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**MIONTUAIRISCÍ NA CRUINNITHE SPEISIALTA PLEANÁLA DE COMHAIRLE  
CONTAE CHIARRAÍ A THIONÓLADH I SEOMRA NA COMHAIRLE, ÁRAS AN  
CHONTAE, TRÁ LÍ, AR AN LUAN 9 NOLLAG 2013.**

**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL PLANNING MEETING OF KERRY COUNTY  
COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, ÁRAS AN CHONTAE,  
TRALEE ON MONDAY 9<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2013.**

**PRESENT/I LÁTHAIR**

***Councillors/Comhairleoirí***

R. Beasley	J. Brassil	T. Buckley
M. Cahill	P. Connor-Scarteen	S. Counihan
B. Cronin	J.J. Culloty	P.J. Donovan
T. Ferris	J. Finucane	S. Fitzgerald
N. Foley	M. Gleeson	M. Griffin
D. Healy-Rae	J. Healy-Rae	P. Leahy
P. McCarthy	A. McEllistrim	T. O'Brien
B. O'Connell	M. O'Shea	L. Purtill
J. Sheahan	G. Wharton-Slattery	

**APOLOGY/LEATH SCÉAL**

**P. O'Donoghue**

**IN ATTENDANCE/I LÁTHAIR**

Mr. T. Curran, Co. Manager	Mr. M. McMahon, Dir of Planning
Mr. J. Breen, Dir. Hsg. & Comm. & Ent	Mr. J.D. Flynn, Dir. Corp. Serv.
Mr. O. Ring, Dir. Env. & Water Serv.	Mr. C. O'Sullivan, Dir. of Ser. & Nat. Proc. Off.
Mr. G. MacNamara, D/Dir. of Roads	Mr. P. Stack, SE Planning
Ms. M. Enright, Sen. Exec. Planner	Mr. E. Fleming, Executive Planner
Ms. C. Fisher, Biodiversity Officer	Ms. A. Murphy, Assistant Planner
Mr. A. Doyle, Exec. Planner	Mr. D. Burke, Assistant Planner
Mr. E. Kelleher, Assistant Planner	Mr. G. O'Brien, Mtgs. Administrator
Mr. L. Brosnan, AO Planning	Mr. P. Corkery, Press & Comm. Off.
Ms. B. Reidy, S.S.O. Corp. Affairs	Ms. N. O'Connor, A.S.O. Planning
Ms. O. O'Shea, CO Corp. Affairs	

The meeting commenced at 10.40 am.

The Mayor, Cllr. S. Fitzgerald took the Chair.

### **13.12.09.04 Draft Kerry County Council Development Plan 2015 – 2021**

#### **Members Duties under Ethics Legislation**

Mayor Fitzgerald informed members that he wished to remind them of their duties under Part 15 (Ethics Framework) of the Local Government Act 2001 and the Code of Conduct for Councillors. He then read the following statement into the record of the meeting.

“Councillors should be aware that the onus for complying with the requirement of the Act and the Code of Conduct lies with each individual Councillor. Under the beneficial interest provision and should that provision apply, a Councillor must

- (1) Disclose the nature of his/her interest or the fact of a connected persons interest at the meeting and before discussion or consideration of the matter commences and
- (2) Withdraw from the meeting for so long as the matter is being discussed or considered, and accordingly, he/she shall take no part in the discussion or consideration of the matter and shall refrain from voting in relation to it.”

In conclusion the Mayor informed members that there could be no interaction with members of the public during the meeting.

#### **(a) Chapter 4 Economic Development and Employment**

Mr. M. McMahon, Director of Planning, informed members at the previous Special Planning Meeting held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> December the first three Chapters of the Draft Plan were considered. They would then commence with Chapter 4 on Economic Development and Employment and with the co-operation of the members he hoped to complete Chapters 4 to 9 inclusive that day. He then called on Mr. P. Stack to brief members on Chapter 4.

Mr. Stack said he had gone through the first three Chapters at the previous meeting and he would not go through the next Chapters in the same detail. He referred members to Chapter 4 on Page 53 of Volume 1 of the Draft Plan. He read the following extracts from this Chapter into the record of the meeting.

#### **4.1 Introduction**

Ireland's economy grew rapidly between 1995 and 2000 at a rate of 9.4% and continued to grow at an average rate of 5.9% during the following decade until 2008. This boom was fuelled largely by direct foreign investment and a domestic property boom. The banking crisis and the collapse of the property market sent Ireland into recession in 2008. Ireland's unemployment rate stood at 14.6 % of the total labour force in the last quarter of 2012. Ireland's domestic economy has contracted but some economic indicators such as employment levels are showing signs of recovery in 2013.

#### **4.1.1 Employment Profile**

The employment profile for Kerry has changed dramatically since 2006. The numbers of people employed in construction has decreased by nearly 60% and with the reduction in economic activity there has been a 15.90% reduction in transport, storage and communications. Employment in the manufacturing industry has also declined considerably in the period.

#### **4.1.2 Unemployment**

Nationally unemployment increased from 8.5% in 2006 to 19% in 2011 - a rise of 10.5 per cent. Unemployment rates in Kerry climbed to a high of nearly 19.8% in 2011. Unemployment has been gradually decreasing and the number of people unemployed went below 14,000 in 2013.

#### **4.1.3 Employment Projections**

It is unlikely that the construction industry will return to 2006 levels and other sectors with the potential for growth such as information technology, tourism, small indigenous industries and the agri-sector will need to expand to provide the jobs lost in traditional employment sectors.

#### **4.1.4 National Economic Policy**

The last two decades have witnessed the relocation of many manufacturing sectors to low cost economies in Asia and elsewhere.

#### **4.1.5 Land Use Planning and Economic Growth**

There is, however, significant regional disparities in growth within the Country with most Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) located in the Gateways of Dublin, Cork, Limerick and Galway. It is clear that other areas will have to depend on growing local indigenous industries to create future employment. This is exemplified by the success of Kerry Group PLC, Dairymaster, Fexco and Liebherr, as well as the growth of the agri-food sector. Indigenous growth will be fueled by inward investment but will also act as a powerful engine of economic and employment growth. It is an objective of this plan to support new and existing indigenous businesses to grow and export.

Kerry has a strong tourism industry and it is the sector most likely to drive economic growth in the short to medium term. Ten percent of the labour force is employed in hotels and restaurants alone. It is also the sector that can contribute the most to the economic development of peripheral areas in the County.

To support and facilitate the sustainable growth of tourism a tourism strategy is set out in Chapter . This strategy supports existing tourism markets, identifies new sectors within the tourism market and supports the sustainable development of tourism across the County.

The strategy also recognises that much of the County's tourism is underpinned by environmental attributes unique to the County. The strategy therefore seeks to protect these environmental attributes by supporting the sustainable development of the tourist industry.

Retailing is also an important sector of the County's economy employing over 8,000 people. Chapter 3 sets out a strategy for the sustainable development and growth of the retail sector in accordance with the settlement hierarchy and the core strategy.

The Kerry agri-food industry operates globally. It, in common with other industries, is experiencing significant challenges from the downturn in the world economy and has also been affected by the capping of national schemes as a result of the deterioration in national finances. However the industry operates within a very dynamic environment, with world food demand continuously on the increase, and it has the capability to be a continued strong driver of local economic recovery. This strategy seeks to underpin and support the future sustainable development and expansion of this industry and allow it to maximise its potential following the removal of production limits in the coming years.

Mr. Stack referred members to Pages 57 and 58 for the 12 objectives which support the overall economic development of the county.

#### **4.2 Tralee Killarney Linked Hub**

The Linked Hub is capable of providing strong and sustainable economic growth sufficient to drive economic development throughout the County during the lifetime of this plan and beyond. The degree to which it achieves this is dependent on a number of factors including the development of the area's potential; critical mass in population, skills, infrastructure and services and linkages between other gateways, hubs, and lower tier towns. The core strategy focuses investment and population growth into the hub area to facilitate the development of critical mass, employment, enterprise and economic activity and places particular emphasis on the role of the towns of Tralee and Killarney as the principal drivers of sustainable economic growth.

The Tralee/Killarney Linked Hub differs from other hubs as its two strategic towns have different yet complementary assets and functions. It is an objective of this Plan that these strategic towns capitalise on their existing assets and develop their complementary roles. Tralee will develop as a fulcrum to harness potential growth in the region by enhancing its role as a 'technopole' centre for high-tech telecoms, IT industries and an employment and training centre, with a distinct, but regional tourist role. Killarney will capitalise on its existing tourism, recreation and amenity roles and promote itself as a leader in this area for development, training and education. These roles will be promoted together forming an overall multi-sectoral dynamic for future growth. Sustainable linkages to the surrounding settlements and rural areas will ensure that the benefits of growth are realised throughout the County.

***Tralee-Killarney Linked hub will capitalise on the combined capacities of both towns, such as those in third-level education, developing links between industry and centres of learning, surface and air transport links and key natural resources such as scenic landscape.***

It is envisaged that the Hub can be developed to become a location capable of harnessing inward direct investment in the emerging global growth sectors.

**This includes:-**

❖ **Knowledge Economy**

❖ **Green Enterprise**

The market for environmental goods and services (EGS) is one of the fastest growing sectors in Europe.

❖ **Creative Industry**

The creative industry can be defined as *‘those activities which have their origins in individual creativity, skills and talent and which have the potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property’*.

Mr. Stack said the following 6 objectives support the development of the HUB.

Objective No.	Tralee Killarney Hub
	<b>It is an objective of the Council to:-</b>
<b>ES - 13</b>	Prepare a strategic economic and social development plan for the Linked Hub which will include the towns of Tralee and Killarney.
<b>ES -14</b>	Promote the Kerry Hub as a centre for knowledge industries and to facilitate the sustainable development of a range of technological clusters in appropriate locations.
<b>ES - 15</b>	Focus sustainable economic development in the towns of Tralee and Killarney as the regional centres for economic growth and enterprise.
<b>ES - 16</b>	Support and develop new partnerships with private enterprise, economic development agencies, educational institutions and other relevant bodies in developing the economic potential of the linked hub.
<b>ES - 17</b>	Support and facilitate the ongoing development of the Kerry Technology Park as the principle focus for the expansion of knowledge based industries in the County.
<b>ES - 18</b>	Support and develop a working partnership with the Institute of Technology Tralee in the future development of third level education in the County.

### 4.3 Farranfore

Farranfore has strong national and regional rail, road and air linkages with the capacity to promote interurban accessibility which is of critical importance to the successful development of both the Hub and the County as a whole. Given Kerry's peripheral location, Farranfore has a strategic and pivotal role in the efficient operation and functioning of the Hub.

Objective No.	Farranfore
	<b>It is an objective of the Council to:-</b>
<b>ES - 19</b>	Promote and facilitate the sustainable development of Farranfore as a national and international transport hub and as a location for the sustainable development of industry, light industry, warehouse/distribution and commercial business.

### 4.4 Regional Towns

These towns have sufficient critical mass in population and services to support economic growth and act as employment centres in the sub regions which make up their catchment area. Among these constraints is the need to create improved linkages between Regional towns and the hub towns of Tralee and Killarney.

### 4.5 District Towns and Villages

The strengthening of rural communities is fundamental to the Development Plan. Where opportunities exist for economic growth the local area plan for each settlement identifies the opportunities for economic growth and zones land accordingly.

Objective No.	Regional/District Towns and Villages
	<b>It is an objective of the Council to:-</b>
<b>ES - 20</b>	Support the sustainable growth and economic development of Regional/District towns to drive economic development throughout the County and to act as catalysts for sustainable development within their hinterlands.
<b>ES - 21</b>	Support the sustainable strategies for economic growth as set out in current local area plans for towns and villages and any subsequent updates/ reviews.

#### **4.6 The Shannon Estuary**

North Kerry's location on the Shannon Estuary presents opportunities for future sustainable economic development and employment growth. The Estuary features 500km<sup>2</sup> of navigable water running from Kerry Head and Loop Head as far as Limerick City, a distance of 100km and it is one of the premier deepwater locations in Europe. The Estuary and its environs are a multi-functional zone, with the waters and adjoining lands supporting a range of functions, uses, communities, activities and environmental resources/assets which bring character and prosperity to the area. The Shannon Estuary is also designated as part of the Natura 2000 network as the Lower Shannon cSAC 002165 and the River Shannon and River Fergus SPA 004077. There are also several proposed National Heritage Areas designations along the estuary that predominately overlap the Natura 2000 designations. Kerry County Council in conjunction with Clare County Council, Limerick City and County Council, Shannon Development and the Shannon Foynes Port Company commissioned a land and marine based plan for the future development and management of marine-related industry and tourism along the Estuary.

This Plan – the Strategic Integrated Framework Plan (SIFP), facilitates the diversification of the economy, through the promotion of commercial/industrial employment, environmentally friendly aqua culture, maritime, energy, transport, recreation and tourism industries in a sustainable manner. It also sets out the importance of safeguarding the Estuary's sensitive environmental resources and natural heritage of national, European and International significance. The SIFP has undergone its own Strategic Environmental Assessment and Appropriate Assessment process. The Council will have regard to the provisions of the SIFP and its environmental reports in the assessment of proposals for development in this area.

#### **4.7 Tarbert / Ballylongford Land Bank**

This Plan zones 390 hectares of land, known as the Tarbert/ Ballylongford Land Bank, for marine-related industry, compatible or complimentary industries and enterprises which require deep water access. The land bank is adjacent to the Lower Shannon cSAC 002165 and the River Shannon and River Fergus SPA 04077 as well as several pNHA designations.

Within the land bank planning permission has been secured for the construction of a Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) regasification terminal. This site is 104 hectares in size. In addition planning permission has also been granted within the LNG site for a Combined Heat & Power plant. These two developments were extensively environmentally assessed and have the potential to sustainably create substantial employment both at the construction and operation phases and can act as a catalyst for future industrial development and employment arising from the availability of secure gas and electricity supply in this region.

<b>Objective No.</b>	<b>Shannon Integrated Framework Plan</b>
	<b>It is an objective of the Council to:-</b>
<b>ES - 22</b>	Support the implementation of the Shannon Integrated Framework Plan (SIFP) to facilitate the sustainable economic development of the Shannon Estuary.
<b>Objective No.</b>	<b>Tarbert/ Ballylongford Land Bank</b>
	<b>It is an objective of the Council to:-</b>
<b>ES - 23</b>	Promote and facilitate the sustainable development of these lands for marine related industry, utilising the presence of deep water, existing infrastructure, natural resources, and waterside location to harness the potential of this strategic location. Alternative proposals for general industrial development, compatible or complimentary with marine related industry and / or those creating a synergism with existing or permitted uses and / or those contributing to the sustainable development of a strategic energy hub at this location will also be encouraged. Development will be subject to compliance with the objectives of this Plan, particularly as they relate to the protection of the environment and will also be subject to compliance with the Environmental Reports prepared in support of the SIFP, where appropriate.

#### 4.8 Rural Economy

The provision of employment opportunities in rural areas close to rural communities not only supports economic growth but is critical in maintaining sustainable vibrant rural communities. In particular, there is considerable potential for the expansion of employment from traditional crafts, artisan food and drink products and outdoor activities. It is an objective of this strategy to promote sustainable growth by encouraging rural enterprise generally, especially those activities that are resource dependent.

While it is desirable that economic enterprises should be located within settlements where there is a larger available workforce and less need to travel, this is not always possible. It is the policy of the Council therefore to support proposals for rural enterprise development in a sustainable manner. In this regard the Council will foster small scale indigenous enterprises as a means of directing employment in rural areas subject to compliance with the objectives of this Plan.

Mr. Stack referred members to Pages 64 and 65 where the objectives supporting Economic Development in Rural Areas are set out.



Objective No.	Economic Development in Rural Areas
	<b>It is an objective of the Council to:-</b>
<b>ES - 24</b>	Consider a substantive and sustainable proposal for a small rural industrial, business enterprise or a community led enterprise scheme on land zoned Rural General, where it is demonstrated that there is no suitable site within any settlement in the locality and the proposal would benefit the local economy or would contribute to community regeneration. An application under this policy must be accompanied by evidence to support the case of economic benefit to the local economy and detailed information on the search conducted to secure a suitable site within the boundary of the local settlement(s). In addition proposals will be required to comply with the objectives and development standards of this Plan and specifically with the provisions of Objective ES-27.
<b>ES - 25</b>	Consider the redevelopment of an established economic development use in the countryside for industrial or business purposes provided there would be no significant increase in the area of the site and the proposal complies with the provisions of Objective ES- 27.
<b>ES - 26</b>	Consider favourably proposals for a major industrial development in the countryside on lands zoned Rural General where the proposal will make a significant contribution to the economy of the County and where it is demonstrated that the proposal, due to its site specific requirements, requires a countryside location. Such developments will in almost all cases be dependent on a resource available in the area of the proposed development. An application for a development proposed under this policy must be accompanied by evidence to support the case of sustainable economic benefit to the economy of the County and detailed information on the search conducted to secure a suitable site within the boundary of nearby settlements. A Travel Plan must be prepared to address the issue of accessibility by various modes of transport. Developer funded infrastructural improvements will be conditioned in appropriate cases. Development proposals will be assessed in the light of all relevant material planning considerations, relevant policies of the County Development Plan and other regional and national guidance/policy, relevant environmental designations including demonstration of compliance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive and compliance with the provisions of ES –27.

