

COUNTY KERRY COVID-19 ECONOMIC RECOVERY PLAN 2021



FOREWORD

As society emerges from the most severe impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and economic activity resumes across many sectors, there remain many challenges and opportunities to regain and grow economic activity to pre-pandemic levels and to further expand and grow the economy and employment into the future.

Kerry County Council in conjunction with the Kerry Economic Stakeholder Forum has developed the County Kerry COVID-19 Economic Recovery Plan 2021, which was considered by the Elected Members of Kerry County Council at the June 2021 Council Meeting. The plan is aligned to national, regional and local policy. The Pillars for Economic Recovery and Growth were developed through engagement with multi-stakeholder groups along with key deliverables to support the delivery of this plan. The plan outlines the impact of COVID-19 on the County, the interagency response and the opportunities that have been identified by the various sectors in relation to economic growth into the future. This plan is a living document which was written at a specific moment in time and can be adjusted to take account of the changing economic environment. This plan is not intended to replace individual organisations work programmes but to complement existing work programmes. The plan also reflects the significant move to a blended form of working and the remote working infrastructure that is required to support these new working models.

Kerry County Council wishes to acknowledge the support of the Kerry Economic Stakeholder Forum, Munster Technological University (MTU), Kerry Education and Training Board (KETB), KerrySciTech, the Kerry Tourism Industry Federation (KTIF) and the Kerry Chamber Network in forming this plan. Kerry County Council will continue to engage with both public and private sector interests in developing the pillars and associated actions contained within the plan.



Cathaoirleach of
Kerry County Council,
Cllr Jimmy Moloney



Chief Executive of
Kerry County Council,
Moira Murrell

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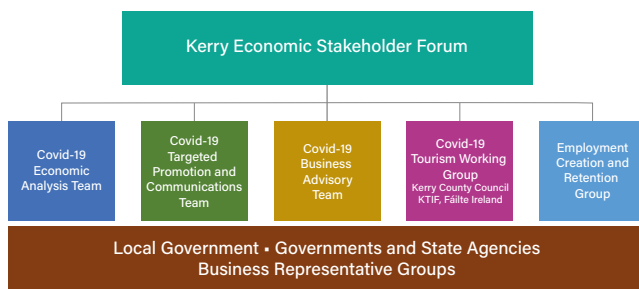
As society emerges from the most severe impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and economic activity resumes across many sectors, there remain many challenges and opportunities to regain and grow economic activity to pre-pandemic levels and to further expand and grow the economy and employment into the future.

While initial research and analysis has shown that the Kerry economy, due to its structure, has been most vulnerable to the restrictions imposed by the pandemic, the response and resilience of the population has led to a strengthened domestic tourism season (though somewhat curtailed), and also the development of home working opportunities that have allowed the relocation of staff to the County to continue their careers. Many businesses within Kerry have also adapted to home and blended working models successfully over the period.



Prior to the 2021 summer season, April 2021 figures showed that there were 6,140 individuals on the live register in Kerry and an additional 15,232 in receipt of the Pandemic Unemployment Payment (PUP)³. The most recent figures (August 2021) show that the numbers on the live register is now just below 6,000 and those in receipt of the PUP has reduced significantly to 5,243 (CSO Live Register LWR14 - 29th August 2021). This reflects the importance of the tourism and hospitality sector to Kerry, and the seasonality of same. There are, however, many individuals still in receipt of the Employment Wage Subsidy Scheme (EWSS), although exact figures have not been published. The most recently published figures from August 2020 estimated 10,000 individuals in receipt of this support⁴.

In response to this unprecedented economic crisis, brought on by the almost complete economic shutdown of many economic areas of activity in the County, the public and private sectors in Kerry, building on existing collaborations, recognised the need for a coordinated response to support the economic recovery of the County. The Kerry Economic Stakeholder Forum was convened in April 2020 to support the economic recovery of the County in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.



Chaired by Kerry County Council, this interagency and business response is supported by a dedicated governance structure that lead the co-ordination of COVID-19 business supports and resilience in the County. The Elected Council is represented on the Business Advisory Team by both the Mayor and the Chair of the Economic and Community Strategic Policy Committee (SPC). Council officials from the Economic Development, Local Enterprise and Tourism units of Kerry County Council provide support for these structures.

The Kerry Economic Stakeholder Forum has, in consultation with key stakeholders, developed this Economic Recovery Plan for County Kerry.

One of the challenges in the preparation of the economic recovery plan for County Kerry is the complexity and evolving situation in relation to the re-opening of business and society, which is based on national health advice. The overall vision for the Kerry Economic Recovery plan is to reflect the significant capital and programme investment that is committed from the public sector in the delivery of strategic capital infrastructural projects to support the economic recovery of the County. This plan addresses the need to build resilience and diversification into Kerry's economy to respond to the additional challenges and opportunities faced by businesses in the County, including:

1. A post-Brexit and COVID-19 environment,
2. Transition to climate neutrality,
3. Digital transformation,
4. Remote/blended working

The plan also sets out the significant Business Supports available to enterprises and the research, training and reskilling programmes that are being delivered in the County.

It is a short-medium term economic recovery plan which includes immediate COVID-19 targeted response measures and medium to longer term economic recovery measures, intended to support, stimulate and strengthen our economy. The plan has been prepared at a specific moment in time, for when the economy reopens on the proviso that the national programmes and funding mentioned throughout the plan will continue in their current format.

The Economic Recovery Plan is shaped and influenced by the strategic objectives of the National Planning Framework (NPF) and the Regional Spatial Economic Strategy for the Southern Region (RSES). Both the vision of the NPF and the RSES are led by the need for transformative change in a greater regional structural realignment of population and economic activity across the state and to achieve the ambitious targets set will require investment of an equally ambitious and targeted nature.

The Economic Recovery Plan is also aligned with national, regional and local policy and plans, including the recently published National Economic Recovery Plan, which sets out a high-level framework setting out the Government's priorities for a jobs-led sustainable and inclusive recovery; and the Government's 5-year strategy for rural development 'Our Rural Future', that represents the Irish Government's blueprint for a post-COVID-19 recovery and development of rural Ireland over the next five years.

³ The Live Register is not designed to measure unemployment. It includes part-time workers (those who work up to three days a week), seasonal and casual workers entitled to Jobseeker's Benefit (JB) or Jobseeker's Allowance (JA).

⁴ The Temporary Wage Subsidy Scheme (TWSS) was replaced by the Employment Wage Subsidy Scheme (EWSS) on 01 September 2020 but figures are not yet available from the CSO on the numbers in receipt of EWSS.

The Kerry Economic Recovery Plan is structured on a number of strategic pillars which underpin areas of economic activity and associated structural reforms that have the potential to transform the economic performance of the County and create significant opportunities for growth. These strategic pillars showcase areas of economic activity where there is significant interaction between both the public and private sector, and where the public sector investment can best support economic growth in the County.

The Plan focuses on the broad themes of Digital Transformation, the Transition to a Low Carbon Economy, building on Kerry's Natural Resources and the necessary Training and Education to support these structural changes. The Plan also concentrates on the challenges of Regenerating our Towns and Villages, the overall Marketing of the County in relation to attracting investment, talent and visitors and the development of our Tourism, Culture, Heritage and Amenities to support the quality of life in the County both for its resident and visiting populations.

There will be a continued support of existing business in the efficient delivery of National Schemes and the prioritisation of local supports in training, mentoring, supporting the transition to online trading and lean programmes and assisting the National Pathways to Work Programme 2021-2025.

The delivery of key infrastructure through public sector investment is a central tenet in achieving economic recovery, in the provision of enabling infrastructure in digital and

physical transport links, water and waste water infrastructure, the delivery of an expanded social and affordable housing programme, investment in enterprise space and the development of key educational facilities.

The continued development of the County's tourism infrastructure, the enhancement of the public realm in towns and villages, universal access, facilities in our blue flag beaches, greenways, amenity trails, outdoor dining and recreation facilities and supporting infrastructure all generate economic activity and support the County's major tourism industry and deliver on the overall attractiveness of the County. The actions and investment proposed under these pillars are designed to stimulate vibrancy in our towns and villages, support the sustainable growth of our key economic sectors and the future-proofing of our economy and environment.

The Economic Recovery Plan acknowledges the significant work programmes being developed by individual sectors, agencies, and bodies and as a result this economic recovery plan is reflective of some of this work but is not intended to outline the detailed actions across these sectors. The Economic Recovery Plan should be considered as a living document that responds to national plans, opportunities, and Ireland's commitment to achieving carbon neutrality and the transition to a digital economy.

A key deliverable of the plan will be to identify areas for collaboration and the exploitation of economic opportunities that will evolve over the coming years.

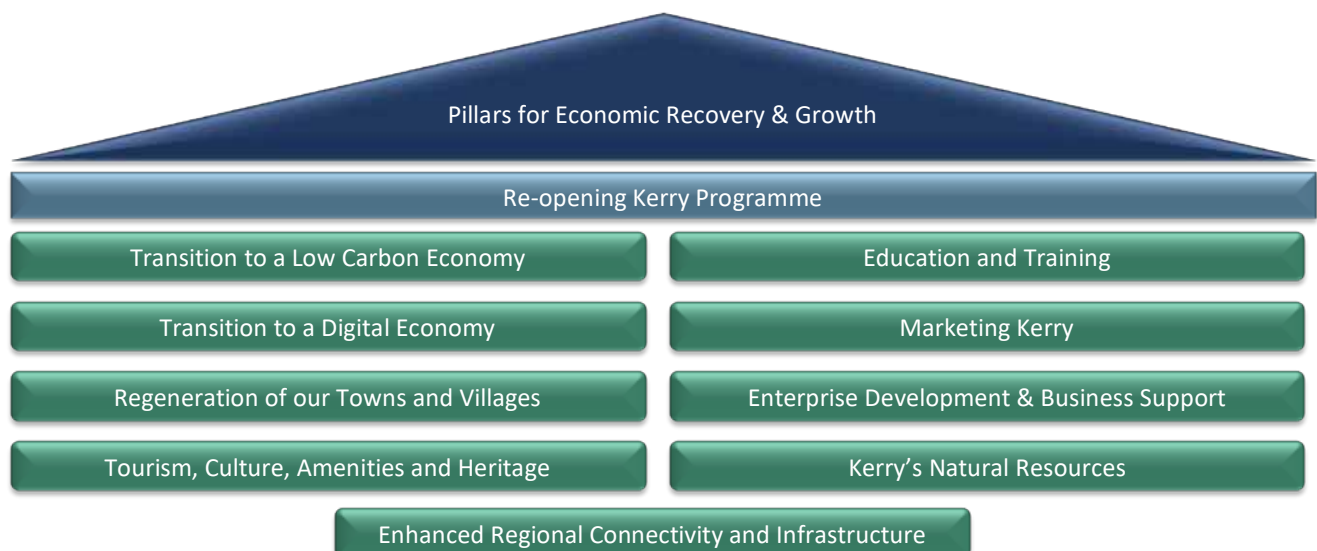




Photo: RDI Hub, Killorglin

NATIONAL POLICY CONTEXT

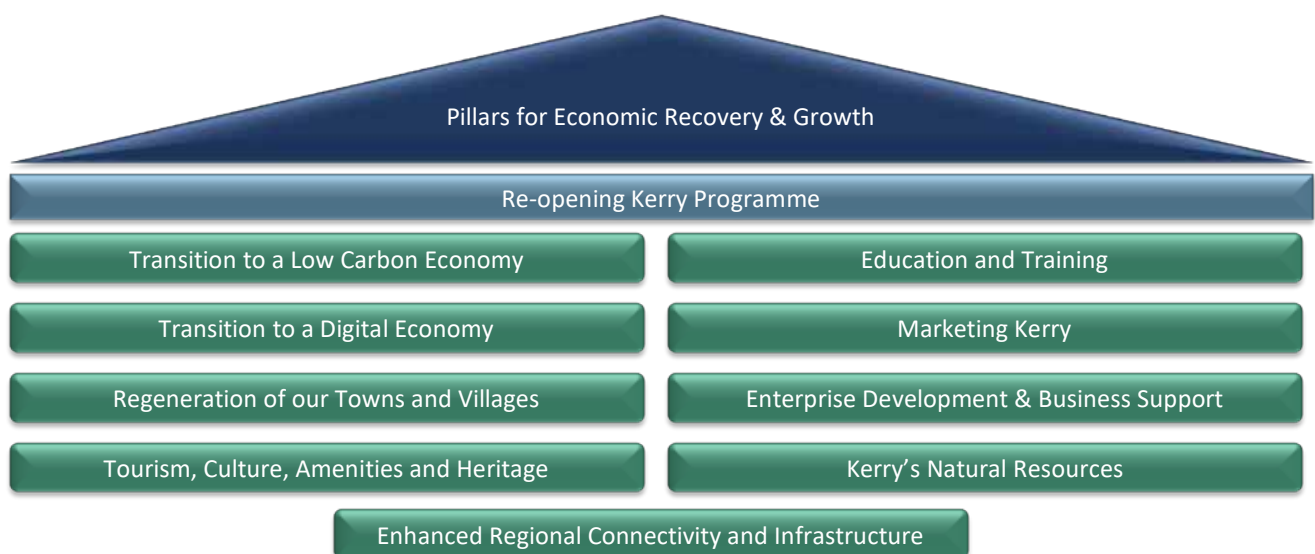
The economic recovery plan will be aligned with and deliver on national, regional, and local strategic objectives. The following is a representative sample of the hierarchy of plans and policies.





ECONOMIC RECOVERY PLAN AND ACTIONS

The Economic Recovery Plan acknowledges the significant work programmes being developed by individual sectors, agencies, and bodies. Through consultation with key stakeholders, the Economic Recovery Plan has been developed under the following economic recovery pillars.



Pillar 1: Re-Opening Kerry Programme

In partnership with key stakeholders, Kerry County Council has a significant programme in place to support the reopening of business in the County as the phased easing of public health restrictions is implemented. This programme has been developed in consultation with the economic stakeholder group and the wider business community.

A number of key themes are included in the programme: Safe Destination Programme, Clean Streets, Outdoor Dining, Shop Local Campaign / Kerry Gift Card, and Community Resilience. The plan also includes marketing and business supports and these are dealt with as economic recovery pillars in their own right.

The Government announced a further easing of restrictions for businesses, on Thursday 28th May 2021. This plan included the reopening of bars and restaurants, for outdoor service, for groups of up to 6 people, from the 7th June, and for such facilities to reopen, for indoor service, from the 5th July 2021.

Kerry County Council has also been actively engaging with An Garda Síochána and the business sector in preparing for the reopening, particularly in relation to outdoor dining, and for increased visitor numbers to our towns, beaches, and amenities. It is acknowledged that, in these exceptional circumstances, there will be a need for enhanced levels of cleaning of our towns and facilities at our beaches.

Senior Management, in Kerry County Council and An Garda Síochána, met with hospitality business representatives at countywide level, in relation to the reopening of this sector. Structures have been put in place for regular meetings between the Council, An Garda Síochána, and the relevant business sectors at Municipal District level, to ensure a co-ordinated and joint approach in managing the reopening. Protocols are also in place for effective communication between Council staff and An Garda Síochána, outside of normal hours, at MD level.

With effect from the start of the June bank holiday weekend, Kerry County Council has put in place the following additional measures.

- Enhanced street cleaning and increased frequency of emptying of bins, with additional resources assigned, and with particular emphasis on weekend cleaning arrangements.
- Extended opening hours for public conveniences in tourist towns and additional cleaning of these facilities.
- Additional bins have been ordered and are to be provided in our towns and primary amenities / beaches.
- Increased inspections of facilities to ensure effective litter control and that public conveniences are regularly cleaned.
- Increased monitoring of premises where street furniture has been licenced to ensure compliance with conditions of grant.
- Engaging directly with businesses, providing take away food services, to ensure the provision, by them, of appropriate refuse collection facilities.

In conjunction with the above, the Council is running a new litter awareness campaign, on social and local media, which will include additional signage at main tourist facilities.

Lifeguard services on our beaches have commenced from Saturday 5th June 2021.

Safe and Welcoming Streets

The COVID-19 pandemic and resulting restrictions have created significant challenges for retailers and businesses. As restrictions ease over the coming months, and shops, retail outlets and business premises reopen, Kerry County Council has developed a **Safe Destination Programme** to ensure that public health advice and guidelines can be adhered to.

This plan, which is based on the Government's "Roadmap for Reopening Society and Business", presumes that social distancing will remain a behavioural requirement for the foreseeable future. As a result, the 'safe and welcoming streets' are intended to be effective ways of ensuring that social distancing can be maintained, as is reasonable and practical, while ensuring that businesses resume trading and provide their goods and services to customers. These measures aim to follow public health guidelines and make the centres of our towns safe and welcoming for shoppers, local residents and staff.

The proposals for the 'safe and welcoming streets' were developed, following a thorough examination of urban street usage, potential additional measures to control and regulate pedestrian and traffic movement, cleaning arrangement, and examination of statutory regulations required on appropriate street furniture. The development of these measures involved extensive consultation with the business community and other agencies.

Kerry is seeking to retain its position as one of the safest destinations in Ireland to visit as it rolls out its new updated **Safe Destination Programme for 2021** to coincide with the gradual reopening of society and the economy. Kerry County Council and its tourism and training partners have launched an updated version of the successful Safe Destination Programme which proved so successful last summer in keeping the County safe. It is envisaged that over 250 businesses and over 2,000 hospitality staff again undertake the specially devised training course from the Kerry Education and Training Board.



The **Safe Destination Programme 2021** builds on the pioneering work done in 2020 and aims to make Kerry the safest and cleanest of destinations to visit and stay in as the county's hospitality and retail businesses reopen. Business premises whose staff have completed the bespoke Kerry ETB training course will receive the 'Safe Destination 2021' badge and qualify for the Fáilte Ireland COVID-19 Safety Charter.

The multifaceted Safe Destination Programme which is supported by Fáilte Ireland, the Irish Hotels Federation and the Kerry Tourism Industry Federation will ensure that those who visit and holiday in Kerry again can do so in the knowledge that it is a safe place to visit and stay. Kerry was Ireland's most popular home holiday destination in 2020 and is seeking to repeat that feat this year.

The Safe Destination Programme includes:

- A bespoke training programme for tourism and retail staff.
- A safer spaces programme (streets, shops, and public spaces).
- Preparing communities to welcome tourists back to the county.
- A tourism marketing campaign to promote staycations.

The bespoke training programme for staff in the tourism and retail industries in the County will be rolled out by the Business Supports Unit of Kerry College (Kerry ETB's Further Education and Training College) over the next few weeks in the lead up to a more expansive re-opening in early June.

The programme will be supported by a marketing campaign to promote Kerry – to the domestic and staycation market – as travel restrictions are relaxed over the coming weeks. The marketing programme is being developed by the Kerry Tourism Industry Federation with support of NEWKD and SKDP under the LEADER programme with the support of Kerry County Council and Fáilte Ireland.

Clean Streets

Kerry County Council is targeting a more extensive additional street cleaning programme in towns throughout the County in support of the reopening and to ensure the county's public places are being presented in a positive manner. The Council has secured additional street bins, and this will be accompanied by strong messaging in relation to "Leave No Trace" and "Take Your Litter Home" campaign.

Outdoor Dining

Following on from the Government decision regarding outdoor dining, Kerry County Council is working with individual businesses in relation to outdoor dining provision in the context of the Safe Streets Programme. Kerry County Council, An Garda Síochána, KTIF and the Kerry Hotels Federation will engage to highlight the importance of responsible behaviour on the streets of the County over the summer period and in the context of outdoor gatherings.

Kerry County Council is currently engaged with individual businesses throughout the county in relation to the issuing of **street furniture permits** to develop outdoor dining options in accordance with government guidelines. Fees for both street furniture licences and temporary permits have been waived. The Council supports socially distanced outdoor dining as an attraction for bringing people back into the town centres. Kerry County Council has explored a number of options in relation to creating additional space for outdoor dining, including temporary pedestrianisation and the use of on-street carparking spaces and will continue to work with business in this regard.

Shop Local Campaign/ Kerry Gift Card

The campaign began in September 2020 to encourage people to shop locally and spend locally and is being re-focused in the context of businesses reopening at this time. The campaign, which is a partnership between Kerry County Council, the Chamber Alliance Network and its local partners and stakeholders, will use local media and social media platforms to promote the 'Shop in Kerry / An Siopa Áitiúil' message. The aim is to encourage consumers in the county to support the local economic recovery by spending locally while observing public health advice and restrictions. The Kerry Gift Card promotion will continue to be rolled out in support of the Shop Local campaign, to encourage its use as a continuing resource for local businesses and establish it as the primary gift card in the county.

Community Resilience

The Community Response Forum continues to meet in support of the wider community response to COVID-19 and the continuing changing dynamics at various stages of lockdown and reopening. The community support line is also continuing its daily service throughout the week. The '**Keep Well**' Campaign continues its rollout of events through the events calendar.

A key objective of the Safe Destination Programme is to assure locals that measures are being adopted to make places and spaces safe and to encourage positive new behaviours among our community and visitors. To prepare for a safe re-opening, a public information campaign has been developed, encouraging responsible behaviour, where people are also assured that the re-opening of Kerry is being managed in consultation with all relevant stakeholders.



Pillar 2: Transition to a Low Carbon Economy

Ireland is undergoing the challenging but essential process of transitioning to a low-carbon, climate resilient and environmentally sustainable economy. Climate change is one of the most important and urgent issues that we face as a community and all sectors in Kerry have a critical role to play in meeting that challenge.

At a European level, the **European Green Deal** is Europe's all sector plan to make the EU's economy sustainable by turning climate and environmental challenges into opportunities and making the transition just and inclusive for all. The target set by Europe is for the EU to be climate neutral by 2050. To do this, a series of initiatives will be undertaken to protect the environment and boost the green economy⁵. These initiatives include a series of measures from clean, affordable, and secure energy, smart sector integration, a 'renovation wave' for the building sector, sustainable and smart mobility, a strategy for offshore wind, greening of the common agricultural policy, the circular economy, biodiversity and many more programmes. The **Just Transition Mechanism (JTM)** will be a key tool to ensure the transition to the neutral economy happens in a fair way, leaving no one behind. It provides targeted support to help mobilise at least €150 billion over the period 2021-2027 in the most affected regions, to alleviate the socio-economic impact of the transition.

Nationally, the **Climate Action Plan 2019** sets out the Government's commitments to tackling climate disruption, and meeting our target of a 7% reduction in overall greenhouse emissions by 2030, followed by a net zero economy by 2050. This means that the amount of green-

house gases released into the atmosphere is dramatically reduced and is balanced by the amount removed by our land, forestry, or technology. Becoming a climate resilient society will help us to cope with the impacts of a changing climate. The Government is currently developing the **2021 Climate Action Plan**.

The draft text of the new **Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Bill**, has been recently been published. This was a key commitment in the Programme for Government. The Bill outlines Ireland's climate targets and sets out a new approach to climate action with the setting of carbon budgets and strengthening of the Climate Change Advisory Council.

As part of Project Ireland 2040, a **Climate Action Fund** has been established, designed to stimulate innovation and pioneer efforts across Irish society. This fund will be used creatively over the coming years in order to foster innovative partnership initiatives in sectors and communities. The design and delivery of these calls will support trials and mainstream new thinking. *The three other Project Ireland 2040 funds, for rural and urban development and for disruptive innovation, will also be oriented towards supporting low-carbon initiatives.*

5 <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1596443911913&uri=CELEX:52019DC0640#document2>



Kerry County Council is uniquely positioned to lead when it comes to climate action and will commit to the development and implementation of a climate change mitigation plan for the county. Locally, Kerry County Council has adopted a **Climate Adaptation Strategy 2019-2024**⁶. This is supported by the **Atlantic Seaboard South Climate Action Regional Office (CARO)**. This region is considered the most climate susceptible of the four Climate Action Regions in Ireland, given its location with regards prevailing wind/storms and Atlantic weather fronts.

The Climate Adaptation Strategy 2019-2024 for Kerry strategy sets out a framework of actions and measures that Kerry County Council proposes to undertake to further embed climate adaptation into all of the local authority's areas of responsibility and to assist communities in adapting to climate change. While there is strong emphasis on local authorities to develop and implement adaptation measures and actions, mitigation measures and actions that seek to combat, reduce, or eliminate the emissions of greenhouse gases are also hugely important. Local authorities have a significant role to play in actively implementing mitigation actions through measures including the design and construction of flood defences, retrofitting of building stock, energy efficient projects, promoting sustainable energy communities and encouraging sustainable transport and land use.

To achieve change, Kerry County Council will require the support of every community across the county to progress towards a new low carbon resilient economy, while delivering on core functions including social, community and economic development.

Under the Government Climate Action Plan, the Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage has sought submissions from local authorities on the identification of a **Decarbonisation Zone**. This is for the

development of demonstrator projects, harnessing a range of technologies and initiatives, to progress low carbon initiatives by Sustainable Energy Communities, in partnership with Kerry County Council. Having regard to the work done to date under the "Dingle Peninsula 2030" project, Kerry County Council has submitted the **Dingle Peninsula** as a Decarbonisation Zone in Kerry. The learnings from the Decarbonisation Zones nationally, will assist the Council in developing its climate action plan, which will be a statutory requirement of the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act, when enacted, and further Decarbonisation Zones.

Munster Technological University has formed a new cluster to accelerate momentum and support the growing **circular bioeconomy in South-West Ireland**, funded by Enterprise Ireland. By 2030, it is expected that 1 million jobs in the bioeconomy will be created across Europe. This is an opportunity to put the South West region at the forefront of innovation, technology, and talent development. With a focus on marine and waste-to-value themes, the Circular Bioeconomy Cluster will foster a network of stakeholder groups including small and medium enterprises, industry, educational institutes, government, and investors to develop a vision, strategy, and action plan for the next two years. The initiative will also have an industry led steering committee to drive the mandate. The MTU will deliver a range of national and EU funded projects aimed at supporting the circular bioeconomy and identify opportunities for Kerry enterprise to engage in and benefit from the circular bioeconomy. The Circular Bioeconomy Cluster in South-West Ireland will have an emphasis on marine and waste-to-value themes.

Kerry Education and Training Board (Kerry ETB) is committed to making a positive impact environmentally, socially, and economically through sustainability leadership, by ensuring all Kerry ETB operations address environmental challenges and support the achievement of a sustainable future for all. The organisation's *Sustainability Strategy 2020 - 2022* includes a new Electricity Generation Policy, a plan to meet society's long-term carbon neutral requirements, the development of Kerry College as a Green Campus, installation of Electric Vehicle Charging points at all Kerry ETB FET Centres and Schools as well as bio-diversity gardens, continued horticulture training and biodiversity planning with community groups. Training and upskilling courses for wind turbine maintenance, electric car maintenance, domestic renewable energy technologies, smart homes, NZEB, 50 Shades Greener for the hospitality sector and the community organisational sustainability training all feature in the expansion of Further Education and Training (FET) courses that meet the needs of the low carbon society. Kerry ETB has plans in place to institute a range of Renewable Domestic Installation courses in 2021/22 for Photovoltaic Panels, Heat Pumps,

6 <http://docstore.kerrycoco.ie/KCCWebsite/environment/climate.pdf>

Solar Panels etc. Kerry College is commencing a range of Marine Activity courses including Marine Engineering and Scuba Diving to complement its Wind Turbine and Power transmission courses designed to support offshore energy production. Kerry ETB through its *Sustainability Strategy 2020-2022* has identified its Kerry College National Outdoor Education and Training Campus as its first facility to become fully energy self-sufficient and carbon neutral.