<b>ES - 27</b>	<p>Proposals for any economic development in rural areas must demonstrate:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Compliance with the development standards of this Plan.</li><li>▪ That there will be no adverse impact on the residential amenity of nearby residents.</li><li>▪ That there will be no significant adverse effects on the environment including the integrity of Natura 2000 network.</li><li>▪ That there is existing or programmed capacity in the water infrastructure (supply and/or effluent disposal) or suitable developer-led improvements can be identified, delivered and maintained.</li><li>▪ The proposal shall include sustainable waste management practices both at the construction and operation stages of the proposal.</li><li>▪ The proposal will not compromise water quality nor the programme of measures contained within the South Western or Shannon River Basin Management Plans 2009-2015 (or subsequent updates)</li><li>▪ That the existing road network can safely handle any extra vehicular traffic movements generated by the proposed development or suitable developer funded improvements are identified and delivered to overcome any road related issues.</li><li>▪ Adequate access arrangements, parking, maneuvering and servicing areas in line with standards set out in the Development Management, Standards and Guidelines section of this plan or as otherwise agreed in writing with the Planning Authority.</li><li>▪ Compliance, where appropriate, with the measures contained in as the plan as they relate to biodiversity protection and enhancement.</li><li>▪ Appropriate boundary treatment and means of enclosure are provided and that any areas of outside storage proposed are adequately screened from public view.</li><li>▪ All measures are taken to assist integration into the landscape. As part of this the use of signage should be kept to a minimum.</li><li>▪ Any retail element to a proposed development under this policy must be clearly ancillary to the primary industrial/business use.</li></ul>
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## **Agriculture**

Agriculture is the second largest employer in the County, with 5,621 working in the Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing sectors.<sup>1</sup> Primary Agriculture accounts for 2.5% of GDP and agri-food sector (including agriculture, food, drinks and tobacco) accounts for around 7% of GDP. However on-farm diversification in Ireland only stands at 1.95% which is much lower than other European countries such as England with 31%.<sup>2</sup> There is significant potential for the growth of the agricultural industry as a whole and the export of agri- food products to existing and new markets. It is an objective of the Council to support the sustainable development and diversification of the agricultural sector.

## **Farmer's Markets**

Farmer's Markets have an annual turnover of €10m. The Council will promote the provision of Farmer's Markets in appropriate locations, as outlets for the sale of local produce and to support the economic viability of local small-scale production.

### **4.9 An Gaeltacht**

Attracting industries to gaeltacht areas can present challenges due to their peripherality, lack of essential services and the size of the labour force. Despite these challenges Údarás na Gaeltachta has been successful in developing jobs in a wide range of business sectors, including manufacturing, healthcare, engineering and food processing. In 2011 there were 730 people employed in a full time capacity in the County's two Gaeltacht areas in Údarás na Gaeltachta client companies.

### **4.10 Home Working**

Changes in technology and working practices have resulted in a change in working patterns. Increasingly more people are working from home. Also there has been an increase in small businesses being run from owners' homes. Often home working facilitates start up business enterprise. Home working reduces the number of journeys and allows employment to be created in peripheral areas. In recognition of the advantages of home working, the Council will support this type of development where residential amenity will not be adversely affected. The scale should not be of a size / intensity sufficient to alter the character of the site from a primarily residential use to a commercial use. The development should not give rise to a nuisance by the generation of traffic movements or noise. Operation should be confined to accepted business hours.

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<sup>1</sup>Table available at <http://www.cso.ie/en/census/census2011reports/census2011profile3atwork>

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.teagasc.ie/publications/2012/1579/David\\_MeredithNRDC2012.pdf](http://www.teagasc.ie/publications/2012/1579/David_MeredithNRDC2012.pdf)

A live-work unit is a single unit or space within a building that is both a place to live and a place of business or commerce.

Objective No.	Home Working
	<b>It is an objective of the Council to:-</b>
<b>ES - 31</b>	Support sustainable home working proposals of appropriate scale where residential amenity will not be adversely affected. Operation should be confined to accepted business hours, generally 9:00am to 6:00pm (Mon –Sat).
<b>ES - 32</b>	Promote new small and medium scale enterprises by facilitating the sustainable development of property solutions such as home work units, shared incubation facilities and home working. Proposals shall demonstrate compliance with the objectives and Development Management, Standards and Guidelines of this Plan.

#### 4.11 Environment

The Council will, therefore, encourage the integration of environmental considerations into the construction and design of buildings and the operational practices of the activity.

##### Prevention of Major Hazardous Accidents

The EU Seveso II Directive (96/082/EEC) seeks to prevent major industrial accidents involving dangerous substances and to limit the consequences of accidents on people and the environment.

There are two sites in the County, both of which are located in Tarbert, to which this Directive applies - The National Oil Reserve Agency Site and Scottish Sustainable Energy Site.

Cllr. M. Gleeson suggested that Chapters 4 and 5 should be taken together.

Cllr. J. Finucane suggested that there were one or two gaps in the Chapter on Economic Development. There should be a section on the proposed Technological University status for the IT Tralee in conjunction with Cork IT. Tralee IT is the largest employer in Tralee town and the future status of this Institution is critical for the town and indeed the County. He requested that a clear objective to attain Technological University status in conjunction with Cork IT would be included in the Draft Plan. The HUB has had no impact on the development of either Tralee or Killarney over the last number of years. He asked that there would be a focus on Fenit Port as this Port is very important for the export of goods from companies such as Liebherr who use Fenit as a finishing location. Fenit Port is a key part of the infrastructure of the County and should be

promoted as a potential base for service personnel for offshore drilling etc. Cllr. Finucane then referred to Kerry Airport and said he would like to see it get greater prominence in the Draft Plan. The maintenance of the PSO is critical for the County and this message should be delivered in as strong a way as possible to the Minister. The Minister has indicated that the PSO would be reviewed in due course taking account of the numbers using the service. He called on officials attending meetings in Dublin to use Kerry Airport and also councillors where possible.

Cllr. D. Healy Rae said we are being told the economy is picking up but that is not evident in Kerry. He asked why multi national companies do not consider Kerry when establishing a business. He accepted that transport costs are a big factor. Rural employment is keeping the County going as there are many one-person businesses in operation. The Council must do everything in its power to ensure they continue in business. The amount of overgrown roadside hedges on minor roads is a big problem and must be addressed. Access to the County from Macroom continues to be a major stumbling block and it is important to keep the pressure on the Minister to ensure the Macroom By-Pass is funded. He commended the Tidy Towns Committees for maintaining the towns and villages. He asked what can be done with vacant houses in towns and villages. Members were told they are not suitable for families as it would be too dangerous for the children to live on the side of the street. He pointed out however that these houses would be suitable for the elderly and he asked that this would be considered. Arts and crafts and home baking etc are improving in some areas and this must be welcomed. A lot of our culture is being lost i.e. song and dance and it is important to ensure it is retained and preserved for future generations. Many tourists visit the County to experience our culture but he believed they are not being fully exposed to it. It needs to be promoted in a better way to the tourist industry. Recreational go-karting is not suitable for residential areas therefore it needs to be located in rural areas. It is important to ensure that those working from home have broadband and that they are facilitated by the Planning Department. When multinational companies close down their operations there is a lot of talk about it in the media but when an individual goes out of business there is no mention of it. If it was not for FEXCO, Liebherr, Mike Cronin and Munster Joinery there would be no employment in East Kerry.

Cllr. M. Gleeson said no county exists in isolation. Recently a conference was organised on economic development and Mr. John Breen stated it was cheaper to go to Germany than to go to Dublin by train which would cost €80 return. That is having an enormous impact on our county. The level of excise duty is crippling rural communities and must be addressed nationally. The standard of roads leading into the County is dreadful and the reason the Bord refused to approve the Adare By-Pass was because it was not the optimum route. From the Kerry point of view this By-Pass is urgently needed. Liebherr is vital for Killarney but there is no hope of attracting further heavy industry to the county while the roads are in the condition they are. The knowledge economy should be equally

accessible from Dún Chaoin as Dublin provided broadband is available. He expressed his gratitude for the existing service at Kerry Airport but said he was informed there is potential to vastly increase the number of visitors coming into the County but another airline would be required. It is possible that a further three to four planeloads of tourists could be brought to the County each week if another airline was prepared to operate from Kerry Airport. Tourism is vital for the economy of the County. It is important to ensure county roads and bridges are maintained to the highest standard possible. In conclusion Cllr. Gleeson said energy development could have enormous employment potential for the County.

Cllr. S. Counihan said as Chair of the Industrial Committee in Killarney Town Council he could not disagree with the views expressed by previous speakers. He agreed that the importance of acquiring Technological University status for Tralee IT in conjunction with Cork IT should be written into the Plan. He believed it was not possible to attract jobs into the County because we do not have a qualified workforce available. Kerry County Council should have an ambition to create jobs. The loss of 341 jobs is astronomical for the County and we must put pressure on the Government to address this. While members complain about the condition of the roads we do not have adequate staff to address this. He was aware of a man who was trying to create a product but he had to go to Mitchelstown to get suitable premises to manufacture the product. He asked if there is a suitable premises available in the County. We should have a strategy whereby we would facilitate the creation of jobs. Liebherr was established in Killarney in 1958 and it has been an extraordinary company. Everything possible should be done to facilitate those who want to set up in business. In conclusion Cllr. Counihan said members should object strongly to the abolition of the County Enterprise Board.

Cllr. M. Cahill said we must support towns and villages as many of them are dying a slow death for a number of years. He asked that the proceeds from the Property Tax would be used to boost these towns and villages. Agriculture is also very important for the County but farmers have been hit with severe penalties of up to 100% in their Single Farm payments. Many farmers are on their knees and to be hit with these penalties could put them out of business. He called on the Minister for Agriculture to take action on this immediately. 2,500 letters were sent out a few weeks ago and South Kerry and in particular Glencar was very badly affected because of the nature of the land. He added that there should be additional funding available for agri-tourism. Cllr. Cahill emphasised the need to promote and facilitate those who want to work from home where possible. High-speed broadband is essential but this is lacking in many parts of Kerry in particular rural Kerry. Working from home is particularly important because of the rising cost of childcare.

Cllr. J. Brassil welcomed this Chapter and said it is very difficult to know what should and what should not be allowed. He referred to the Objectives set out on Pages 64 and 65 and said these could either be used to help or hinder someone. It would be helpful if the planning authority came up with a matrix of what will be allowed. People with small businesses such as garages are creating local employment. They start on a very small scale and then grow and neighbours can object. It is then difficult for the planning authority to decide whether to grant permission or not. He requested that a matrix would be drawn up which would outline what type of development would be permitted. He referred to existing businesses and said the planning authority should require all of these to apply for permission to retain their business provided it is not a traffic hazard and the site assessment is acceptable. It is important to regularise all of these businesses as soon as possible and then go forward with the matrix. Then if a person comes to a councillor they can give them a clear indication whether their proposed development would be permitted or not. In previous decisions issued by An Bord Pleanála they said the land was not zoned for the relevant use. He asked if the Draft Plan deals with this anomaly. Rural Kerry will not be zoned and the Bord is using this as a reason to refuse permission. Cllr. Brassil requested that this would be addressed in the Draft Plan. Kerry is a huge tourism County and anyone trying to develop a product which will assist this industry should be facilitated.

Cllr. N. Foley supported the views expressed by previous speakers in relation to the roads infrastructure. This Chapter is littered with references to the HUB but all foreign direct investment is located in the Gateways. She asked if anyone has quantified the benefits to Kerry from the HUB status. She asked must this terminology continue to be used in the Draft Plan. She added that there is a clear distinction between Tralee and Killarney. Tralee has the IT but it also has its own tourism sector including Siamsa, the Wetlands etc. She requested that this tourism industry in Tralee would be acknowledged in the Draft Plan. Fenit Port is of huge economic importance to the county and this should also be acknowledged. Cllr. Foley requested that an aspirational objective would be included in the Draft Plan to support Tralee and Cork IT's in their endeavours to achieve Technological University status.

Cllr. M. Griffin requested that an objective would be included in the Draft Plan to regenerate existing industrial sites i.e. Clash etc as they can yet again become a hub of activity. Further industrial sites should not be developed until these are utilized. A farmer who wants to set up a business may need seed capital and should be allowed to sell a site for this purpose. He referred to the reference to working from home in the Draft Plan and said the hours of 9am to 6pm are a bit restrictive. He asked that this would be relaxed. Cllr. Griffin supported the views expressed by previous speakers in relation to access to the county and said rail and air links should be developed further. This should be included as an objective in the Plan. The Plan should also support local groups i.e. the GAA who organize tournaments and boost the economy of the area. It should be an objective in the Plan to support these groups.

Cllr. T. Ferris said she had no objection to the regeneration of existing industrial sites in urban areas. However we must also be open to alternative types of industry. The Plan must clearly state what will/will not be permitted. It is important to adopt a Plan that will encourage job creation. This Plan does as much as can be done and the only reservations she had were in relation to the Matrix which would set out what will/will not be allowed as this could lead to a dangerous situation. She suggested that it should be left up to the Planning Department to be more amenable to allow a business i.e. hairdressers at the side of a house. Cllr. Ferris then referred to Fenit Port and its potential not just as a Port but also as a service site for off shore development in future. She was satisfied the Plan contains enough objectives to facilitate this type of development in Fenit. She asked that the Plan submitted by the former Harbour Master would be considered and that the overall objective of that Plan would be studied to ensure nothing is omitted.

Cllr. T. O'Brien said the campaign to get Technological University status for IT Tralee and Cork is underway. However it is a slow process but it would be very important for the county. The IT is a huge resource and is important for employment and the students who attend there. Cllr. O'Brien referred to Kerry Airport and said it is important not to upset the companies operating from there. It is also imperative that the PSO is retained. During the year the County Manager went to China and he said we must always reach out to establish links with other countries. The IDA has not secured any foreign direct investment for Kerry so it is up to us to make a difference.

Cllr. J. Healy-Rae said geographically Kerry is isolated and broadband is vital. In some areas of the county there is no mobile phone coverage and the service providers are not providing an adequate service. He believed the conditions of their licenses are not strict enough. Cllr. Healy-Rae said the number of outdoor staff working in roads and water services has diminished and there will not be adequate staff numbers to maintain the road network. The development of greenways/walkways is important for the future of the county and he hoped that the necessary funding to develop them will be provided in 2014. It is vital that the road infrastructure leading into the county from Cork and Limerick is upgraded. There appears to be progress in relation to the Macroom By-Pass and this is welcome. Cllr. Healy-Rae expressed disappointment that the NRA appeals permissions granted on national secondary roads.

The Mayor said in relation to the provision of broadband the companies involved attended a meeting of the Council and they stated that the 1km rule is the reason for the poor service in Kerry.

Cllr. T. Ferris said members were informed An Bord Pleanála over rule our 1km rule anyway so the argument put forward by the companies involved does not stand up.



Cllr. L. Purtill welcomed the inclusion of the Tarbert / Ballylongford landbank in the Plan. He said the LNG project is the one project that has the potential to deliver real growth in North Kerry and beyond. Villages like Tarbert, Ballylongford and Lisselton are slowly draining of young people. Over four hundred construction jobs over a four to five year period will energise the whole region. This Council through its deputations has fought hard to bring this project to reality. Inclusion in our County Development Plan is a further endorsement of our pro active approach. In conclusion Cllr. Purtill said as we face into 2014 this project will give so much hope and confidence to so many people.

Cllr. R. Beasley welcomed the support given by Kerry County Council to Shannon LNG and said a number of people in North Kerry were dependant on this project proceeding to secure work but they have now emigrated. He hoped there would be a positive outcome for the project from the High Court the following Wednesday and that it could proceed without further impediment. Access roads to the county are a major impediment to attracting industry to Kerry. The Dale Road in North Kerry also needs further improvement. Public transport is almost non-existent in North Kerry and he would like to see it improved in particular for the elderly. He supported the pro-active approach taken by Kerry County Council in relation to Kerry Airport.

Cllr. B. Cronin said accessibility to the county is a major problem and the lack of By-Passes at Adare, Newcastlewest and Macroom is making it very difficult to attract industry into the county. Those access roads must be a priority for the future development of the county. The inclusion of home working in the Draft Plan is welcome but broadband is not available in many parts of the county. There is a mast 1.5 miles from his home yet he must go outside his house to take a call on his mobile phone. The existing landline service is barely acceptable but if fibre optic was available throughout the county it would be much better. Cllr. Cronin welcomed the inclusion of Kerry Airport in the Draft Plan and said it is of huge importance to the county. He understood flights are practically full and this is important. It would be marvelous if another carrier could be encouraged to operate out of Kerry Airport, however, he urged caution. He pointed out there is a railway station in Farranfore also and this area has huge potential for development. He acknowledged there is land zoned in Farranfore for development but said this area has yet to generate a lot of employment. Cllr. Cronin acknowledged there are issues with Single Farm Payments and said he submitted a Notice of Motion for the December meeting on this issue. The County Development Plan should fully support the agriculture industry and high quality produce. It is vital that people working in rural areas are supported as they cannot afford to rent premises in big business parks as the rent is too high. People with good business ideas should be facilitated and supported as it is important to retain the existing population in rural areas.

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Mr. P. Stack welcomed the recognition in the Plan for the development of indigenous industry. Anyone who wants to start up a business should consult with the Planning Department at the early stages. He said, however, that he could not guarantee anyone they will get permission. It is up to the people of Kerry to generate employment. The reference to the HUB must be retained as it is contained in the National Spatial Strategy. The Draft Plan is mindful of the need to protect the environment and the agriculture industry. Mr. Stack informed members there is a section on Page 119 in relation to Fenit and Kerry Airport is mentioned at length on Page 118. He referred to the Matrix requested by Cllr. Brassil and said while he would like to see a Matrix included it would be very difficult to agree it. Each case stands on its merits and the Planning Department will be as positive as possible towards each application. There is a lot of emphasis on access to the county and this is dealt with in the Roads section. Mr. Stack undertook to consider including a reference to the regeneration of existing industrial sites in the Draft Plan. The issue of farmers selling sites has been ongoing for years and from 2003 to 2013 permission was granted for 8,000 houses. He added that permission is still being granted in rural areas.

Cllr. Griffin suggested that farmers should be allowed to sell sites where the financial gain would be re-invested to create employment.

Mr. Stack said if the objective in relation to Fenit Port is not strong enough it can be reconsidered.

Cllr. J. Finucane said Fenit Port needs a specific section in the Chapter on Economic Development.

Mr. McMahon informed members that Objectives ES-17 and ES-18 on Page 60 were intended to support the aspiration to gain Technological University status for Tralee and Cork IT's. He felt these objectives were adequate but it would be possible to strengthen the Objective in relation to Technological University status.

Cllr. D. Healy-Rae asked if the Director of Housing had any comment to make in relation to housing.

Mr. McMahon referred Cllr. Healy-Rae to Chapter 3 which deals with housing and said there was an extensive debate on that topic at the previous meeting. A strong objective is included with a view to getting housing estates completed.

Cllr. D. Healy-Rae said he was referring to older houses on the side of the street and he asked what plan is in place for them. He asked the Housing Department to utilize them to house the elderly.

The Mayor informed Cllr. Healy-Rae that issue was dealt with at the previous meeting.

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In response Mr. J. Breen, Director of Housing said his Department lease/rent houses where they meet the required standard and criteria.

Cllr. N. Foley requested clarification on Section 4.2 on Page 58 of the Draft Plan and said Tralee has a distinct regional role. She then read the following excerpt from Page 58 *“Tralee will develop as a fulcrum to harness potential growth in the region by enhancing its role as a ‘technopole’ centre for high-tech telecoms, IT industries and an employment and training centre, with a distinct, but regional tourist role.”* Cllr. Foley said this is a diminution of Tralee’s tourism aspect. Her interpretation of this is that ‘regional’ should not be included as Tralee has a right to develop it’s tourism products.

Mr. Stack accepted Cllr. Foley’s view and said that paragraph would be reworded.

The County Manager said with the demise of the County Enterprise Board this will come under the Local Employment Office and he hoped people would get a better service which is more focused and a one stop shop. Assuming the same level of funding is provided Enterprise Ireland would hope to improve this service. The provision of incubation units can be considered in particular in Farranfore. He requested Cllr. Counihan to provide him with the details of the person seeking premises to go into production of a product.

Cllr. Counihan said he was not criticising the County Enterprise Board but said the problem is the facilities are not available.

The Manager said he was conscious of the need for incubation units in the county.

### **(b) Chapter 5 Tourism & Recreation**

Mr. Stack referred members to Chapter 5 Tourism and Recreation on Page 70 of Volume 1 of the Draft Plan. He read the following extracts from this Chapter into the record of the meeting.

#### **5.1 Introduction**

The tourism sector is one of the major growth areas of the national and local economy with tourism expenditure standing at €5.3 billion in 2009, representing 3.8% of Gross National Product. It is the sector of the economy with the most potential for growth in the short and medium term. Kerry received 846,000 tourists in 2011. Ten percent of Kerry’s labour force is employed in hotels and restaurants compared to a national average of 6%. The County ranked fourth in total visitor numbers behind Dublin, Cork and Galway. However visitor spend in Kerry is €212 whereas the corresponding figure for Cork is €370 per visitor. Kerry has the potential to increase visitor numbers and to increase visitor spend.

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A Study recently carried out by the School of Architecture at University College Dublin has indicated that Kerry is close to 'tipping point' in relation to the impact of rural housing on this unique and precious landscape. We must be careful going forward that we protect this landscape for the benefit of the County and its residents.

Niche tourism by its nature has the capacity to develop in locations throughout the County and as such can contribute to the sustainable economic development of peripheral and rural areas with an otherwise weak economic base.

Kerry is well positioned to become a significant destination for the growing market for culture, heritage and arts based activity holidays through the appropriate development of its indigenous built, cultural and natural assets. The 'sightseer and culture seeker' market is growing; they are interested in exploring a Country's sights and finding out about its culture and heritage. This sector of the market is high yield in terms of greater visitor spend and the increased length of time visitors stay in the County. These culture and heritage based activities are often a complimentary activity supporting other holiday experiences.

There has been a growing shift in the nature tourism demand away from tour led holidays to independent tourists seeking the infrastructure to allow them to move freely and conveniently between attractions in the County. Integrated land use and transport planning will enhance the tourist product and visitor experience and encourage longer term stays in the County.

Sustainable tourism is defined as 'tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities'. Sustainable tourism planning therefore requires a balance to be struck between the needs of the visitor, the place, heritage assets and the host community. Erosion and damage to pathways and vegetation associated with multiple uses, particularly in relation to mountain trails, is a concern and such uses may need to be controlled or regulated.

It is also recognised that the development of a diversified and sustainable tourist industry will require an integrated multi-agency approach and it is an objective of this Plan to work with the Councils strategic partners and in particular with Fáilte Ireland - South West Region.

Objective No.	Tourism General
	<b><i>It is an objective of the Council to:-</i></b>
<b>T- 1</b>	Adhere to the principles of sustainable tourism and have regard to its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts.
<b>T- 2</b>	Maximize the potential of tourism as a 'pillar of economic growth' which will contribute to the balanced economic development of the County and the tourism industry in the South West Region.
<b>T -3</b>	Facilitate the development of a sustainable and diversified tourism industry through the growth of niche markets in a socially, environmentally and economically sustainable manner.
<b>T -4</b>	Protect and conserve, through the enforcement of the objectives and development standards of this Plan, the natural, built and cultural heritage features that form the basis of the County's tourism industry, including biodiversity, areas of important landscape, coastal scenery, areas of geological and scientific interest, historic buildings, archaeological sites and monuments and the traditional form and general appearance of towns and villages.
<b>T - 5</b>	Promote the sustainable development of tourist related infrastructure such as transport, access, appropriate facilities and high-quality tourist accommodation, in appropriate locations where proposals are in accordance with the provisions of this Plan.
<b>T - 6</b>	Liaise with strategic partners such as Fáilte Ireland (South West Region), the National Parks and Wildlife Services, Inland Fisheries Ireland, Waterways Ireland, Coillte and other relevant bodies on the identification of land use strategies for areas, focusing on their tourism, environmental and heritage value.

<b>T - 7</b>	Promote the sustainable integration of land use and transportation policies to ensure that the unique needs of the tourism sector such as the provision of a public bus service linking visitor attractions and improved transport links between the airport at Farranfore and the County's main tourist hubs.
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## 5. 2 Accessible Tourism

Ensuring that services are more accessible to people with mobility issues, people with learning disabilities, visual or hearing impairment, young children and elderly people is both socially and economically important. In order to increase tourism numbers within these groups the appropriate infrastructure, such as ramps, suitable toilet facilities must be in place to cater for their needs.

<b>Objective No.</b>	<b>Accessible Tourism</b>
	<b><i>It is an objective of the Council to:-</i></b>
<b>T- 8</b>	Facilitate the provision of access to information on accessibility in the various formats required by groups with disabilities.
<b>T- 9</b>	Ensure that all public toilet facilities where feasible, cater for those with varying levels of mobility and access issues.

## 5.2 Activity & Adventure Tourism

Adventure includes both “soft” and “hard” activities all of which are to be found in Kerry. Soft adventure includes walking, cycling, golf and swimming which are the most popular activities. Hard adventure includes mountain climbing, absailing and scuba diving.

Kerry is renowned as a centre for walking with a well-established network of long distance walks; including The Beara Way, The Kerry Way, The Dingle Way, The Saint's Walk (Cosán na Naomh), The North Kerry Way and The Shannon Way, which combined, extend to a network of over 500km.

Kerry has some of the finest golf courses in the Country, including the internationally renowned Ballybunion, Tralee and Waterville links courses.

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The rivers and lakes of Kerry provide significant leisure and amenity opportunities – including angling, eco-tourism and cycle ways. Anglers stay longer (12 days) and spend more than the average visitor. Sea angling is a major niche in the overall angling product attracting some 55,000 overseas visitors in 2012.

Objective No.	Activity Tourism
	<b><i>It is an objective of the Council to:-</i></b>
<b>T- 10</b>	Support and facilitate, in conjunction with other bodies and agencies, the sustainable development of Kerry as a world class destination for sports and recreation related tourism.
<b>T- 11</b>	Promote and facilitate the sustainable development of outdoor activities, in appropriate locations, such as walking, rambling, cycling and adventure with specialised wellness centres and facilities in association with Tralee IT, Fáilte Ireland, National Trails Office, Irish Sports Council, Kerry Education and Training Board and other relevant national and County based departments and agencies.
<b>T- 12</b>	Promote the sustainable development of low impact experiential tourism including orienteering, angling, equestrian activities, bird watching, whale and dolphin watching, canoeing and kayaking, caving, paragliding, botany, photography, painting and meditation, in appropriate locations in order to diversify the range of tourist experiences available in the County and extend the tourism season.
<b>T- 13</b>	Promote the sustainable development of non weather dependent and family-friendly attractions and amenities in appropriate locations that will contribute to the dispersal of tourism throughout the County.
<b>T - 14</b>	Facilitate the sustainable development of water sports, surfing and water related events.

<b>T- 15</b>	Work in partnership with local community organisations, angling clubs, Inland Fisheries Ireland and other relevant bodies to sustainably upgrade angling related infrastructure including access, stands and signage at appropriate locations.
<b>T- 16</b>	Support in collaboration with the National Parks and Wildlife Service and other relevant stakeholders, the monitoring of aquatic vessels in relation to the spread of invasive alien aquatic species by leisure craft.
<b>T- 17</b>	Support the strategic objectives of the National Countryside Recreation Strategy (2006) Dept of Community Rural & Gaeltacht Affairs.

### 5.3 Amenity Paths and Networks

There is an extensive network of long-distance existing waymarked walks, pilgrim paths and forest walks in the County which includes:-

- The Beara Way.
- The Kerry Way.
- The Dingle Way.
- Cosán na Naomh (Saint's Walk).
- The North Kerry Way.
- The Shannon Way.
- River Lee Walk

There is potential for the sustainable development of further walkways at appropriate locations throughout the County for example the proposed Lough Leane Looped Walk in Killarney.

The Council recognises that sustainably developed and maintained walking routes are of considerable benefit to the economies of the areas through which they run as well as providing an invaluable educational, recreational and conservation role. The Council recognises that these routes cannot come into existence or remain in existence without the full co-operation of the owners of private property on the routes.

Mr. Stack referred members to Map 5.1 on Page 78 which shows the walkways in the county.



### Macgillicuddy's Reeks Mountain Access Project

A study to assess the potential for a Mountain Access Project (MAP) in the Macgillicuddy's Reeks commenced in 2013. The Macgillicuddy's Reeks is designated as part of the Natura 2000 network as the Killarney National Park, Macgillicuddy's Reeks and Caragh River, site code 000365. The vision for the project is to sustainably create a suitably resourced upland recreational activity zone, focussed principally on hillwalking, climbing, mountaineering, environmental and cultural heritage, all underpinned by permissive land access by the relevant landowners, while ensuring no significant adverse effects on the environment including the integrity of the Natura 2000 network. The MAP will be delivered through a participative multi-stakeholder management forum, to support the livelihoods of landowners and local enterprises, while providing an excellent experience for recreational users. It is envisaged that the Macgillicuddy's Reeks' MAP will become the exemplar for sustainable uplands management and permissive recreational access in Ireland, based on an agricultural and environmental sustainability ethos.

Objective No.	Adventure Tourism
	<i><b>It is an objective of the Council to:-</b></i>
<b>T-18</b>	Facilitate the sustainable provision at appropriate locations of a network of quality pathways and associated carparks for walkers and cyclists and horse-riders that are attractive and free of vehicular traffic.
<b>T-19</b>	Co-operate with representative bodies in order to support the sustainable development, maintenance and enhancement of walking routes at appropriate locations throughout the County.
<b>T-20</b>	Sustainably promote, in co-operation with the various statutory and relevant organizations, at appropriate locations the more extensive use of the coastal strip for such activities as touring, sight-seeing, walking, pony trekking, etc as a sustainable tourism and recreational resource for the residents of County Kerry and other visitors.
<b>T-21</b>	Actively encourage and seek to facilitate the appropriate and sustainable development of integrated cycle routes throughout the County in association with other agencies.
<b>T-22</b>	Sustainably support the preparation and implementation of an Integrated Management Plan for the Macgillicuddy's Reeks to address all aspects of the social, environmental and economic development of the Macgillicuddy's Reeks while ensuring no significant adverse effects on the environment including the integrity of the Natura 2000 sites.

## 5.5 CYCLING

The County has a number of cycling routes. Routes should follow in order of preference: off-road tracks, quiet country roads and regional or national roads.

There are significant stretches of land that were formerly in use as railway lines. To the extent that these are engineering works negotiating (at times) difficult topographical obstacles, they also constitute significant resources.

The former railway lines have potential for use as corridors for amenity access, free from motorised traffic and even have potential for a revived railway use.

Cycling is growing in popularity both as a sport and as a means of transport. The National Cycle Policy Framework has a specific objective relating to the development of the National Cycle Framework to include rural recreational routes around urban areas and connecting with major urban areas. There are also initiatives at a European level that can be used to promote cycling tourism within the County.

EuroVelo is the European Cycle Route Network and the [European Cyclists' Federation \(ECF\)](#) is coordinating the development of a network of high-quality cycling routes that connect the whole continent. EuroVelo is currently comprised of 14 [routes](#) and it is envisaged that the network will be substantially complete by 2020. Route 1 (Atlantic Coast Route) of the EuroVelo network runs from the North Cape (Norway) to Sagrés (Portugal). It passes through Ireland with the route running from Abbeyfeale-Listowel-Tralee-Dingle (Slea Head)-Ring of Kerry-Beara.

It is the policy of the Planning Authority to consider proposals for development in these areas including the sustainable development of former railway lines for local heritage and outdoor activities including the provision of recreational walkways and cycleways, where it can be demonstrated that such development will not have significant adverse effects on the environment including the integrity of Natura 2000 sites.

Objective No.	Cycleways
	<i><b>It is an objective of the Council to:-</b></i>
<b>T- 23</b>	Co-operate with the Irish Sports Council, Fáilte Ireland, National Way Marked Way Advisory Committee, Coillte, the Heritage Council and other relevant bodies, in order to support the sustainable development, maintenance and enhancement of trail development, throughout the County in an environmentally sustainable way.
<b>T- 24</b>	Protect and support the sustainable re-use of existing former railways lines for amenity purposes, such as cycleways, walkways and other recreational activities in order to develop a network of 'green routes' throughout the County.
<b>T- 25</b>	Support the sustainable development of a National Cycle Network and the development of the EuroVelo project, in particular the Atlantic Coast Route where it passes through the County.

## 5.6 Wild Atlantic Way

The Wild Atlantic Way will be Ireland's first long distance touring route stretching along the Atlantic coast from the Inishowen Peninsula to Kinsale, covering approximately 2750 km. It will direct visitors to less visited areas of the Country and when completed it will be one of the longest signed tourist routes in the world, with over 150 'discovery points' along the way. With some of the most spectacular coastal scenery in Ireland, the benefits to Kerry resulting from this new tourism initiative could be significant.

## 5.7 Arts, Craft and Food Tourism

The County has a rich tradition of arts and craft industries including traditional currach making, lace making, and pottery. Food tourism is an expanding sector around the globe and Kerry is well positioned to capture some of this market.

Objective No.	Arts, Craft and Food Tourism
	<i><b>It is an objective of the Council to:-</b></i>
<b>T- 28</b>	Support the sustainable development of the arts, crafts and food sectors and liaise with other relevant agencies to facilitate growth within this sector.