The importance of the transition to a low carbon economy is reflected across all of the pillars contained in this Economic Recovery Plan. Innovation in the bioeconomy is a major contributor to our indigenous renewable energy resources and as an economic driver for our rural areas.

The following actions present opportunities and initiatives to achieve sectoral diversification in the Green Economy.

Transition to a Low Carbon Economy Actions

#	Actions	Lead	Partners	Deliverables 2021-2023	Deliverables 2023-2030
1	Coordinate and develop the planned transition to a low carbon economy through the adoption of the Climate Action Plan and continued stakeholder engagement.	Kerry County Council	Collaborative public and private sector partners; Climate Action Regional Offices (CARO); KTIF; MTU; RDI Hub	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and adopt Climate Action Plan for the county and coordinate and monitor delivery of the plan. Staff resources deployed to raise and promote environmental awareness. 	Implementation of the actions arising from the Climate Action Plan
2	Provide resilience to the impacts of Climate Change, through the development of a Climate Action Plan for the County, completion of coastal studies on Tralee Bay and Dingle Bay / Castlemaine Harbour, and advancing plans for flood relief measures in Tralee and Kenmare to statutory planning consent.	Kerry County Council	OPW, Department of Environment, Climate & Communications; Climate Action Regional Offices (CARO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The completion of the coastal study report; Advance the Flood Mitigation Schemes for the sanctioned towns in the County 	Secure investment and deliver on recommendations
3	Continue work on energy efficiency retrofitting programme upgrades to Local Authority housing stock.	Kerry County Council	Approved Housing Bodies	The Council Programme (including Approved Housing Bodies) is for 221 units in 2021. Following the expected publication of the new National Housing Strategy – 'Housing for All' in July 2021 there will be a 10 year. social housing programme with annual targets included.	Complete the programme
4	Rollout of an energy efficient low carbon housing construction & maintenance programme for Local Authority housing.	Kerry County Council	Approved Housing Bodies	Deliver the programme for 51 units for 2021. Annual programmes/ target will be in place following annual Department notification of budget allocations.	Achieve the housing targets for Kerry
5	Deliver a Public Lighting Energy Efficiency Programme	Kerry County Council		Upgrade of 10,423 public lights to LED	Finalise the programme and maintain stock

#	Actions	Lead	Partners	Deliverables 2021-2023	Deliverables 2023-2030
6	Continue the 'Greening' of the Kerry County Council Building Campus and upgrades to carbon efficient Plant and Machinery	Kerry County Council	SEAI, CARO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roof Upgrade County Buildings; Wall Fabric and Window Upgrade County Buildings; • EV Charging County Buildings; • Lighting system upgrade County Buildings; • Roof Upgrade Machinery Yard Building; • Killarney Fire Station Extension; • Energy Assessment and Design for Corporate Buildings throughout the County; • Waste Management and Recycling in all Corporate Buildings 	Energy Efficient Retrofit to Corporate Buildings throughout the County
7	Support sustainable development of Electric Vehicle charging facilities and to integrate Electric Vehicle charging point infrastructure within residential, commercial, and mixed-use developments	Private Sector / Industry / Government of Ireland	Kerry County Council	Enhance the EV charging infrastructure of the county in accordance with national guidance.	Further enhance the network to deal with increasing demand
8	Deliver a range of national and EU funded projects aimed at supporting a circular bioeconomy	Shannon ABC/ Circular Bioeconomy Research Group (MTU/ LIT)	National and EU	<p>Opportunities for Kerry enterprise to engage in and benefit from the circular bioeconomy :</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Biowill - Optimisation of bioactive extraction from forestry products 2. BIOSWITCH: Encouraging Brand Owners to Switch-to-Biobased in highly innovative ecosystems: 3. Efficient Food: Understanding the nature and extent of food losses and food waste from primary production in Ireland. 4. Biorefinery Glas: Small-scale Farmer-led Green Biorefinery 5. COOPID: COOPeration of bioeconomy clusters for bio-based knowledge transfer via Innovative Dissemination techniques in the primary production sector 6. AGROBRIDGES: Developing business models and supporting best practices in sustainable short food supply chains 7. WAVA - Disruptive technologies to valorise food Waste into Value-added commodities 	

#	Actions	Lead	Partners	Deliverables 2021-2023	Deliverables 2023-2030
9	Establish and operationalise a Circular Bioeconomy Cluster in South-West Ireland with an emphasis on marine and waste-to-value themes.	MTU	Enterprise Ireland; CircBio Research Group at MTU & Shannon ABC; Project Steering Group: Kerry Group, Carbery Group, Nutramara, Dillon Waste, Allihies Seafood	Cluster up to 60 members <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New products and services • New value chains • Innovation Projects • Increase Tech and Knowledge Transfer • Skills and Training Course • High value job creation • Increased uptake of biobased alternatives • Reduction in carbon emissions and waste 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High value job creation • Increased uptake of biobased alternatives • Reduction in carbon emissions and waste
10	Develop social enterprises and the circular economy within local communities to benefit environmental protection, employment generation and community development.	MTU	Enterprise Ireland; CircBio Research Group at MTU & Shannon ABC; Project Steering Group: Kerry Group, Carbery Group, Nutramara, Dillon Waste, Allihies Seafood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circular Bioeconomy Cluster Ideation and Entrepreneur News, Events and Networks • Campaign on benefits of circular bioeconomy and economy for communities • Education and training programme for communities on how to create circular economy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased uptake of biobased alternatives • Reduction in local carbon emissions and waste
11	Consider mechanisms to deliver affordable sustainable public transport service for key towns in the County	National Transport Authority (NTA)	Kerry County Council; Kerry Chambers; Local Link Kerry; Collaborative Partners	Increase public bus services in accordance with the national Bus Connect Programme.	
12	Deploy two Electric Vehicle buses on the Dingle peninsula, Co. Kerry. (Action 113a National Climate Action Strategy)	D/Transport	NTA, Local Link Kerry, Dingle Hub	Electric vehicle buses deployed to Dingle Peninsula	Expand use of ELV buses in the County, based on pilot findings.
13	Provide reskilling and retraining as opportunities arise with the transition to low carbon economy	KETB; MTU	Local Development Companies (LDCs); Regional Skills Forum; Kerry County Council	Identify skills development requirements and develop and deliver courses.	Continual assessment of skills needs in the County and roll out of skills development.
14	Promote the community energy initiatives that are implemented and supported through The Dingle Hub.	Dingle Hub; NEWKD; MaREI, ESB Networks; WK Dairy Farmer's SEC; Corca Dhuibhne Community Energy	Údarás na Gaeltachta; Kerry County Council; SEAI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete Sustainable Mobility pilot project; Complete development phase of Anaerobic Digestion pilot; Complete three Community Funded Energy projects. • Sensor technology installed on 30 farms; 6 new agri-food/ agri-tourism businesses established through EU Ploutos project • WKDFSEC Energy Masterplan complete and energy efficiency measures undertaken in at least 20 farms 	Implement countywide initiatives based on learnings of the pilot

#	Actions	Lead	Partners	Deliverables 2021-2023	Deliverables 2023-2030
15	Ensure continuation of the community initiatives which are being rolled out as part of the EU Project REACT (Recovery Assistance for Cohesion and the Territories of Europe)	Údarás na Gaeltachta	EU REACT Partners; Community Cooperatives; Kerry County Council	EU REACT programme rollout (2021/2022)	
16	Support local enterprises in the areas of research, technology and green innovations that work towards a carbon-neutral circular economy	Kerry County Council Local Enterprise Office; MTU; KETB; Local Development Companies; Kerry Chamber Network		Financial supports, mentoring, skills development, and LEAN programmes	
17	Support initiatives to identify and develop decarbonising zones within the County	Kerry County Council; Dingle Creativity and Innovation Hub		Pilot Dingle as decarbonising zone for the county.	Transfer the learnings of this pilot to other areas of the county.
18	Work with all industry to develop Kerry as a Low Carbon tourism destination.	Kerry Tourism Industry Federation (KTIF)	Kerry County Council; Kerry Chamber Network; Fáilte Ireland	Develop a plan for industry	



Photo: Wazp 3D Printing



Photo: Agritech Centre of Excellence

Pillar 3: Transition to a Digital Economy

One of the primary drivers of structural change in the global and national economy is the transformation to digital, accelerated by technological breakthroughs for example digital technologies, artificial intelligence, automation, 3D printing, bio-based production and nanomaterials. These technological changes are transforming the production and distribution of goods and services, creating new businesses and business models, and delivering private and public services in new ways (OECD, 2018b; World Bank, 2019)⁷.



There is evidence that the transition to digitalisation can lead to high quality jobs, however there are also risks to some roles in the context of deployment across the economy. Continuous development of the workforce will be the primary driver of jobs and sectoral resilience and inclusive

transformation. This will be delivered through **research, upskilling and reskilling** to match new opportunities. The **Digital Council** pillar of the County's forthcoming **Digital Strategy** will provide a framework for the internal transition. Kerry County Council's Digital Strategy will map out approaches to maximising the benefits of the infrastructure delivered in the National Broadband Plan to the County as a whole.

The COVID-19 pandemic has clearly illustrated the digital divide across geographical regions as well as socio-economic groups and the potential impact this may have on current economic and social activity as well as life opportunities. It is essential for our economic competitiveness and resilience to provide new and continual re-investment in the quality of our digital infrastructure networks across towns, villages, and rural areas. 'Our Rural Future', the national Regional Development Plan 2021-2025 aims to transform digital connectivity for rural communities and enterprises through the delivery of high speed broadband to every part of the country, ensuring equality of access to digital services and supporting the diversification of rural economies and jobs through digital technologies. The continued investment in the **National Broadband Plan** is key for the economic development of the regions

⁷ Addressing Employment Vulnerability as Part of a Just Transition in Ireland, National Economic & Social Council (NESC) No 149 March 2020.

and in particular rural counties like Kerry. The provision of supporting infrastructure in economic and community hubs in urban and rural areas is essential to allow communities full participation in the opportunities afforded by the digital age. The rollout of the Broadband Connection Points (BCPs) in the County will continue to be supported by Kerry County Council, Local Development Companies, and local communities.

The partners in the Kerry Economic Stakeholder Forum are committed to showcasing County Kerry as a 'Smart' County. The **Digital Enterprise & Employment** pillar of the Digital Strategy includes supporting the development of digitally enabled jobs in the county as well supporting traditional business to operate in the digital world.

COVID-19 has brought remote and blended working to the fore. The strategic objective of the Government's new strategy on remote working – "**Making Remote Work**" – is to ensure that remote and blended working is a permanent feature in the Irish workplace in a way that maximises economic, social, and environmental benefits.

The importance of remote or blended working is also reflected in the **Atlantic Economic Corridor and Connected Hubs Network** which facilitates collaboration between multiple stakeholders to enable the network of hubs in the region to act as drivers of economic and social activity. The impact of COVID-19 in the context of remote, blended or hub-based working is very considerable. The Connected Hubs Network will identify and deliver valuable solutions that will impact on the capacity and operational efficiency of the hubs and raise the standard of facilities on offer. Enterprise hubs are at the centre of *Town Centre Revival*, they are vehicles to support *Remote Working* and deliver the *Digital Agenda*, and they have the potential to contribute to the *Climate Agenda* through a reduction in transportation.

Through the AEC and national Connected Hubs Network a new and dynamic suite of technology and software solutions is being brought to the hubs in Kerry. This will digitise the administration, marketing, networking, and data

gathering functions of hubs and will incorporate systems for data capture, desk or events bookings, marketing and promotion, collaboration and smart management.

Kerry ETB supports the transition to a digital economy through Further Education and Training (FET) courses that deliver digital literacy skills to citizens and communities across Kerry, as well as business and industry in the region. Provision of courses such as Software Development, Programming, Cyber Security, Digital Media Production and Social Media and Marketing are essential for the new digital era. ICT skills and technology enhanced learning are an important element of professional development for teaching and learning, management, and administration of staff. These skills are incorporated into the everyday curriculum in schools and FET centres. Kerry ETB as part of its sustainability strategy is progressing the move to paperless delivery with advanced Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) implementation across all Further Education and Training provision.

As a Technological University, the **Munster Technological University (MTU)** is rooted in its regional connectedness, while reaching out nationally and internationally through its teaching, learning and research collaborations. As a research-driven University, MTU researchers play a key role in preparing our students, our industries and businesses, and our society for a rapidly changing world with a focus on the needs of our surrounding regional economy and society. MTU researchers, located in six campuses across Munster, work on projects that address the needs of Ireland's South West region and beyond. The University campuses in Kerry, support a thriving research community of over 200 researchers including academic staff, research professional staff and research students many of whom are linked to one of our three research centres: Shannon ABC, IMaR and the UNESCO Chair. MTU's research is multi-disciplinary, sustainable and takes advantage and cognizance of the socio-economic profile of our surrounding region. MTU's activities support social and economic development through partnerships and delivers the talented individuals and informed leaders needed to respond to external challenges now and in the future.

Transition to Digital Economy Actions

#	Actions	Lead	Partners	Deliverables 2021-2023	Deliverables 2023-2030
1	Support the continued rollout of the National Broadband Plan (NBP).	National Broadband Ireland; Dept. of Rural and Community Development (DRCD)	Kerry County Council	Accelerate the rollout of the NBP	Finalise rollout of NBP
2	Launch a Digital Strategy for County Kerry and implement the key actions identified.	Kerry County Council	Multiple external stakeholders in the County.	Strategy; Annual Action Plans	Annual Action Plans
3	Provide reskilling and retraining as opportunities arise with the transition to digital economy	KETB; MTU	Regional Skills Forum; Local Development Companies (LDCs); Community Sector	Identify and deliver appropriate training based on needs assessment.	
4	Support continued rollout of the EU Wifi4EU initiative	Dept. of Rural and Community Development (DRCD)	Kerry County Council; Kerry Chamber Network	WIFI4EU available in Tralee, Killarney, Killorglin and Listowel.	Expand the provision of the WIFI4EU to other locations within the County
5	Continue to facilitate remote working infrastructure in the county through the Atlantic Economic Corridor (AEC) and Connected Hubs project ('Our Rural Future')	Dept. of Rural and Community Development (DRCD); Western Development Commission (WDC); Kerry County Council	Kerry Hub Network; National Hub Network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roll out of ICT/book-ing system to all hubs in Kerry; • Marketing initiatives delivered for Hubs along the AEC; • Training initiatives rolled out to Connected Hub Network. 	Continue to support the strengthening of the AEC and Connected Hubs network through engagement and collaboration.
6	Advance 9 Community Based Broadband Connection Points (BCPs) in the County during 2021 and work towards the establishment of others.	Kerry County Council; Dept. of Rural and Community Development (DRCD)	Local Development Companies	Complete the establishment of the 9 BCPs	Identify and deliver additional BCPs; Work with the BCP network to maximise the benefits to communities
7	Ensure that additional capacity for remote and/or blended work in the County is identified in a strategic way and is evidence-based	Kerry County Council; Údarás na Gaeltachta	Kerry Hub Network; KETB; MTU; Industry; Local Communities; Local Development Companies (LDCs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify demand for further remote working infrastructure in the County • Submit grant applications to support roll out 	
8	Implement the Smart Beach programme	Kerry County Council; Atlantic Economic Corridor (AEC)	DRCD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pilot at Inch beach implemented; • Toolbox Developed; • Seek funding opportunities to roll out to other key beaches 	Roll out of Smart Beaches to other key beaches in the county
9	Support the Gteic network of rural Gaeltacht Hubs	Údarás na Gaeltachta	Kerry County Council; Dept. of Rural & Community Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of gteic Uíbh Ráthaigh ag Baile 'n Sceilg ; • Continue development and support of the Gteic network. 	



Pillar 4: Regeneration of Our Towns and Villages

As an integral part of the National Planning Framework, the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region provides for a targeted growth in population for the region of 343,500 to 2031, and in the Kerry context a population increase of 23,000 for the same period. This represents a population increase of 15.6% over the 10-year period.

To achieve this growth in population in a sustainable manner will require significant investment in infrastructure, services, and the expansion of the economic sector to create the necessary employment opportunities. An overriding challenge is the management of this targeted growth and development in ways which facilitate economic opportunity and access to appropriate services, which are environmentally sustainable, and which protect and enhance people's livelihoods, health, and quality of life. This challenge has been increased by the negative economic impact upon the county by COVID-19, with Kerry County Council and other key agencies working to promote Kerry as a safe destination for visitors, workers, and residents alike.

Some of the challenges facing the county in providing for this growth will be to ensure that the communities created, and existing communities, will have a high quality of life, in an environment with good access to appropriate life-long services at a reasonable distance from where they live. Well planned quality housing developments, with easy access to school and employment opportunities are required. The regeneration of our town and village centres and where necessary repurposing of vacant units will provide new energy to these areas and make towns and

villages attractive places to live. Investment is required in the delivery of infrastructure that improves the liveability and quality of life of both urban and rural places.

The NPF has identified fundamental objectives based on the importance of urban settlements, and the enhancement of people's experience of living and working in and visiting urban places in Ireland.

The actions under "Regeneration of Our Towns and Villages" pillar have been identified in response to the significant challenges facing towns and villages relating to vacancy and

underuse of buildings and a preference for living outside of town and village centres. The policy both nationally and at a county level is a 'town centre first' policy which focuses on the viability, resilience and vitality of our town and villages both for residential population and as centres for retail and services, information, learning, innovation and R&D, administration, healthcare, as well as offering choice and opportunity, employment, connectivity, and community in support of large rural hinterlands.

Central to this is the creation of *place making*, a multi-faceted approach to strengthening the sense of place through enhancing urban attractiveness, liveability, and accessibility, delivered through high quality public realm

There is a need to re-imagine and re-invest in our towns and rural areas to encourage local people and visitors to spend time here and to make these attractive locations in which to invest.

and connectivity, smart travel, and modal switching. Due to the change in the economic behaviour of society over a prolonged period of time there is a need to reimagine and reinvest in our towns and rural areas to encourage local people and visitors to spend time here and to make these attractive locations in which to invest. This will require investment to deal with physical decline in town and village centres, dereliction, and investment in enabling infrastructure that will provide certainty for future sustainable growth. Providing employment, educational and social opportunities close to where people live is key to this long-term sustainable vision.

Funding Streams to support Regeneration of Towns and Villages

There are a number of funding streams which the County has and will continue to avail of to help increase the vitality and viability of the urban centres of the County.

Kerry County Council has undergone a significant level of re-organisation – which has enabled the organisation to be positioned to avail of investment from funding initiatives; Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF), Urban Regeneration Development Fund (URDF), Town and Village Schemes which have, to date, proved very beneficial across the County. In the period of 2020 alone, Kerry County Council has successfully applied for 480 grants across the County. It must be noted that the co-funding requirements for these schemes and the extensive Capital Programme are significant.

The **Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF)** focuses on the compact growth and sustainable development of Ireland's large urban centres/ larger towns with population in excess of 10,000 and has a fund of €2 billion covering the period 2019 to 2027. Kerry County Council and its collaborative partners applied for funds under the URDF programme in May 2020 and were successful in securing 32 million euro for Tralee and Killarney, the two towns eligible for this scheme.

Tralee Town Centre Regeneration

Tralee is the Southern Region's fourth largest urban settlement outside the cities. Tralee is the County Capital and main administrative, retail, health, third level education and service centre for County Kerry. The long-term vision for Tralee is to enhance its position as a driver of County and Regional prosperity and to build on its status as a university town through a sustained regeneration programme that creates a quality, vibrant and attractive urban centre. A 'Destination Town' that is competitive nationally and internationally in attracting investment, talent, enterprise, and visitors. The Council will seek to regenerate Tralee as a regional economic driver through boosting the supply of high-quality employment spaces, residential

opportunities, and the development of an excellent quality environment, by means of strategic investment in office development, public realm improvements, leisure, and amenity areas. To date significant investment has taken place in the delivery of this vision in Tralee by Kerry County Council supported by grants under Active Travel, Urban Regeneration & Development Fund (URDF) and the European Regional Development Fund.

The Framework Model for Tralee, which was submitted in support of the Urban Regeneration & Development Fund grant application, prioritises actions under four intervention themes. This successful submission resulted in an approved capital investment for Tralee of €21.2m. The action areas prioritised include:

- Town Centre Public Realm Improvements
- Development of Tralee's Market Quarter
- Address dereliction in Town Centre
- Redevelopment of Primary Entrances to Town
- Island of Geese Innovation District/Community outdoor space
- Master-planning for future growth

The planned investment outlined in this plan will focus delivery of an attractive, vibrant town centre, with sustainable transport links, building on the strong research potential of the Munster Technological University with its emerging links with health care providers.

The Plan also seeks to continue the development of Tralee as a Centre of Activity Tourism, capitalising on its strategic location on the Wild Atlantic Way, Gateway to the Dingle Peninsula, linking long distance walking routes the Dingle Way/Kerry Camino with the North Kerry/Shannon Way, its emerging Greenway links to Fenit and Ballyseedy Woods and its strong accommodation base. This Plan will support the actions of the Cliff Coast Visitor Experience Development Plan currently being prepared.

The various elements outlined in the Economic Recovery Plan are complementary in reinforcing Tralee as a location both for residential and commercial development, for promoting innovation and providing an attractive centre for local residents, students, and visitors.

Killarney Town Centre Regeneration

Killarney is a settlement balancing protection of an exceptional natural environment, ecology and heritage with inherent strengths and specialist role in tourism, culture, amenity, and other dynamic economic activities. Killarney is part of the Kerry Hub Knowledge Triangle with Tralee and Killorglin and on the strategic road network linking with the Atlantic Economic Corridor. Killarney occupies a very significant place in Irish tourism. Killarney's location in the Killarney National Park which was awarded UNESCO

Biosphere Reserve is significantly important, the challenge is to manage Killarney's growth sustainably and to link the town with the national park.

The vision for Killarney seeks to mirror the world class natural environment that is Killarney National Park with an exceptional urban experience that sets Killarney apart as a world class tourism destination. The vision encompasses an expansion and diversification of the town's core offering through creating an authentic tourist experience building on and extending the existing culture and heritage of the town through the creation of Cultural and Art/Craft Quarters, creating and defining linkages between areas of historic and cultural significance and merging the National Park as part of the town's core experience.

The National Park is of key strategic importance to Killarney and the County. It will be important to balance the development of the park with its fundamental role of nature and conservation. A number of Outdoor Infrastructure projects have progressed in Killarney in the past twelve months. December 2020 saw the completion of Tomies access road, which has after a number of years opened up the Western side of Killarney National Park. The development of the Flesk Walkway is currently underway, and this is an important cycling link between the Kenmare Estate - Killarney House and the Muckross Estate. 2021 will also see the upgrade of access to Torc Mountain which is a key piece of outdoor infrastructure for locals. The Local Authority has partnered with the National Parks & Wildlife Service and this has worked extremely well in recent years in leveraging funding for investment in outdoor infrastructure.

The Framework Model for Killarney, which was submitted in support of the Urban Regeneration & Development Fund (URDF) grant application, prioritises actions under five intervention themes. This successful submission resulted in an approved capital investment for Killarney of €21.4m through URDF and Kerry County Council funding. The action areas prioritised include:

- Town Centre Redevelopment - Áras Phádraig Cultural Hub & Regeneration Site/ Theatre & Community Space
- Cultural Heritage Experience (Glebe Craft Quarter Feasibility plan & Study)
- Public Realm improvements - Kenmare Place/ Main street/ College Square/ High Street/ New Street/ Beech Road

Regional Towns' Regeneration

The regional towns identified in the County Development Plan have a strategic importance due to their location and the services they provide within the towns and to the surrounding hinterlands. For each of the regional towns in the County, there is a pipeline of projects at various stages of

development. These projects have been initiated by local communities, public and private sector partners with the objective of stimulating and strengthening the economic core and economic potential of these communities.

To date **Listowel** has been supported through the development of a Food Hub and funding to protect heritage buildings in the town. Grant funding proposals are being prepared to support the further implementation of strategic infrastructure projects in this important regional centre to realise the economic potential of the Greenway and the cultural and heritage attributes of the town.

Town and Village funding has recently been secured for **Castleisland** to implement enhanced connectivity measures between neighbourhoods, schools, community facilities and amenities and to provide for a more pedestrian friendly environment. A study of the vacant and derelict properties in Castleisland will also be undertaken and actionable recommendations identified. Further grant applications will be prepared to enable the development of infrastructure projects and amenity areas in the town.

In **Killorglin**, the Chamber Alliance with the support of Kerry County Council, has recently completed the development of a regeneration plan, building on the town's strong employment base, its state of the art RDI Hub, its location in the heart of the Reek's district and its development as a retail and residential centre. Grant proposals are being developed to support the implementation of the plan. The RDI Hub, a partnership between Fexco, Kerry County Council and Munster Technological University, and supported by Enterprise Ireland was formerly launched in Killorglin in 2020. The hub offers a state-of-the-art workspace for technology teams, located in Killorglin.

Dingle is a major tourism and cultural destination. The redevelopment of the **Dingle** Hospital and Workhouse as a multi-use community building is a significant infrastructure project led by Údarás na Gaeltachta and supported by public and private sector partners. Once completed, the building will house the Dingle Creativity and Innovation Hub, visitor experience centre, community facilities and the Transition Dingle Peninsula project. Other infrastructure projects in train for Dingle include the enhancement of Green Street and Holy Ground and the development of Dingle Town Park and the Waterfront. A further successful RRDF project is improving infrastructure on the Sleah Head Drive.

Kenmare is recognised nationally and internationally as a tourism destination in its own right and an important heritage town on the Ring of Kerry. Kenmare's potential as a sustainable tourism destination and strategic regional centre will be further supported through the delivery of waste/water infrastructure, the development of amenity lands and additional car parking facilities.

To date **Cahersiveen** has been supported through RRDF funding to implement the Cahersiveen Town Centre Regeneration Plan. This plan includes the development of a

'Daniel O'Connell Quarter', the repurposing of buildings in support of innovation and education and the enhancement of public realm in the town. Cahersiveen has been identified as a Gaeltacht Services Town in support of the Uíbh Ráthach Gaeltacht.

It is proposed to develop **Ballybunion's** economic potential as a strong Tourist Destination through the implementation of the Ballybunion Development Plan and the emerging actions from Fáilte Ireland's North Kerry – West Clare Destination Experience Development Plan. The recently announced 'Platforms for Growth' funding will provide shared beach facilities at the resort.

Milltown is the fastest growing town in the county with a significant inter-censal population increase. To meet the potential of this growing centre it is proposed to develop a Masterplan for Milltown to strengthen the town core, identification of public realm works, reuse/development of vacant and derelict sites/properties.

The Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF)

The Fund provides investment to support rural renewal, strengthen and build resilience in rural communities and assist in the regeneration of towns and villages with a population of less than 10,000, and outlying areas. This is a competitive funding process with funds of €1 billion covering the period 2019 to 2027. The re-use and regeneration of buildings and the return of people living in these smaller settlements are essential catalysts to transforming the capacity and potential of Kerry's towns and villages. This coupled with investment in our towns and villages through regeneration, public realm improvements and the appropriate adaptation and re-use of our built heritage, tackling vacancy and dereliction, can create a sense of place offering a retail and tourism experience, enabling these settlements to compete with larger settlements and online challenges. The RRDF can prove a catalyst for significant additional public and private sector investment in the delivery of both residential and commercial developments. Kerry County Council will continue to collaborate with strategic partners at both National and Local level to deliver projects of scale that can have major economic and social benefits to rural settlements. The actions under this section outline the development proposals for the Regional Towns in the County, the impact on their rural hinterlands and which will form the basis for grant applications over the period covered by this plan.