### 5.8 Business Tourism

The business tourism and events sector is a highly competitive market and is the fastest growing sector in tourism worldwide. Conferences, exhibitions, product launches, trade shows, corporate hospitality are all components of this sector. Business tourism is currently a small sector in the overall tourism market in Kerry, but an area where there is significant potential for growth, particularly in the Tralee-Killarney corridor, where the majority of the commercial enterprises are located.

Good connectivity is essential for the further development of the conference and event market, especially if it is hoped to attract international conferences, there needs to be an increase in direct air route access to Kerry Airport.

### 5.9 Coastal Tourism

There is potential to develop coastal tourism through the sustainable development of marinas, new and improved sailing centres, angling and improved access to the coast, at appropriate locations.

The world surfing championships have been held in Kerry, thus marking the County out as a quality surfing environment.

Objective No.	Coastal Tourism
	<i>It is an objective of the Council to:-</i>
<b>T- 31</b>	Encourage the sustainable development of maritime tourism where it complies with the objectives and development standards of this Plan, including the provision of necessary maintenance and storage facilities and decontamination areas for aquatic alien species.
<b>T- 32</b>	Prohibit development which would significantly diminish the amenity, natural environment and/or economic value of the County's coastline and beaches or any of their built natural or cultural assets or amenities.
<b>T- 33</b>	Support and promote, with the co-operation of landowners improved access to the coastline where sustainable and appropriate and in line with the objectives of this Plan.

<b>T- 34</b>	<p>Facilitate the sustainable development of marinas at appropriate locations where they comply with relevant legislation, the objectives detailed in this Plan and the following standards:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ The proposal is at a location where associated activity is already underway, or where a tangible demand for such a facility exists.</li> <li>✓ Adequate water depth, berthing, cleaning and decontamination arrangements for pleasure craft, navigation aids, pontoon, lighting, fire safety equipment, toilet facilities, a sufficient level of road access, car parking, direct access and walkways to boats is provided.</li> <li>✓ -Facilities such as boat quays shall be integrated into the shoreline and avoid water intake points.</li> </ul> <p>-Facilities to handle waste water and litter/solid waste are provided in compliance with the Environmental Protection Agency standards and regulations and those of Kerry County Council's Environment Department.</p>
<b>T- 35</b>	<p>Promote the Green marina scheme and the Green Coast award schemes in association with An Taisce.</p>
<b>T- 36</b>	<p>Facilitate the sustainable development of coastal tourism such as water sports and water related events at appropriate locations subject to compliance with the objectives and development standards of this Plan, particularly as they relate to the protection of the natural environment and coastal areas.</p>

<b>T- 37</b>	Promote the sustainable development of marine, leisure and recreation clusters at appropriate locations along the County's coastline subject to compliance with the objectives and development standards of this Plan, particularly as they relate to the protection of the natural environment and coastal areas.
<b>T- 38</b>	Ensure that future caravan, camping and parking facilities in coastal areas will not be visually intrusive or impact on sensitive coastal environments (e.g. sand dune systems), by requiring, appropriate siting, layout, design, and native locally provenanced natural screening, the protection of biodiversity and compliance with the requirements of the Habitats Directive.
<b>T- 39</b>	Identify additional coastal walking routes, which can be developed on a sustainable basis in conjunction with the Wild Atlantic Way and which will allow links to other activities and facilities subject to compliance with the principles of sustainability the objectives and standards of this Plan, particularly as they relate to the protection and the natural environment, to Rights of Way and Coastal Zone Management.

#### 5.10 Festivals and Events

Kerry has a number of festivals which are unique and have a national profile, such as Puck Fair which celebrated its 400th anniversary in 2013, the Rose of Tralee, Listowel Writers Week and Kerry Film Festival, all of which attract visitors not only from all over Ireland but many also from abroad.

<b>Objective No.</b>	<b>Festivals and Events</b>
	<b><i>It is an objective of the Council to:-</i></b>
<b>T- 40</b>	Support and promote the existing festivals and cultural events which take place in the County and facilitate the establishment of new events where opportunities exist.
<b>T- 41</b>	Promote the sustainable development of new festivals and sporting events, at appropriate locations, in conjunction with other relevant agencies and organizations, to increase the lifestyle profile of the County and where deemed appropriate, to promote the development of new venues and locations to host these events.

### 5.11 Gaeltacht Tourism

Objective No.	Gaeltacht Tourism
	<b><i>It is an objective of the Council to:-</i></b>
<b>T- 42</b>	Facilitate and promote in co-operation with Údarás na Gaeltachta and all other statutory development agencies, sustainable tourism development in the Gaeltacht areas of the County, while protecting and promoting the Irish language as the first community language of these areas.
<b>T- 43</b>	Sustainably support and promote our Gaeltacht areas as key Irish Language Tourism destinations. Facilitate the development of a marketing strategy for Irish Language Tourism for County Kerry.
<b>T- 44</b>	Preserve the cultural and linguistic heritage of Gaeltacht areas through the settlement strategy and development objectives of this Plan.

### 5.12 Heritage and Cultural Tourism

Heritage holidays are an important tourist market through visits to particular sites, heritage trails, touring buses and educational tours.

Kerry has a rich heritage of religious architecture extending back over 1,500 years, ranging from Gallarus oratory to medieval monastic foundations such as Lislaughtin and Killagha to St. Mary's Cathedral, Killarney to the relatively modern Corpus Christi Church in Knockanure.

Objective No.	Heritage & Cultural Tourism
	<b><i>It is an objective of the Council to:-</i></b>
<b>T- 45</b>	Sustainably support and promote, with the co-operation of landowners, public access to heritage sites and features at appropriate locations.
<b>T- 46</b>	Support and promote the sustainable development of architectural and heritage trails, at appropriate locations.
<b>T- 47</b>	Support and encourage measures to secure the designation of Valentia cable station and associated features as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

### 5.13 Major Attractions

Figures published by Fáilte Ireland listing the top 23 fee charging attractions in the Country only include one Kerry attraction, the Aquadome, Tralee, which is 22<sup>nd</sup> on the list. In order to increase visitor numbers and visitor spend, Kerry must develop its existing attractions and new significant attractions capable of competing with such attractions elsewhere.

Objective No.	Major Attractions
	<i><b>It is an objective of the Council to:-</b></i>
<b>T - 48</b>	Support inter-agency initiatives to secure the establishment of visitor attractions in appropriate locations and subject to the principles of sustainability and the objectives and standards contained in the provisions of this Plan.

### 5.14 Rural Tourism

The importance of tourism to rural economies is growing and in some instances is critical to the economy of these areas.

Objective No.	Rural Tourism
	<i><b>It is an objective of the Council to:-</b></i>
<b>T- 49</b>	Sustainably support and facilitate proposals for on-farm or farm related tourism ventures/developments and associated infrastructure having regard to the protection of the landscape, biodiversity, the principles of sustainability, the primary purpose of family farms and compliance with the objectives and development standards of this Plan
<b>T- 50</b>	Promote and facilitate the sustainable development of rural tourism such as open farms, on-farm craft villages and visitor centres where these are not detrimental to the character, biodiversity, scenic value and rural amenity of the surrounding area and subject to the objectives and development standards of this Plan, particularly as they relate to the protection of the natural environment.



<b>T- 51</b>	Encourage the reuse and refurbishment of vernacular buildings (houses or farm/industrial buildings) in appropriate locations for tourist related facilities, including holiday house accommodation. The development shall relate in scale to the sites characteristics and location, shall not be detrimental to the rural amenity of the surrounding area and be in accordance development standards of this plan, particularly as they relate to the protection of the natural and built environment.
<b>T- 52</b>	Support agri-tourism initiatives in the form of on-farm visitor accommodation and supplementary activities such as health farms, food centred activities, heritage and nature trails, pony trekking and boating in appropriate locations in accordance with the principles of sustainability, the development objectives and standards of this Plan, particularly as they relate to the protection of the natural and built environment.

### 5.15 Urban Tourism

The urban experience is significantly affected by the way towns are planned, designed and managed to enhance and reinforce identity rather than create culturally homogenous environments.

<b>Objective No.</b>	<b>Urban Tourism</b>
	<b><i>It is an objective of the Council to:-</i></b>
<b>T- 53</b>	Protect the innate character of the County's towns and villages through the implementation of the design and heritage objectives of this Plan and those of local area plans.
<b>T- 54</b>	Improve the visual appearance of towns and villages, protect their character and maximise their tourism potential by the continuance of environmental and public realm programmes, design control and the removal/improving of dereliction.
<b>T- 55</b>	Identify settlements or areas of special character which may require Architectural Conservation Area designation, Village Design Statements, Design Guidelines etc. to ensure the long term protection and management of their special character.

### 5.16 Visitor Accommodation

One in five guesthouses in the Country is located in Kerry, almost a fifth of Five Star hotels in the country are located in Kerry. Outside of Dublin, Kerry has the greatest concentration of hotel rooms in the Country. Within the County there is an imbalance in the distribution of hotel accommodation, with a huge concentration in Killarney, a considerable amount in Tralee, Kenmare and Dingle, but very little in other urban centres such as Listowel, Castleisland, Cahersiveen or Killorglin. This imbalance impedes the spread of tourism revenue throughout the County. It is considered appropriate to maintain, improve and increase the provision of good quality accommodation in order to encourage longer term stays within the County. Managing the provision of tourist accommodation is essential to ensuring the delivery of a sustainable tourism strategy.

Objective No.	Visitor Accommodation
	<b><i>It is an objective of the Council to:-</i></b>
<b>T- 56</b>	It is an objective of the Council to support best practice environmental management including energy efficiency, waste management, procurement and recycling in accommodation providers and tourism enterprises in the County, through the use of accreditation and eco-labeling.
<b>T- 57</b>	Encourage the sensitive redevelopment, and/or return to suitable use, of derelict, vacant or redundant buildings, in appropriate locations in order to provide for visitor accommodation and tourism development, while having regard to ecological constraints and architectural heritage requirements.
<b>T- 58</b>	Generally permit the use of existing houses in rural areas for the provision of small scale commercial visitor accommodation, where such provision does not give rise to a traffic hazard, or have an adverse impact on residential amenity or the environment.
<b>T- 59</b>	Ensure that where the development of facilities for commercial accommodation for tourists and visitors is proposed, that these facilities are encouraged to locate within settlements. Such proposals will be required to be of an appropriate scale to the settlement in which it is to be located in order to retain the vibrancy and sustainability of the settlement when such accommodation is not occupied.

<b>T- 60</b>	Encourage the sustainable provision of additional high quality hotel accommodation in conjunction with leisure, conferencing and other associated facilities, in Listowel, Cahersiveen, Killorglin and Castleisland.
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Cllr. M. Gleeson said the McGillicuddy Reeks are a huge part of the tourist attraction in the county. However, there is a lot of concern in relation to the safety of the Devils Ladder and it is vital that this is addressed immediately. The potential of archaeological sites in the county is largely undeveloped yet this could be of enormous importance to the county. Tourists have great interest in this area and we should seek to develop trails to these sites of interest. Additional cycling and walking trails should be developed especially circular walking trails. Good signage is vital and while this has improved it is still inadequate. We cannot expect tourists to visit the county unless there is adequate signage to European standards well in advance of junctions etc. Properly developed cycle lanes are also vital and there are very few in Kerry. In Killarney on the first Saturday in July the Ring of Kerry Cycle takes place with up to 8,500 people taking part. We have a wonderful facility in Kerry in the National Park. Adequate funding is not provided to maintain the roads in the National Park and a local committee, the Meitheal, is in discussions with the NPWS to maintain the roads and pathways. Cllr. Gleeson said he recently cycled the greenway in Mayo which goes through two towns, Mulranny and Newport. As a result of this greenway these towns have been revitalized. It is hugely important that the old railway line from Killorglin to Cahersiveen is developed as a greenway/cycleway. He emphasized the need to ensure tourists get value for money. It is also vital to ensure that rivers and lakes are not allowed to be polluted as this would do enormous harm to the tourism potential of the county.

Cllr. J. Finucane said our contention that Kerry is the premier tourist county in the country does not bear out when you consider the top 10 visitor attractions in the country as follows:

- Guinness Storehouse – 1,025,677 visitors
- Dublin Zoo – 1,000,000 visitors
- National Aquatic Centre, Dublin – 825,049 visitors
- Cliffs of Moher – 809,474 visitors
- Book of Kells – 524,119 visitors
- Fota Wildlife Park – 390,124 visitors
- St. Patrick's Cathedral – 362,000 visitors
- Blarney Castle – 325,000 visitors
- Kilmainham Gaol – 294,095 visitors
- Bunratty Castle – 275,986 visitors

Out of the top 10 6 are in Dublin, 3 in Cork and 1 in Clare. The challenge is how to get visitors to visit Kerry. The Aquadome was No. 25 on this list. Kerry has the natural beauty but it is clear we must do something to attract tourists to the county. He suggested that our tourism bodies should establish an office in Dublin to encourage visitors to come to Kerry. On Nassau Street there are coaches to take visitors on day trips to the Cliffs of Moher. It is important to select 2 or 3 areas in the county and to promote them properly. Cllr. Finucane added that 90% of all industry is based in Dublin and 60 – 70% of all tourists come to Dublin. Kerry has an authentic product with serene beauty. It is time to do a reality check and to focus on promoting a few areas in the county. The Guinness Storehouse had in excess of 1m visitors last year and they also profited from the sale of souvenirs. If Kerry had an attraction like this it would be of huge benefit to the county. He called on the tourism sector to review the industry in Kerry.

Cllr. J. Brassil welcomed the significant debate on this aspect of the County Development Plan and said this is what the future of Kerry is about. He was glad Kerry County Council is taking a 'hands on' approach in this area as we must do it for ourselves. The Wild Atlantic Way is a new marketing drive by Failte Ireland and Kerry County Council should be actively involved in developing viewing points along this route. In some instances the Council already owns the land and we can be proactive and proceed with the provision of the viewing parks in these areas immediately. He called on the County Manager to identify viewing points and to develop them. Kerry has excellent Blue Flag beaches and last year we lost one due to the way An Taisce compiled the data. This issue needs to be addressed as it was just one rogue test last year that resulted in the loss of the Blue Flag. As a result members faced numerous phone calls from journalists that were unnecessary. If the problem was pollution he could accept that but the Blue Flag should not be lost because of the method of reporting. Cllr. Brassil welcomed the section on the development of walking routes in conjunction with landowners and interested groups.

Cllr. M. Cahill said tourism is very important to Kerry. Access to the County is an ongoing problem and it is important that the Macroom By-Pass progresses. There are sections of the Ring of Kerry road that need urgent attention especially on the Iveragh Road in Killorglin, Glenbeigh, at the Red Fox Inn, Mountain Stage and Sneem Village. It would be very beneficial if an additional flight could commence from Germany. The existing flight from Germany brought huge visitor numbers to the County. The retention of the 9% VAT rate together with the abolition of the travel tax is also very good for tourism. He suggested that Michael O'Leary of Ryanair, whose Aunt lives in Killarney and whose father had a holiday home in Glenbeigh, be invited to a meeting of the Council. The quality of accommodation and the scenery in Kerry is second to none. Cllr. Cahill referred to the proposed Greenway from Glenbeigh to Cahersiveen and said this is a very exciting prospect for South

Kerry. The development of cycle and walking routes is also very important as this type of tourism is growing. He emphasised the need to secure funding for the development of these routes. Priority must also be given to the development of coastal tourism including securing funding for the upgrade and maintenance of piers and marinas and also for the development of new ones. He added that while the Aquadome appears on the list of top attractions it is not a world-class attraction. Cllr. Cahill emphasised the need to invest in and protect existing amenities. He also suggested that a submission should be made to the Government to retain the title of Mayor as this is an internationally recognised title. From a tourism point of view the title of Cathaoirleach would not be recognized internationally.

Cllr. A. McEllistrim said Kerry has a world-class tourism attraction in the Killarney National Park. However there is no admission fee therefore there is no record of the number of visitors each year. She referred to the Wild Atlantic Way and said this is a new niche market and should be marketed properly. Tourist attractions along this route should be designated and discovery/viewing points identified and developed. She emphasised the need to get the signage correct. Walking and cycling are the new craze and running events for running, walking and cycling brings huge numbers into the County. She asked that these types of events would be supported in the Plan. In conclusion Cllr McEllistrim commended the work of the Kerry County Enterprise Board in promoting Craft and Food Fairs.

Cllr. D. Healy Rae referred to the development of walkways and requested that discussions would commence with landowners to bring them on side as this is very important. He referred to the development of the Lough Leane Loop Trail and said local people are concerned as they have not been consulted yet engineers are out on the ground surveying close to their homes. Cycling has become very popular in Kerry and credit for this must be given to Denis Geaney who started the Ring of Kerry Cycle. Lay-byes are not provided where people can pull in for a break when they are tired. This is particularly the case along the Ring of Kerry where a number of lay-byes should be provided to allow motorists to take a rest. Cllr. Healy Rae referred to the reduction in the number of fish and said he understood that was as a result of drift netting. However when that was banned fish stocks did not recover. Country houses/hotels should consider having pet farms as it is an additional attraction in particular for families. Festivals/events are held in most parishes in the County but there are finding it more difficult to keep going. These are very important to the local area. He asked that Kerry County Council would assist them in any way possible in particular in relation to insurance. He asked if the Council would engage with an insurance company on behalf of all festival organisers who would then pay into a fund and avail of cheaper insurance.