RRDF Projects Funded– Cahersiveen, Valentia, Listowel Food Hub, Dingle Workhouse, Sleah Head Drive, Uíbh Ráthach Taskforce, Baile na Sceilg Digital Hub.

Town and Village Renewal Scheme

This scheme was developed by the Department of Rural and Community Development in 2016 to support measures which rejuvenate rural and urban towns and villages throughout Ireland. It is managed on behalf of the Department by the Local Authorities. The 2020 Town & Village Renewal Scheme was tailored to address the new challenges associated with COVID-19 and support the economic and social recovery of our rural towns and villages. The 2021 Town and Village scheme was opened for applications in May 2021. The 2021 Scheme places particular emphasis on projects supporting remote working and enhancing town centre living. Projects that enable the economic and social recovery of our towns and villages in response to COVID-19 will continue to be supported. The 2021 scheme has similar themes focusing on the following areas:

- Tackling dereliction in town centres
- Turning vacant properties into remote working and community spaces
- Supporting Local Authorities to run innovative marketing campaigns targeted at attracting remote workers to their county
- Investing in green spaces, parks, and recreational amenities
- Upgrading and improving shop fronts and streetscapes on Main Streets
- Projects that support and enhance the night-time economy and add vibrancy to town centres

Water Services

Development in Water Services in County Kerry is primarily funded by Irish Water (IW) with some funding coming from the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage for Rural Water.

The Small Town and Village Growth Programme for water and wastewater infrastructure has indicated that €12,458,000 has been allocated to progress selected upgrades in Kerry. National and Regional policy has recently highlighted the importance of these settlements as key components to address and reverse rural decline, reduce car dependency and transition to a low carbon economy with the allied reduction of carbon emissions. In addition, having regard to the rural nature of Kerry, its peninsula nature and its peripheral location in the state, the economic importance of these smaller towns and villages are vital to sustaining rural communities.

Aligned to this, it is recommended that projects prioritised under the IW capital investment plan would create growth in towns, villages, and settlements to facilitate development and investment.

Private Water and Wastewater upgrades are facilitated through the Framework for Multi-Annual Rural Water Programme funded by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. The current Programme is the 2019 – 2021 with an allocation for Kerry of €4,354,750.

Housing Programme

The objective of the Kerry County Council's Housing Section is to maximise provision of suitable accommodation for those who are unable to provide their own, utilising the various social housing options, to manage and maintain the Council's housing stock and facilitate the development of sustainable communities.

All services are provided in line with National Policy and the Government has indicated that a new 10-year National Housing Strategy will be published shortly – '**Housing for All**' under the Programme for Government. It is anticipated under this Strategy that Local Government will continue to be central to delivery of housing.

Over the lifetime of the Programme it has been identified that a total of 33,000 new housing units per annum will be required to meet Housing needs in the state. Within this social housing units will be of the order of 10,000 annually.

The current activity levels and this medium-term commitment to a large housing programme has significant potential not only on the social and community themes but on economic development in Kerry with an outlet/demand for significant construction and related activities.

Housing Delivery Programme – increasing social housing stock

A primary focus of the current overall delivery programme is the provision of additional social housing units under capital programmes supported by Government – in particular, the construction of new units by Kerry County Council and also in partnership with Approved Housing Bodies working in Kerry.

While specific annual targets are awaited, there are 205 houses currently under construction by contractors with an approximate value of €41 million with a further 38 due to start in 2021. In addition, the Voids Programme valued at €1.3 million will bring back into use approximately 78 houses in 2021. This provides employment generally for local contractors. There is a further €1.3 million investment of Energy Efficiency Retrofit Programme (EERP), which will enable approximately 51 units to be completed in 2021.

It is anticipated that ongoing programme following the launch of the new Strategy in July could be of this order but at a minimum will be 100 new units per annum.

In parallel to the Capital programme to provide newly constructed units there are other programmes to increase public housing stock, through Acquisitions/Buy & Renew, the Repair and Lease Scheme, Lease Scheme and through partnership with Approved Housing Bodies.

Over the course of 2019-2021, in excess of 650 units will be delivered through the housing capital programme.

Existing stock – upgrading and refurbishment

In addition to the significant capital programme, Kerry County Council has a range of other construction activities which involve the repair and maintenance of the Council's stock of approximately 4,300 Units and availability of grant funding for adaptation of private houses. Programmes including Housing Maintenance, Voids Programme, Adaptations and Extensions and Energy Efficiency programmes involves significant activity and spend in construction activities much of which is procured by the Council.

Over the course of 2019-2021, in excess of 650 units will be delivered through the housing capital programme.

Regeneration of our Towns and Villages Actions

#	Actions	Lead	Partners	Deliverables 2021-2023	Deliverables 2023-2030
1	Rollout of Kerry County Council's "Reopening Plan" (includes Safe Destination, Clean Streets, Outdoor Dining, Shop Local Campaign, Kerry Gift Card, Business Supports, Marketing Kerry)	Kerry County Council	Kerry ETB; Irish Hotels Federation; Kerry Tourism Industry Federation; Kerry Chamber Network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A bespoke training programme for tourism and retail staff • A safer spaces programme (streets, shops and public spaces) • Preparing communities to welcome tourists back to the county • A tourism marketing campaign to promote staycations • Enhanced street cleaning and increased frequency of emptying of bins, with additional resources assigned, and with particular emphasis on weekend cleaning arrangements. • Extended opening hours for public conveniences in tourist towns and additional cleaning of these facilities. • Additional bins have been ordered and are to be provided in our towns and primary amenities / beaches • Increased inspections of facilities to ensure effective litter control and that public conveniences are regularly cleaned • Increased monitoring of premises where street furniture has been licenced to ensure compliance with conditions of grant • Engaging directly with businesses, providing take away food services, to ensure the provision, by them, of appropriate refuse collection facilities. 	
2	Support the implementation of actions under the Rural Development Policy 2021-2025 "Our Rural Future" thematic objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assisting the regeneration, repopulation and development of rural towns and villages. 	Kerry County Council and collaborative partners	State Agencies; Údarás na Gaeltachta; MTU/KETB/ LDC/KCN/KTIF/ KerrySciTech	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver opportunities for the redevelopment of Brownfield sites for residential, commercial and community uses; • Develop collaborations with multi stakeholders in key settlements and identify opportunities for regeneration. 	Continue to support the implementation of objectives under the national Our Rural Future plan.
3	Continue to prioritise, develop, and deliver projects following funding calls to enable our towns and villages to become resilient, viable and vibrant places to live, work, visit, study, socialise and attract investment. Funding calls include but not limited to RRDF, URDF, Town & Village Renewal, ORIS, Sports Capital, Smarter Travel.	Kerry County Council and collaborative partners	State Agencies; Local Development Companies (LDCs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and Submit appropriate grant applications across the 5 Municipal Districts; • Deliver approved projects with key partners. 	Animate projects across the county through engagement with local economic and community interests.
4	Identify opportunities for funding to support the development of our towns and villages through European Funding Programmes	Kerry County Council; MTU; Local Development Companies (LDCs)	Collaborative Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and Submit appropriate grant applications; • Deliver approved projects with key partners. 	

#	Actions	Lead	Partners	Deliverables 2021-2023	Deliverables 2023-2030
5	Delivery of the National Housing Programme in Kerry	Kerry County Council	AHBs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 243 units under construction (2021); • Subsequent delivery programme targets following expected publication of "Housing for All" National Strategy in July 2021. • Delivery of an extensive housing programme across the county; • Provision of assisted housing developments to revitalise our towns and villages across the county and support housing needs 	
6	Detailed assessment of Vacant Buildings in Town & Village Centres for potential reuse for residential, commercial or community use	Kerry County Council	Kerry Chamber Network; Property owners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessments to be undertaken in all towns; • Engage with property owners around potential for development of vacant/derelict buildings. 	Deliver sustainable solutions for town centre properties
7	Develop a county-wide Retail Strategy	Kerry County Council	Kerry Chamber Network; Retail Sector; Kerry County Council LEO	Strategy Prepared.	Recommendations to guide policy and plan.
8	Develop "Smart" town, village and hinterland plans that: involve their own communities; are consistent with the relevant planning frameworks; and in turn influence those and other plans and initiatives.	Local Development Companies	Kerry County Council; Dingle Creativity and Innovation Hub; Kerry Chamber Network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Kerry & West Limerick Research project ongoing. • Dingle Smart plan as part of "preparatory" project involving 21 areas throughout the EU. Implement recommendations. 	
9	Implement Digital Town Initiatives	Kerry County Council; Kerry Chamber Network; Dingle Hub	Collaborative Partners	Digital town initiatives delivered	
10	Deliver on the successful projects announced under the URDF/ERDF and Destination Town for Tralee including the implementation of the Island of Geese Masterplan positioning Tralee as a Regional Economic Driver and Destination Town	Kerry County Council	Collaborative Partners; Tralee Chamber Alliance; MTU; KETB; Iarnród Éireann; Kerry GAA; Heritage Council; Fáilte Ireland	<p>Tralee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public realm design and implementation • Masterplan for John Joe Sheehy Road Area • Design for Casement Station/Austin Stacks Plazas • Deliver investment to tackle dereliction in town centre • Feasibility and designing for Town Square <p>Deliver on the Island of Geese Masterplan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Linear Park • Community Space • Community Building • Residential Development • Finalise a decision in relation to the Court House • Explore with Public & Private Sector in relation to employment opportunities 	Finalisation of the delivery of these projects and seek additional funding opportunities

#	Actions	Lead	Partners	Deliverables 2021-2023	Deliverables 2023-2030
11	Deliver on the successful projects announced under the URDF and other successful Grant applications for Killarney building on its Tourism Potential/Association with the National Park/Smarter Travel initiatives & town centre vibrancy	Kerry County Council	Collaborative Partners; Killarney Chamber Alliance; Fáilte Ireland; KTIF; NPWS	Killarney <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public realm design and implementation - town centre/links to National Park • Enhance the cultural opportunities in Killarney through the development of the Áras Phadraig • Develop a feasibility plan for a Cultural Heritage Experience Glebe Craft Quarter Killarney • Maximising the potential of brownfield and vacant sites • Accessible Tourism Project 	Finalisation of the delivery of these projects and seek additional funding opportunities
12	Develop a parking strategy for the County that reflects the move toward a low carbon society while meeting the needs of the economic and community sectors	Kerry County Council	Kerry Chamber Network; Local Communities	Complete the County Parking Strategy and commence the implementation of its recommendations	Continuous review and implementation of the strategy
13	Develop Listowel's economic potential through building on its unique strengths of Built Heritage, Literary Arts and Food Culture, through the improvement of the Public Realm, the Potential of the North Kerry Greenway and Activity Tourism and strengthening the Town Centre in redeveloping existing buildings and sites within the Town Core.	Kerry County Council	NTA; Listowel Chamber Alliance; NEWKD; Business Interests/Property Owners Arts/Heritage Groups; Fáilte Ireland	Submit RRDF/Town and Village Grant Funding Application for the following Plan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of a renewed urban centre through enhanced public realm and other infrastructure • Develop Activity Tourism around the Greenways and in line with Fáilte Ireland's North Kerry – West Clare Destination Experience Development Plan • Promote Smarter Travel in the Town in line with the NTA Transportation Plan for Listowel and following the construction of the N69 Listowel Bypass • Build on and further develop Listowel's unique strengths of Built Heritage, Literary Arts and Food Culture • Re-establish Listowel as a strong regional hub and in line with the principle of compact growth, re-develop exiting buildings and sites within the town • Autism Friendly Town 	Continued Delivery of the projects outlined
14	Develop an overall regeneration plan for Castleisland building on the town's strengths as a regional market town and strong residential base servicing a wide catchment	Kerry County Council	Castleisland Chamber Alliance; Castleisland Tidy Towns; Property Owners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify a suitable funding source and develop a project application for a rural regeneration plan for this key location - Statutory planning completed • Advance the development of a more pedestrian/cycle friendly environment through the provision of traffic calming measures and improved pedestrian/cycle infrastructure. • Improvement of public realm • Plan for improved amenities 	Implementation of further actions in the regeneration plan

#	Actions	Lead	Partners	Deliverables 2021-2023	Deliverables 2023-2030
15	Implement the Killorglin Regeneration Strategy to build on the Town's strong employment base, tourism potential (Reeks District) and development as a retail and residential centre	Kerry County Council; Killorglin Chamber Alliance	Strategic Partners Fáilte Ireland KTIF Business & Property Owners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a project steering committee; Identify and prioritise projects that can have an early impact; Identify funding sources to advance projects - Applications submitted for funding - Planning Secured Public Realm Improvement Dereliction and Vacancy Reuse of Town Centre buildings in relation to potential of remote working/Arts Culture 	Continued rollout of Actions under the Killorglin Regeneration Strategy
16	Develop Dingle's Economic Potential building on its strong Tourism and Cultural Assets, its established innovation capacity in the areas of Sustainability, Digital Transformation and Creative Industries and as pilot Decarbonisation Zone	Kerry County Council; Údarás na Gaeltachta; Dingle Innovation and Creativity Hub	Dingle Chamber and Business Alliance Netfeasa Dingle Workhouse Project; Health Service Executive Fáilte Ireland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the development of the Dingle Hospital Project as a gateway visitor experience for the Dingle Peninsula. Enhancement of Green Street and Holy Ground Dingle Town Park Development Waterfront Development 	Advancement of these projects
17	Enhance the Potential of Kenmare as a Tourism Destination and Strategic Regional Centre, through the delivery of Waste/Water Infrastructure, Amenity Lands and Car Parking Facilities	Irish Water; Kerry County Council	KMEG; Collaborative Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Waste/Water Infrastructure delivered by Irish Water Plan Developed and being implemented for Peninsula Lands / Reenagoss/Pier area Land identified and planning complete for additional Car Park in Kenmare Develop the project feasibility for Kenmare Inner Relief Road 	Continue Development of Peninsula Lands/ Reenagoss/Pier area Completion of Additional Car Park facilities
18	Implement the Cahersiveen Town Centre Regeneration Plan through the RRDF funding; including; A) the development of the ' Daniel O'Connell Quarter', B) enhancement of public realm, C) addressing dereliction & repurposing of buildings (Iveragh Ballroom), Skellig CRI project	Kerry County Council	Cahersiveen Chamber Alliance; Strategic Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Realm Design and construction underway Derelict Properties acquired Repurposing of buildings underway 	Continued rollout of Actions under the Cahersiveen Town Centre Regeneration Plan
19	Develop Ballybunion's economic potential as a strong Tourist Destination through the implementation of the Ballybunion Development Plan and the emerging actions from Fáilte Ireland's North Kerry – West Clare Destination Experience Development Plan.	Kerry County Council	Fáilte Ireland Business Interests/ Property Owners Ballybunion Development Company	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finalise Plan for the creation of a renewed urban centre through enhanced public realm and other infrastructure Delivery of the Platforms for Growth Shared Facilities Upgrading the Cliff Walk Plan for the establishment of Ballybunion as a Universal Access Tourism destination 	Continue to promote Ballybunion as a Tourism Destination with identification and implementation of additional projects subject to funding

#	Actions	Lead	Partners	Deliverables 2021-2023	Deliverables 2023-2030
20	A) Develop a Masterplan for Milltown to strengthen the town core, identification of public realm works, reuse/development of vacant and derelict sites/properties B) Implementing Public Realm Enhancement works to the Square in Milltown under the Town & Village Renewal Scheme C) Develop a scoping study for an Innovation Space and Business Hub in Milltown under the Town & Village Renewal Scheme	Kerry County Council	Milltown Community & Chamber Alliance; Milltown Community Council/Tidy Towns; Property Owners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify a suitable funding source and develop a project application for a Rural Regeneration/Town and Village Masterplan for Milltown including the acquisition of derelict properties. - Masterplan completed Implement public realm improvements at the Square in order to improve the visual appearance of the town, protect its character and maximise its tourism potential - Statutory Planning completed and construction underway Develop a Needs analysis and scoping document/plan for the development of a digital hub 	A) Priorities of Master plan being actioned B) Complete Public Realm Project C) Development of a Space & Business Hub in the town (subject to funding)
21	Work with Local Communities in the identification and delivery of Projects for the regeneration of small town and villages focusing on strengths of each settlements and targeting; Dereliction and vacancy in Town/Village Centres Compact Residential Developments Remote Working Opportunities Tourism initiatives Enhancement of Community Facilities Amenities supporting Towns/Villages - enhancing Public Realm, Walkways, Amenity Trails, Parks/ Waterways etc Safety Schemes	Kerry County Council	DRCD Fáilte Ireland Local Development Companies Údaras na Gaeltachta Community Groups	<p>Identification and delivery of projects on an annual basis in Settlements as defined in the Kerry County Development Plan.</p> <p>Examples of Projects include;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhancement of Rathmore, Fossa, Kilcummin & Barradubh through safety design schemes, Town & Village Renewal grants and Clár funding Platforms for Growth Facilities in Fenit/Masterplan Public toilets/ Coach Parking Ardfert/Development of Playing fields Valentia Cable Station Development/ Waterville Car Park Development Ballyheigue Toilets Upgrade/ Coastal Steps Upgrade Lixnaw integrated wetlands Housing developments 	Continue to identify projects with the various communities in settlements across the County
22	To work with the DEHLG and Irish Water to develop capital investment programmes for the upgrade and enhancement of our water and wastewater infrastructure to support economic and residential growth in the County . To work to deliver, with Irish Water the Wastewater treatment plant upgrades provided for in Irish Waters Small towns and Villages Growth programme (STVGP) To inform the development of the national water resources study for the future water security in the county	Irish Water Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government (DEHLG)	Kerry County Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> STVGP funding of 12.4 m being invested in new waste -water treatment plants to support growth Regional Water resources study completed Investment in Water and Waste-water plants and Networks as per CRU capital funding to Irish water To secure the required investment under the next phase of the Rural water Programme to enhance the Group Scheme water and Community Connection waste-water infrastructure where feasible 	Projects completed and commissioned Objectives of study being delivered Fourth Round of Irish Waters Revenue and Capital funding approved by CRU and being invested in Kerry Kilcummin Sewerage Scheme Completed Kenmare Sewerage Scheme upgrade completed Multi Annual Rural Water Programme Investment to enhance group scheme infrastructure



Pillar 5: Tourism, Culture, Amenities and Heritage

A sustainable tourism industry is a key driver of Kerry's economy, a number of projects will be developed and/or progressed during the lifetime of this plan.

In terms of economic structure, employment statistics show that, at the end of 2019, Kerry had 18% of its work force employed in tourism and related sectors compared to 8% for the state. The total value of the tourist industry to Kerry in terms of income, including direct and indirect effects, was circa €550 million in 2019.

Notwithstanding its economic value, tourism also has other qualities which are difficult to measure but contribute greatly to the social benefit of communities. Tourism amenities within localities make them better places to live for local residents, whether by providing attractions and activities or offering good quality hospitality and events. In a post-COVID world where remote working is becoming the norm regional towns and villages that are nice places to live with strong tourism & leisure infrastructure can transform the economies of regional Ireland beyond tourism.

The Tourism Strategy which is in place for the county for the period 2016 to 2022 is currently under review. Post-COVID, the tourism sector in Kerry will have an increased focus on the green agenda, sustainability and universal access and the active promotion of these activities with partners.

Kerry has 18% of its work force employed in tourism and related sectors compared to 8% for the state

In response to the enormous challenges faced by the sector due to COVID-19, a Tourism Working Group was convened under the Kerry Economic Stakeholder Forum. This working group includes representatives from Fáilte Ireland, Kerry Tourism Industry Federation (KTIF) and Kerry County Council. KTIF has played a key role in the development of a **National Tourism Recovery Plan 2020-2023⁸**. The Tourism Recovery Taskforce (TRT) was established in May 2020 to develop a recovery plan for the tourism industry from 2020-2023 in recognition that this vital sector of the economy has been hardest hit by the COVID-19 pandemic.

While tourism offers the potential to sustain and economically develop peripheral locations, COVID-19 has demonstrated the need to build resilience into tourism products by linking tourism with other indigenous sectors. The diverse and geographical nature of the projects outline in this plan is reflective of the status and importance of the tourism sector to economy, and community aspects of Kerry living.

8 <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/be0cb-tourism-recovery-plan-2020-2023/>

Fáilte Ireland

As the National Tourism Development Authority, **Fáilte Ireland's** role is to support the long-term sustainable growth in the economic, social, cultural, and environmental contribution of tourism to Ireland. Fáilte Ireland is in the process of preparing **Regional Tourism Plans** for each of the four Regional Experience Brands (Dublin, Wild Atlantic Way, Ireland's Ancient East and Ireland's Hidden Heartlands). The purpose of the Regional Tourism Plans is to identify the sustainable tourism development priorities that will help to unlock the commercial potential of the region bringing benefits to all stakeholders and industry. Each plan will be prepared based on the VICE model which is a methodology for working towards sustainable tourism that seeks to strike an appropriate balance between the needs of the Visitor, the Industry and Community and the Environment. The plans will be for the period to 2025 and will be grounded in the Fáilte Ireland's new Corporate Strategy. There will be a strong spatial element to the plans which will seek to identify where development should take place in order to unlock the tourism potential of the region.

Fáilte Ireland has and continues to work with communities in Kerry to develop **Destination & Experience and Development Plans (DEDP)**. A DEDP is designed to be a roadmap for enhancing the existing visitor proposition to achieve the objectives of addressing seasonality, increasing visitor numbers, improving dwell time, and increasing visitor dispersion across the destination. A DEDP will be implemented over a 5-year period and primarily focuses on a specific geographic destination. In Kerry there are a number of DEDP's:

- Skellig Coast year 4
- Dingle Peninsula year 1
- Killarney year 1
- Kenmare & West Cork Three Peninsulas year 1
- Cliff Coast (North Kerry / West Clare) in development

Ireland's built and natural heritage is the bedrock upon which Irish tourism has been developed. These are drivers of international demand and vital to Ireland's visitor experience. It is imperative that sufficient investment is made in these core assets and a coordination body is established to oversee a consistent approach to the operation, management and marketing practices are applied to maximise their potential.

Fáilte Ireland has identified that there is a significant underutilisation of key tourism demand-driving assets such as national parks, heritage sites and trails in Ireland. In response to this Fáilte Ireland has established a number of primary strategic partners (including but not limited to the following state and semi-state agencies): Office of Public Works, National Parks and Wildlife Service, Coillte, National Transport Authority and Waterways Ireland.

Fáilte Ireland's strategy highlights that there is a growing consumer segment that want to get out in nature and have out-door experiences particularly walking but also cycling

and water-based activities. COVID-19 has accelerated this by increasing everyone's appreciation of the outdoors and changing the way we socialise. There is increased demand for outdoor activities, eating and cultural events among visitors and communities alike, and improving our outdoor experiences will directly enhance the quality of holiday / life of both groups.

Fáilte Ireland's regional brand areas (Wild Atlantic Way, Ireland's Ancient East, Ireland's Hidden Heartlands and Dublin) are well positioned to develop motivating tourism outdoor experiences that can tap into this need. However, Ireland is currently behind global practice in this area and therefore as a country we need to support both businesses and government agencies to provide best in class outdoor experiences in both rural and urban destinations. This will require additional investment in product development including in outdoor activities and enabling access and better use of our open spaces, thus enhancing Ireland's position of being a green, clean, and sustainable destination. State agencies will also require capital investment to maintain and operate existing assets on an ongoing basis.

In February 2021, Fáilte Ireland announced details of its new **€55million Tourism Business Continuity Scheme**. The scheme will support those tourism businesses that were not eligible for the COVID Restrictions Support Scheme (CRSS) payment or previous Fáilte Ireland continuity grant schemes. Fáilte Ireland has set out a number of key initiatives for 2021:

- A €55million Tourism Business Continuity Scheme to help tourism businesses offset fixed costs incurred in 2020 and support them to continue operating through 2021.
- Heavyweight investment in Domestic Marketing to drive domestic tourism once the country re-opens including county-specific campaigns and a focus on Dublin.
- Employee, business and sector supports on areas such as strategy and leadership, finance and cost efficiency, food and beverage innovation, maximising revenue and service excellence to drive performance and help businesses navigate the challenges they are facing, as well as wellbeing services to support employers and employees at this difficult time.
- The enhancement of urban areas through 31 Destination Town projects across the country and two new funding schemes - the **Outdoor Dining Grant Scheme** which will improve the quality of outdoor dining spaces and offer reassurance around safety and comfort, and the **Urban Animation Grant Scheme** to animate our cities and towns with innovative lighting and art installations.
- Preparing for the return of tourism by working with industry to build improved websites and online booking capability through a new digital transformation programme and continuing to keep Ireland front of mind for overseas buyers through a range of virtual sales events, including Meitheal, one of Ireland's largest travel trade shows.

A Destination and Experience Development Plan is being prepared for Killarney and significant rebranding of the destination is underway. The investment by Fáilte Ireland, and through the recently announced URDF grant of €16 million, additional funding under Active Travel and Kerry County Council's match funding will facilitate the transformation of the Public Realm and access to the town centre for pedestrians and cyclists. Enhancing the benefits of the National park for the town, together with developing an authentic cultural experience within the town are key ambitions of the emerging strategy.

Tralee has been identified as a "Destination Town" under the Fáilte Ireland initiative to support tourism as an economic driver. The funding allocated under the URDF for Tralee to significantly enhance the Public Realm and sense of place will be supported by this Fáilte Ireland Grant Scheme and funding from Kerry County Council. International research consistently shows that attractive towns and cities are key motivators for overseas holidaymakers coming to Ireland. The scheme will provide funding to enhance wayfinding, signage, public spaces such as squares, streetscapes and markets in a way that will engage tourists and enhance their experience in Tralee.

Fáilte Ireland's capital investment programme, **Platforms for Growth**, is worth €150 million and runs from 2019 to 2022. Funding was recently announced under the Shared Facilities for Activity Providers platform to develop Ballybunion Beach Shared Facilities Centre, Men's (South) Beach, Fenit Beach Shared Facility Centre, and Magherabeg Shared Facilities Centre, Castlegregory.

Fáilte Ireland's new **Outdoor Dining Enhancement Investment Scheme**, in partnership with Local Authorities will work to facilitate greater capacity in outdoor dining by supporting Local Authorities and hospitality businesses with upgrading and enhancing streets and public spaces and implementing weather-proofing solutions which will facilitate year-round outdoor dining. This investment scheme will be delivered under the Fáilte Ireland 'Opening the Outdoors' strategic pillar which aims to capitalise our outdoor assets and re-imagine our urban spaces.

Sustainable Tourism

The COVID crisis has presented Ireland and Kerry with an opportunity in relation to sustainability. Even before the pandemic there was a growing consciousness internationally of the need for more sustainable tourism approaches which benefitted – rather than harmed – the very attractions and communities they were coming to see. The challenges of climate change and biodiversity loss, and the

importance of the UN Sustainable Development Goals, have also highlighted the need for all of us to play our part in moving Ireland towards a sustainable future.

Sustainable tourism balances the economic, the social and the environmental. A sustainable approach is a 'win-win' for the tourism sector. Kerry is well positioned to lead the way and has a head start given the county's range of natural assets and the pioneering work of four organisations; - the Dingle Creativity and Innovation Hub, ESB Networks, North East West Kerry Development (NEWKD), and MaREI, the SFI Centre for Energy, Climate and Marine joined forces in 2018 to establish the ambitious multi-partner initiative, Corca Dhuibhne 2030/Dingle Peninsula 2030.

The key objectives are to work with the local community, tourism and farming sectors, schools, and business to explore, support and enable the broader societal changes required for this sustainable transition. Within this, the Dingle Hub is also working to identify employment opportunities and to help develop a sustainable economic future for the area.

Over the course of the Plan Kerry County Council will collaborate with industry partners in promoting sustainability measures across the industry; in the areas of active travel initiatives to increase low carbon travel solutions, promotion of locally sourced food production within the industry, reduction of food waste, promotion of energy reduction measures across the sector, and the promotion of sustainable environmental practices. The plan focuses on the improvement of amenities throughout the County in providing walking trails and amenities that promote interaction with the natural environment with minimal disturbance.

The Kerry Recovery Plan has a strong focus on promoting and supporting actions that deliver a speedy transition to a sustainable economic future. The Plan builds on and supports the national sustainability goals and the emerging consistent policy in the development of the Draft Kerry County Development Plan.

Film/Creative Industries/Art Sector

Arts and culture are an essential part of the fabric of County Kerry. The arts contribute to well-being, connect people to each other and send out a unique image of who we are across the world. Kerry has a wealth of tradition in creativity and culture. The county has over 10,000 archaeological sites, numerous heritage sites including the world renowned Skelligs. Kerry has two heritage towns and a rich urban and rural built landscape. It has two Gaeltacht areas where Irish remains part of our living culture. It is home to the National Folk Theatre of Ireland, and has within its borders a significant section of the Sliabh Luachra Music Trail. The county has a vitally strong performing arts sector

A sustainable approach is a "win-win" for the tourism sector

as well as a growing contemporary dance sector. Combined with literary achievements and a vibrant visual arts sector, Kerry's strong arts based cultural traditions continue to foster creativity and have significant scope in terms of development potential. **Creative Ireland Kerry** based at the Arts Office at Kerry County Council is a programme which supports and communicates Kerry's unique creative sector. It resources and values the central role of creativity across all sectors of society and works to promote a greater cultural, social, and economic impact in the county. An ambitious and innovative 5-year Culture and Creativity Strategy (2018-2022) has been developed for Kerry in consultation with local artists, creatives, cultural and heritage organisations, community groups, the creative industries, centres of education and schools.

The Economic Recovery Plan will focus on the implementation of national supports for live performances and the creative sector at a county level.

- The Live Performance Support Scheme
- The Music and Entertainment Business Scheme
- An Events Sector Support Scheme

According to the Government commissioned Olsberg SPI Report, "worldwide screen content production is one of the fastest growing industries in the world". The Government launched an Audio-visual Action Plan in June 2018 to capitalise on this. The industry-wide, long-term plan aims for Ireland to become a global hub for the production of Film, TV drama and animation. "Global Ireland 2025 seeks to **double the size of Ireland's film production sector.**"

The screen industry's contribution to the Irish economy has more than doubled in the past decade, from €164 million in 2010 to €357 million in 2019, according to figures from development agency Screen Ireland. The Irish film, television and animation sector has a gross value added of €692 million. The animation sector has been a notable success, almost quadrupling in size over the same period. This is a growth industry. In recognition of this, Screen Ireland was handed a €9 million increase in funding last year, lifting its capital budget 52% to €26.2 million for 2021. The Irish Government is committed to developing regional filmmaking, evidenced by the Section 481 tax incentive – which is worth 32% of budget, rising to 37% for projects shooting in the regions.

Screen Kerry aims to promote and facilitate all types of productions (film, television, drama, documentaries, student and international). Screen Kerry is a one-stop shop for advice and help with all of Pre-Production, Production and Post-Production needs in County Kerry. Screen Kerry

Creatives living and working in an area contribute to social vibrancy, economic recovery, enhanced quality of life as well as innovation

is focused on actively marketing the Kerry region as a film location, providing a comprehensive Production Support Service, and supporting indigenous film productions.

The **Film Steering Group** was established by Kerry County Council to help to foster and promote film and the film industry in the county. The group brings together many agencies including the Kerry Education and Training Board, Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, Munster Technological University, Kerry Film Festival, Irish Film and Television Awards, National Parks and Wildlife Service as well as experts from across the industry with a view to promoting Kerry as a film destination and helping to nurture the sector in the county.

Kerry County Council values the **Creative Sector** and recognises that as one of the top three growth industries internationally, there is scope to capitalise on the potential in Kerry, by developing supports to enable creative practitioners to live and work in Kerry. Kerry County Council will engage with key commercial industries and local and national agencies, to explore and develop a menu of incentives and supports to grow Kerry's competitive positioning as a centre for creative industries. Creatives, in general, have low incomes, which impacts on their capacity to rent at commercial rates.

Within five years, we aim to have **15% more Creative Sector** industries based in Kerry and producing work in Kerry. We will explore opportunities for the provision of additional space for creative practitioners to operate. There will be a targeted communications campaign to promote the profile of Kerry as a centre of creativity and culture. The strategic aim is to enable more creative practitioners to choose to live and make work in Kerry. Creatives living and working in an area contribute to social vibrancy, economic recovery, enhanced quality of life as well as innovation, we will work to grow this sector. Workspaces are needed to create, make, display and sell creative works and for workshop and performance spaces to interact with the public. Needs differ according to creative discipline, geographic location and the needs of individual creatives. Local Authority led capital projects for towns will include objectives in association with local communities and the business sector to provide additional working spaces and exhibition spaces for the sector. There are many vacant premises that would benefit from having creative practitioners living and making work in towns. The Local Authority will collaborate with the Chamber Network and landlords to identify suitable spaces that can be offered on a lease basis to the sector. Consideration should be given to offering creatives the opportunity to make use of and work in derelict buildings and 'above shop' accommodation.

Tourism, Culture, Amenities and Heritage Actions

#	Actions	Lead	Partners	Deliverables 2021-2023	Deliverables 2023-2030
1	Kerry will retain, promote, and drive Kerry's position as a premier international tourism destination, with a focus on developing green and sustainable tourism.	Kerry Tourism Taskforce; Kerry Tourism Industry Federation; Kerry County Council; Fáilte Ireland	Tourism operators; Local Communities; Kerry Chamber Network	Implementation of County Tourism Strategy deliverables	
2	Develop new County Tourism Strategy	Kerry County Council; Fáilte Ireland	Kerry Tourism Taskforce; Kerry Tourism Industry Federation; Tourism operators; Local Communities; Kerry Chamber Network	Develop and Implement County Tourism Strategy in association with key stakeholders	Implementation of new tourism strategy.
3	Extend the tourism season in a sustainable manner across the County, through diversification, festivals, and events (subject to Government guidelines), activity, adventure, astro, food, marine and business tourism	Kerry County Council; Fáilte Ireland; Tourism Ireland; Kerry Tourism Industry Federation Kerry Convention Bureau	Local communities; activity, event and festival organisers and tourism networks throughout the county	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Festivals & Participative Events Programme 2022 and 2023. • Promote shoulder season events. 	
4	Support existing and new Visitor Destination Development Plans: Killarney Destination and Experience Development Plan (DEDP), Skellig Coast VEDP; Cliff Coast (North Kerry/ West Clare) DEDP; Dingle VEDP, the Three Peninsulas Beara VEDP and Tralee Destination Town Project.	Fáilte Ireland	Kerry County Council; Local Tourism Networks, co. Business Chambers, KTIF, Údarás na Gaeltachta; NEWKD; SKDP, NPWS, OPW, Clare County Council	Various stages of Implementation of DEDP Framework	Implement framework
5	Develop Greenways in line with Kerry County Council's Greenway Strategy: – Tralee-Fenit, North Kerry Greenway (Listowel-Abbeyfeale and Tralee-Listowel), Ballyseedy Wood - The Spa, Tralee, and South Kerry Greenway; Dingle-Cloghane Greenway; and examine the feasibility of greenway extensions, linkages, and new greenways. Market and promote developed Greenways.	Kerry County Council and collaborative partners	Fáilte Ireland, Department of Transport (DoT), Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications, TII, Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD), Limerick City and County Council, Tourism Ireland.	Market and promote the Listowel-Abbeyfeale, and Tralee-Fenit Greenways and Tralee-Listowel once opened.	

#	Actions	Lead	Partners	Deliverables 2021-2023	Deliverables 2023-2030
6	Continue to develop and maintain the tourism infrastructure of the County including walking routes countywide and identify additional loops and spur walking paths and trails for development through ORIS, LEADER and other funding streams. Promote Kerry Your Natural Escape and develop a new Kerry Walking Trails Interactive Map.	Kerry County Council; Local Development Companies	Fáilte Ireland; DRCD, MPWS, OPW, Údarás na Gaeltachta, Kerry Tourism Industry Federation,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upgrade: The Dingle Way, Old Kenmare Road, Torc Mountain, Flesk Cycleway, Tralee Coastal Trail, Killorglin Amenity Park, Shannon Way, Kerry Way Blackwater Improvement Project; North Kerry Way, Beara Way • Enhance the Dingle Harbour Walk; • Develop the Shannon Way and North Kerry Way; • Link Kerry Way and Dingle Way; • Link Beara-Breifni Way to Kenmare and Kerry Way Develop new Interactive Kerry Walking Trails Map.	
7	Continue to develop and upgrade Kerry's beach facilities and blueways; including the development of Shared Beach Facilities in Kerry as part of a network of 20-25 coastal locations around the country for Adventure Tourism under Platforms for Growth (Platform 3)	Fáilte Ireland; Kerry County Council	Department of Environment Climate and communications ; Supporting Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EOI/Application for Funding and statutory planning complete if successful (FI Platforms for Growth); • Develop a Stop off Pedestrian & Cycling Amenity at Inch under the Accelerated Town & Village Round 3 - Provide landscaping, clearing off of area, installation of picnic tables, bicycle racks, drinking water fountain, information board and signage.; • Undertake assessment of Tralee Canal to identify potential future amenity usages/Blueway development 	Constructed and operational (FI Platforms for Growth)

#	Actions	Lead	Partners	Deliverables 2021-2023	Deliverables 2023-2030
8	Develop additional car parking at key visitor sites and popular trails	Kerry County Council	Landowners; Local Communities, Fáilte Ireland; National Parks & Wildlife Services, Údarás na Gaeltachta, Local Development Companies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional temporary seasonal car parks at Inch and Castlegregory to support tourism and activity sports economies - Land agreements and pilot project completed to inform longer term amenities ; • Develop parking facilities and improved access to Reenagoss Park, pier area and Peninsula Lands, Kenmare; • Provision of Car Parking Facilities for Blue Pool; • Development of a carpark at the base of Mount Brandon at Faha, Cloghane (feasibility) • Carry out a feasibility studies; Design; Land Agreements; Part 8 Planning. 	Secure funding and develop car parks
9	Develop Greenway Trailhead Infrastructure at key town/village terminals including Listowel, Fenit and Tralee on North Kerry Greenway and improved car parking facilities at Cloghane access to Mount Brandon	Kerry County Council	Local Development Companies, Fáilte Ireland, DRCD, Údarás na Gaeltachta, Local communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greenway Trailhead Planning & Design completed or in progress. • Mt. Brandon trailhead being investigated. 	Construction complete and open to public
10	Continue to develop and upgrade key strategic infrastructure in support of tourism	Kerry County Council and collaborative partners	Fáilte Ireland, OPW, Local Development Companies, Landowners, Collaborating Government Departments,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainably develop the former boat-yard site at the waterfront in Dingle (Consultation and Design); • Progress plans for new landing facilities on the Great Blasket Island; Enhancement works at Glounsharoon Viewing Area, Castleisland; • Continue to upgrade facilities and infrastructure at Kerry County Museum/ Blennerville Windmill Centre/ Tralee Bay Wetlands & Eco Centre 	

#	Actions	Lead	Partners	Deliverables 2021-2023	Deliverables 2023-2030
11	Protect and enhance Kerry's natural and built tourism assets including - the Wild Atlantic Way, Reeks District, Cappanalea OEC, Kerry International Dark Sky Reserve, LIVE Project, upgrade of Bray Head Discovery Point, and designated Heritage Towns.	Kerry County Council; Fáilte Ireland; KTIF; Reeks District Group	Collaborative partners including Kerry ETB, UCC, Skellig Coast, Listowel and KMEG Tourism Networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement Measures at various locations on the Sleah Head Drive to ease congestion on the WAW, • Upgrade the WAW Discovery Point at Bray Head, Extend the International Dark Sky Reserve to Reeks District from Rossbeigh to Glencar and Blackwater Bridge. • Promote the heritage towns of Listowel and Kenmare. 	
12	Kerry will be a leader and exemplar in all aspects of hospitality and management, culinary and arts training for the Tourism Industry. Kerry's Safe Destination programme will train tourism and retail staff in infection prevention, hygiene, and cleanliness to the highest international standards as they reopen for business.	MTU; Kerry ETB; Kerry County Council	Irish Hotels Federation (Kerry branch); Fáilte Ireland, Irish Restaurants Association, Vintners Federation, the Kerry Tourism Industry Federation, Accommodation providers, Kerry Chambers Network; Kerry PPN		
13	Implement the Fáilte Ireland Outdoor Dining Enhancement Investment Scheme - Weatherproofing and Outdoor Dining Infrastructure Scheme and Urban Animation Capital Investment Scheme	Kerry County Council	Kerry County Council; Fáilte Ireland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement the necessary remedial works and weather-proofing solutions to areas where additional outdoor dining could be possible thereby increasing capacity and locations • Support public realm and urban animation projects that have the potential to transform and re-imagine urban centres for visitors and communities. 	
14	Support Tourism and Hospitality businesses to implement the Fáilte Ireland Outdoor Dining Enhancement Investment Scheme - Outdoor Seating & Accessories for Tourism and Hospitality Businesses Scheme	Kerry County Council	Kerry County Council; Fáilte Ireland	Provide necessary supports to businesses in order to implement the scheme and maximise outdoor dining capacity for summer 2021.	

#	Actions	Lead	Partners	Deliverables 2021-2023	Deliverables 2023-2030
15	Implement the Fáilte Ireland's Urban Animation Capital Investment Scheme	Kerry County Council	Kerry County Council; Fáilte Ireland	Supporting sustainable tourism development through public realm and urban animation projects that have the potential to transform and re-imagine urban centres for visitors and communities	
16	Realise the potential of UNESCO designations in the county; Progress the Valentia Transatlantic Cable Station onto the Irish Tentative List and the station and associated sites with Canadian partners as an UNESCO World Heritage Site; Promote the Kerry Biosphere Reserve, Killarney & Skellig Michael UNESCO WHS.	Kerry County Council and Valentia Island Development Company	Department of Housing Planning and Heritage, Valentia Trans-Atlantic Cable Foundation, Department of Rural & Community Development, Fáilte Ireland, South Kerry Development Partnership Canadian Partners. NPWS and OPW.	Commence work on Conservation and Adaptation of Valentia Cable Station. Secure Irish Tentative List nomination for Valentia Cable Station by 2022.	Submit Transboundary World Heritage application with Hearts Content, Newfoundland, Canada to UNESCO Paris. Secure World Heritage Inscription for Valentia Cable Station and associated sites.
17	Promote and develop Universal Accessibility to all key tourism amenities and attractions	Kerry County Council and collaborative partners	Fáilte Ireland, DRCD, Local Development Companies, Product Providers, State agencies, disability, and community groups	Progress Killarney, Ballybunion and Waterville as Universal Access pilot destinations	Extend UA initiatives to wider county
18	Protect and enhance Kerry's cultural and linguistic heritage.	Kerry County Council; Údarás na Gaeltachta and collaborative partners	Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, Department of Housing, Planning & Heritage, Fáilte Ireland, , NPWS, OPW, Blennerville Windmill Company, NEWKD, Kerry ETB.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and promote language plans as appropriate Support Tralee, Caherciveen and An Daingean as Gaeltacht Service Towns 	Continue to support and extend the use of the language in all aspects of society
19	Protect and enhance Kerry's tourism built infrastructure; visitor attractions, amenities, and infrastructure .	Kerry County Council; Fáilte Ireland	Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, Department of Housing, Planning & Heritage	Advance the upgrade of the Kerry County Museum; the development of a dedicated centre for culture and the arts in Dingle; the reimagining of the Blennerville Windmill Visitor Centre.	

#	Actions	Lead	Partners	Deliverables 2021-2023	Deliverables 2023-2030
20	Developing Best-in-class Digital Tourism Promotion, Branding, Information and Visitor Research	Fáilte Ireland; Kerry County Council; KTIF	Fáilte Ireland, Local Development Companies, Kerry Convention Bureau DRCD, MTU, KETB.	Promote and further develop digital resources such as the Discover Kerry web-site and social media platforms; online booking facilities at venues and attractions, the extension of the KCC Atlantic Discovery App, digital interpretation facilities at Natural and Cultural sites, Kerry Walking and Garden Trails; interactive map, Sky Quality metering and Visitor Research.	
21	Develop the Dingle Hospital Project as a gateway visitor experience for the Dingle Peninsula.	Údarás na Gaeltachta	Dingle Workhouse Project; Health Service Executive; Fáilte Ireland; DRCD, Dingle Hub, Kerry County Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full planning permission for the development; • Secure funding for the project; • Procurement and begin construction 	Staged development of the project
22	Progress the project of developing a language learning centre in Baile an Fheirtéaraigh	Údarás na Gaeltachta	CFCD; Dept. of TCAGSM	Seek full planning permission for the development	Identify funding sources and a staged development of the project
23	Support the completion of the upgrade of the Dingle Way waymarked way	Coiste Slí Chorca Dhuibhne	Údarás na Gaeltachta; Kerry County Council	A complete upgrade of the 179 km route to world class standard	
24	Implement the findings of feasibility study into establishment of cycling trails in Uíbh Ráthach Gaeltacht	Údarás na Gaeltachta	Partner agencies on Tascfhórsa Uíbh Ráthaigh, Kerry County Council, local community, tourism sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage with partners to develop implementation plan; • Complete signage work on trails as per feasibility study 	Marketing of facility in collaboration with other stakeholders
25	Develop of a range of targeted language-based holidays	Údarás na Gaeltachta	Local Authorities, community Co-operatives, Language Planning Officer, Irish Language colleges, activity providers & accommodation providers	Initial working groups to be convened to develop a marketable and sustainable business model	Holiday experiences to be advertised on national and international marketing platforms.
26	The introduction of new and expansion of existing courses to support the changing needs presented by the staycation tourism market with particular emphasis on outdoor activities.	Kerry ETB	SOLAS		

#	Actions	Lead	Partners	Deliverables 2021-2023	Deliverables 2023-2030
27	Ensure the protection and integrity of Gaeltacht towns and villages including the development of the language plans	Údarás na Gaeltachta; Kerry County Council; KETB	Kerry County Council; Tascfhórsa Uíbh Ráthaigh; Comharchumann Forbartha Chorca Dhuibhne; Comhchoiste Ghaeltachtaí Uíbh Ráthaigh; Comharchumann Forbartha an LeithTriúigh		
28	Support a Film Office in Kerry (Screen Kerry) to attract, support & develop the Screen Sector in the county & ensure Kerry's competitiveness in attracting film opportunities.	Kerry County Council; Kerry ETB Film Office	Collaborative Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support Incoming Film Productions; • Increase training provision to meet needs of growing Screen sector; • Promote & Market Kerry as a Green (Low Carbon) Film Location. 	
29	Support the implementation of the national schemes: The Live Performance Support Scheme The Music and Entertainment Business Scheme An Events Sector Support Scheme	Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sports and Media	Kerry County Council; KETB; Arts Sector		
30	Support the recovery of our cultural institutions, theatres, and performance spaces.	Sector; Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sports and Media; Arts Council; Kerry County Council, KTIF	Local communities; collaborative partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing a post-COVID 19 response to the challenges experienced by the sector; • Assist in the development of sustainable plans; • Explore additional operating activities; • Source financial supports where available. 	
31	Support the recovery of festivals and events in the county	Fáilte Ireland; Festival Organisers; Kerry County Council, KTIF; Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sports and Media	Local Development Companies; Local communities; collaborative partners	Targeted marketing campaigns; training and mentoring; Source financial supports where available.	



Photo: Dairymaster

Pillar 6: Enterprise Development and Business Supports

There are a number of stakeholders with an 'Enterprise Development' remit and each body has their own priorities and areas of concentration. Through this economic recovery plan, the stakeholders will work with each other collaboratively to market and promote Kerry as an attractive place to live, work and invest; entice skills and talent to the region; support the growth of indigenous and small-medium sized enterprises and the investment of FDI in Kerry. As part of the response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the longer-term development of employment opportunities in the County an interagency group was established to focus on opportunities for increasing employment in the County. This work will continue as outlined hereunder through the period of the plan.

Employment Creation and Retention Interagency Group

The Employment Creation and Retention Interagency Group has been recently established to promote employment creation and retention in Kerry. The Group includes representatives of Kerry County Council, Kerry Local Enterprise Office, the Industrial Development Authority, Enterprise Ireland, KerrySciTech, Kerry Tourism Industry Federation, Kerry Chambers Network, Munster Technological University, Údarás na Gaeltachta and industry representatives. Facilitated workshops were held in February and May 2021.

The actions under this pillar are informed in part by the work of the **Employment Creation and Retention Interagency Group**. This group identified the following as areas of opportunity for Kerry:

- Marketing the County
- Second Site Opportunities
- The Green Economy
- Digital Emerging Opportunities
- Re-generating our Towns and Villages
- Growing Local Business

It is proposed to further develop these themes through appropriate existing working groups or through the establishment of additional appropriate structures.

The following statutory and non-statutory agencies play a significant role in the in supporting enterprise at National and Local levels and will continue to deliver their individual programmes and collaborate to provide a strong unified voice for the County.

COVID-19 Business Recovery Supports

Significant Central Government targeted grant support has been delivered over the past 12 months in response to COVID-19. Almost €24million was paid out in Kerry through the **Business Re-start grant and Re-Start Plus** grants to support micro and small businesses with the costs associated with reopening and re-employing workers following COVID-19 closures. Approximately 490 businesses were approved vouchers worth €1.1million through the **Trading Online Voucher Scheme** which enabled businesses to adapt to trading in an online environment.

IDA Ireland

In 2021, IDA Ireland launched a new Strategy, "Driving Recovery & Sustainable Growth 2021-2024". This strategy positions IDA to respond to the emerging trends that are accelerating as a result of the Covid-19 global pandemic. It identifies the opportunities for sustainable growth among IDA's established base of clients through a focus on transformative investments to increase the productivity of Irish operations and their workforce through RD&I, digitisation, training, and actions on sustainability. Crucially it also maintains a focus on attracting the next generation of leading MNCs to locate in Ireland, further driving sustainable growth and maximising the impact of FDI in Ireland to 2024 and beyond.

IDA's new strategy has been developed in the context of the Government's National Economic Plan. The new strategy will be delivered through a focus on five pillars: Growth, Transformation, Regions, Sustainability, and Impact. The ambition of the strategy is to deliver substantial job creation and drive economic activity through 800 client company investments to support the creation of 50,000 jobs nationally, targeting a 20% increase in client expenditure to maximise the impact of foreign direct investment (FDI). Supporting the Climate Action Plan, the strategy also aims to win 60 sustainability investments over the period to 2024 and will support future growth through 170 Research, Development & Innovation and 130 training investments, enabling a transformative recovery focused on sustainability and transformation.

There are 17 IDA client companies in County Kerry employing 2,153 employees across Engineering, Biopharma, Medical Technologies, Technology, International Financial Services and Consumer & Business Services. IDA engages proactively with every IDA client company in County Kerry and provide a range of supports to companies to help sustain, transform and growing the company's operations.

The focus of IDA Ireland is to build on the strengths and competencies of the FDI base in the South-West region with a particular focus on high value manufacturing, services and research and development opportunities across a number

of established clusters in Life Sciences, Technology, and Global Business services including Financial Services as well as Engineering. Emerging technology trends have and will continue to create new opportunities across the region in areas such as cybersecurity, data analytics, artificial intelligence, smart manufacturing, and new approaches to working such as home working and hub working. IDA will continue to work closely with Enterprise Ireland and its indigenous base of companies to identify synergies, enhance clusters, participate in site visits and maximise benefits for the Region. IDA's property investment programme for the South-West Region includes the provision of a second Advance Building Solution (ABS) in Tralee.

Enterprise Ireland

Enterprise Ireland (EI) supports companies in urban and rural areas to start, innovate and remain competitive in international markets, now and into the future. In the period 2016 – 2018 there was 8.3m invested in EI client companies in Kerry. Powering the Regions is Enterprise Ireland's response to Government regional initiatives including the Future Jobs Ireland framework, the Regional Assemblies, Regional Enterprise Plans and Project Ireland 2040. It provides an overarching national plan underpinned by nine regional specific plans to drive scale and expand reach of our indigenous enterprise. The focus for the current Mid-West region (which includes Kerry) is;

- 900 Co -Working Spaces
- 1000+ New Jobs
- Support Financial Services, ICT, Digital, Maritime, Aviation and Bio Economy clusters and sectors
- Enhanced R&D and Innovation
- Drive development of new start-ups

The Regional Enterprise Development Fund (REDF) was launched in May 2017 with the overarching aim of driving enterprise development and job creation in each region throughout Ireland. Over the three calls to date under the REDF, over €7.3 million has been awarded to project in Kerry. These include:

- Agritech Centre of Excellence
- KerrySciTech
- Dingle Creativity and Innovation Hub
- RDI Hub
- Sneem Digital Hub
- Kerry Food Hub

Local Enterprise Office

The Kerry County Council Local Enterprise Office (LEO) provides a range of services in training supports to the business community, including the retail and the tourism sector. These supports include a range of online Digital Marketing, Business Growth and Lean Programmes to support business efficiencies.

The activities of the LEO are guided by a service level agreement with Enterprise Ireland, defining the LEO as a “one stop shop” for enterprise supports where entrepreneurs are directed to a broad range of supports for business start-ups and growing businesses.

LEO Kerry delivered training and soft supports activities over the 2017 – 2020 period with over 4,511 individuals participating in training programmes and a further 754 engaged on fully completed and paid mentoring assignments. There was a strong delivery of the “Start Your Own Business” and “Digital Marketing” programmes.

The Trading Online Voucher Scheme saw huge demand in 2020 based on the 90% voucher funding commitment. Over 910 applications have been received over with 662 approvals. Over 100 Microfinance Ireland applications were processed over the period. The Trading Online Voucher continues to be available. The recent introduction of the “Green for Micro” Programme provides “green and sustainability” advice/consultancy which is critical to the tourism sector. The LEO continues to support small food businesses and other innovative services supplying the hospitality sector which represents essential indirect employment.

A range of webinars have now been developed supporting businesses in returning to work, and providing general training and soft supports online to business.

The COVID-19 pandemic has created very serious challenges for Kerry businesses with job losses, disruption and uncertainty. In the shorter term, a number of cross-agency business supports have been put in place to assist enterprise navigate this crisis period. The mid-to-longer term supports focus on enterprise recovery and resilience, strengthening productivity and competitiveness, sustaining, and driving job creation, stimulating the economy through public sector investment, and creating a positive business and investment environment.