Cllr. S. Counihan said the seasonality of the tourism industry is a problem and how we market the County is a critical issue. He referred to Killarney National Park and said in Europe there is a minimum entry charge of 50c or €1. The income generated is then used to maintain the park. When he was young he drove a jaunting car and visitors had to pay sixpence to go into the National Park. Kerry has the tourism products but it appears to him that Dublin is Ireland as far as tourists are concerned. It is vital that the Adare By-Pass progresses and that Shannon Airport is utilised to its full potential as this will help the tourism industry in Kerry. It is up to the members of Kerry County Council to formulate the policy. At present employment in the tourism industry is limited to the period June to September but initiatives must be devised to extend this season either through conferences, concerts etc.

Cllr. J.J. Culloty said the Government states we have a thriving tourism sector yet the average spend per visitor in Kerry is €212 while in Cork it is €370. There is a potential to increase this figure but visitors may be getting better value in Kerry. Outdoor recreation is a growing industry and we have the potential in Kerry to facilitate this industry. It is important that the road network is maintained to a high standard in these areas. The Lough Leane Loop Trail has huge potential that must be developed. Cllr. Culloty added that he is involved in the Meitheal in Killarney and we must be prepared to do voluntary work in conjunction with Killarney Town Council and Killarney National Park. This is already happening in other counties. The Ring of Kerry Cycle was a huge success in 2013 and it should be built on. There is huge potential for diversification in farming with just 2% happening in Ireland while in England this figure is 37%. He called for the development of this area further.

Cllr. T. Ferris said we must be realistic and while we live in a beautiful country anyone going for a short break is likely to go to the city. We cannot compete in that market. However people coming for a longer break can be attracted to Kerry. Cllr. Ferris referred to the Wild Atlantic Way and said the story of St Brendan is part of this project and she was actively working with a group on it. There will be travel by water and the trail will lead to Ardfert Cathedral. She asked that consideration would be given to the provision of coach parking facilities at the Cathedral in Ardfert. She suggested that tourists should be allowed to move more freely between attractions. Problems were encountered in Banna and Ballyheigue and she called on the Council to ensure that there will be no abuse of public facilities.

Cllr. R. Beasley said tourism is the biggest industry in the county and from Tarbert to Cahersiveen we rely on it. He asked why are our waterways not developed further and he requested that provision would be made in the Draft Plan for the development of water sports, in particular, in seaside resorts as this would help to increase visitor numbers. During the Celtic Tiger the price of a round of golf was exorbitant but tour operators were trebling it and this did a lot of damage to the industry. Hotels also overcharged guests and this also damaged the industry and tourists did not return as a result. He requested that an objective be included in the Draft Plan on Ballybunion Cliff walk. He also asked that viewing areas would be provided there to facilitate dolphin watching etc. The Cliff Walk in Ballybunion is more attractive than the Cliffs of Moher. In the Cliffs of Moher an Interpretive Centre was provided and consequently costs increased. Cllr. Beasley said he looked forward to additional tourists visiting North Kerry as a result of the Wild Atlantic Way. He expressed concern that the access roads into the county have not been improved and said this is a huge disadvantage. The development of walkways and cycleways, including the Great Southern Trail, has been difficult and a speedy resolution with the landowners is required. He commended local voluntary groups, such as, Tidy Towns Committees for maintaining the county so well.

Cllr. N. Foley acknowledged the tremendous work that went into producing this Chapter and complimented the diversity of tourism products captured in it. She also acknowledged the inclusion of accessible tourism. This provides an opportunity to specify specific accessible tourism products for example playgrounds for children with special needs as these are underdeveloped in this country. She asked that this amenity product would be developed in Kerry. Cllr. Foley said she did not see a specific reference to B&B's which are unique and appeal to many tourists. She supported the comments by previous speakers in relation to signage. Cllr. Foley referred to the list of top visitor attractions in the country and said there is no fee for many of the visitor attractions in Kerry therefore there is no record of the number of visitors. She pointed out that the Aquadome was a product led by Tralee Town Council yet the role of the local authority is not always associated with the tourism product. Unfortunately the Aquadome is the only visitor attraction in Kerry on the list. There is huge scope for the involvement of the local authority in this area and she hoped it would continue under the new local government system.

Cllr. G. Wharton Slattery said the Devils Ladder on the MacGillycuddy Reeks needs urgent attention. She suggested that it could be closed while the works are ongoing. Walking is very popular and many walkers guide themselves therefore it is vital that the signage is good. It is also vital that adequate signage is provided for monuments in particular when new roads are constructed. Families with children with disabilities favour B&B's so it is important that we support that business. She called on all Chambers of Commerce to work with the new Municipal Districts to promote and market their areas. During a recent clean up of two beaches 80 bags of refuse were collected. Major household items are being dumped on the roadside and it is important to combat this. She suggested that an initiative could be undertaken by the Council where once a month these items could be disposed of at the Transfer Stations at a reduced cost.

### **Suspension of Standing Orders**

The Mayor said it was 1.30pm and it would be necessary to suspend Standing Orders to continue the meeting.

On the PROPOSAL of Cllr. B. Cronin, SECONDED by Cllr. N. Foley it was agreed to suspend Standing Orders to allow the meeting to continue.

Cllr. B. Cronin referred to the list of top visitor attractions and said it must be recognised there is a charge to visit them. There is no charge to visit Killarney National Park and Gardens so there is no record of the number of visitors. He acknowledged that there is a fee to visit Muckross House and Farm. A large number of tourists also visit the Demesne each year but again because there is no charge there is no record of these numbers. The Conor Pass and Dingle are also very scenic and popular with tourists. Kerry has a tourism product that is second to none and he urged members not to take too much notice of the list of top visitor attractions. Whether a fee should be charged to go into the National Park is a matter for the NPWS. Cllr. Cronin welcomed the appointment of a dedicated staff member to the development of walkways/cycleways and said there is huge potential in this area. He referred to the development of the Lough Leane Loop Trail and said it is critically important that all partners are consulted and their views heard. Kerry has some of the most beautiful golf courses in the world and during the celtic tiger he counted 14 helicopters near Aghadoe. However at that time visitors were overcharged and it is important that charges remain reasonable and that they get value for money. Cllr. Cronin referred to Page 89 of the Draft Plan and the reference to rural tourism and said he knew a person who is in discussions with a tour operator on providing facilities for teenagers with a disability. This would be hugely beneficial to them and he welcomed the section on Rural Tourism.



## Special Planning Meeting

Cllr. P. McCarthy asked if an analysis was done in Kerry in relation to the list of top visitor attractions in the country. He asked if there is anything we can do to attract more tourists to Kerry.

In response to queries Mr. P. Stack said the Wild Atlantic Way is being co-ordinated by Fáilte Ireland. There will be 22 viewing sites in Kerry at a cost of €650,000 and we are awaiting a response from Fáilte Ireland in relation to funding. The issues raised by members in relation to cycling will be addressed further. Mr. Stack informed members that the issue in relation to the Devil's Ladder is a major issue for the MacGillycuddy Reeks Committee.

The meeting adjourned for lunch at 1.40pm.

The meeting resumed at 2.30pm.

The Mayor informed the meeting that Cllr. P. O'Donoghue sent his apologies as he was unable to attend the meeting.

Mr. P. Stack then briefed the meeting on Chapter 6 Retail Strategy and read the following into the record of the meeting.

### **(c) Chapter 6 Retail Strategy**

Employment in the combined retail and wholesale sector in the County, during 2011, was calculated by the CSO at almost 8,300 persons. The most recent figures from the Retail Sales Index (CSO) show a considerable drop off in retail activity linked to reduced disposable income. Notwithstanding this, figures from the CSO also show approximately, a 2.6% increase in the number of people employed in the wholesale and retail trade sector in the County during the period between 2006 and 2011. This may be due in part to the part-time nature of many of these jobs.

Relocation of retailing to more peripheral and out of centre locations has the potential to threaten the vibrancy and vitality of many core shopping areas and this Plan aims to address this issue in a plan-led, evidence-based approach.

The retail section of this Plan is prepared in accordance with the aforementioned retail guidelines and is based on a number of fundamental objectives:-

- All retail development in the County will be plan-led (through Local Area Plans).
- The vitality of the town centres will be promoted through a sequential approach to development.

- Competitiveness in the retail sector will be secured by actively enabling good quality development proposals to come forward in suitable, sustainable locations.
- Facilitate a shift towards increased access to retailing by public transport, cycling and walking in accordance with the Smarter Travel strategy.
- All retail developments will deliver quality urban design outcomes.

### 6.3 Retail Strategy

A critical part of delivering the overall aim of this Plan is the recognition of the County's retail hierarchy as a core spatial policy around which future growth, rejuvenation and expansion in the retail sector needs to be focused.

#### 6.3.1 County Retail Hierarchy

The Retail Hierarchy for the County, as set out below, has been prepared having regard to the Settlement Hierarchy of this Plan and the function, retail context, population profile and infrastructure available in each settlement.

Objective No.	Retail
	<b>It is an objective of the Council to:-</b>
<b>RS-1</b>	Have regard to the <i>Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities and associated Retail Design Manual (2012)</i> in the assessment of planning applications for all retail developments.
<b>RS-2</b>	Ensure that the provision of additional retail floor space is compatible with the scale, character and function of the overall retail centre and contributes to the viability and vitality of each settlement.

### 6.4 Hub Towns

In Kerry, the hierarchy is dominated by Tralee and Killarney. Tralee is the highest order retail town in the County having the greatest sphere of influence, catchments population and range of retail facilities and as such is the foremost centre of comparison goods. Killarney is recognised for its importance in tourist retailing and is well connected by public transport and also serves large population catchments. Both towns have a significant retail base, including both convenience and comparison goods. The provision of additional large scale comparison shopping should be encouraged to locate in these two hub town centres.

Objective No.	Retail
	<b>It is an objective of the Council to:-</b>
<b>RS-3</b>	Encourage sustainable large scale convenience and comparison retail development in the County to be principally focused at appropriate locations in the Hub town centres in line with the <i>Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities</i> and associated <i>Retail Design Manual (2012)</i>

## 6.5 Regional Towns

There are six regional towns identified in County Kerry, namely; Castleisland, Cahersiveen, Dingle, Kenmare, Killorglin and Listowel.

### CASTLEISLAND

Castleisland, a traditional market town, is located mid-way between Tralee and Killarney and is caught in the retail catchment areas of the two largest retail towns in the County. 21% of the all ground floor units in the town centre are now unoccupied and vacant.

### CAHERSIVEEN

Cahersiveen is an attractive coastal town which has historically serviced the retailing needs of the wider South Kerry/ Iveragh Peninsula. 26% of all ground floor retail units here are unoccupied; leading to the second highest level of vacant retailing space of the 6 regional towns in the County. One of the biggest challenges facing Cahersiveen is to tackle the decline in permanent population in the region.

### DINGLE

Dingle town provides important services and employment functions for its catchment area, traditionally the centre for trade and commerce in West Kerry. Given the tourist nature of the town, bars, restaurants, cafés, traditional craft and food shops and other convenience retailing occupy 30% of all units in the town centre. Vacancy<sup>3</sup> is comparatively low in its core and the location of four town centre supermarkets has sustained a high volume of footfall.

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<sup>3</sup> Figures obtained during the tourist season

## **KENMARE**

The vitality of many town centres can be threatened by an over-concentration of one particular type of outlet. Kenmare is unique in this respect as the town centre has struck a good balance and mix of comparison and convenience shopping on offer. Footfall in the town centre is extremely high, in particularly during the summer months, due to high volumes of tourists and the retired population. Consequently vacant units in the town centre remain the lowest in the County, at 6%, notwithstanding the development of an edge of town retail-park with two well known large anchor food stores.

## **KILLORGLIN**

Killorglin town functions as an important local service centre for the northern part of the Iveragh Peninsula and has a wide diversity of services and facilities. The town is quickly gaining a reputation for quality fine dining with a number of restaurants opening in recent years. Notwithstanding this, a large numbers of premises in the town centre are currently vacant.

## **LISTOWEL**

Listowel is the third-largest urban centre in County Kerry after Tralee and Killarney and serves as an important service and retailing centre for the population of North Kerry/West Limerick. In recent years the scale of vacant units within the town centre has increased significantly with more than 26% of retail units in the town centre unoccupied. However, this is clearly disguised by the upkeep and good maintenance of shopfronts and buildings.

<b>Objective No.</b>	<b>Retail</b>
	<b>It is an objective of the Council to:-</b>
<b>RS-4</b>	Facilitate and encourage appropriate year round retail uses in tourist town centres.
<b>RS-5</b>	Encourage and facilitate where possible appropriate sustainable retail developments in vacant retail units in town centres before considering any edge-of-town centre or out-of-town centre development.
<b>RS-6</b>	Encourage and facilitate sustainable tourism related retail developments and initiatives, of appropriate scale, in the vicinity of tourist town centres.

<b>RS-7</b>	Ensure that, in the interest of vitality and viability, development proposals result in a balance of services and outlets thus avoiding an over-concentration of certain uses in town centres.
<b>RS-8</b>	Require that any application for large retail developments in edge-of-town centre or out-of-town centre be accompanied by an assessment on the size, availability & accessibility of available sites and premises in the town centre. Out-of-centre sites will only be satisfactorily considered where it can be demonstrated that there is an evidence based need for such development and there are no town centre or edge of town centre sites suitable.

## 6.6 District Towns

Generally these are smaller towns of less than 1500 population, which provide basic convenience shopping and comparison shopping on a limited scale. provide typically a small supermarket / general grocery store and sub-post office. The challenge for these towns is to ensure they maintain and where possible expand the choice of convenience and comparison shopping to service their residential population.

## 6.7 Villages and Small Villages

Villages and small villages act as local service centres providing retailing shops which serve the immediate daily needs of their resident population and in many cases consist of a local grocery store. The challenge will be to ensure that convenience shopping is maintained at an appropriate level.

## 6.8 Retail Warehousing and Retail Parks

Retail warehousing is generally large scale with single product line stores catering for car borne customers and specialist bulky goods such as furniture, carpet, tiles, DIY goods, etc.

<b>Objective No.</b>	<b>Retail</b>
	<b>It is an objective of the Council to:-</b>
<b>RS-9</b>	Only permit retail warehousing on lands zoned for this purpose and where there is a clear evidence based need for such uses. In addition proposals will be required to comply with the objectives and development standards of this plan and specifically with the provisions of Objective R1-9.

## 6.9 Retail Development in the Rural Countryside

Kerry is largely a rural County and there is opportunity to broaden the rural economy of the County by promoting small-scale retail services in the countryside that will not have a significant impact on retailing in the larger centres.

### Rural/Village Shops

Objective No.	Rural/Village Shops
	<b>It is an objective of the Council to:-</b>
<b>RS-10</b>	Support the sustainable development of local rural / village shops in appropriate locations, where the scale of development is compatible with the rural character of the area.

- **Farm Shops**

Kerry County Council will encourage the introduction of retail uses ancillary to farm complexes in accordance with the criteria set out in R1-13 below and the development management section of this Plan.

Objective No.	Farm Shops
	<b>It is an objective of the Council to:-</b>
<b>RS-11</b>	<p>Support Farm Shops in the rural area where it is ancillary to an existing farm complex, where:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ a reasonable account have been taken of the possibility either of using disused/derelict buildings or of locating a new building on a brownfield site, and</li> <li>❖ there would be no significant adverse impact on the vitality or viability of identified network of existing centres as demonstrated by a Retail Impact Assessment, if considered necessary by the Planning Authority.</li> <li>❖ it can be demonstrated that there will be no significant adverse impact on residential, and visual amenities, traffic or on the environment of the area.</li> </ul>

- **Petrol / Diesel Station/Service Station**

Petrol /Diesel stations usually consist of a forecourt with petrol/diesel pumps and can provide a good range of retail goods in an associated shop. While the Council recognises the importance of such provisions, the preferred location for petrol / diesel stations is on the edge of towns and villages, not on an isolated site outside these preferred locations.

The maximum net retail floor space of a shop associated with a petrol/diesel station will be 100 square meters.