Retail centres throughout the County have experienced significant changes and challenges in recent years. Reduced demand for certain retail goods is complex and multifaceted with some commentators contributing it to a lack of central finance, Brexit, the emergence of the new digital world and online shopping. The COVID-19 pandemic has also added to the pressures faced by retailers in relation to public health restrictions which has led to a long-term

change in consumer behaviour. It has pushed many SMEs to embrace the online trend and the ‘shop local’ initiative including ‘click and collect’, and ‘selling direct’ via smart-phone shopping from social media platforms. Supports will continue to be provided through the Trading Online Vouchers and the Online Retail Scheme. It is imperative however that experience driven ‘bricks and mortar’ shops are retained within our retail core areas in key towns, towns and villages.

Údarás na Gaeltachta

Established in 1980, Údarás na Gaeltachta is the regional authority responsible for the economic, social and cultural development of the Gaeltacht. The overall objective of Údarás na Gaeltachta is to ensure that Irish remains the main communal language of the Gaeltacht and is passed on to future generations. The Údarás endeavours to achieve

that objective by funding and fostering a wide range of enterprise development and job creation initiatives and by supporting strategic language, cultural and community-based activities.

Údarás na Gaeltachta has placed a particular focus on Kerry in recent years and, for the most part not-

withstanding the effects of COVID-19 lockdowns, the results of that investment are now evident in certain parts of the county.

gteic – Gréasán Digiteach na Gaeltachta has an important role in revitalising the Kerry Gaeltacht as an area of opportunity for remote or connected workers. 4 digital hubs will for part of the gteic network in west and south Kerry and the provision of these innovation units with highspeed broadband connectivity are giving new technology companies an opportunity to establish or locate themselves in the rural areas which encompass the Gaeltacht.

gteic@Corca Dhuibhne, gteic@Baile an Sceilg and gteic@An Dromaid (in development) will operate alongside Molteic/Dingle Innovation and Creativity Hub to provide hot desks, shared spaces and offices for remote working and e-workers making them ideal incubation units for start-up or expanding businesses.

Údarás na Gaeltachta is engaging directly with Gaeltacht businesses to support them and their staff through these challenging times and will continue to work alongside Government, State Agencies, and the Gaeltacht community on a cohesive approach to the COVID-19 crisis.

The Uíbh Ráthach Interagency Taskforce Action Plan aims to assist the regeneration of this most picturesque of Gaeltacht areas. It is currently marketing the area to new prospective residents as the perfect place to live, work and do business in with the target of welcoming 10 new families to Uíbh Ráthach over a three-year period and the taskforce

gteic Gréasán Digiteach na Gaeltachta has an important role in revitalising the Kerry Gaeltacht as an area of opportunity for remote or connected workers

members are committed to creating and facilitating new business and jobs in the area. A recent grant under the RRDF will deliver a state-of-the-art Digital Hub to provide workspace for up to 50 people in the Iveragh Gaeltacht, in Ballinskelligs. The Hub will provide remote learning and upskilling programmes, support small businesses to develop and expand and provide remote working space for the surrounding region.

The COVID-19 crisis has put significant pressure on the tourism sector and highlighted the importance of the sector to the Gaeltacht. It is now more important than ever that Údarás na Gaeltachta continues to support the development of strategic Gaeltacht tourism facilities, including the redevelopment plan for Seanospidéal an Daingin/Former Dingle Workhouse and the Skellig Coast Visitor Experience Development Plan. Kerry County Council has recently approved the planning application for the Seanospidéal an Daingin masterplan. The plan was developed with funding from the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund and Údarás na Gaeltachta.

Údarás na Gaeltachta also supports the employment of Tourism Development Officers in 3 tourism projects in County Kerry - Slí Chorca Dhuibhne, Comhchoiste Ghaeltachtaí Chiarraí Theas and Comhaontas Turasóireachta Chorca Dhuibhne.

Local Development Companies

Kerry is served by three Local Development Companies, South Kerry Development Partnership, North East & West Kerry Development Partnership and IRD Duhallow all three of which are experienced rural development organisations and have successfully implemented numerous state & EU funded rural development programmes in the last 30 years they combines an economic development role, creating sustainable jobs and attracting investment with community, cultural and social development activities and work with a very broad range of stakeholders, including individuals, communities, businesses, networks, cooperatives, government agencies and departments. These are non-governmental organisations and are legally established as Companies limited by guarantee with registered charitable status with the Irish Revenue Commissioners. The operation of the local development companies is overseen by voluntary boards of directors representing four key pillars, The Community & Voluntary Sector, The Social Partners, Statutory Agencies and Local Government. The three companies play an important role in the delivery of key programmes in the county, many in partnership with the Local Community Development Committee and statutory agencies. These include the LEADER Programme, the Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme (SICAP), Rural Social Schemes, TUS Schemes, Walk Schemes and a range of other interventions.

KerrySciTech

KerrySciTech is a not-for-profit member organisation showcasing the Kerry Region as a science, technology & engineering hotspot for talent, jobs & investment. The organisation was established to connect, promote, influence and develop Kerry's science, technology and engineering ecosystem. KerrySciTech has implemented a programme of work that not only has a positive effect at individual company level but has a significant positive impact on the regional economy. Direct Services include networking and information seminars; thought leadership fora on behalf of member companies; talent sourcing, retention and development initiatives; education, training & skills; early intervention schools' initiatives and regional economic marketing to name but a few. Together the member companies and strategic partners are identifying and driving programmes to ensure that they grow, accelerate innovation and have a positive impact of the Kerry region and beyond - positioning the Kerry region as a location of choice, to live & work and a key inward investment location. KerrySciTech's vision is to make the Kerry region the best place to imagine, start and grow a career or business in the science, technology and engineering sectors.

High Potential Leaders, CEOs & Entrepreneurs:

Entrepreneurs and outstanding leadership teams are critical to the long-term growth prospects in Kerry. In fact, it is the successful entrepreneurs who have already put Kerry on the map – driving innovation and job creation over the last number of years. It is a strategy to build on this rich entrepreneurial heritage in order for the region to become a hub for a new set of companies with highly skilled leaders bringing innovative products and services to the global market-place. There is a well-established suite of programmes and supports for the start-up community from local and national agencies (e.g. Enterprise Ireland, the LEO network & the NDRC), many of which a number of our member companies and community continue to leverage such as New Frontiers, Competitive Start Fund & HPSU Fund as well as a range of existing mentoring services and supports for entrepreneurs (e.g. the newly launched NDRC programme which is being delivered by the RDI hub for the Kerry region). In order to further stimulate start-ups and build world class leadership teams from the Kerry region KerrySciTech have focused & will continue to focus on supporting leadership and entrepreneurship skills within the Kerry region

STEM Employee Community: Some of the obvious benefits for companies located in regional Ireland now, is that talent, in particular software and IT talent is no longer location dependent and we may find more highly skilled technology talent flocking to locations like Kerry which are now seen as more attractive due to safety, space and lower cost of living. However, KerrySciTech has recognised that community and an ability to become a part of the locality and the region's ecosystem is a key differentiator

that we can leverage in order to retain talent which is fast becoming a pressing issue for companies around the globe. KerrySciTech is helping companies on-board, engage & retain employees through wellbeing/employee engagement and lifelong learning.

Kerry Chamber Network

The County has developed a strengthened network of Chamber Alliances in recent years in addition to the long-established Tralee & Killarney Chamber Alliances. Chamber Alliances play an important role in promoting individual towns and the county as a whole and help bring a cohesive voice for the business communities in their areas. Kerry County Council supported the establishment of these Chambers throughout the county and continue to work with them. Over the years the Chambers have provided supports for businesses in the areas of Training, Networking, Trade Services, Lobbying and promoting Kerry as a great place in which to do business.

Second Sites

The Employment Creation and Retention Interagency Group has identified 'Second Site' locations as an area of opportunity for Kerry. Kerry has faced significant challenges in recent years in attracting large scale operations to the County, while being successful in developing indigenous companies and in attracting and growing smaller company operations that have expanded to become significant employers in the County. There is also a recognition that the challenges facing inward investment to the country will continue to focus investment in the larger population centres either in Dublin or in regional locations. Kerry will continue to seek investment and provide solutions for the larger companies but will also prepare a targeted campaign to attract companies with existing investments in the country to locate part of their operations in Kerry.

This campaign will focus on marketing the County as a location for both investment and quality of life, identifying property solutions, continuing to roll out a responsive and adaptable talent and skills development programme through the Munster Technological University and Kerry ETB. The Local stakeholders will engage with both the IDA and Enterprise Ireland in pursuing this strategy. There will also be a focus on engaging the Kerry Diaspora to advance this proposal.

Engaging the Diaspora

County Kerry has an extensive Diaspora network in Ireland, the United Kingdom, United States, Europe and Internationally. The Diaspora network has strong linkages to the County and provides valuable supports through various mechanisms such as access to national

and international markets, mentoring and supporting the development of the enterprise and social ecosystem within the County.

Prosper Kerry Series

The Prosper Kerry Series held a number of events online in 2020/2021. The Prosper Kerry Series is supported by Kerry County Council, Munster Technological University, Guinness Enterprise Centre and Enterprise Ireland. The Prosper Kerry Series provides an opportunity for local businesses to engage with Kerry's business diaspora to enhance prosperity in Kerry through co-operation, knowledge sharing, creativity, inspiration, and a stronger entrepreneurial ecosystem. The Prosper Series will continue to engage the Diaspora in advancing economic investment in the County and its associated employment potential.

Cantillon Conference 2021: The virtual Cantillon Conference 2021, titled 'Community 2.0 Transforming For Sustainability' was held in March 2021. The conference was hosted jointly between Kerry County Council and Munster Technological University. The conference focused on leading change and fostering resilience and sustainability through climate change, digitalisation and rethinking the Diaspora in sustaining businesses into the future.

The County is in a strong position to develop and host additional conferences in the future with its significant accommodation base and reputation for high quality tourism in an outstanding natural environment. The Kerry Convention Bureau will work with key stakeholders in developing this offering.

Remote/Blended Working and Enterprise Hubs

As discussed elsewhere in this recovery plan, the COVID-19 pandemic has rapidly accelerated the adoption of remote or blended working as a model of work. This change of working practice changed overnight for many individuals and businesses who had to quickly adapt to moving from office to home working.

An initial survey in October 2020 by NUIG and the Western Development Commission found that 94% of participants stated that they would like to work remotely after the crisis for some or all of the time. A second national survey, undertaken in April 2021, found that over 95% of workers now favour some form of remote working, with fewer than 5% wanting a full-time return to the office. It reveals that the number of employees who want to work solely from home all the time has almost tripled over the last year, rising from 12% a year ago to 32% now. Three-quarters of organisations have not yet decided how their teams will function when the pandemic ends. Of the 25% who have decided, however, almost four in every five - 78% - will operate a hybrid model.

'*Making Remote Work*', is the new national Remote Work Strategy published at in January of this year. The objective of this is to ensure remote work is a permanent feature in the Irish workplace and sets out actions to support this objective. The National Rural Policy 2021-2025 '*Our Rural Future*' identifies the investment in remote working infrastructure and supports as a key deliverable to enable more people to live and work in rural communities, with good career prospects, regardless of where their employer is headquartered.

Remote or blended working presents opportunities for Kerry, as employees or employers are no longer tied to a particular location. It has benefits for attracting and retaining talent that might otherwise locate to larger cities, improving work/life balance, supporting and revitalising local communities, potentially reducing the amount of time spent commuting and as a result, reducing transport related carbon emissions. It opens up possibilities for companies to locate outside of the major cities.

Kerry is fortunate to have a number of well-established and quality enterprise hubs. These include a mix of public and privately funded enterprise hubs, with a geographical spread throughout the County.

- Tom Crean Business Centre (Tralee)
- Killarney Innovation Hub (Killarney)
- Sneem Digital Hub (Sneem)
- gteic Baile an Sceilg
- Office Light (Cahersiveen)

- The Box Cowork (Killarney)
- Dingle Creativity and Innovation Hub (Dingle)
- RDI Hub (Killorglin)
- Castleisland Carnegie Coworking (Castleisland)
- HQ Tralee and Listowel
- Kenmare Enterprise Hub (Kenmare)
- Valentia Cable Station (Valentia)

Kerry is part of the **Atlantic Economic Corridor**, a linear network along the western seaboard supported by the Department of Rural and Community Development and the Western Development Commission. One of key initiatives under the AEC is the development and support of enterprise hubs – the "**Enterprise Hubs Network**" – a project that brings together the hubs in the region and supports their development through financial aid, networking, training and the delivery of state of the art ICT systems and digital resources.

The AEC Enterprise Hub Network will transition to a new nation-wide '**Connected Hubs**' network, which was launched on the 31st May. The Connected Hubs network of Enterprise Hubs has a key role to play in supporting clients, their employees and companies looking for solutions to retain their staff and productivity. Enterprise hubs provide not only office space but can also act as the conduit for entrepreneurship and innovation. They are an important element in the economic landscape of our towns and villages and have the potential to offer larger employers 'dispersed' office solutions.

Enterprise Development and Business Support Actions

#	Actions	Lead	Partners	Deliverables 2021-2023	Deliverables 2023-2030
1	Kerry County Council will Engage with state agencies, including IDA Ireland, Enterprise Ireland, and the Third Level Institutions to coordinate economic development and promotion of the County to potential investors.	Kerry County Council	IDA Ireland, Enterprise Ireland, MTU, KETB, KerrySciTech	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support potential investment visits Market and promote the County to potential investors Develop and Implement Strategic Infrastructure projects in the County 	
2	Co-ordinate the inter-agency response to COVID-19 in the county, working with public agencies and private enterprise to re-establish Kerry's economy.	Kerry County Council	Enterprise Ireland, Údarás na Gaeltachta, MTU, Kerry ETB, Kerry Chamber Network, Local Communities, Local Development Companies	Safe Destination Programme, Business Supports, Shop Local Campaign, Kerry Gift card	
3	Adopt the Kerry Employment Creation and Retention Plan and implement the associated recommendations	Kerry Employment Creation and Retention Interagency Group	Collaborative Partners	Implement recommendations under the pillars: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marketing the County Second Site Opportunities The Green Economy Digital Emerging Opportunities Re-generating our Towns and Villages Growing Local Business 	
4	Promote the Prosper Kerry Series	Prosper Kerry	Guinness Enterprise Centre, Kerry County Council, IDA Ireland, Enterprise Ireland, MTU, KETB, KerrySciTech, Kerry Convention Bureau	Networking events	
5	Engage with national and international organisations to create a network of support among the county's business diaspora.	Kerry County Council	Collaborative Partners	Devise a diaspora plan in association with collaborative partners and diaspora networks	
6	Increase the emphasis on growing business through start-up and growth phases.	Kerry County Council (Local Enterprise Office)	Enterprise Ireland	30 Business Start Up programmes and 6 Business Growth Programmes will be delivered involving 500 participants	60 Business Start Up programmes and 12 Business Growth Programmes will be delivered with 1,000 participants
7	Deliver a suite of funding supports through feasibility, business priming and business expansion grants; Support access to additional credit schemes such as Microfinance Ireland.	Kerry County Council (Local Enterprise Office)	Enterprise Ireland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 75 businesses will receive core funding support through feasibility, Business Priming and Business Expansion grants. Businesses will also be supported through the Microfinance Loan process 	200 businesses will receive core funding support

#	Actions	Lead	Partners	Deliverables 2021-2023	Deliverables 2023-2030
8	Provide business support to explore overseas markets through tradefair participation.	Kerry County Council (Local Enterprise Office)	Enterprise Ireland	7 businesses per year will receive tradefair participation supports	35 businesses will receive tradefair participation support
9	Deliver a suite of training supports linked to business lifecycle phase with a strong emphasis on digital delivery	Kerry County Council (Local Enterprise Office)	Enterprise Ireland	3,000 businesses will participate on core training programmes (webinars and physical) (double check figure)	6,000 businesses will participate on core training programmes
10	Encourage businesses to digitise through the delivery of the Trading Online Voucher Programme as per national guidelines.	Kerry County Council (Local Enterprise Office)	Enterprise Ireland	150 businesses will be approved Trading Online Vouchers and participate in information webinars	300 businesses will be approved Trading Online Vouchers and participate in information webinars
11	Ensure strong output from the mentor programme with client businesses receiving actionable support and advice	Kerry County Council (Local Enterprise Office)	Enterprise Ireland	300 business owners will receive one to one mentoring service assignments	600 business owners will receive one to one mentoring service assignments
12	Deliver on specific national programmes at a local level such as youth entrepreneurship and female entrepreneurship.	Kerry County Council (Local Enterprise Office)	Enterprise Ireland	LEO Kerry will work national initiatives such as National Women's Enterprise Day, Ireland Best Young Entrepreneur Programme, Student Enterprise Awards engaging with 500 individuals in process subject to scheme funding	LEO Kerry will work national initiatives such as National Women's Enterprise Day, Ireland Best Young Entrepreneur Programme, Student Enterprise Awards engaging with 1,000 individuals in process subject to scheme funding
13	Support the interagency transfer of client businesses ensuring access to the Enterprise Ireland range of supports.	Kerry County Council (Local Enterprise Office)	Enterprise Ireland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LEO Kerry will transfer 2 clients per annum to the Enterprise Ireland High Potential Start Up Unit and a further 4 clients to the New Frontiers Programme. LEO Kerry will also engage in Brexit, Customs and Export initiatives supporting 30 businesses. 	12 High Potential Clients will be transferred to the HPSU in Enterprise Ireland. 24 client companies will be referred to the New Frontiers Programme
14	Provide ongoing support for enterprise development, training, marketing, through the LEADER funding programme and other mechanisms.	Local Development Companies (LDCs); LEO; UnG; EI; IDA.	All (Business Advisory Team)	LEADER funding for specific actions	LEADER funding for specific actions
15	Provide opportunities that encourage innovation, networking, and collaboration for business and enterprise in Kerry.	MTU / Tom Crean Business Centre	Various Partner Facilitators	100 events (2021-2025)	
16	Attract additional events and business opportunities to Kerry via hosting national & local business conference, events & exhibitions	Kerry Convention Bureau; MTU; Kerry Sports Academy; KTIF, IHF; Kerry County Council	Government bodies; Kerry Business Community; Industry Leaders, National Sport Governing bodies, Regional Sporting Organisations	Conferences, events & exhibitions held	

#	Actions	Lead	Partners	Deliverables 2021-2023	Deliverables 2023-2030
17	Support Kerry's Enterprise Hubs and Clusters: RDI Hub, Agritech Centre of Excellence, Dingle Creativity and Innovation Hub, Sneem Digital Hub, Castleisland Carnegie, Tom Crean Business Centre, Killarney Innovation Hub, KerrySciTech	Hub and Cluster Boards	Enterprise Ireland, Kerry County Council, Údarás na Gaeltachta, MTU, Local Communities, Local Development Companies	Hub and Cluster programmes delivered.	
18	Support the development of the Listowel Food Hub	NEWKD; Listowel Food Hub	Department of Rural and Community Development, Kerry County Council, Collaborative Partners	Construction to be completed by 2022	
19	Support the expansion of the Kerry Food Hub	Kerry Food Hub	Enterprise Ireland, Kerry County Council, Collaborative Partners	Construction to be completed by 2022	
20	Support the start-up and scale-up community in Kerry.	Tom Crean Business Centre	Kerry Innovation Centre; MTU; Enterprise Ireland	Business Training, Workshop and other supports to 250 early stage businesses per year	
21	Provide pre-accelerator stage programme supports for start-ups in Kerry to aid with the Covid-19 recovery.	MTU / Tom Crean Business Centre	Enterprise Ireland; Kerry Hub Network	Funded Kerry HubStart Programme (2021/2022)	
22	Position the Kerry Hub Network as a key resource for newly emerging 'blended' work patterns.	MTU / Tom Crean Business Centre	Enterprise Ireland; IDA; Kerry County Council, Kerry Hub Network; Kerry SciTech; Guinness Enterprise Centre	Kerry HubStart Remote Working Stimuli as part of Funded Kerry HubStart Programme (2021/2022)	
23	Support the implementation of the National Connected Hubs project in County Kerry	Department of Rural and Community Development, Western Development Commission; Kerry County Council (AEC)	Enterprise Ireland, Údarás na Gaeltachta, Kerry Hub Network, NACEC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the roll out of a new and dynamic suite of technology and software solutions to the hubs in Kerry. Support the promotion and marketing of Kerry hubs. 	
24	Development of a research, innovation and enterprise "hub" for Kerry College.	Kerry ETB; Kerry College	Kerry County Council; SOLAS	Establishment of the "hub"	Delivering and supporting new enterprise development
25	Provide creative, innovative solutions to the Life Science industry.	Shannon ABC	MTU & LIT	140 industry projects; €2 million worth of projects	
26	Provide solutions to increase competitiveness in the area of Intelligent Mechatronics (including enterprise and industrial process automation), RFID and Internet of Things on near-to-market problems for industrial partners.	Intelligent Mechatronics and RFID (IMaR) Technology Gateway	MTU; Technology Gateway Network ; Enterprise Ireland (EI); Regional and National SMEs, FDI's, start-ups	Target for the total value of projects in 2021, 2022 is 668k & 707k respectively with a likely target for 2023 of 750k.	

#	Actions	Lead	Partners	Deliverables 2021-2023	Deliverables 2023-2030
27	Deliver Funded programmes to support upskilling employees in Tourism sector.	MTU	HEA; Skillnet; Údarás	F&B Costing; Culinary Management; Nutrition; Culinary Skills; F&B Service; Revenue Management; Accommodation Supervisory Management; Trainee Manager Development Programme	MA in Rural Tourism Development
28	Deliver Funded programmes to support CPD in Retail sector	MTU	Skillnet	BA Retail Experience Management; Cert in Social Media for Digital Marketing	
29	Support sports sector businesses with Human Rights and Sustainable Development support.	MTU UNESCO Chair	Skillnet; Kerry Recreation and Sports Partnership	Certificate	
30	Establish, build and maintain a cluster of AgriTech companies from all across Ireland to drive AgriTech SME productivity, competitiveness and internationalisation.	MTU; Kerry STEM	Enterprise Ireland; ACE; IMAR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish and build the cluster; Grow active membership; Engage SMEs in new R&D activities; Identify skills gaps and plan to close; Support growth in no. of jobs in AgriTech. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate the growth of the AgriTech SME sector; Improve productivity; Improve competitiveness; Increased level of international sales; Make the AgriTech cluster sustainable
31	Implement KerrySciTech Strategy to attract, develop and retain STEM talent in the County.	Kerry SciTech	Enterprise Ireland, Kerry County Council, MTU, Kerry ETB, Regional Skills Forum, Southwest Gnó Skillnet, IMI (Executive Education)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launch an Executive Leadership Development Programme in 2022 Investigate the viability of a KerrySciTech Internship Programme Support the provision of guest lectures, internships and input into the development of modules and courses that will assist skills development in STEM in the region. Assist and support KerrySciTech start up and SME community in their engagement with undergraduates through the provision of resources and platform to increase the awareness of the benefits of working in a smaller organisation. Continue to act as a brand ambassador for the SME community by attending graduate fairs, career talks and promoting the opportunity for graduates within the KerrySciTech community. 	
32	Upskill Enterprise hub management and teams.	MTU / Tom Crean Business Centre	Enterprise Ireland; Kerry Hub Network; Guinness Enterprise Centre	Kerry Hub Enterprise & Innovation Series as part of Funded Kerry HubStart Programme (2021/2022)	

#	Actions	Lead	Partners	Deliverables 2021-2023	Deliverables 2023-2030
33	Continuation of the Gaeltacht Social Enterprise training and mentoring initiative programme	Údarás na Gaeltachta	KETB; MTU		
34	Continue to support job creation and enterprise development in the Gaeltacht	Údarás na Gaeltachta			
35	Continue to support and develop the export market for Gaeltacht companies.	Údarás na Gaeltachta	Enterprise Ireland		
36	Identify opportunities for the establishment of social and community-based enterprises in the Uíbh Ráthach Gaeltacht area, including those provided for under An Plean Gníomhaíochta Cúig Bliana don Ghaeltacht (RTCEGSM)	Údarás na Gaeltachta	Partner agencies on Tascfhórsa Uíbh Ráthaigh, Local community, An Roinn Turasóireachta, Cultúir, Ealaíon, Gaeltachta, Spóirt agus Meán, Communities Creating Jobs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collation of community audit report and publication of findings; • Identification of support pathways in relation to prioritised projects 	Pursue the implementation of the findings along pathways identified.
37	Provide targeted information and support to potential entrepreneurs, both local and re-locating, with solid business development proposals in co-operation with Tascfhórsa Uíbh Ráthaigh	Údarás na Gaeltachta	Partner agencies on Tascfhórsa Uíbh Ráthaigh, Kerry County Council, Kerry LEO, SKDP, BIM, MTU, Skellig CRI	Build on initiatives rolled out during Kerry Month of Enterprise, including online clinics, webinars, mentoring and 1:1 meetings	Build on existing initiatives including online clinics, webinars, mentoring and 1:1 meetings
38	Deliver funded 3-Phase start-up programme to Kerry based entrepreneurs: New Frontiers Entrepreneur Development Programme (2021-2025)	MTU / Tom Crean Business Centre	Enterprise Ireland; Kerry County Council LEO; Shannon ABC; IMaR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phase 1: Deliver 80 Workshops to 400 early stage start-ups in Kerry (2021-2025) • Phase 2: Deliver full-time funded business accelerator programme to 60 Kerry entrepreneurs (2021-2025) • Phase 3: Deliver full-time funded business accelerator programme to 10 high potential start-ups (2021-2025) 	
39	Grow the start-up community in Kerry by creating an investment vehicle in Kerry (HBAN Kerry Angel Network) and open up opportunities for Kerry start-ups.	HBAN Network; KerrySciTech		Series of events to be held.	

#	Actions	Lead	Partners	Deliverables 2021-2023	Deliverables 2023-2030
40	Promote the development of sustainable supply chains in the bio economy.	MTU	Enterprise Ireland; CircBio Research Group at MTU & Shannon ABC; Project Steering Group: Kerry Group, Carbery Group, Nutramara, Dillon Waste, Allihies Seafood	Circular Bioeconomy Cluster Roadmap Events - Identification of Opportunities - New Product Development & Process - Optimisation - Business Case & Market Analysis - Access to Markets New partnerships and collaborations across private sector to prevent, reduce, reuse, recover, utilise waste and renewable resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High value job creation • Increased uptake of biobased alternatives • Reduction in carbon emissions and waste
41	Support Shannon Estuary development and its potential contribution to County Kerry	Regional interagency partners	Local Authorities, Shannon Port Company, State Agencies, Third Level Sector, Chambers		
42	Provide companies with the necessary aids and supports, applying state of the art internet of things technologies to new and existing products, processes and services, to drive their businesses forward and contribute to increased revenues and jobs growth.	COMAND Technology Gateway; IMaR Technology; Nimbus Technology Gateway; TSSG Technology Gateway; WiSAR Technology Gateway	MTU; Enterprise Ireland;	The Applied IoT Cluster based at MTU Kerry (current programme 2018-2022) will facilitate 20 industry projects in Kerry.	
43	Promote the gteic network in all Gaeltacht regions	Údarás na Gaeltachta	Kerry County Council; Tascfhórsa Uíbh Ráthaigh; Comharchumann Forbartha Chorca Dhuibhne; Comhchoiste Ghaeltachtaí Uíbh Ráthaigh; Mol Teic Teo.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baile an Sceilg, Ciarraí Theas (operational) • Forbairt na Dromaide Ciarraí Theas (2021 in progress) • Mol Teic / Dingle Hub (operational) • Gteic@páircghnóanDaingin (Dingle Business Park operational) • Dingle Workhouse Project (2023) Baile an Sceilg (RRDF 2022) 	
44	Develop a new Kerry Local Economic and Community plan	Kerry County Council	Collaborative Partners	Develop and Implement Kerry Local Economic and Community Plan	Implement actions within plan
45	Develop new Regional Enterprise plan for the South-West	Regional Enterprise Steering Committee	Collaborative Partners	Develop and Implement Regional Enterprise Plan 2021-2024	Implement actions within plan



Photo: Munster Technological University, Kerry

Pillar 7: Education and Training

This plan has been developed against a backdrop of substantial global upheaval. The labour market is constantly evolving, and the specific occupations, skills and qualification that are required change over time. However due to the impact of the COVID pandemic it is anticipated that there will be an urgent need for people and business to upskill and re-skill. We are very fortunate in Kerry that, students, graduates, employees, businesses in the county can avail of lifelong learning and skills development, formal education and non-formal education, through the Kerry Education and Training Board and the Munster Technological University (MTU).

Munster Technological University (MTU)

The establishment as the **Munster Technological University (MTU)** is a game changer for County Kerry. MTU is a multi-campus technological university, contributing to the region through the provision of academic programmes that support student development and opportunities, education and research. MTU has an extensive and impressive regional footprint with six campuses across the South-West region in Cork and Kerry, and consists of:

- 18,000+ Learners
- 140+ Courses and Programmes
- 120+ Links with Leading Colleges Worldwide 6 Campuses Across the South-West Region
- 100+ Clubs and Societies
- 2,000+ Staff Developing & Supporting Learners

Opportunities created by the establishment of MTU will afford additional benefits and outcomes to students including:

- Enhanced employability both in Ireland and internationally as MTU graduates.
- A greater range of course choices, progression opportunities and industry placements.
- A greater selection of options nationally and internationally for further and postgraduate study.
- Enhanced opportunities for participation in research and innovation activity in support of globally competitive business and driving societal change.
- An enhanced range and quality of services and supports available to students

External funding for all research undertaken at MTU is derived from a wide range of sources, including the EU Horizon programmes, Erasmus+, Science Foundation Ireland, Enterprise Ireland and direct funding from industry partners nationally. Over the period 2019/20, MTU researchers across the Kerry Campuses secured a research income of over €7m, highlighting the significant growth in professional research activities across the University campuses in Kerry in recent years. This upward trend is expected to escalate significantly further over the next ten years as MTU strives to exceed its ambitious new University research targets.

MTU Kerry has always worked closely with employers, both regionally and nationally to ensure programmes are relevant to specific industry sectors. Uniquely, MTU Kerry a campus with a Technology Park. This proximity has further enabled the development of links with a range of cutting-edge start-ups, global companies and internationally recognised research centres. Companies operating from Kerry Technology Park provide work placement opportunities for students and work opportunities for graduates. In fact, 25% of those working in the Technology Park are MTU Kerry graduates. Also located on the Kerry Campus at Kerry Technology Park is the **Tom Crean Business Centre**. Funded by Enterprise Ireland, this business incubation centre celebrates 15 years in operation in 2021, during which time well over 100 sustainable jobs have been created by businesses at the Centre, and over €1 million investment raised. Today, the Tom Crean Business Centre is home to 30 businesses, directly employing over 70 people.

A collaboration of Kerry's skills and talent have been applied to develop several **Centers of Excellence**; **The Agritech Centre of Excellence** is an initiative of the MTU Kerry in collaboration with Dairymaster, McHale Engineering, Abbey Machinery and supported by Kerry County Council. The centre will identify, research, share and implement best practice in innovation, processes and systems, people skills, company capability and internationalisation to deliver sustainable market growth. The project is a step change in the Agri-tech sector and offers a new and exciting approach to sectoral learning and development, through e-learning and virtual reality. **RDI Hub is a world-class centre for design-led, digital innovation located in Killorglin.** A first of its kind, RDI Hub focuses on digitisation, ideation and commercialisation of innovation and research in the Digital, AI, Data and related

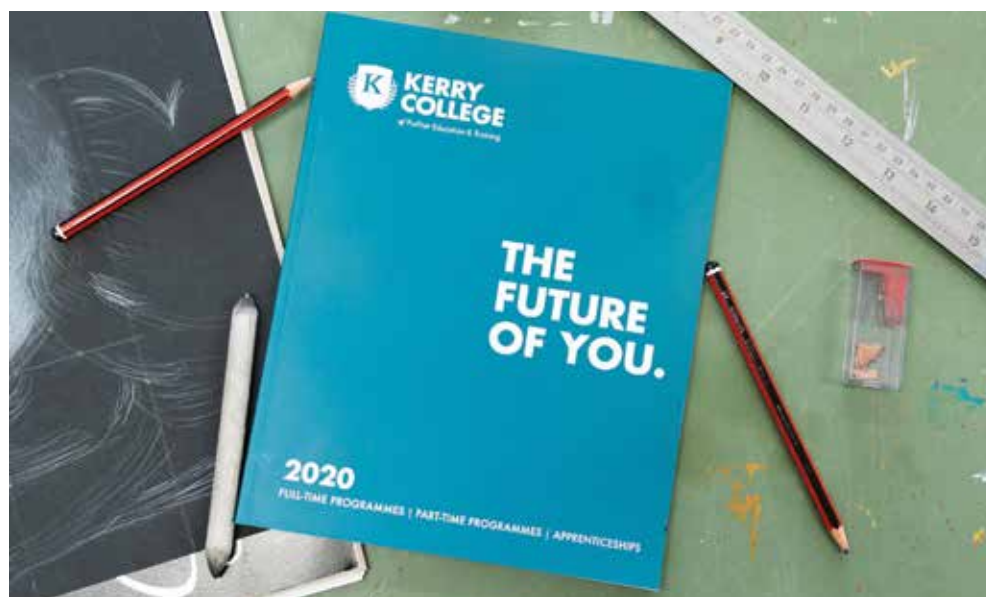
MTU Kerry has always worked closely with employers, both regionally and nationally to ensure programmes are relevant to specific industry sectors

technologies' sectors. RDI Hub is a not-for-profit partnership between Private Enterprise (Fexco), Third level (MTU Kerry) and Government (Kerry County Council) and supported by Enterprise Ireland. This unique innovation hub has the potential to develop the research capacity in the Region, accelerate knowledge transfer and

the placement of researchers in industry. The Hub will provide innovative and Industry-Tech Education and Training opportunities – linking the Higher Education Authorities in the Region.

Kerry Education and Training Board

Kerry ETB extends the higher education and vocational offering in the county through the delivery of education and training programmes from 37 schools/centres and over 100 outreach centres across the county. The ETB has an annual budget of circa €52 million employing over 1,100 staff with approximately 15,000 students/learners annually. Through its wide range of programmes, Kerry ETB promotes the development of a learning society in Kerry and is focussed on the development of innovative and creative solutions and responses to the learning and developmental needs of young people and adults in a changing society.



Skellig Centre for Research and Innovation (Skellig CRI)

The Skellig Centre for Research and Innovation (Skellig CRI) is a unique higher education and community development partnership between Kerry County Council, University College Cork (UCC), South Kerry Development Partnership (SKDP) and the local community. The Centre is based locally in Cahersiveen Library and facilitates the delivery of higher education programmes, research and practice locally in the Skellig Coast region.

There are local students enrolled in both first and second year of the two-year Diploma in Environmental Science and Social Policy. This is an accredited level 7 programme being delivered by UCC and local experts in Cahersiveen. The second cohort of students graduated in 2020. The UCC Certificate in Practice Support in Social Farming bespoke level 6 programme was developed in collaboration with South Kerry Development Partnership and Kerry Social Farming. The first cohort of students graduated in November 2020 and a further cohort studied for their Certificate in 2021. An Introduction to Astronomy module to support the UNESCO Gold Tier Dark Sky Reserve is being delivered online in May/June 2021. Modules will be delivered in Marine Heritage and Genealogy in 2021. Skellig CRI will continue to develop courses on the basis of needs identified with the local community for the duration of the plan.

KerrySciTech

KerrySciTech has always been focused on increasing career interest & awareness in STEM, on-boarding and integrating talent in our region and ultimately retaining and developing our talent to ensure that we have the leaders to drive our industries and create more jobs for the next generation of scientists, engineers and technologists. Over the last year KerrySciTech has significantly increased its activities in the areas of creating a robust STEM talent pipeline in the Kerry region.

Education and Training Actions

#	Actions	Lead	Partners	Deliverables 2021-2023	Deliverables 2023-2030
1	Provide undergraduate programmes to meet skills needs of the Region and create an educated and work-ready workforce.	MTU	Higher Education Authority (HEA); THEA; DFHERIS; CAO; Regional Skills Forum South West	18,000 regional learners (per year), across 6 campuses in the South West.	
2	Provide Lifelong Learning opportunities to those wishing to upskill or retrain.	MTU – Lifelong Learning Department; UNESCO Chair	Higher Education Authority (HEA); Springboard+; University; Regional Skills Forum South West; Shannon ABC; IMaR Technology Gateway; Kerry SciTech	1,300 part-time learners per year Kerry campus.	
3	Recruit International fee-paying and exchange students to Kerry campus	MTU – International Office		Recruit 550 International full-time and visiting students resulting in an estimated contribution of €3.6 million (excluding fees to the University) per annum to the Kerry economy	Recruit 750 International full-time and visiting students resulting in an estimated contribution of €4.6 million (excluding fees to the University) per annum to the Kerry economy
4	Provide world-class education, research and innovation opportunities at a postgraduate level to meet the needs of Regional Enterprise.	MTU UNESCO Chair	Higher Education Authority (HEA); THEA; DFHERIS; CAO; Regional Skills Forum South West	150-200 Postgraduate opportunities per year Kerry campus	
5	Visitor Experience development workshop for Gaeltacht product providers	Údarás na Gaeltachta	Fáilte Ireland, ETB's & Local Authorities, Dingle Peninsula Tourism Alliance, Skellig Coast Experience	2-3 sessions per year	

#	Actions	Lead	Partners	Deliverables 2021-2023	Deliverables 2023-2030
6	Continue the suite of Third Level courses designed in conjunction with Third Level Institutes to deliver several specific programmes with Gaeltacht companies	Údarás na Gaeltachta	WIT/Nemeton Teo; GMIT/Europus Teo; TG4		
7	Gteic Network – a training programme will be agreed in conjunction with Third Level Institutes and Organisations and Government Department hoping to deliver a number of training initiatives via the Gaeltacht Network of gteic hubs	Údarás na Gaeltachta	Third Level Institutes; Enterprise Ireland; Fáilte Ireland; Local Authorities; Enterprise Ireland		
8	Engage with relevant stakeholders including client companies, educational bodies and the local community to promote apprenticeships as a pathway to education, with an emphasis on new-generation apprenticeships. Particular focus will be placed on targeting needs identified through Tascfhórsa Uíbh Ráthaigh in South Kerry	Údarás na Gaeltachta	Kerry ETB; Skellig CRI; MTU; partner agencies of Tascfhórsa Uíbh Ráthaigh	Promotion of Scoláireachtaí Printiseachta scheme among potential learners and sponsors, with participation as set out in the scheme to be attained as per targets set out	
9	Digital Strategy - Digital Citizen Skills and Cyber pillar: Objective DCSC1: Developing citizen Digital Skills and experience to facilitation participation in the Digital Economy and Digital Society	Multiple Education and Community Organisations, LDC's	DES	Programmes to be developed	Programmes to be developed
10	Provide updated training for the Hospitality Sector re COVID-19 matters etc.	Kerry ETB	Kerry County Council, Fáilte Ireland	Provide the training as required.	
11	Completion of Key ETB Capital Projects	Kerry ETB, Corporate, Capital and Technology Department	Dept. of Education Dept. of Further & Higher Education SOLAS Design Team External Consultants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of both Major and Minor works across Kerry ETB estate; • Completion of Gaelcholaiste Chiarraí new school building in Tralee; • Commence Listellick NS School Build 	Delivery of both Major and Minor works across Kerry ETB estate
12	Expansion of training programmes to support the staycation tourist market	Kerry ETB, Kerry College		Delivery of Training Programmes	
13	Expansion of training programmes to support the needs of the Sustainable Green Economy.	Kerry ETB, Kerry College		Delivery of Training Programmes	
14	Implementation and roll out of the Sustainability Strategy across Kerry ETB sites and locations across the county.	Kerry ETB, Corporate, Capital and Technology Department	External Suppliers Community Groups Schools FET Centres	Achievement of Goals highlighted in Sustainability Strategy	Continuation of Sustainability practices throughout the organisation
15	Implementation and roll out of the ICT Strategy across Kerry ETB sites and locations across the county.	Kerry ETB, Corporate, Capital and Technology Department	Third Party ICT support Schools FET Centres	Achievement of Strategic Goals identified in Kerry ETB ICT Strategy 2019-2022	Development of Kerry ETB ICT Strategy beyond 2022

#	Actions	Lead	Partners	Deliverables 2021-2023	Deliverables 2023-2030
16	Upskilling, reskilling to meet the needs of the low carbon economy, introduction of new courses to meet emerging needs etc.	Kerry ETB, Kerry College		New courses developed and implemented	
17	Expansion of IT FET Course provision	Kerry ETB, Kerry College		New courses developed and implemented	
18	Establishment of Kerry National College Outdoor Education and Training Campus Tralee as a low carbon campus exemplar.	Kerry ETB, Kerry College		Low carbon initiatives implemented in the campus	
19	Deliver Funded programmes to support CPD in Kerry SciTech	MTU	Skillnet; RDI Hub; Kerry SciTech	MSc Fintech Innovation; Cert in Cloud Services; Cert in Software Testing	
20	Support the business community in Kerry through the provision of industry ready work placement students	MTU	Industry; KIC	Circa 1,500 work placements per annum.	
21	Transform the delivery of undergraduate engineering education through the implementation of the Rethinking Engineering Education in Ireland (REEdI).	MTU	Higher Education Authority (HEA); UL;	Rethinking Engineering Education in Ireland (REEdI) is an €8.95 million project that combines an innovative method of content delivery with new immersive technologies to deliver a transformative programme of self-directed and self-scheduled learning for the next generation of engineers. REEdI has three central pillars - eLearning - projects - performance planning and review	
22	Expand partnerships, advocacy and research to implement human rights and sustainable development approaches to health and well-being, education and sport sectors.	MTU UNESCO Chair	DFA Ireland at Expo	Deliver global MTU-led week-long event at world Expo 2022 Dubai in partnership with DFA. Leverage partnerships for regional research, enterprise development and education.	
23	Strengthen the Skellig Centre for Research and Innovation (Skellig CRI) as a satellite outreach university campus	University College Cork; Kerry County Council; South Kerry Development Partnership	Collaborative Partners	Develop and delivery Skellig CRI Programmes annually	



Pillar 8: Kerry's Natural Resources: Agriculture, Fisheries, Forestry, Rural Landscape and the Marine

County Kerry's natural environment includes a wealth of features that encompass the character of the County. These include the highest mountain in the country, a diversity of wildlife, ecological sites of importance including Killarney National Park, coastal areas including blue flag beaches and sites of geological importance. It is necessary for these features to be protected to the standards required by national legislation and European Directives, whilst accommodating sustainable development in appropriate locations to facilitate sustainable economic growth and development.

In addition to having its own intrinsic value, the natural environment is an immense economic and amenity asset, providing a platform for the County's major employment sectors in tourism, agriculture, forestry and the marine, while simultaneously providing sustainable recreational activities, enhancing the quality of life of residents and visitors alike and contributing natural resources such as drinking water and raw materials which can facilitate sustainable development. These resources are generally located in rural areas providing employment and contributing to the economy of these rural communities. The continued sustainable development of these resources at appropriate locations will serve to diversify and strengthen the economy of the County.

Agriculture and Food

Agriculture has traditionally been the most important contributor to rural economies, and it remains important as a significant source of income and both direct and indirect employment.

Agri-food, fisheries and forestry represent Ireland's largest indigenous industry. Agriculture output in Kerry is valued at €358m (5.3% of the State) with additional output from farming amounting to €262m. Forestry and Aquaculture output is valued at €12m and €4.7m respectively.

The agricultural sector employs approximately 5,000 directly. At 9% of Kerry working population, it is 3% higher than South West and double the State average. According to the IFA, agriculture supports an additional 2,800 jobs indirectly in food and drink processing alone, with further employment in the wider agri-industry, including input suppliers, agriculture contractors, jobs in transport and engineering, accountancy, legal, veterinary and other agri-advisory services.

Agriculture will continue to be an important component of the economy. The agricultural sector will continue to innovate and adapt to the challenges posed by modernisation, restructuring, market development and the increasing importance of environmental issues. An economically efficient agricultural and food sector, together with forestry,

sensitive exploitation of natural resources and diversification into alternative on-farm and off-farm activities, are essential components for the development of the rural economy.

One of the aims of this plan is to heighten the sustainability of the traditional sectors of tourism and agriculture and ensure that they continue to play a significant role in driving Kerry's economy. This plan includes actions centred on diversifying both the tourism and agriculture sectors through further expansion of Kerry's local food economy.

Much of the economic benefits in the agri-food sector are dispersed throughout the country making it particularly vital to rural areas and economic development generally. Continued development of the agri-food sector will be supported through the implementation of Food Wise 2025. Food Wise 2025 sets out a strategic plan for the development of the agri-food (including seafood) sector over for the period up to 2025 and is the successor to the Food Harvest 2020 strategy.

The Agritech Centre of Excellence (ACE)

Based in Tralee, ACE is a new and exciting approach to Agritech sectoral learning, development and research. ACE uses immersive learning technologies such as e-learning and virtual reality platforms to deliver excellence in learning and development for the Agritech sector. Industry-led, ACE works to enhance the capabilities of Ireland's Agritech companies, enabling them to expand their reach and global ambition. The vision is to position Ireland at the forefront of the international Agritech industry.

ACE recently launched the 'ACE Suite', a purpose-built virtual and physical collaboration space with endless possibilities. The ACE Suite hosts a huge array of the very latest augmented, virtual, and mixed reality platforms, enabling companies to work in a unique technology-rich environment. The ACE Suite enables a company to experience its physical space and products in an engaging and fully accessible virtual environment. It allows for virtual training scenarios and the launching of products to a global audience using the latest custom-built hardware and software solutions and possibilities for collaboration with geographically dispersed partners and workforce.

The **Kerry Food Hub** provides production facilities for start-up food entrepreneurs and growth directed food businesses. Blending naturally into the local environment, phase one (Concept to Launch) of this purpose-built facility on a greenfield site near Firies village began operations in 2016 with four units of 1000 ft² each finished to

food-grade industry standards. Kerry Food Hub is community run facility that aims to support job creation, encourage up-skilling, promote food tourism provide an online platform to connect buyers with artisan food producers. The Kerry Food Hub is further expanding its facilities following a recent successful grant funding application with Enterprise Ireland.

The **Listowel Food Hub Ltd.** Led by NEWKD will deliver a 12,000 sq. ft food hub facility at Clieveragh Business Park, Listowel, comprising of five food production units and a fully fitted Research and Development suit. Construction has commenced and is expected to be completed by 2022. Once complete, the Listowel Food Hub will provide space for mobile projects and enterprises to graduate from the food hub to their own facilities.

Fisheries and Aquaculture

Our ocean wealth will be a key element of our economic recovery and sustainable growth, generating benefits for the County. Not alone fishing, but fish distribution, processing, aquaculture and related activities generate significant levels of employment and remain an important resource for the County which has potential for further sustainable development. Aquaculture includes the culture or farming of fish, aquatic invertebrates, aquatic plants or any aquatic form of food suitable for the nutrition of fish⁹.

It is essential that a balance is achieved between generating a sustainable and economically viable industry on the one hand and complying with EU policies and quota on the other hand. Kerry County Council will support the sustainable development of the operations of the fishing and aquaculture industry while protecting and preserving the biodiversity and ecosystems in our oceans, so they can continue to provide essential monetary and non-monetary goods and services.

While in recent years there has been a decline in the marine fishing industry due in part to the EU quota restrictions, there has been an expansion in the aquaculture and secondary sectors of the industry as a whole and overall fishing remains an important and vital sector in the economy of the County.

In 2019, **Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM)** undertook a study to examine the impact of the seafood sector on Ireland's ten main fishing ports. The findings point to the significance of the sector in rural economies in Ireland. *For every four jobs in the seafood sector, three are created downstream.* In Kerry, BIM studied the economic impact of the seafood sector in An Daingean.

The Council will support the sustainable development of the operations of the fishing and aquaculture industry while protecting and preserving the biodiversity and ecosystems

⁹ Aquaculture includes the culture or farming of fish, aquatic invertebrates, aquatic plants or any aquatic form of food suitable for the nutrition of fish.

The report found that the seafood sector makes an important contribution to the An Daingean economy. In 2018, direct seafood related activity at the port generated €39.2 million in turnover, supporting 330 direct jobs or 8% of employment across the local port economy. Fish processing is the largest seafood subsector at the port, generating €24.8 million in turnover, followed by commercial fishing (€8.1million) and aquaculture (€6.3 million). When translated into GVA, the overall seafood sector makes a €18.9 million direct contribution to the local port economy. The consultants also estimate that the total economic contribution of the seafood sector of An Daingean, taking indirect and induced effects into consideration, equated to €27.7 million of GVA across the south-west economy in 2018, supporting 430 jobs.

Aquaculture and food processing both have the potential to continue to expand in the County, while opportunities for the development of a service industry exist particularly in South Kerry with approximately 300-400 Irish and foreign fishing vessels operating off the coastline. Kerry County Council recognises the importance of the industry as a whole to the economy of the County and will continue to play a supportive role to ensure fishing and aquaculture is managed and assisted where necessary.

In addition to commercial fishing and aquaculture the aquatic environment (marine, estuarine and freshwater) supports smaller scale fishing and angling activities. The protection and support of water quality and habitats as natural resources necessary to safeguard these activities is therefore of importance.

Marine

The South-West region has a wealth of natural resources, which contribute to the social and economic fabrics of the region. Maritime and the marine is a growth sector and selling point for the region, reaching into a range of areas including enterprise and entrepreneurship, tourism, technology, and sustainability, among others. The South-West has natural marine assets and resources that could be further leveraged to grow business and employment, supported by the development of productive connections and networks. There is potential to create added value to products sourced within the Region (including 'blue-tech'), that result in a more diversified and resilient sector, with associated economic and employment benefits.

The forthcoming revised South-West Regional Enterprise Plan will examine how stakeholders in the marine sector can collaborate more to realise the enterprise potential of the marine, particularly in the areas of marine tourism, marine bio-economy, renewable energy and the internet of things.

Forestry & Amenity Assets

The forest industry makes a significant and increasing contribution to the Kerry economy. As the quality of land is often a determining factor in the land-use decision-making process, lower quality land that currently presents challenges for economic agriculture may represent a resource that might be used for afforestation. It is likely that forest cover will continue to focus on suitable agricultural land which may be easier to convert to afforestation owing to more limited agricultural use.

The afforestation of agricultural land, supported by Government incentives, aims to increase long-term timber supply to support the development of a sustainable processing sector and offers significant carbon sequestration potential, thereby contributing to national greenhouse gas mitigation targets and the bio-economy.

Developing a forest as an amenity creates a resource for the local community and for visitors to an area. Using the forest for simple quiet enjoyment or for a particular sport or adventure activity promotes fitness, health and a sense of well-being. Forest recreation also creates the basis for a wide range of related enterprises and opportunities for income generation. The Council recognises the tourist and recreational benefits of forested areas and will seek to encourage the sustainable management of forest lands for recreational and tourism purposes as set out in the natural heritage section of this plan.

Kerry County Council values the assets of the natural environment to underpin the long-term sustainable development of the County and to provide the current and future generations with a quality of life that is intrinsically linked with a high-quality natural ecosystem. The continued investment in green infrastructure in developing Greenways, walkways, mountain and forest trails, supporting infrastructure to protect beaches and the natural resources of unique landscapes including, mountains, rivers and lakes is required to ensure the continued enjoyment of these natural assets both for the local and visitor population. The rollout of the Greenway programme offers a sustainable opportunity for regional tourism development as well as positively impacting on sustainable mobility across the country. The Tourism Section of this plan provides an expanded outline of this area.

Rural Job Creation

Creating the environment to support job creation in rural areas is a key enabler to rejuvenating towns and villages, sustaining vibrant rural communities and reversing population decline. Rural areas support a mix of businesses of varying sizes, operating in a wide range of sectors from the traditional, such as agriculture and tourism, to more modern industries such as financial services and creative industries. Rural business also comprises small and

medium enterprises (SMEs), involved in non-traditional agricultural activities. These serve a wide range of markets, from local to international level. Local services sectors, including tourism and small-scale manufacturing, are also a significant part of the rural economy and are important local employers. Locally-based enterprises are critical in maintaining the fabric of local communities.

However, supporting the diversification of the rural economy is essential, not just to create additional jobs and facilitate rural entrepreneurship in rural areas, but also to maximise the opportunity to link employment to issues such as climate change and managing sustainable land use. Kerry's natural resources are some of our greatest assets and through the development of various sectors, will not only sustain rural employment, but also contribute to driving the local economy.

Many rural businesses have been particularly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic due its impact on the sectors in which they operate. The actions contained in this economic recovery plan aim to facilitate the development of enterprises and local economies in order to allow for the creation of a wider variety of employment opportunities therefore helping to secure and access employment within rural areas.

The development of a strong enterprise culture is central to the economic and societal vibrancy of rural communities including development of micro enterprises and small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) is of particular relevance to the sustainability of smaller towns and rural areas. Rural areas have significant potential in these sectors, and as digital links and opportunities for remote working and new enterprises continue to grow, employment is likely to increase in areas such as agri-tech, ICT, multi-media and creative sectors, tourism, and an added value bio-economy and circular economy. Improved digital connectivity,

As digital connectivity and opportunities for remote working continue to grow, there is potential for increased employment in rural areas in sectors such as Agri-tech, ICT, Financial Services, multi-media and the Creative Industries.

through the roll-out of the National Broadband Plan, offers unprecedented opportunities for businesses in rural areas to offer new services and to reach new markets over the coming years. The rise in the amount of people remote working during the COVID 19 emergency demonstrates the potential changes in work practices. *As digital connectivity and opportunities for remote working continue to grow, there is potential for increased employment in rural areas in sectors such as Agri-tech, ICT, Financial Services, multi-media and the Creative Industries. As Ireland transitions to a climate neutral economy, rural areas are also well placed to see employment growth in areas such as renewable energy, the Bioeconomy and the Circular Economy (Our Rural Future, Rural Development Policy 2021-2025).*

The Local Enterprise Office (LEO) and Údarás na Gaeltachta provide a range of supports for local businesses across a range of sectors. The Regional Plan for the South West is

aimed at bringing together key stakeholders in the Cork and Kerry region to drive sustainable and quality job creation through "bottom up" collaborative initiatives. The MTU and Kerry ETB support investment in training and enhancing skills to support continued economic development in rural areas. By working collaborative to create an environment that supports entrepreneurship and the enterprise growth, the aim is to develop the rural economy by supporting a sustainable and economically efficient agricultural and food sector, together with forestry, fishing and aquaculture, energy and extractive industries, the bio-economy and diversification into alternative on-farm and off-farm activities, while at the same time noting the importance of maintaining and protecting the natural landscape and built heritage which are vital to rural tourism.