## **6.10 Urban Design and Accessibility**

<b>Objective No.</b>	<b>Urban Design</b>
	<b>It is an objective of the Council to:-</b>
<b>RS-12</b>	<p>Ensure all new retail developments conform to the highest sustainable urban design standards in accordance with the Retail Design Manual (2012).</p> <p>Ensure that proposed developments integrate with and are complimentary to the streetscape or areas where they are intended to be located.</p> <p>Ensure that retail developments are of a high standard of architectural design and finish and satisfy requirements regarding access, layout, aesthetics, tree planting and landscaping</p> <p>Ensure that new retail developments maximise the accessibility of the development particularly by sustainable travel such as public transport, cycle, pedestrian as well as persons with disabilities.</p>
<b>RS-13</b>	<p>Require design briefs/design statements as part of all planning application for particularly important sensitive development sites.</p>
<b>RS-14</b>	<p>Ensure that sustainable usable open spaces/ urban parks are incorporated into the design for large scale retail parks, where the recreational space is otherwise not met in the area.</p>

## **6.11 Development Management**

All planning applications for all new retail developments will be assessed in accordance with the criteria set out in the Development Management, Standards and Guidelines chapter of this Plan.

Cllr. B. Cronin welcomed the Chapter on Retail Services and said the amount of unoccupied premises around the county is alarming. He asked what can be done to get them occupied again. He welcomed Objectives RS-4 and RS-5. Cllr. Cronin welcomed the focus on villages and retail development in the countryside and he said it is important to boost rural areas. He also welcomed the specific reference on P104 to farm shops and petrol/diesel service stations and said these family run businesses kept families going down through the years.

Cllr. G. Wharton Slattery requested clarification on Objective RS-3. She asked if delivery trucks could be limited to doing deliveries at quieter times in the day.

Cllr. D. Healy-Rae said large retail parks outside town centres have had an adverse impact on town centres and this is a cause for concern. He asked the Planning Authority to be aware of the problem they create when they grant permission for these out of town centre developments. Many small shops stood the test of time but they are now disappearing. The best town in Kerry at present is Castleisland and it is important to ensure towns like Castleisland retain their identity.

Cllr. S. Counihan said the big issue in relation to town centre versus the retail park is parking charges. Many Killarney streets were once residential but they changed to commercial premises and many are now closing down. Development levies should be applied to out of town retail parks as they provide free parking and this is damaging town centres.

Cllr. J. Brassil concurred with the views expressed by Cllr. D. Healy-Rae on the impact on town centres of out of town retail parks. Shops that sell larger items i.e. washing machines etc. are more suited to retail parks. Demand will determine if a company will locate in Kerry and the County Development Plan should indicate to them where they can locate. It is important to set out a clear policy and the benefits will be felt for years to come.

Mr. Stack said it is a balancing act and people come to retail parks because of the large national companies there i.e. Harvey Norman.

## **7. Transport & Infrastructure**

Mr. P. Stack referred members to Chapter 7 on Transport & Infrastructure on Pages 106 to 134. As this is a very long chapter he would divide it up into sections. Mr Stack then read the following extracts from this Chapter:



## 7.1 Introduction

The strategic aim of the Transport and Infrastructure Strategy of this Plan is to maintain and provide additional key infrastructure and to work with other agencies in the sustainable provision of infrastructure to attract new business investment and people into the County through the implementation of the policy and objectives below and the Development Management, Standards and Guidance document of this Plan.

Infrastructure in this Strategy refers to physical infrastructure required for transport, water services, waste, energy and utilities, gas, renewable energy, energy efficiency and telecommunications.

One of the greatest difficulties faced by Kerry is its peripherality. The provision of proper external infrastructural linkages from the County to national and international infrastructural networks greatly minimizes the impact of peripherality.

The total road network in the County under the four classifications: National Primary, National Secondary, Regional and Local measures 4881km.

Mr Stack said Map 7.1 on Page 107 shows the national primary and national secondary network in the County.

The Council is also committed to reduce the degree of commuting in the first instance by promoting the creation of additional jobs within the County for the resident population by the provision of Information and Communication Technology facilities and promoting online facilities within Kerry County Council.

Table 7.1 outlines the priority Road Projects during the lifetime of the Plan while Table 7.2 outlines the priority Water and Wastewater projects during the lifetime of the Plan.

- It is the policy of the Council to support sustainable extensions and improvements to existing infrastructure and services in the County such as Kerry International Airport, rail and bus network, rural transport programme etc.
- It is the policy of the Council to support innovation in infrastructure such as the sustainable development of Renewable Energy, Information and Communication Technology and Smarter Travel.
- It will be the policy of the Council to work with Irish Water regarding the provision of services and facilities required for the economic, social and environmental development of the County.

Mr. Stack informed members that the six Objectives in relation to Infrastructure are set out on Pages 109 and 110.

## 7.2 Land Use Integration & Sustainable Transport

**Aim:** *To achieve a sustainable, efficient and integrated transport system, high quality connectivity and ease of movement within and to County Kerry by enhancing the existing strategic transportation infrastructure, in terms of the road, rail and public transport network, together with cycleway and pedestrian facilities.*

It is a strategic aim of this Development Plan to co-ordinate transport and land use planning.

The effective integration of land-use and transportation will generate and reinforce sustainable settlement patterns that make the most efficient use of land, and minimise the need for travel by car.

- It is the policy of the Plan to promote the sustainable development of a transport system that provides a range of transport options for the County, including a safe road network, a range of bus services and rail services, adequate facilities for walking and cycling, at appropriate locations and opportunities for air and water-based travel.*

Mr. Stack stated that Objectives RD-7 to RD-12 relate to Sustainable Transport as follows:

Objective No.	Sustainable Transport
	<b>It is an objective of the Council to:-</b>
<b>RD-7</b>	Support and promote an integrated approach to land-use planning and transportation through the implementation of the Local Area Plans.
<b>RD-8</b>	Support sustainable travel in the County and implement the key goals, targets and actions of Smarter Travel – A Sustainable Transport Future – A New Transport Policy for Ireland 2009-2020 and the “National Cycle Policy Framework.
<b>RD-9</b>	Improve access for all vulnerable road users and people with disabilities to all modes of transport thereby increasing and improving transport facilities for all users.
<b>RD-10</b>	Protect and sustainably develop the County’s principal transportation assets including ports, Kerry airport and strategic road and rail corridors.
<b>RD-11</b>	Promote the sustainable development of all transportation links both within and out of the County in co-operation with adjacent County Councils so as to integrate the different modes of transport.
<b>RD-12</b>	Promote the sustainable delivery of a reliable, integrated and cost effective public transport system for the County.

- **National Primary and Secondary Routes**

The road network throughout the County and particularly the national road network is a vital element of this infrastructure. It is essential that they are maintained to the highest standards possible and that their efficiency, safety and carrying capacity is maximised. The creation of additional entrances onto these roads reduces their carrying capacity and safety and is contrary to the overall objective of improving the infrastructure serving rural areas.

### **Access onto the National Routes**

The creation of an access or the intensification of usage of an existing access onto a National Road shall be only considered where it is in compliance with *Spatial Planning and National Roads Planning Guidelines (DoECLG January 2012)*.

In compliance with Section 2.6 of these Guidelines the following “exceptional circumstances” as agreed with the NRA shall pertain in County Kerry whereby new accesses or the intensification of existing accesses will be considered along the following sections of the National Secondary Network in compliance with the criteria listed.

National Secondary Roads	
<b>N70</b>	Killorglin-Cahersiveen-Kenmare
<b>N71</b>	Killarney-Kenmare-“Tunnels”

### **Criteria:-**

- There is no suitable alternative non national public road access available.
- The development otherwise accords with the Development Plan.
- Safety issues and considerations can be adequately addressed in accordance with the NRA’s design manual for Roads and Bridges.

	<b>National Roads</b>
	<b>It is an objective of the Council to:-</b>
<b>RD-13</b>	Protect the capacity and safety of the National Road and Strategically Important Regional Road network in the County and ensure compliance with the Spatial Planning and National Roads Planning Guidelines (January 2012).
<b>RD-14</b>	Reserve lands and prohibit development in areas identified for both the immediate and long-term provision and improvement of roads throughout the County and the construction of relief roads as indicated in Table 7.1
<b>RD-15</b>	Support sustainable improvements to the existing National Road network including road schemes and by-passes outlined in Table 7.1

- **Regional and Local Roads**

These routes are of vital importance, linking the national roads with the towns and villages and remaining rural areas within the County.

- *It is the policy of the Plan to continue the ongoing upgrading, strengthening and improvement works on all regional & local roads in a sustainable manner in accordance with the objectives of this Plan and in compliance with the annual Roads Programmes.*

<b>Objective No.</b>	<b>Regional and Local Roads</b>
	<b>It is an objective of the Council to:-</b>
<b>RD-16</b>	Support sustainable improvements to the existing Regional Road network including road schemes and by-passes outlined in Table 7.1.
<b>RD-17</b>	Sustainably strengthen and improve the road network including links, by-passes and relief roads with priority given to those serving the Hub and Regional/District Towns and interconnection between such settlements.
<b>RD-18</b>	Provide a safe road system throughout the County through Road Safety Schemes and to encourage the promotion of road safety in the County.
<b>RD-19</b>	Continue the ongoing sustainable upgrading, strengthening and improvement works on regional & local roads in accordance with the objectives of this Plan.

<b>RD-20</b>	Sustainably upgrade and improve the major tourist routes within the County (as shown on Map 7.1). Improvements shall include the provision of lay-bys, viewing areas, picnic areas and the improvement of finger-posting and access ways to points of interest, at appropriate locations and in a sustainable manner along such tourist routes.
<b>RD-21</b>	That applications for development shall comply with the standards (sight distances, boundary treatment, surface water etc.) specified in the Development Management, Standards and Guidelines section.

### 7.2.2 Parking Provision

### 7.2.3 Pedestrians & Cyclists

Details of a number of proposed walk/cycle ways have already been outlined and assessed in Functional Area (Local Area Plans). Former railway lines in Kerry, which have the potential to be developed as 'greenways', where it can be demonstrated that the development will not have significant adverse effects on the environment, including the integrity of the Natura 2000, are listed below:-

<b>From</b>	<b>To</b>
Listowel	Ballybunion
Tralee	Abbeyfeale (Co. Limerick)
Tralee	Fenit
Tralee	Dingle
Camp	Castlegregory
Gortatlea	Castleisland
Farranfore	Cahersiveen to Renard Point
Headford	Kenmare

**Table 7.3 Former Railway Lines in Kerry**

Preliminary environmental assessments have been undertaken on the Tralee-Fenit Greenway and feasibility studies have been carried out in relation to the line between Killorglin and Cahersiveen.

Objective No.	Pedestrians & Cyclists
	<b>It is an objective of the Council to:-</b>
<b>RD-24</b>	Promote the sustainable development of walking, cycling, public transport and other sustainable forms of transport, as an alternative to the private car, by facilitating and promoting the sustainable development of necessary infrastructure at appropriate locations and by promoting initiatives contained within "Smarter Travel, A Sustainable Transport Future 2009-2020".
<b>RD-25</b>	Promote the sustainable development of the public footpath network, the walking and cycling routes and associated infrastructure in the County, including where possible the retrofitting of cycle and pedestrian routes into the existing urban road network and in the design of new roads.
<b>RD-26</b>	Support the sustainable establishment of a network of "Greenways" as outlined in Table 7.3 within the County and the adjoining counties where it can be demonstrated that the development will not have significant adverse effects on the environment, including the integrity of the Natura 2000 network.
<b>RD-27</b>	Support the sustainable establishment of a network of interlinked cycle ways and walk ways within the County and the adjoining Counties, including; Tralee-Fenit, Lough Leane Loop, Glenbeigh-Reenard, Great Southern Trail, Ballyseedy-Blennerville-Spa and linking them where appropriate and possible; where it can be demonstrated that the development will not have significant adverse effects on the environment, including the integrity of the Natura 2000 network.

#### 7.2.4 Public Transport

According to the 2011 census only 1% of the County's residents use public transport in journeys to work, compared to 8.9% in the State (65% use private car/motor transport compared to 63% nationally). This very low use is not surprising given the dispersed nature of settlements in County Kerry, the extensive road network and the increase in car ownership in recent years. The percentage of commuters using public transport (bus or train) is declining in the face of increasing car use.

#### 7.2.4.1 Rail

The Dublin-Mallow-Tralee railway routes are a vital connection between Kerry and the Gateways of Dublin and Cork and provide connectivity for the people of Kerry and tourist visiting the County.

Objective No.	Rail
	<b>It is an objective of the Council to:-</b>
<b>RD-28</b>	Support and encourage the provision of a high quality rail network and service and ancillary works for passenger and freight carriage to, from and within the County.
<b>RD-29</b>	Protect all existing or historic rail lines and associated facilities from redevelopment for non-transport related purposes in order to protect their future use as an operational transportation network or for Green cycle/walking routes.

#### 7.2.4.2 Bus

There is an inadequate service to most of the minor towns and most rural areas are poorly served. Kerry County Council now has a role in organizing rural public transport under the revised Rural Transportation Programme.

Objectives RD-30 to RD-32 relate to Bus as follows:

Objective No.	Bus
	<b>It is an objective of the Council to:-</b>
<b>RD-30</b>	Support the provision of public and private bus services, including the Rural Transport Programme.
<b>RD-31</b>	Facilitate the development of the Transport Co-ordination Unit.
<b>RD-32</b>	Prepare a rural County Transportation Plan.

#### 7.2.4.3 Air Transport

The Local Authority recognises the strategic importance of Kerry International Airport (KIA) as a key factor in promoting the economic development of the County.

	<b>Air (Kerry International Airport)</b>
	<b>It is an objective of the Council to:-</b>
<b>RD-33</b>	Promote and support the sustainable development of Kerry International Airport.
<b>RD-34</b>	Ensure public health and safety in the area around the Airport by ensuring all development is subject to safe guarding restrictions outlined in the Development Management, Standards and Guidelines document of this Plan.
<b>RD-35</b>	Ensure the future development and viability of the Airport by restricting development that may effect operations of the airport.
<b>RD-36</b>	Support the provision of public and private bus services linking the airport with the Hub Towns.
<b>RD-37</b>	Ensure that no new development will be permitted which will extend within the airspace volume as defined by the obstacle limitation surfaces for the airport.

### 7.2.5 Ports, Harbours and Piers

The sustainable establishment of a necklace of Marinas, located at appropriate and strategic locations around the coast, is important for the development of marine tourism.

<b>Objective No.</b>	<b>Ports, Harbour &amp; Piers</b>
	<b>It is an objective of the Council to:-</b>
<b>RD-38</b>	Sustainably develop and improve ports, harbours, piers, slipways and associated shore facilities and access, at appropriate locations. This includes those that can be shared by leisure, tourism, fishing, renewable energy and aquaculture and where it can be demonstrated that the development will not have significant adverse effects on the environment including the integrity of the built, natural or cultural heritage.
<b>RD-39</b>	Promote and investigate the potential for sustainably developing harbours and piers for increased usage including cruiser stopovers and greater economic benefit where it can be demonstrated that the development will not have significant adverse effects on the environment including the integrity of the built, natural or cultural heritage.
<b>RD-40</b>	Facilitate improved access to launch facilities and marine leisure activities at piers in a sustainable manner and at appropriate locations.



<b>RD-41</b>	Sustainably improve port and harbour infrastructure in the County and to safeguard lands in the vicinity of ports and harbours against inappropriate uses that could compromise the long-term economic potential (including access) of the port or harbour.
<b>RD-42</b>	Safeguard and enhance the roles of Dingle, Fenit, Portmagee, Cahersiveen as centres of fishing fleet activity, processing and ancillary services and to facilitate the sustainable diversification of such locations into new areas of appropriate investment and employment opportunities, including marine related economic activity, that accords with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

### 7.2.6 Roadside Signage

Kerry County Council has regard to the provisions of the DoECLG Policy on the Provision of Tourist & Leisure Signage on National Roads (March 2011) and Traffic Signs Manual, Dept of Transport (2010) when erecting signage on all roadways. The magnificent scenery and unique identity of much of the County is being spoiled by the erection of road side signage.

The proliferation of signage seriously affects the visual amenities of the landscape and adds to the visual clutter. These signs are generally associated with commercial business and tourist accommodation. The majority of signage along public roads and erected on private land are unauthorised. Kerry County Council will seek to remove all unauthorized signage. Kerry County Council controls the erection of finger post signs.

A licence is required for the erection of such a sign, and it shall be renewed annually. A detailed policy for the erection of signage is contained within the Development Management, Standards and Guidelines section of the Plan.

	<b>Roadside Signage</b>
	<b>It is an objective of the Council to:-</b>
<b>RD-43</b>	Have regard to the provisions of the DoECLG Policy on the Provision of Tourist & Leisure Signage on National Roads (March 2011) and Traffic Signs manual Dept of Transport (2010).
<b>RD-44</b>	Seek to remove all unauthorised signage and advertisements erected on roadside verges and on private lands.
<b>RD-45</b>	Develop multimedia and social networking methods for directional and advertising information.

Mr. Stack then invited comments from them.

Cllr. J. Brassil referred to Page 112 and the section dealing with access onto national roads and said while he welcomed the proposal to allow access onto the N70 and N71 where exceptional circumstances apply he asked why was there no mention of the N69 or N86. He would like to see all national secondary roads provided for in this section as there will also be exceptional circumstances on these routes. The NRA Guidelines state there can be no new entrances or intensification of existing entrances. The proposal contained on Page 112 is welcome however he PROPOSED that all national secondary roads would be included.