Kerry's Natural Resources: Agriculture, Fisheries, Forestry, Rural Landscape and the Marine Actions

#	Actions	Lead	Partners	Deliverables 2021-2023	Deliverables 2023-2030
1	Support the implementation of actions under the Rural Development Policy 2021-2025 "Our Rural Future" thematic objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting a Just Transition to a climate neutral economy. • Supporting improved quality employment and career opportunities in rural areas. • Supporting the sustainability of Agriculture, the Marine and Forestry. • Supporting the sustainability of our island and coastal communities. • Nurturing our culture and heritage. 	Department of Rural and Community Development	Kerry County Council and collaborative partners		
2	Support the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine in the implementation of the Agriculture, Food and the Marine Action Plan 2021	Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine	Collaborative Partners		
3	Support Kerry's Agri-Tech Centre of Excellence driving new product development for the Agri sector	MTU; EI (Enterprise Ireland),	Kerry County Council and Industry Partners		
4	Complete the Listowel Food Hub Project	NEWKD ; Listowel Food Hub Company	Collaborative Partners; Kerry County Council; DRCD		
5	Complete the expansion of the Kerry Food Hub Project	Kerry Food Hub	Enterprise Ireland; Kerry County Council; Collaborative Partners		
6	Support sustainable forestry developments at appropriate locations in the County and the continued sustainable expansion and diversification of the forestry sector.	Coillte	Kerry County Council and collaborative partners		
7	Support the appropriate use of forests for timber, energy, biodiversity, recreation and tourism and development of associated businesses and enterprise at local level.	Coillte; Local Development Companies (LDCs)	Kerry County Council and collaborative partners		
8	Support and promote the sustainable development of the marine and aquaculture sectors and support added-value marine and freshwater foods and service industries in a sustainable manner and at appropriate locations.	Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine	Industry; BIM; Kerry County Council; Local Development Companies (LDCs)		
9	Support the sustainable use of existing port facilities for the catchments and processing of fish as an economic activity that contributes to the food industry in the County	Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine; Industry	Kerry County Council and collaborative partners		

#	Actions	Lead	Partners	Deliverables 2021-2023	Deliverables 2023-2030
10	Support the protection of water quality, key habitat, and other natural resource requirements necessary to safeguard coastal, estuarine, and freshwater fisheries.	Environmental Protection Agency (EPA); Irish Water; Kerry County Council; LAWPRO	Collaborative Partners		
11	Sustainably improve road networks that link port facilities to the larger urban centres.	Kerry County Council; TII			
12	Facilitate the sustainable development of the extractive industry and seek to ensure the ongoing availability of an adequate supply of aggregates for the construction industry.	Industry	Kerry County Council and collaborative partners		
13	Deliver excellence in learning and development for the AgriTech Sector. The AgriTech Centre of Excellence (ACE) delivers excellence in learning and development for the AgriTech Sector, offering a new approach to AgriTech sectoral learning and development by using eLearning, virtual, and augmented reality technologies.	ACE	MTU; Kerry County Council; Enterprise Ireland; Dairymaster; McHale Engineering; Abbey Machinery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of Ireland's first and only Augmented, Virtual, and Mixed Reality Suite. Latest augmented, virtual, and mixed reality platforms, enabling local and national business a new venue to deliver world class presentations and pitches, workshops and conferences, unique media events and product launches • Develop and Implement a Learning Management System (LMS) across 3 leading Irish AgriTech companies to deliver World class training and development programmes for over 500+ employees. • Certificate in AgriTech Management (Springboard 2021) • Certificate in Agricultural Technology (Springboard 2021) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In partnership with Skillnet, establish a rural enterprise digital skills development programme to enhance the capabilities of multiple audiences including Digital novices, digital workers and digital innovators. • Expand VR Suite to a wider audience and enhance capabilities to accommodate the needs of the sector.



Pillar 9: Enhanced Regional Connectivity and Infrastructure

The County's infrastructural and connectivity challenges are being overcome through significant investment both within and leading to the County, with an annual investment of over €75million on road infrastructure. This funding is primarily through Central Government grants, with funding of €27.9m from Transport Infrastructure Ireland on improving the national road network, €29.5 million from the Department of Transport on the non-national road network, €9.4m on greenway infrastructure, and €5.6m on Active Travel measures in 2021, with the balance of funding provided by Kerry County Council from its own income streams.

Enhanced regional accessibility and improved connectivity within the county in terms of the road, rail and public transport network, together with cycleway and pedestrian facilities are critical to support the development of industry & tourism, and to strengthen and support sustainable rural economies and communities.

The need for improved accessibility to the Cork and Limerick Metropolitan Areas has been the subject of detailed submissions by the Council to Government, in particular for the delivery of the €280m N22 Macroom – Ballyvourney By-Pass, which is currently at construction stage, the €400m Foynes to Limerick / Adare By-Pass, which is at planning consent stage and the N21 Abbeyfeale and Newcastlewest Bypasses, which are now at preliminary design stage.

Improved access within the county is being addressed through the development of the €420m N22 Farranfore to Killarney Road Improvement Scheme, currently at preliminary design stage, the €70m N69 Listowel Bypass (at pre-tender stage), the upgrade of the N86 Camp to Dingle Road, improvements to the N70 Ring of Kerry at Milltown, Brackharagh & Blackwater, the N72 at Stagmount,

Rathmore & Anglont, the construction of the Tralee Northern Relief Road and the R556 Tralee to Ballybunion Road Improvement at Rathscannell.

The provision of sustainable high-quality public transport and the expansion of routes served by Kerry, Shannon and Cork Airports serve to limit perceptions of peripherality and enhance and grow a transformative Kerry economy.

Contained in this plan is the identification of strategic routes for development & upgrading, to support economic investment, sustainable transport and social inclusion, in partnership with both Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) and Department of Transport (DoT), as part of a Transportation Plan for the county. It is proposed to Investigate the potential to sustainably develop Fenit Harbour for increased usage to support industrial and tourism growth in the county, in partnership with the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine.

The Kerry Economic Stakeholder Forum is supportive of the need to develop sustainable smarter modes of transport, most notably in larger urban areas, to provide for safer cycling and walking accessibility to schools and amenities, which benefits the health and wellbeing of

society, whilst alleviating traffic congestion. In partnership with key stakeholders, Kerry County Council is developing iconic Greenways as high quality tourism infrastructure, and supporting the development of enhanced public transport under the National Transport Authority's "Connecting Ireland" programme.

Kerry International Airport

Kerry International Airport (KIA) together with Shannon and Cork airports are a key factor in promoting the economic development of the County. KIA is an important strategic asset to the County in strengthening transportation links both nationally and internationally. It is envisaged that future upgrading of the airport facilities will increase the potential for the airport to attract increased passenger numbers thereby making the County more accessible to other national and international transport hubs.

Air transport drives and facilitates wider economic activity through connectivity and is vital to businesses operating on an international scale and for the development of regions as business locations and tourist destinations. Safe, secure and reliable transport links are essential to ensure a vibrant future for regional and local communities. They are essential in attracting inward investment and they improve the quality of life for those who live outside the main urban centres. It is important that the airport identifies opportunities for attracting new business within their niche markets and that long-term viability is identified and supported, in partnership with relevant regional, tourism and industry bodies.

The location of Kerry International Airport with respect to the Kerry Technology Park, and centrally in the Kerry Hub & Knowledge Triangle, is important to ensuring that regional development continues. The ability for multinationals (both fully developed and incubating in Technology Park) to have ready access to an airport with services to Dublin is an important consideration for the economic health of the region. Expanded services and routes would also benefit the county, both in terms of business and tourism.

The Kerry Economic Stakeholder Forum is supportive of the development of an Airport Strategy for the Southern Region to be prepared by the relevant stakeholders through consultation with the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sports, Local Authorities, Airport Authorities, TII, NTA and other relevant stakeholders in the Southern Region. Maximising strategic air access to the region utilising the three airports to provide international connectivity of scale as an alternative to continued reliance on the Dublin connectivity.

Rail Connectivity

Rail is of critical importance in linking Kerry to the metropolitan areas of Cork, Limerick and Dublin. Improved access and linkages to Kerry and the metropolitan areas is vital to ensure continued and strengthened economic and social activity in the regions. Businesses based within the County also require easy access to airports and ports to ensure connectivity with national and international markets. Improvements in rail connectivity are not only of imperative importance to population and employment growth, but also County Kerry has developed a major tourism industry contributing to the national, regional and local economy. Killarney provides a major regional anchor for the industry with extensive tourism accommodation second only to Dublin in the state. The international reputation of the County and its global appeal in respect of place names such as Killarney, Dingle, Skellig, Reek's District, Listowel Writers, Rose of Tralee, Puck Fair and others position the county as a regional and national centre for tourism. This drives a regional economy throughout an extended tourist season and has the potential with growth in business tourism to provide a regional base for a growing conference sector which can influence and positively impact on the County.

Connecting Ireland Rural Mobility Plan

The National Transport Authority has undertaken a nationwide study to inform its future approach to rolling out improved public transport across the country (excluding the GDA, Regional Cities and Large Towns). The proposed programme of improvements is entitled 'Connecting Ireland Rural Mobility Plan' and will provide better connections between villages and towns through enhanced and new local routes. These local routes will be integrated with an enhanced regional network connecting cities and regional centres nationwide. The key principle is to provide access to opportunities (employment, education, healthcare, retail, etc) at the closest point, or connections to higher level centres further away that offer those opportunities. As these will be mainstream public transport services, they will open to all and all vehicles will be wheelchair accessible.

TFI Local Link Kerry

TFI Local Link Kerry provides Safe, Secure and Reliable Bus Transport Services all over Co Kerry. TFI Local Link Kerry's mission is to provide and promote community led integrated, inclusive, accessible and affordable public transport services that links all people to services and facilities. TFI Local Link is the national brand for Public Transport services in local and rural areas of Ireland. There are 15 Local Link offices nationally which are funded by the National Transport Authority (NTA), under the Transport

for Ireland (TFI) umbrella. These bus services are affordable and available for anyone wishing to travel to or from their local town or village. TFI Local Link Kerry operate two different types of service: Regular Rural Bus Services and Door-to-Door Bus Services.

In April 2021 TFI Local Link Kerry expanded bus services along the Dingle Peninsula, which will provide increased access to local amenities and will make a real difference to those living in the surrounding isolated or rural areas.

Ports, Harbours & Piers

The establishment and maintenance of the piers, ports and harbours of the County are important to the local economic base of an area. There are many such facilities located along the length of the Kerry coastline. The major commercial ports in the county are Fenit and Dingle/Daingean Uí Chúis. These are of strategic importance in terms of their fishing and commercial base and should be encouraged to sustainably develop further.

The Tarbert-Killimer Ferry is an important link between Kerry and Clare. The main tourist routes of the West of Ireland's Shannon Region and the Wild Atlantic Way are linked via this car ferry.

There are a large number of small piers along the coastline providing ferry facilities to neighbouring counties, ports and offshore islands as well as supporting local mariculture and leisure activities. Continued investment is required to further develop this infrastructure in a sustainable manner and to support local industry and tourism.

County Kerry has all of the natural resources necessary to develop a vibrant and successful marine leisure and tourism sector. 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.

The potential of the **Shannon Estuary** and its impact on the economy of the mid-West region, including North Kerry, will be explored with relevant agencies over the period of the plan. The industrial lands in North Kerry will provide opportunities for the development of employment and delivery of resources to the North Kerry area.

Enhanced Regional Connectivity and Infrastructure Actions

#	Actions	Lead	Partners	Deliverables 2021-2023	Deliverables 2023-2030
1	Seek enhanced accessibility between Kerry and the Metropolitan Areas of Cork & Limerick, particularly with the development of the Macroom by-pass/ Adare By-pass/ Abbeyfeale & Newcastle-west By-Passes and eastern links to the Limerick-Cork motorway network	Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII)	Local Authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statutory Planning Consent obtained- Adare Bypass • Schemes Opened- Macroom Bypass 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statutory Planning Consent obtained- Abbeyfeale and Newcastle West Bypasses, N72 link projects to M20 • Schemes Opened- Adare Bypass, Abbeyfeale and Newcastle West Bypasses
2	Advance major infrastructural transport projects on national routes within the Kerry Knowledge Triangle to statutory planning consent, including the N22 Killarney – Farranfore By-pass and the N70 Milltown By-Pass	Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII); Kerry County Council		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preferred Option Selected: N22 Killarney -Farranfore Bypass • Statutory Planning Consent obtained – N70 Milltown Bypass 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statutory Planning Consent Obtained- N22 Killarney -Farranfore Bypass, • N70 Tralee to Castlemaine & Tinnahalla, N70/N72 Killorglin Bypass • Schemes Opened- N70 Milltown Bypass, N70 Tinnahalla

#	Actions	Lead	Partners	Deliverables 2021-2023	Deliverables 2023-2030
3	Improve access on the national road network throughout the county, particularly with the construction of the N69 Listowel By-Pass, improvements to the N70 Ring of Kerry at, Brackharagh & Blackwater, to the N72 at Stagmount, Rathmore & Anglont, and the N86 between Camp & Dingle.	Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII); Kerry County Council		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statutory Planning Consent Obtained- N70 Sneem to Blackwater, N72 Anglont**, • Schemes Opened- N69 Listowel Bypass, N72 Stagmount, N70 Brackharagh, Further N86 Phase between Camp and Dingle 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statutory Planning Consent Obtained- N70 Ring of Kerry selected improvements • Schemes Opened- N70 Sneem to Blackwater, N70 Anglont**, N70 Ring of Kerry selected Improvements
4	Develop and Construct relief roads in our larger towns to improve journey times and relieve traffic congestion, including the Tralee Northern Relief Road, the Clash to Ballymullen Link Road in Tralee, the N22 Lewis Road / Kilcummin Road junction improvement, Inner link roads in Killarney, Dingle Relief Road (Phase 5) and Kenmare Relief Road.	Department of Transport; TII (on national routes); Kerry County Council		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clash-Ballymullen Road- Phase 1 (incorporating access to the school) is under construction and is due for completion in early 2021 • A-C Link Road Killarney • Develop Bohereen Na Goun- completing the circulation route around the town. 	
5	Improve the local and regional road network, to address peripherality and provide social inclusivity, targeting improvements to 200km of the road network annually, including the reconstruction of the R556 Dale Road at Rathscannell and improving access to Fenit Port and the Tarbert/ Ballylongford Landbank.	Kerry County Council	Department of Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tralee to Fenit Phase 1 (O'Sullivan's bar) Part 8 awaiting publication of Fenit masterplan. • Phase 2 (Gaynor's bends) Natura Impact Statement determination awaited with a view to submitting CPO and NIS to An Bord Pleanála in early 2021 	
6	In accordance with the Kerry County Council workplan, deliver safety schemes countywide.	TII; Kerry County Council			
7	Promote smarter sustainable modes of travel, through investment in Active Travel measures, including cycle lanes and pedestrian friendly junctions in Tralee, Killarney and Listowel, including the development of Active Travel Plans throughout the county	Kerry County Council	Department of Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement active travel pilot schemes in Tralee, Killarney, Listowel; • Identify other active schemes in other settlements in the County; 	
8	Support the development and expansion of improved and sustainable public transport throughout the county.	National Transport Authority	Kerry County Council; Local Link Kerry		
9	Deliver a network of Greenways throughout the county, including construction of the South Kerry Greenway, the Fenit to Tralee & Listowel to Limerick Greenway and advancing the Tralee to Listowel Greenway through planning consent.	Department of Transport; Kerry County Council		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fenit to Tralee and Listowel to county-bounds complete; • Funding secured and construction commenced South Kerry Greenway; Design and planning for Listowel – Tralee greenway 	South Kerry Greenway and North Kerry Greenway complete and additional routes identified

#	Actions	Lead	Partners	Deliverables 2021-2023	Deliverables 2023-2030
10	Support the retention and expansion of regional air access through Kerry International Airport	Kerry Airport	Collaborative Partners		
11	Support the development of the Rail network in accordance with Iarnród Éireann	Iarnród Éireann; Department of Transport	All partners		
12	Enhance the MTU Kerry campus environment for students and staff, and support strengthened partnerships with industry.	MTU	DFHERIS	Commencement of multi-million, 9,000 square metre building to accommodate the STEM School of IMTU, including agri-tech facilities.	STEM building with capacity for 1,000 students will be operational.
13	Grow MTU's research and innovation talent pipeline to optimise MTU's contribution to support our region and Ireland's economic and social development	MTU	Higher Education Authority (HEA);	€8.5m secured through Technological University Transformation Funding (TUTF) launched March 2021	
14	Engage with TelCo's & ComReg for dealing with service deficit areas / blackspots for mobile telecommunications	Kerry County Council	(DRCD, DCCE, DHPLG, IBEC)	Engagements; Create Area Specific Action Plans	
15	Engage with appropriate agencies and providers to improve mobile phone reception in the Uíbh Ráthach Gaeltacht area and its immediate vicinity	Údarás na Gaeltachta	Kerry County Council ; Cellnex Telecom Ireland	Appropriate infrastructural interventions to come on stream	Appropriate infrastructural interventions to come on stream



Pillar 10: Marketing Kerry

County Enterprise Marketing

Kerry County Council in association with Kerry Scitech, Kerry Tourism Industry Federation, Kerry Chamber Network, Industry, Third Level Education Sector, state agencies and local development companies are currently developing a County Enterprise Marketing Plan. The ultimate objective of the multi-stakeholder marketing communications initiative is to position Kerry as a leading destination for business, investment and study, married to its well-established reputation as a tourism destination.

KerryScitech engaged Kudos Consultants who conducted the initial feasibility study report, which was funded through the LEADER programme. The report outlines the research conducted with multi stakeholder groups in the County to form an overall brand strategy for the County. Following discussions with the various groups it was decided that the Discover Kerry platform would be the most suitable to provide the web portal for the overall marketing of the county.

A compelling and coherent branding and communications strategy is required to support and elevate the economic and tourism development of the County. There is a recognition that Kerry needs to differentiate itself from competitor locations, significantly raise its profile and build a strong brand through consistent messaging. The new strategy and identity will need to engage multiple audiences, including visitors, the local community, mobile talent, investors and students.

The enhanced Discover Kerry web portal will provide the central foundation for the overall marketing of the County. It is intended to enhance this with targeted marketing campaigns at local, national and international audiences. This will incorporate promoting Kerry as a location for second sites for indigenous or multi-national companies and remote/blended working.

Tourism Marketing Campaign

Kerry County Council in association with the Kerry Tourism Industry Federation, Kerry Chamber Network, Industry, Third Level Education Sector, state agencies and local development companies have developed a number of targeted promotional campaigns. These will include promotion of the county at both local, regional and national level. Targeted campaigns such as Shop Local, promotion of the Kerry Gift Card and other initiatives will be delivered.

Another significant element of the 'Safe Destination Program' is the development of a countywide marketing campaign, which has been developed in consultation with the tourism sector and the Kerry Tourism Industry Federation for the domestic tourism industry initially.

A key element of this campaign was the development of the Discover Kerry website, where the campaign has been set up to drive traffic to the www.discoverkerry.com website. A brand campaign has also been set to encourage people to explore the Kingdom and 'Experience Kerry',

encouraging people to visit Kerry and for people in Kerry to holiday within their County, which is being promoted in the national media and locally through Radio Kerry.

Kerry County Council engaged with Radio Kerry in relation to their new radio campaign in May 2021 encouraging Kerry people to showcase their county, highlight hidden gems and support the recovery of the hospitality and tourism industry. Kerry County Council had weekly slots throughout the month showcasing each of the five Municipal Districts and the wider county. This programme was supported by a series of promotional adverts, banner lines on the Radio Kerry Website and other features.

Shop Local Campaign/ Kerry Gift Card

The campaign began in September 2020 to encourage people to shop locally and spend locally and is being refocused in the context of businesses reopening at this time. The campaign, which is a partnership between Kerry County Council, the Chamber Alliance Network and its

local partners and stakeholders, will use local media and social media platforms to promote the 'Shop in Kerry / An Siopa Áitiúil' message. The aim is to encourage consumers in the county to support the local economic recovery by spending locally while observing public health advice and restrictions. The Kerry Gift Card promotion will continue to be rolled out in support of the Shop Local campaign, to encourage its use as a continuing resource for local businesses and establish it as the primary gift card in the county.

Marketing Kerry as a Location to Study

Despite the challenges created by the COVID-19 pandemic, it is still an exciting time for students to embark on their higher education journeys. Aside from academic credentials, there are many advantages to living and studying in Kerry, from its unique location and affordable accommodation, to the sense of community that is tangible within MTU Kerry.

Marketing Kerry Actions

#	Actions	Lead	Partners	Deliverables 2021-2023	Deliverables 2023-2030
1	Position Kerry as a leading destination for business, tourism, investment and study	Kerry County Council/ KerrySciTech/ Kerry Tourism Industry Federation	Enterprise Sector, Kerry Chamber Network, Kerry Hub Network, Kerry Convention Bureau, Local Development Companies, MTU, Kerry ETB.	Branding and Communications Strategy for the County, Enhance Discover Kerry Web Portal .	
2	Promote Kerry for remote/ blending working and second site opportunities	Kerry County Council/ KerrySciTech/Kerry Tourism Industry Federation	Enterprise Sector, Kerry Chamber Network, Kerry Hub Network, Kerry Convention Bureau, Local Development Companies, MTU, Kerry ETB, Diaspora Network	Develop and Implement market- ing strategy	
3	Promote Kerry to Diaspora Network	Kerry County Council/ KerrySciTech/Kerry Tourism Industry Federation	Enterprise Sector, MTU, Kerry Chamber Network, Kerry Hub Network, Kerry Convention Bureau, Local Development Companies, Kerry ETB, Diaspora Network, Prosper Kerry	Series of networking and promotional events held	

#	Actions	Lead	Partners	Deliverables 2021-2023	Deliverables 2023-2030
4	Kerry will retain, promote and drive Kerry's position as a premier international tourism destination, with a focus on developing green and sustainable tourism.	Destination Kerry Forum, Kerry Tourism Industry Federation, Kerry County Council, Fáilte Ireland		Market Kerry to the domestic and international market	
5	Promote Kerry as a place to study and live through the CAO Campaign/ CAO Change of Mind Campaign, Lifelong Learning/Springboard+, and International Office marketing campaigns	MTU		Student recruitment – currently 3,500 studying at MTU Kerry campus. Target to increase by 15%.	
6	Leverage the <i>UNESCO Chair</i> in Inclusive Physical Education, Sport, Fitness and Recreation globally to increase visibility and enhance reputation of MTU and Kerry.	MTU		Position Kerry as a global leader in Inclusive Physical Education, Sport, Fitness and Recreation, recognising that the MTU Kerry holds the only such UNESCO Chair in the world.	
7	Promotion of Kerry College of Further Education and Training as key response vehicle inside the County to address up skilling and re skills needs arising from increased unemployment levels resulting from the jobs displacement cause by the pandemic. In this regard, specifically courses targeted at Hospitality and Tourism sector.	Kerry ETB	SOLAS, Kerry County Council	Targeted increase in the provision of courses to meet the reskilling and upskilling needs presenting.	
8	Destination Marketing; as a Gaeltacht wide destination website will be developed - promote the unique culture, heritage & language of the Gaeltacht.	Údarás na Gaeltachta	Fáilte Ireland, Local Authorities, Product Providers and community co-operatives	Phase one of the website to be completed Q4 2021	
9	Ongoing and sustained marketing of Uíbh Ráthach Gaeltacht as an attractive re-location destination for individuals and families (including diaspora), with a focus on 'Community, Culture and Connectivity' as the key drivers of the initiative	Tascfhórsa Uíbh Ráthaigh	Údarás na Gaeltachta and Tascfhórsa partner organisations	Targeted marketing initiatives, with an emphasis on social media channels	
10	Ongoing and sustained marketing of the gteic network of digital hubs as centres of innovation, networking, information and learning transfer, business development, and as focal points of remote working in rural, Gaeltacht communities	Údarás na Gaeltachta	Forbairt na Dromoda, Comhchoiste Ghaeltacht Uíbh Ráthaigh, Atlantic Economic Corridor, Kerry Hubs Network, Kerry LEO, Grow Remote	Targeted marketing initiatives, with an emphasis on use social media channels and business networks both regionally and nationally	

#	Actions	Lead	Partners	Deliverables 2021-2023	Deliverables 2023-2030
11	Support coordinated and localised marketing initiatives that develop and enhance our offering throughout the county and ensure quality promotion.	Kerry County Council/ Kerry Chamber Network/Local Development Companies	Business Advisory Team	Shop Local Campaigns, promotion of the Kerry Gift Card	
12	Develop Kerry's Smart, Green, Tech reputation nationally & internationally	Multiple agencies & Hubs	Hub Network; Kerry County Council; MTU; DCCE; DRCD; DHPLG; Tourism & Chambers; LDC's; Údarás; SEAI; ESB	Promote Smart Town, Smart Village and Smart Rural initiatives	
13	Support a Film Office in Kerry (Screen Kerry) to attract, support & develop the Screen Sector in the county & ensure Kerry's competitiveness in attracting film opportunities.	Kerry County Council; Kerry ETB Film Office	Collaborative Partners	Support Incoming Film Productions; • Promote & Market Kerry as a Green (Low Carbon) Film Location.	



IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLAN

This Economic Recovery Plan is a 'county-wide' plan developed through the Kerry Economic Stakeholder Forum. It has been developed in partnership with a number of stakeholders and its successful implementation will require continued collaboration across the County. While this plan is broad in ambition it is not intended to reflect the entire work plans of individual agencies and communities. Each of the partners involved in developing this plan will monitor the implementation of their actions.

The Economic Development, Enterprise, Tourism Strategic and Policy Committee (SPC) will review the implementation of the plan annually. Following this review a progress report will be presented to the Elected Members of the Council for review.

There will be on-going engagement with the Kerry Economic Stakeholder Forum partners who will support the implementation of actions contained within the plan.

The Economic Recovery Plan as previously stated is not a statutory plan. However, the plan will inform the development of the new Kerry Local Economic and Community Plan, County Tourism Strategy and South West Regional Enterprise plan 2021-2024. It is intended that the plan is a living document and projects may arise in the future which can be included as part of the plan taking into account the uncertain economic operating environment post COVID-19 and post Brexit.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Report From The Employment Creation and Retention Working Group

Context

In the latter part of 2020, it was agreed by the Kerry Economic Stakeholder Forum that a working group would be established between the relevant state agencies, local government, education sector, industry and commerce to focus on employment in the County and the challenges and opportunities that exist.

The objective of the group was to identify a few key themes which would be agreed through a series of initial workshops.

The actions contained in the Economic Recovery Plan have been informed by this report.

Group Members

A diverse group contributed to this work with representation from the following bodies:

- South-West Regional Enterprise Steering Committee
- Kerry County Council
- IDA Ireland
- Enterprise Ireland
- Kerry Chamber Network
- Munster Technological University
- Kerry Education and Training Board
- South-West Regional Skills Forum
- Údarás na Gaeltachta
- Kerry Tourism Industry Federation
- RDI Hub
- KerrySciTech

This submission outlines the outcomes of the series of focus groups. Six priorities, outlined below, were identified to build on existing work and capitalise on current and emerging opportunities for Kerry. Where gaps exist in current collaborations and working groups, programs of work will be developed and delivered by dedicated sub-groups.