Cllr. M. Gleeson said on two occasions in Killarney the previous day drivers at roundabouts were confused as they did not know what lane to take. Motorists cannot see the arrows on the road because of traffic. Access to the county by rail and bus is very important. If we want to promote the use of bus services we must ensure adequate bus shelters are provided. There is an ongoing problem with water flowing out onto roads from elevated sites. He walked past two such houses the previous day where water was running out onto the road and was damaging it. The promotion of walking and cycling in the county is very important, yet it is taking a long time to provide facilities for it. He asked that two or three cycle /walking lanes would be provided each year to ensure the network is brought to fruition. He recently met an Area Engineer from outside the county who said the N22 is delaminating. This road is in a very serious state and it is time it was addressed.

Cllr. T. Ferris said the reason public transport is not utilised in Kerry is because the service is so poor or non-existent in places.

Cllr. D. Healy-Rae welcomed the provision made for the N70 and N71 under Access onto the National Roads. However he asked why was the N72 Rathmore to Lissivigeen road not included as the people in these areas are also in need of housing. He PROPOSED that the N72 from Rathmore to Lissivigeen road would be included. He expressed concern that it will be necessary to fight harder than ever for funding to maintain national secondary roads as they are in the same category as the LUAS in Dublin. The Rathmore to Killarney Road is in a very poor state of repair. Cllr. Healy-Rae referred to the need for signage for businesses and said he has been highlighting this problem for a long time. Businesses put them up to promote their business. There needs to be a more proactive approach on this by the NRA as these businesses must be allowed to survive. It is important that adequate signage is permitted on national roads. Kenmare is a great tourist town but it is not on the list of priorities yet it should be. Cllr. D. Healy-Rae then referred to the Kenmare By-Pass and said there is a need to identify the route for the remainder of the By-Pass otherwise the section already constructed will not be of great benefit. He referred to the railway line from Headford to Kenmare and said this could be developed as a walkway. He asked that landowners would be contacted to bring them on board.

Cllr. P. McCarthy referred to the N86 and the N69 and said they are not included in the section dealing with Access onto National Roads. He could not understand why just two roads were included in that section. Roadside drainage is an ongoing problem and while houses are well finished water is flowing down onto the road. He asked if the Planning Department requires a roadside drainage plan prior to permission being granted. If a road is being developed two organisations are involved i.e. the local authority and the NRA. These organisations develop and choose the route yet An Bord Pleanála can overrule them. He asked how was that allowed to happen and can anything be done about it.

Cllr. P. Leahy referred to ongoing problems in securing permission on the N69 and supported Cllr. Brassil's proposal that this road would be included for exceptional circumstances.

Cllr. J.J. Culloty referred to the section on Access onto the National Roads and said in compliance with Section 2.6 of the Guidelines only the N70 and N71 were included. He asked why the road from Rathmore to Lissivigeen was not included.

Cllr. M. Griffin said additional entrances should be permitted onto national roads. It should be an objective that there would be a Speed Limit Review in the lifetime of the Plan as in many instances existing speed limits are not adequate. He then referred to drainage and said this should also be reviewed. He added that there are some roads in the County where busses cannot pass.

Mr. P. Stack referred to Kenmare Pier and said while an Objective is included in the Plan the Pier is not specifically mentioned. He added that roadside drainage plans are now required to be submitted as part of a planning application. However non-compliance is the main issue but the Roads Enforcement Officer is pursuing this. This is now a condition of planning. There are just two sections of road identified in the Access onto National Secondary Roads section. This stems from the 2012 Guidelines issued under the NSS by the DoE. Mr. Stack then read two sections from the Guidelines as follows:

**“Section 2.5 Required Development Plan Policy on Access to National Roads**

With regard to access to national roads, all development plans and any relevant local area plans must implement the policy approaches outlined below.

***Lands adjoining National Roads to which speed limits greater than 60 kmh apply:***

The policy of the planning authority will be to avoid the creation of any additional access point from new development or the generation of increased traffic from existing accesses to national roads to which speed limits greater than 60kmh apply. This provision applies to all categories of development, including individual houses in rural areas, regardless of the housing circumstances of the applicant.”

**“Section 2.6            Exceptional Circumstances**

Notwithstanding the provisions of Section 2.5 above, planning authorities may identify stretches of national roads where a less restrictive approach may be applied, but only as part of the process of reviewing or varying the relevant development plan and having consulted and taken on board the advice of the NRA and having followed the approach outlined below.”

Mr. Stack said arising from this the Planning Department entered into negotiations with the NRA last April and had numerous communications with them. They held a meeting in July and the exceptional circumstances agreed with the NRA are the ones included in the Draft Plan. The reason these two sections are included is this section of road is 170 km long and the average annual daily traffic is less than 3000 vehicles per day (AADT). The NRA’s view is that all roads with less than 3000 AADT can be considered for this ‘exceptional circumstances’.

Cllr. T. Ferris said this is non-sensical.

Cllr. J. Brassil acknowledged that working within the constraints they had the Planning Department did their best with accesses onto national secondary roads. Mr Stack flagged this issue for members a while ago and said it would be a very difficult issue. While we take cognisance of national guidelines when they are fundamentally unfair and wrong he could not agree with them. If someone involved in farming wants to renovate or extend a house they will be refused permission. If part of the family farm is being given to a son he will also be refused permission. He would not agree to put anything in the County Development Plan that would discriminate against them. He pointed out that the NRA are not always right. It is important to consider each individual case on its merits. If there is an existing entrance and there will be no additional traffic the application should be given favourable consideration. This proposal will discriminate against a lot of people and if necessary he was prepared to confront the NRA on it.

## Special Planning Meeting

Cllr. T. Buckley said he understood no new entrances would be allowed onto national secondary roads. However if a son wants to take over a farm from his parents he will not be given permission even when he proposes to use an existing entrance.

Cllr. T. Ferris asked Mr. Stack where members stand legally on this issue.

Cllr. J.J. Culloty said the issue is “intensification”. If an applicant is living with his/her parents it is unfair to say there will be any intensification of use of an entrance.

Cllr. D. Healy Rae said people living on National Primary roads need to live also and should be allowed to use existing entrances.

Cllr. N. Foley said there are Planning Guidelines and she asked what their status is.

Mr. McMahon, Director of Planning pointed out that the discussion relates to National Secondary Roads only and there are no exceptional circumstances provided for National Primary Roads. He referred members to Page 5 of the Draft Plan which states

*“If applicable, where a Planning Authority formed the opinion that it is not possible because of the nature and characteristics of the area, or part of the area, to implement certain policies and objectives of the Minister contained in the Guidelines: it shall give reasons for the forming of the opinion and why the policies and objectives of the Minister have not been so implemented.”*

Mr. McMahon added that he was satisfied the Draft Plan complies with national policy. He pointed out that there are Ministerial Guidelines which state that if anything further is included in the Draft Plan it is necessary to (1) identify and specify the nature and characteristics of the area and specified those reasons and (2) amend the Table on Pages 6 to 9 of the Draft Plan and highlight why the policies of the County Development Plan do not comply.

Cllr. T. Ferris agreed that members must comply with legislation but did not agree when it came to complying with Guidelines. She PROPOSED that the N69 and the N86 be included.

Cllr. D. Healy-Rae PROPOSED that the road from Rathmore to Lissivigeen be included also.

Mr. McMahon said that the Planning Department has secured agreement with the NRA in relation to 50% of National Secondary Roads in the County and it is now a matter for members to decide what they want to do in relation to the other 50%.

## Special Planning Meeting

Cllr. Brassil asked if somebody involved in agriculture applied for permission to build a slatted unit with the current policy what is likely to be the decision on such an application.

In response Mr. McMahon said he would have no difficulty with that application as it would not result in intensification of use. He said farming is only one aspect but there is a difficulty when there is intensification of use. At present there is no difficulty with an extension onto an existing farmhouse. The difficulty arises when a son or a daughter wants to build a house despite the fact that they already use the existing entrance.

Cllr. Brassil said the same argument could be made for having an off farm house as the son/ daughter will have to travel from their residence to their place of work. He was trying to ensure that a commonsense approach is taken on this issue.

The County Manager said member's argument is not with the executive but rather with national policy. He agreed if a person is forced to build a house off the farm there will be additional traffic going to and from the farm and it will be more dangerous. The executive agree with what the members want but they are forced by guidelines and legislation to incorporate what is already in the Draft Plan. He pointed out that it was difficult to get agreement from the NRA to even include the two roads listed in the Draft Plan.

Cllr. Brassil said he would not agree to what is contained in the Draft Plan in relation to access onto National Secondary roads.

Cllr. P. Leahy asked if a person wants to build a house and cannot use an existing entrance will they be granted permission.

Mr. Stack said that the answer for them is to build an extension onto an existing house.

Cllr. P. McCarthy asked if it would be possible to include the wording "where no other alternative is available" in relation to the N69 and N86.

Cllr. T. Ferris pointed out that that is already included.

Cllr. D. Healy-Rae said members discussed the need to facilitate people who want to work from home earlier that day and in accordance with this section people will not be granted permission and members must resist that.

## Special Planning Meeting

Mr. Stack said this is as far as they could go in their discussions with the NRA. The NRA is not unreasonable and was fair. In relation to this 170 km on the N70 and N71 they are agreeable to the exceptional circumstances but they have a difficulty with the remaining 170 km on the N69, N72 and N86. He advised members to retain what's already in the Draft Plan. If they wish to alter the Plan they can incorporate another section in relation to the N69, N72 and N86. Even if members include criteria for these roads it is likely that any permission will be appealed by the NRA to An Bord Pleanála. He suggested that the Council should be seen to be reasonable and fair therefore any new accesses must be confined to family members. It is important to adopt a more restrictive approach and they must be seen to have different criteria.

Cllr. T. Ferris said people on the Ring of Kerry road should not be treated different to people on the N86 etc. She did not believe there should be different criteria.

Mr McMahon pointed out that the average annual daily traffic on the N70 and N71 is less than 3,000 vehicles per day.

Cllr. J. Brassil stated that this policy is going out on public display in the Draft Plan and he would be entitled to make a submission. It is being suggested that the use of existing entrances on the N69, N72 and the N86 would be restricted to family members.

The County Manager pointed out that this is the member's Plan and if they want to make amendments they were entitled to do so at this point.

Cllr. Brassil **PROPOSED** that in exceptional circumstances the use of existing entrances by family members would be permitted.

Cllr. D. Healy-Rae said new entrances should be permitted in exceptional circumstances.

Cllr. G. Wharton Slattery asked if exceptional circumstances would apply to family members.

Mr. McMahon said members must take cognisance of government policy. However if they feel what is policy for other roads should apply to these roads because of the nature and characteristics of the area they must state why the policies and objectives of the Minister have not been so implemented.

## Special Planning Meeting

Mr. P. Stack suggested in relation to access to the N69, N86, N72 and the section of the N70 from Tralee to Killorglin, the following criteria might apply in relation to the creation of a new access:-

- (a) the applicant is the Son or Daughter or Favoured Nephew or Niece of a landowner inheriting the family farm.
- (b) There is no suitable alternative, non-national public road access available.
- (c) The existing access to the landholding does not conform, or cannot be made conform to the NRA design manual for roads and bridges standards.
- (d) The development otherwise accords with the Development Plan.
- (e) The proposed access relates to the development of a fixed resource or Renewable Energy Project.

Development resulting in the intensification of use of an existing access will be favourably considered where

- (a) There is no suitable alternative non-national public road access available.
- (b) The existing access conforms to the standards set out in the DMRB guidelines
- (c) The development otherwise accords with the Development Plan.
- (d) The development will contribute to the achievement of national objectives in the NSS or RPG's eg. Employment.

Cllr. G. Wharton Slattery asked if this would facilitate family expansion.

Cllr. M. Griffin said the majority of existing entrances do not comply with the NRA guidelines in relation to sight lines.

Cllr. J. Brassil PROPOSED that the criteria outlined by Mr. Stack be adopted and incorporated in the Table at the front of the Draft Plan as required.

Mr. McMahon said a statement must be included as to why Kerry is different.

Cllr. Brassil said Kerry has an excessive amount of National Secondary roads and an abundance of existing entrances.

Cllr. D. Healy-Rae expressed concern at stating that entrances are or can be brought up to standard as it may be used against applicants. He asked if anything can be done to facilitate applicants on National Primary roads.



## Special Planning Meeting

Mr. McMahon suggested that members could state due to the rural and dispersed nature of the county.

On the PROPOSAL of Cllr. J. Brassil *that we the members of Kerry County Council have formed the opinion that due to the –*

- (1) Rural and dispersed nature of the population*
- (2) The average size of farm holdings in the county*
- (3) The strategic nature of the National Secondary routes and the lack of alternatives and the peninsular nature of the county and the large number of existing enterprises located on these routes*

*That it is not possible in relation to the N86, N69, N72 and the N70 Tralee to Killorglin road to implement the policies and objectives of the Minister as outlined in the Spatial National Planning and Road Guidelines 2012 and accordingly resolve to insert the following policies and objectives into Section 7.2.1 of the Draft County Development Plan 2015 – 2021 in respect of developments on these routes.*

*in relation to access onto the N69, N86, N72 and the section of the N70 from Tralee to Killorglin, the following criteria shall apply in relation to the creation of a new access:-*

- (a) the applicant is the Son or Daughter or Favoured Nephew or Niece of a landowner inheriting the family farm.*
- (b) There is no suitable alternative, non-national public road access available.*
- (c) The existing access to the landholding does not conform, or cannot be made conform to the NRA design manual for roads and bridges.*
- (d) The development otherwise accords with the Development Plan.*
- (e) The proposed access relates to the development of a fixed resource or Renewable Energy Project.*

*Development resulting in the intensification of use of an existing access will be favourably considered where*

- (a) There is no suitable alternative non-national public road access available.*
- (b) The existing access conforms to the standards set out in the DMRB guidelines*
- (c) The development otherwise accords with the Development Plan.*

- (d) *The development will contribute to the achievement of national objectives in the NSS or RPG's eg employment.*

Cllr. D. Healy-Rae asked if a landowner with just a few acres of land will be facilitated under this provision.

Mr. Stack said they must be engaged in farming.

Mr. G. O'Brien said the proposal clearly stated 'son or daughter of a landowner'.

Cllr. G. Wharton Slattery asked must the applicant be resident there.

Cllr. J. Brassil said a reasonable alternative was proposed and he suggested that members should support it.

Cllr. J.J. Culloty SECONDED Cllr. Brassil's proposal.

A vote was taken on Cllr. Brassil's proposal which resulted as follows:

**For:** Cllrs. Brassil, Buckley, Counihan, Culloty, Ferris, Foley, Gleeson, Griffin, D. Healy-Rae, McCarthy, Wharton Slattery and Fitzgerald **(12)**

**Against:** None **(0)**

**Not Voting:** None **(0)**

**Absent:** Cllrs. Beasley, Cahill, Connor-Scarteen, Cronin, Donovan, Finucane, J. Healy-Rae, Leahy, McEllistram, O'Brien, O'Connell, O'Donoghue, O'Shea, Purtill and Sheahan **(15)**

The Mayor declared the proposal CARRIED.

Mr. Stack then referred members to Page 122 and 7.3 Water Services and he read the following into the record of the meeting.

### **7.3 Water Services**

The significant growth of the economy over the past number of years has increased the pressures on existing water and wastewater infrastructure in the County.

### 7.3.1 Public Water Services

Irish Water will take over full responsibility for all public Water Services Infrastructure from 1 Jan 2014. In this role they will assume responsibility for Forward Planning of water services infrastructure. Kerry County Council will work in partnership with Irish Water to achieve the stated objectives of this Plan.

Kerry County Council will continue to deliver the operational functions and many of the capital functions, under a Service Level Agreement for at least 12 years.

The zoning of lands within the Core Strategy and settlement hierarchy is determined by the provision of adequate wastewater collection and treatment facilities. The focus of population growth within the county will be on settlements where the appropriate treatment of wastewater is feasible.

### 7.3.2 Private Water Services

Group Water Schemes (and individual wells) also play an important role in the provision of a piped water supply to private households, farms and businesses in County Kerry.

Mr. Stack said the following are the objectives in relation to Water Services:

	Water Services
	It is an objective of the Council to:-
WS-1	Support the sustainable provision of an adequate level of water services infrastructure throughout the County to meet domestic, commercial, industrial and other needs, having regard to the Core Strategy and Settlement Strategy of this Plan, the Water Services Investment Programme, the Rural Water Programme and Table 7.2 in Section 7.1.
WS-2	Prioritise the sustainable provision of infrastructure having regard to the potential for pollution from wastewater discharges, sensitivity of receiving waters and the settlement strategy of this plan.
WS-3	Support the sustainable provision of a safe and secure water supply in the County.
WS-4	Work in partnership with Irish Water for the provision and operation of public water services infrastructure.
WS-5	Work in partnership with communities and individuals for the provision and operation of private/group water services infrastructure.

### 7.3.3. Water Abstraction

Objective No.	Water Services
	<b>It is an objective of the Council to:-</b>
<b>WS-6</b>	Ensure that proposals for water abstraction shall consider the potential impacts on the ecology of the waterbody, including fish and protected species populations.
<b>WS-7</b>	Prohibit any non-public water abstractions from surface water bodies that are considered to have a potentially detrimental impact on the ecology of the water body, or any associated water body.
<b>WS-8</b>	Require that the following be complied with in regard to the lakes being used as drinking water sources and/or vulnerable to elevated nutrient levels: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Prohibit all new discharges of wastewater effluent to groundwater (via percolation areas, polishing filters etc) from on-site wastewater treatment systems within 200m of the lakeshore.</li> <li>(b) Assess any proposed development that has the potential to discharge to a watercourse which drains into any of the lakes in terms of its potential impact on the lake.</li> <li>(c) Assess all forestry proposals within each lake catchment in terms of potential impact on water quality of the lake.</li> <li>(d) Prohibit any development which would have an adverse impact on the water quality in these lakes.</li> </ul>
<b>WS-9</b>	All areas within 1km of a public drinking water source will be regarded as Nutrient Sensitive Areas and the effluent from any Onsite Waste Water Treatment System proposed within these areas must comply with the EPA Code of Practice.

### 7.3.4 Water Conservation

Water is a valuable resource and the production and treatment of its supply must be managed in a sustainable manner in order to ensure it's most efficient and economic use.

Objective No.	Water Conservation
	<b>It is an objective of the Council to:-</b>
<b>WS-10</b>	Promote water conservation and responsible use of water by introducing and facilitating the provision of demand reduction measures.

### 7.3.5 Storm Water Management

Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) are effective technologies which aim to reduce flood risk, improve water quality and enhance biodiversity and amenity.

### 7.3.6 Public Conveniences

Kerry County Council has Public Conveniences at 19 locations throughout the County.

Objective No.	Public Conveniences
	<b>It is an objective of the Council to:-</b>
<b>WS-11</b>	Facilitate the sustainable provision of public toilet facilities at appropriate locations.

## 7.4 Waste Management

### 7.4.1 National and Regional Policy

A revised national waste policy was published by the DoECLG in July, 2012 to cover the period to 2020.

The Waste Management Plan for the Limerick / Clare / Kerry Region 2012- covers all non-hazardous wastes generated within each of the above local authorities.

The recently revised national waste policy – “A Resource Opportunity – Waste Management in Ireland” (July, 2012) – included a proposal to consolidate the old waste management regions into three larger regions, which is now in-train. Revised boundaries for these new regions have been identified and new structures are being put in place to bring the new regions into effect. County Kerry has been included as part of the Southern Region.

In the current climate the economics of waste management are constantly changing and investment decisions are framed in the context of a very uncertain economic and regulatory environment.

Objective No.	Waste Management
	<b>It is an objective of the Council to:-</b>
<b>WM-1</b>	Ensure the implementation of the Regional Waste Management Plan with particular emphasis on waste reduction, reuse and recycling and the sustainable disposal of residual waste in the most appropriate manner.
<b>WM-2</b>	Facilitate the implementation of the current Regional Waste Management Plan, and any replacement or amending plan, to include implementation of the waste hierarchy and maximising the diversion of waste from landfill in accordance with current national and European policy.

#### 7.4.2 Waste Management Infrastructure

The Council will continue to promote waste prevention and minimisation initiatives to target all aspects of waste in the County, focusing on both commercial and domestic waste producers.

##### 7.4.2.1 Recycling Facilities

The Council is in compliance with the targets set out in the Regional Waste Management Plan for the provision of Bring Banks, with a total of 106 Bring Banks located at various locations around the County.

Objective No.	Waste Management & Recycling
	<b>It is an objective of the Council to:-</b>
<b>WM-3</b>	Facilitate the sustainable provision of additional waste recycling/recovery facilities at appropriate locations.
<b>WM-4</b>	Facilitate the sustainable development of waste management facilities including thermal treatment and mechanical/biological treatment at appropriate and sustainable locations in the Southern Waste Management Planning Region.
<b>WM-5</b>	Facilitate the on-going sustainable provision and maintenance of adequate licensed landfill capacity for the disposal of residual waste at an appropriate and sustainable location(s) in the County.
<b>WM-6</b>	Require significant employers and significant retail developments to provide and maintain suitable locations for public bring-bank facilities, as determined by the Planning Authority.

#### 7.4.2. Litter management

Kerry County Council's Litter Management Plan 2013-2016 (LMP) outlines the Council's commitment to the environment and litter prevention in the County.

Objective No.	Waste & Litter Management
	<b>It is an objective of the Council to:-</b>
<b>WM-7</b>	Promote and encourage education and awareness on all issues associated with waste management, at household, industry and community level.
<b>WM-8</b>	Promote and facilitate communities to become involved in environmental awareness activities and community-based recycling initiatives or environmental management initiatives that will lead to local sustainable waste management practices.

#### 7.5 Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

**It is the policy of the Council to:-**

- ✓ Support the co-ordinated and focused sustainable development and extension of broadband infrastructure throughout the County at appropriate locations to ensure economic competitiveness for the enterprise and commercial sectors and in enabling more flexible work practices e.g. teleworking.
- ✓ Facilitate the sustainable development of a modern efficient telecommunications network serving the County.
- ✓ Achieve a balance between facilitating the sustainable provision of telecommunications infrastructure in the interests of social and economic progress, and sustaining residential amenity and environmental quality.

##### 7.5.2 Telecommunications

An efficient telecommunications system is important in the development of the economy. However, in considering location requirements, Kerry County Council will take the following factors outlined in the 'Telecommunications Antennae and Support Structures Guidelines for Planning Authorities' (DoECLG, 1996) and Circular Letter PL07/12 into account:-

- The Council aims to support the sustainable development of Mast infrastructure at appropriate locations which facilitates backhaul in the peninsula areas, and Broadband services to areas of the County with no Broadband service and with poor Broadband service.

- Proposals for standalone telecommunication installations should demonstrate that the developer has made reasonable efforts to share with other existing users or proposed sites in the vicinity of the proposed mast. Standalone telecommunication installations will not generally be favoured in residential areas, on land where development may be restricted or prevented for amenity or environmental reasons or in parts of the town centre which are architecturally important.
- Telecommunications antennae should be located so as to minimise any negative visual intrusion on the surrounding area, especially on landscapes or streetscapes of a sensitive nature. The preferred location for telecommunication antennae is in industrial estates or areas zoned for industrial use or in areas already developed for utilities

### 7.5.3 Broadband

Broadband is central to the development of a knowledge-based economy throughout the Country. Broadband helps to combat social exclusion. Areas without broadband will be less able to take advantage of internet centred developments in education, banking, research, business, etc. According to the 2011 census, 54.6% of households in Kerry had broadband connectivity compared with 63% nationally.

While Kerry is a county with reasonable broadband availability the quality of this broadband service is unsatisfactory and inadequate. Most recently Kerry was omitted from a national project that would bring 100Mbps to secondary schools in Ireland.

Objective No.	Information & Communication Technology
	<b>It is an objective of the Council to:-</b>
<b>ICT-1</b>	Support and facilitate the sustainable delivery of ICT infrastructure, broadband networks and digital broadcasting in the County having regard to the Government Guidelines Telecommunications Antennae and Support Structures-Guidelines for Planning Authorities 1996 (DoECLG) and Circular Letter PL 07/12.
<b>ICT-2</b>	Facilitate the sustainable development of a modern efficient telecommunications network serving the County.
<b>ICT-3</b>	Support the sustainable provision of new and innovative telecommunications infrastructure at appropriate locations, subject to normal proper planning considerations.
<b>ICT-4</b>	Locate telecommunication masts in non-scenic areas, or in areas where they are unlikely to intrude on the setting of, or views of/from, national monuments or protected structures or have an adverse effect on the environment including the integrity of Natura 2000 sites.



<b>ICT-5</b>	Facilitate the sustainable development of Open Access subterranean ducting infrastructure in urban areas, which will provide new opportunities for enhancement of existing fibre based MAN's, for joining network segments together and for creating new MAN's.
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## 7.6 Energy/Power Provision

**Aim;** *To support and provide for the sustainable development of indigenous energy resources, with an emphasis on renewable energy supplies, in the interests of economic progress and the proper planning and sustainable development of the county.*

The Council will continue to support the infrastructural renewal and sustainable development of electricity and gas networks. The County has, in terms of alternative energy, huge potential for the development of wind, solar, biomass, geothermal, hydro and wave energy. The wave and wind resources are among the richest in Europe. Although some wind projects are in production in the County, an objective to maximise the sustainable alternative resources, in accordance with the County's Renewable Energy Strategy, shall be a priority.

### 7.6.2 Energy Conservation

Kerry County Council is committed to encouraging more sustainable development through energy end use efficiency and increasing the use of renewable energy in all new building projects in accordance with the following principles:

- *Encouraging responsible environmental management in construction;*
- *Promoting sustainable approaches to housing development by spatial planning, layout, design and detailed specification;*
- *Ensuring high standards of energy efficiency in all housing developments , and encouraging developers, owners and tenants to improve the environmental performance of the building stock, including the deployment of renewable energy to ensure a high BER rating;*
- *For housing and other buildings, specifically encouraging compliance with the Building Regulations.*

	<b>Energy &amp; Power</b>
	<b>It is an objective of the Council to:-</b>
<b>EP-1</b>	Support and facilitate the sustainable provision of a reliable energy supply in the County, with emphasis on increasing energy supplies derived from renewable resources whilst seeking to protect and maintain biodiversity, archaeological and built heritage, the landscape and residential amenity

<b>EP-2</b>	Implement the Renewable Energy Strategy for Co. Kerry 2012
<b>EP-3</b>	Promote energy conservation through reduced consumption and incorporating renewable energy technology into building design standards.
<b>EP-4</b>	Facilitate sustainable energy infrastructure provision, so as to provide for the further physical and economic development of the County.
<b>EP-5</b>	Support and facilitate the sustainable development of enhanced electricity and gas supplies, and associated networks, to serve the existing and future needs of the County.
<b>EP-6</b>	Facilitate the sustainable provision of charging infrastructure for electric vehicles.
<b>EP-7</b>	Promote LNG associated enterprises/industries and expand the gas distribution network.
<b>EP-8</b>	Facilitate the sustainable development of additional electricity generation capacity throughout the region/county and to support the sustainable expansion of the network. National grid expansion is important in terms of ensuring adequacy of regional connectivity as well as facilitating the development and connectivity of sustainable renewable energy resources.
<b>EP-9</b>	Ensure that the siting of electricity power lines is managed in terms of the physical and visual impact of these lines on both the natural and built environment, the conservation value of Natura 2000 sites and especially in sensitive landscape areas. When considering the siting of powerlines in these areas, consideration will be given to undergrounding or the selection of alternative routes.
<b>EP-10</b>	Support the sustainable implementation of EirGrid's Grid 25 Investment Programme, subject to landscape, residential, amenity and environmental considerations.
<b>EP-11</b>	Support the development of District Heating Schemes and associated infrastructure.

### 7.6.3 Renewable Energy

The renewable energy sector is expanding rapidly and is a growing source of employment and investment. To facilitate the sustainable growth of renewable energies Kerry County Council prepared and adopted a Renewable Energy Strategy in 2012.

This strategy sets out the development criteria, development management standards and objectives for the development of renewable energy in the County and will be used in the assessment of all planning applications for such development.

## Special Planning Meeting

In conclusion Mr. Stack informed the meeting that National Renewable Energy Guidelines would issue shortly and would impact on the adopted Renewable Energy Strategy 2012 for County Kerry.

Cllr. T. Ferris referred to P109 where it states Ardfert Sewerage Scheme is a priority but it is not progressing. 10 years ago when she was first co-opted to the Council at the first Area Meeting she attended the urgent need for a new Sewerage Scheme in Ardfert was discussed. Now 10 years later she felt they were no closer to getting the new scheme. Members were lead to believe months ago that the scheme was going to tender yet no contracts were drawn up. The previous Friday a meeting was facilitated with the Ardfert Development Group and they were informed it would not go to tender before Christmas. In 2014 it will be at the behest of Irish Water. There is an ongoing problem with the storm water in Ardfert and she asked could these works be funded separately. Cllr. Ferris also asked why there was such a delay in preparing contract documents from the time An Bord Pleanála issued their decision. She said the delays with this scheme on the part of Kerry County Council are unacceptable. Cllr. Ferris said if more members were present in the Chamber she would formulate an amendment in relation to the Telecommunications policy. She presumed the 1km rule was not included in the Draft Plan and she said she would like further discussions on this prior to the conclusion of consideration of the Draft Plan. She asked if would be possible to include an objective that a percentage of power generated by wind farms would be given to the community where the wind farms are located.

Cllr. P. McCarthy said one of the issues for farmers wishing to develop a wind farm is the SPA designations. Even though there is no objection, in relation to wildlife, to the proposed development just because the land is in an SPA it is automatically ruled out. He asked if provision could be made in the Draft Plan, in exceptional circumstances, where there is no objection to the proposed development that favourable consideration would be given to such applications.

Cllr. S. Counihan referred to the new Guidelines on Renewable Energy which are due to issue from the Department and said he did not believe they would be very favourable towards Wind Energy development. He asked if the new Guidelines are more negative what impact this will have on renewable energy in the county.

Cllr. N. Foley supported the views expressed by Cllr. Ferris in relation to Ardfert Sewerage Scheme. She referred to Objective EP-9 on Page 134 of the Draft Plan which reads as follows: *“Ensure that the siting of electricity power lines is managed in terms of the physical and visual impact of these lines on both the natural and built environment, the conservation value of Natura 2000 sites and especially in sensitive landscape areas. When considering the siting of powerlines in these areas, consideration will be given to undergrounding or the selection of alternative routes.”* Cllr. Foley said this objective should be stronger and the word ‘priority’ should be used instead of ‘consideration’.

## Special Planning Meeting

Cllr. D. Healy-Rae said Water Services is a major service where water is supplied and maintained for the people of the county. There is a lot of speculation that Irish Water will not take over responsibility for water until 2025. A lot of staff are being recruited by Irish Water yet they will not be involved in the provision or maintenance of water for years. He could not understand what they would be doing. He was concerned that the public would suffer as a result. The Draft Plan states that group sewerage schemes would be favoured and he requested clarification on this. He referred to Currow where the Council has group housing and said all that is happening there is the sewerage is being transported to Killarney for treatment. Kilgarvan treatment plant was constructed in 1935 for just 20 houses and he was concerned some older schemes may be causing pollution to rivers. Cllr. D. Healy-Rae agreed that at a minimum the high voltage wires should be laid underground.

Mr. O. Ring, Director of Environment and Water Services said the Council is in favour of group sewerage schemes. In relation to Kilgarvan Sewerage Scheme he anticipated that a contract would be signed by Christmas. He acknowledged that the Ardfert Sewerage Scheme had not progressed the way he wanted but said due to the pressure of work in relation to Irish Water it was not possible to prepare tender documents. He added that he had secured agreement, in principle, with the Department regarding the provision of new storm water pipes in Ardfert which would alleviate the flooding problems.

Cllr. Ferris asked when this agreement was secured.

Mr. Ring said the meeting with the Department official took place, he thought, in October. He added that he was not aware of the meeting between Ardfert Development Group and the Minister.

Cllr. Ferris said Mr. J. O'Connor in Water Services Capital was informed and he supplied the maps for the meeting.

Mr. O. Ring said Water Services would be completing contract documents for the Scheme and the Draft Investment Plan submitted to Irish Water has Ardfert Sewerage Scheme as a priority.

Cllr. T. Ferris said it was her understanding that Irish Water will decide what projects will proceed.

Mr. O. Ring confirmed that was the case but added that the Water Services Department will make a case to Irish Water on the priority projects.

Cllr. T. Ferris asked what month did the decision issue by the Bord?

## Special Planning Meeting

Mr. Ring said he was not sure. The Ardfert Sewerage Scheme has been a very difficult scheme to deliver as it had to be redesigned.

Cllr. Ferris said she understood the decision issued by the Bord between May and July and in the interim the tender documents were not prepared.

Mr. Ring said that scheme is one of our priorities. We have delivered 48 water schemes as part of the RAL Project. Tarbert and Ballylongford Sewerage Schemes are also being delivered but Ardfert was a difficult scheme and he was confident it would be delivered.

Cllr. D. Healy-Rae PROPOSED that the 1km rule would be retained in the Draft Plan.

Cllr. T. Ferris PROPOSED that this issue would be considered at the next meeting.

Mr. P. Stack agreed to amend the wording in Objective EP-9 to include the word 'priority' as requested by Cllr. Foley. He pointed out that SPA's are excluded from the Renewable Energy Strategy and that is still the case. All Natura 2000 sites are also excluded. There will be changes to the Renewable Energy Strategy and that is why it is excluded from the Draft County Development Plan.

The meeting concluded at 4.45pm.

**Gerard O'Brien**  
**Meetings Administrator**

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**Mayor of Kerry**