Working Process

In line with public health guidance, the group met in three virtual focus groups between February and May of 2021. The groups were facilitated by People in Mind, Occupational Psychologists with experience in facilitating Local Government leadership teams.

Through a series of initial one to one and small group discussions, themes were identified for discussion at the initial focus group. In between the full-group meetings, smaller groups progressed the work and the themes were iterated to produce the outcomes outlined below. Throughout this process, Kerry County Council staff within the Economic and Community Development Directorate contributed their insight of work already in progress within the County and nationally.

The outcomes of this working group will inform the Kerry Local Economic and Community Plan, the County Development Plan and the Southwest Regional Enterprise Plan 2021 to 2024.

Outcomes

The early stages of the process highlighted that within this stakeholder group there is a broad and complex range of perspectives on what a focused set of priorities ought to be, although all agreed that a collaborative approach to a focused set of priorities would be beneficial.

From the diversity of suggestions, it was decided to distinguish between Enabling Strengths and Priorities For Focus as follows:

Enabling Strengths: Enduring assets, inherent to the County that will be leveraged to support six priorities for focus.

Priorities For Focus: Opportunities, relevant to the current economic context, that are most likely to yield results in job retention and creation.

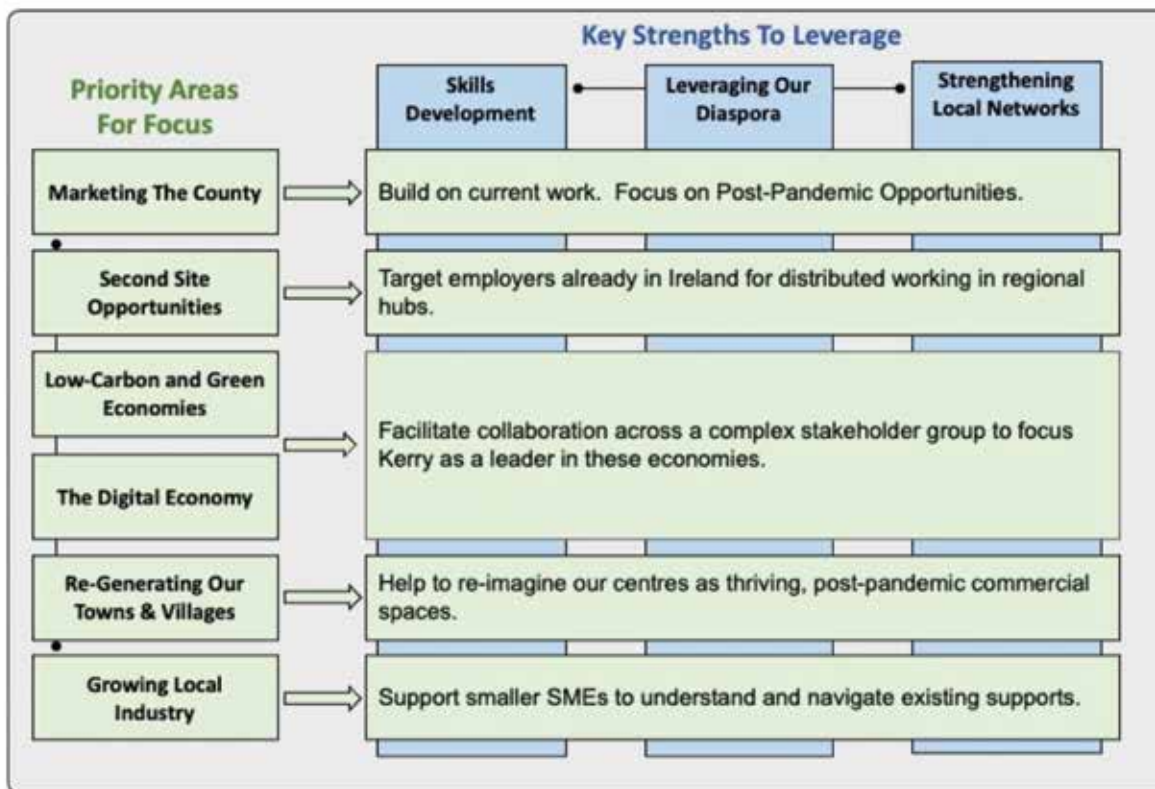


Figure One. Outcome Summaries.

Enabling Strengths

The group identified three Enabling Strengths. Mechanisms to leverage these should be evident throughout the action plans that will be developed.

Skills Development. The County was considered as being well-served by the existing infrastructure in this space, with effective links to enterprise. In particular the Munster Technological University, the Kerry Enterprise and Training Board and The Regional Skills Forum were noted as significant strengths in education and research.

Diaspora. The group noted the potential of the Kerry diaspora as a strength which will be fully leveraged by the relevant sub-groups. Many examples were discussed where strong national and international networks such as the Prosper Kerry Series had led to organic growth of enterprise within the County.

Strengthening Local Networks. The challenge of job retention and creation is a complex one, requiring collaboration, often driven by volunteerism and a spirit of County citizenship. The group agreed that individual networks within the County are strong, but that the action plans should seek to foster greater and easier collaboration between them.

The three Enabling Strengths are represented as vertical pillars in the diagram above, and each will be given careful consideration by the groups that form action plans for the six Priorities For Focus.

Priorities For Focus

Six opportunities were identified. It is important to note that energy and progress exists in all six currently, and that the opportunities outlined under each attempt to highlight where further collaboration and focus will enhance outcomes for the County. The six Priorities For Focus are:

Marketing The County. The group identified an opportunity to build on existing work to focus Kerry's marketing on post-pandemic opportunities. It was noted that a dedicated collaborative team has been established between Kerry County Council, Kerry Tourism Industry Federation, KerrySciTech and a multi-stakeholder group to advance the proposal of a unified consistent marketing campaign for the County which would include the following initial deliverables;

- o County branding strategy
- o Dedicated web-portal (Discover Kerry) that would showcase tourism, business and living segments for the County
- o Establishment of a governance structure for the development and ongoing renewal of the project

Second-Site Opportunities. It was agreed that the County should pursue job creation through the provision of facilities and talent to support distributed-working and regional hub strategies of existing employers in the country. This will also be strategically linked to the marketing of the County and relevant material developed to support this campaign. It is proposed that a working group would

convene to further explore this area and include the relevant agencies at National and County levels. The following are considered some of the deliverables;

- o Focused marketing campaign
- o Engage with diaspora both nationally and internationally
- o Identify and engage with relevant companies
- o Identify potential property solutions
- o Work with Educational Institutes to reinforce the existing and potential skills in the region

Relevant Groups:

- o Industrial Development Authority, Enterprise Ireland, Kerry County Council, Kerry Hub Network, Munster Technological University, Kerry SciTech, Kerry Chamber Network, Kerry Prosper Series

Low-Carbon and Green Economies. An opportunity exists for the County across a broad tapestry of sectors from Tourism to Energy. This is a fast-moving and complex opportunity where closer collaboration within the county and then nationally, could develop Kerry as a leader in the Low-Carbon and Green Economies. Kerry has a number of key strengths in this area through the work already underway in the Dingle Peninsula, Circular Bioeconomy in the MTU and skills development through the Kerry ETB. The body of the Economic Recovery Plan has a significant number of actions in this area that can be developed and will deliver enterprise and economic growth. It is proposed to build on these assets to provide long term growth in this area. The following are deliverables;

- o Identify new enterprise potential
- o Skills development, including apprenticeships
- o Retrofit programmes and other carbon reduction initiatives
- o Industry management programmes e.g. Sustainable Tourism

Relevant Groups:

- o Kerry County Council, Munster Technological University, Kerry Education and Training Board, Kerry Tourism Industry Federation, Dingle Creativity and Innovation Hub, Kerry Hub Network, Local Development Companies

The Digital Economy. The group identified the need for close collaboration across the agencies on identifying and exploiting opportunities in this emergent space. The action plan here will help to engage all stakeholders in ensuring sectoral resilience and enhancing transformation where specific opportunities are identified. The key areas in this were seen as ensuring the County had a robust digital Infrastructure supported by an appropriate talent pool and strong community digital literacy. The success of existing enterprises within the County in this area as well as businesses who have successfully adapted to working remotely are seen as strong ambassadors for the County. The following are the broad deliverables;

- o Broadband rollout
- o Digital strategy
- o Remote working infrastructure
- o Link to second sites/remote working
- o Development of skills base

Relevant Groups:

- o The Council in association with multi-stakeholder groups are developing a Digital Strategy for the County. Working groups will be established following finalisation of the plan.

Re-Generating Our Towns and Villages. The group discussed the on-going efforts and many successes in this space and agreed that there is an opportunity to further help employers to re-imagine our towns and villages as post-pandemic commercial spaces, thriving in an e-commerce era. The development of projects in this area will be undertaken in a planned and collaborative way under the leadership of the Council. The National Grants Schemes under the URDF, RRDF and Town & Village Schemes will provide a catalyst for development of these projects. The delivery of Active Travel, tackling of Dereliction, reuse of Vacant Properties for residential, commercial and community uses as well as the overall improvement of the Public Realm and Amenities within our Towns were seen as key outcomes. The following are the key deliverables:

- o Planned investment in settlements supported by National Grant Schemes
- o Survey of vacant & derelict sites in settlements
- o Engagement with property owners in relation to potential for development
- o Development of retail strategy
- o Public realm/active travel projects to be developed

- o Brownfield social housing schemes to be identified and developed
- o Feasibility of additional co-working spaces and hubs to be undertaken in key settlements
- o Develop strong linkages between amenities and town centres
- o Identify additional community and social activities for town centres

Growing Local Industry. The group identified a need to support businesses in the micro and small business sector in understanding the existing supports available. Kerry has a high percentage of smaller businesses. These businesses need support to identify additional growth and employment prospects. Additional work is required to inform and advise employers of the range of supports available.

The Way Forward

At the final focus group, it was agreed that where any gaps exist, sub-groups will be established to develop programs of work and deliverables, complimenting but not duplicating existing groups and bodies of work.

Appendix 2: Economic Analysis

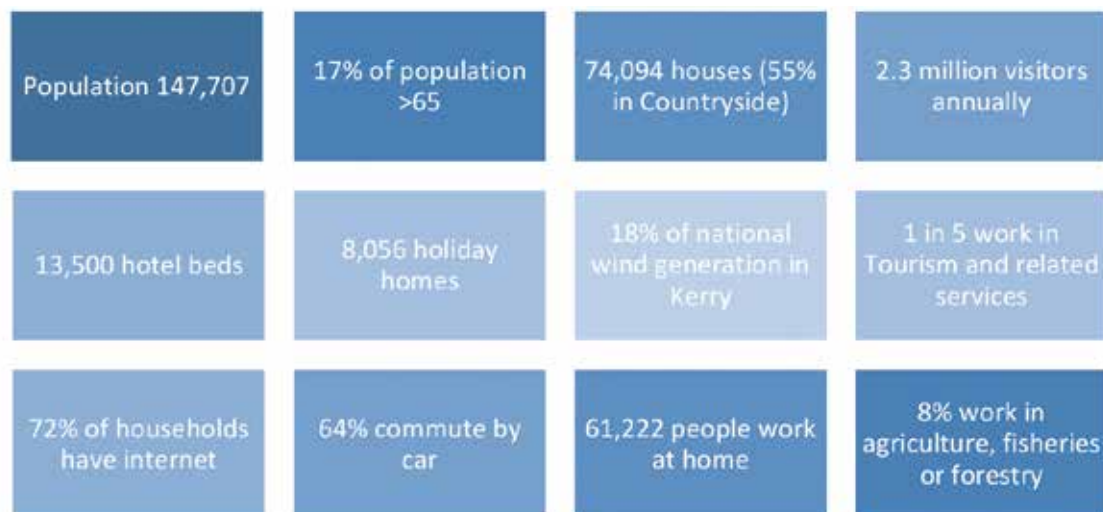
In 2020, Kerry County Council conducted surveys of the business community and in association with the Kerry Tourism Industry Federation a detailed analysis of the impact of COVID 19 on the tourism sector in the County. These surveys coupled with comprehensive statistical research and an examination of the national and regional expected impacts helped to develop an understanding of the impact of COVID 19 on the Kerry economy and through the examination of various scenarios consider likely impacts over time. The Council engaged the services of Economist, Mr James Dorgan to validate this research. This analysis outlining a major negative impact on the economy of the County was confirmed by a number of independent national assessments which reference the Kerry economy. The report *The Economic Impact of COVID-19 on the Economy of County Kerry*, was launched in May 2020 and is available online.

Kerry is a diverse county, with important regional towns, significant national, international and global leading companies, a tourism industry of both national and international significance and thriving agriculture, fishery and forestry in the primary sector. In industry and manufacturing it has some notable enterprises such as Liebherr Cranes, Kerry Foods, Astellas and Dairymaster. In the services sector Fexco is an international leader in the financial services arena. It also has an active technology and start up sector with over 70 science, technology and engineering companies present in the County.

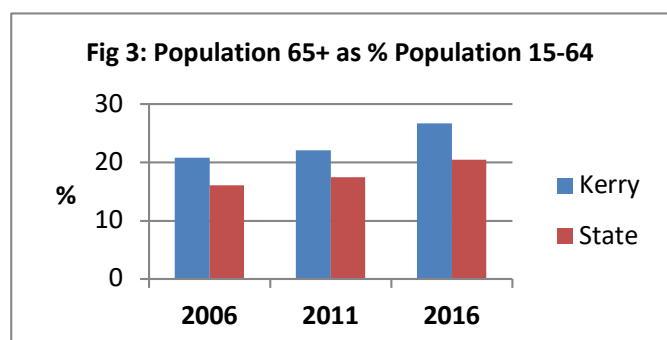
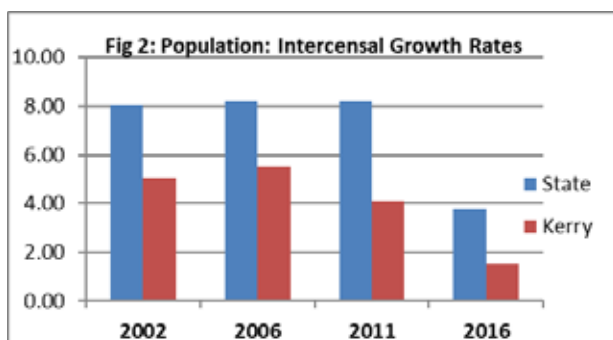
County Kerry is Ireland's leading regional tourism destination. It attracts 2.3 million overseas and domestic tourists annually who generate revenue of €650m in direct spend for the local economy.

However, Kerry entered the current crisis with a number of structural and economic weaknesses compared to the rest of the country.

Kerry at a Glance



Demography



The population of Kerry was 147,700 according to the 2016 Census, an increase of 1.5% on the 2011 Census and 17.1% on the Census of twenty years before. By contrast the figures for the state are 3.8% and 30.1% - very substantial differences.

This is the consequence of a tendency in recent decades for economic activity to be concentrated in major cities, a tendency which the Project Ireland 2040 programme is intended to correct. In this respect Kerry is in line with experience in other counties in the West of Ireland.

The consequence of slow growth in population is a somewhat higher proportion of the elderly than the national average. Thus the over 65s are equal to about 27% of the

active age groups (15-65) in Kerry, a percentage that has increased from 21% in 2006 whereas the state figure in 2016 is 20%.

Incomes

The CSO publishes Incomes by County one year in arrears to the annual National Income Accounts. The latest figures available are therefore for 2017. In that year total household income in the county was €3,800 million. Assuming that growth in Kerry has matched that of the country, in 2019 incomes in Kerry would have been about €4,200 million.

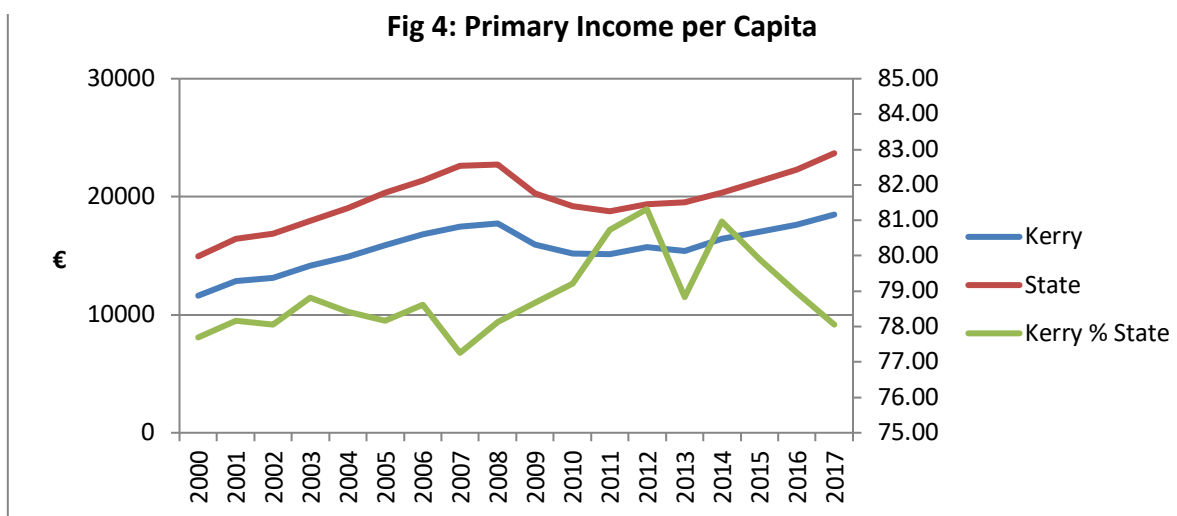


Figure 4 following shows 'primary' income per capita (i.e. income from employment, profits and investment) for Kerry and the state from 2000 to 2017. Also shown is the ratio between the two.

In the context of the current difficulties it is worth noting the impact of the financial crash. In terms of personal incomes Kerry and the State both reached their pre financial crash apogees in 2008 and then declined until 2011 before recovering their pre-crash levels sometime in 2016, eight years later. The decline was precipitous as well as protracted: a fall of 12% in three years.

The green line shows that Kerry primary incomes are approximately 20% below those of the state. Up to 2012, the ratio improved slightly in Kerry's favour from 78% to 82% but since then has fallen back to the ratio in 2000.

In relative terms, Kerry is one of the lowest income counties in the country. According to the 2016 Census, average Kerry household income was €37,337 compared with €45,256 for the State. Only three counties (Donegal, Leitrim and Longford) were lower. It is important to note that there is geographical inequality in income within County Kerry, with the lowest incomes located in the more peripheral areas of the county.

Structure of the Economy

Kerry is a rural county undergoing a transformation into a modern, ambitious, vibrant and outward-looking county. While several well-known large companies are based in Kerry (Fexco, Liebherr, Kerry Group, Astellas), 93% of active enterprises in Kerry are micro-enterprises and employ less than 10 people. Small and medium sized enterprises together account for 84% of the employment in the county.

An indication of the structure of the Kerry economy is shown in Table 1 below. In the absence of income or value added data per sector, the figures are from the Q4 2019 Labour Force Statistics.

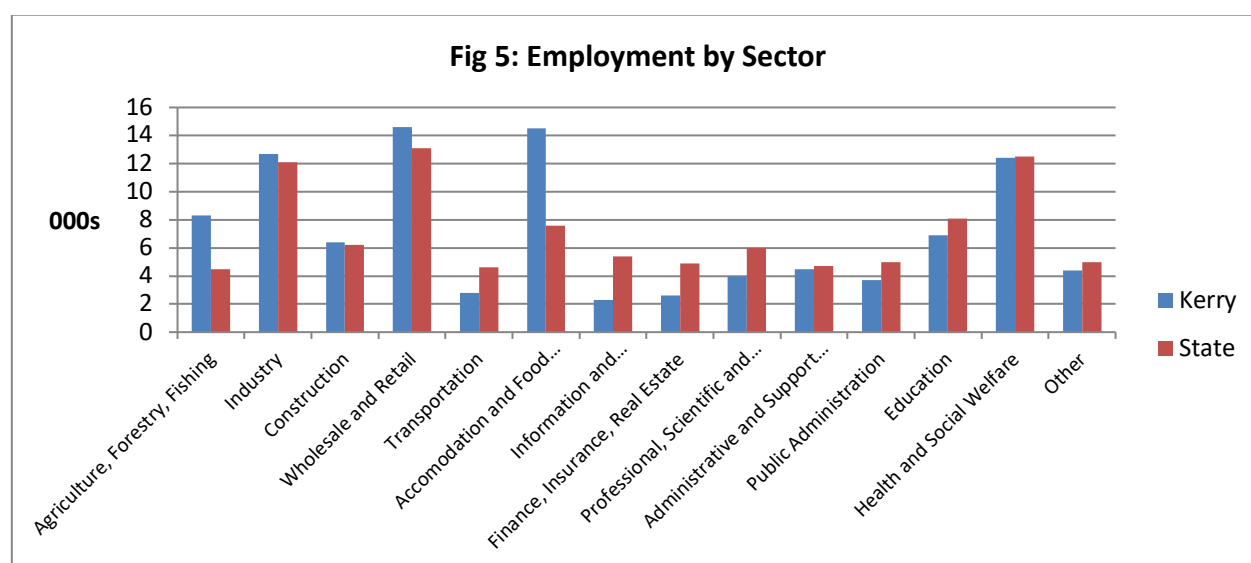
Of the estimated 69,000 people in the labour force in Kerry, the largest employment cohort is in the retail and wholesale trade with hotels and restaurants (accommodation and food services) shortly behind. Accommodation and food services are the core of the tourism sector, but parts of the transportation and 'other' also include tourist dependent activities.

Table 1 : Kerry Employment by Sector

Sector	Employment	% of Total
Wholesale and retail trade	10107	14.6
Accommodation and food service activities	10076	14.5
Industry	8783	12.7
Health and social work	8563	12.4
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	5729	8.3
Education	4790	6.9
Construction	4431	6.4
Administrative and support service activities	3137	4.5
Other NACE (Arts, Entertainment, Recreation)	3076	4.4
Professional, scientific and technical activities	2747	4.0
Public administration and defence	2590	3.7
Transportation and storage	1908	2.8
Financial, insurance and real estate activities	1769	2.6
Information and communication	1622	2.3
All NACE economic sectors	69328	100.0

Source: Extracted from CSO Labour Force Survey, Q4 2019.

Figure 5 shows a comparison of employment by sector with the rest of the country. It illustrates the importance of employment in the tourism and hospitality sectors (Accommodation & Food, Art & Entertainment) and Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries sectors relative to state value in Kerry.



The knowledge economy is also a vital contributor to the Kerry economy. There are many knowledge-based industries located within Kerry including computer technology, life sciences, research and development, high-tech manufacturing, communications, business, finance, insurance and other market services providing substantial employment within the county.

Appendix 3: Submissions Received

The following organisations and representative bodies have contributed to this plan :

- Kerry County Council Elected Members representing the five Municipal Districts
- State Agencies, including IDA Ireland, Enterprise Ireland, Fáilte Ireland and Údarás na Gaeltachta
- Third Level Sector, including the Munster Technological University and the Kerry Education and Training Board
- Kerry Economic Stakeholders' Forum
- Kerry County Council Economic Development, Enterprise, and Community Strategic Policy Committee (SPC)
- Kerry Chamber Network
- KerrySciTech
- Kerry Tourism Industry Federation
- Local Development Companies
- Irish Hotel Federation, Kerry Branch
- Kerry Public Participation Network (PPN)
- Kerry Hub Network
- Reek's District
- Screen Kerry
- Skellig Coast

Appendix 4: High Level Summary of National, Regional and Sectoral Plans

The summary of plans is a representative sample of plans which exist at a national, regional and sectoral level:

Project Ireland 2040

Project Ireland 2040 is the government's long-term overarching strategy to make Ireland a better country for all of its people. Alongside the development of physical infrastructure, Project Ireland 2040 supports business and communities across all of Ireland in realising their potential. The National Development Plan and the National Planning Framework combine to form Project Ireland 2040. The National Planning Framework (NPF) sets the vision and strategy for the development of our country to 2040 and the National Development Plan (NDP) provides enabling investment to implement the strategy.

The NPF sets out ten National Strategic Outcomes (NSOs):

- Compact Growth
- Enhanced Regional Accessibility
- Strengthened Rural Economies and communities
- High Quality International Connectivity
- Sustainable Mobility
- A Strong Economy Supported by Enterprise, Innovation and Skills
- Enhanced Amenities and Heritage
- Transition to Sustainable Energy
- Sustainable Management of Water and other Environmental Resources
- Access to Quality Childcare, Education and Health Services
- Southern Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES)

The Southern Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy sets out the strategic regional development framework for the Region. The primary aim of the RSES is to implement Project Ireland 2040 - the National Planning Framework, at the regional tier of Government and to support NPF policy for achieving balanced regional development. The RSES provides the framework through which the NPF's disruptive vision and the related Government policies and objectives will be delivered for the Region. In line with international best practise, the RSES adopts a territorially differentiated and place-based approach to regional planning and economic development. It is a 12-year strategic

regional development framework and establishes a broad framework for the way in which our society, environment, economy, and the use of land should evolve.

The NPF projects that the population of the Southern Region will grow from between 340,000 to 380,000 people by 2040, bringing our population to almost two million and an additional 225,000 people in employment (880,000 in total).

The challenge for the RSES is to implement a strategy to ensure that this growth is managed in a sustainable way. No place or community is left behind by the RSES. A dual-track strategy is pursued that builds on the cities, metropolitan areas as significantly scaled engines of growth, and supports a sustainable competitive advantage by repositioning the Region's strong network of towns, villages and rural areas in an imaginative and smart manner.

The Southern RSES is based on five main pillars:

- A Strong Economy – Innovative and Smart
- Environment including responding to Climate Change
- Connectivity
- Quality of Life
- Water and Energy Utilities

National Economic Recovery Plan

The Government of Ireland launched the Economic Recovery Plan 2021 in June 2021. The four pillars of the Plan are:

1. Ensuring our public finances are sustainable for a lasting recovery
2. Helping people back into work by extending labour market supports and through intense activation and reskilling and upskilling opportunities, driven by Pathways to Work 2021-2025
3. Rebuilding Sustainable Enterprises through targeted supports and policies to make enterprises more resilient and productive

4. A Balanced and Inclusive Recovery through strategic investment in infrastructure and reforms that enhance our long-term capacity for growth, balanced regional development and by improving living standards.

The ambition of the plan will be supported through:

- a comprehensive package of supports including the extension of unprecedented enterprise and labour market supports, complemented by targeted supports for the most impacted sectors.
- significant investment of €915 million for areas of opportunity, through funding for Ireland's National Recovery and Resilience Plan under the European Recovery and Resilience Facility, aligning with our approach by focusing on sustainable, innovative and digital progress. Projects are grouped across three distinct priorities in line with our approach to recovery:

Priority 1: Advancing the Green Transition – €503 million

Priority 2: Accelerating and Expanding Digital Reforms and Transformation – €295 million

Priority 3: Social and Economic Recovery and Job Creation – €181 million

- this approach will be further reinforced through multi-billion capital investment in the upcoming revised National Development Plan, which has sustainability and regional development at its core, and ambitious housing targets under the forthcoming Housing for All Strategy.
- strategic policies linked to the four pillars of the Plan will ensure progress towards its overall aims.

Rural Development Policy 2021 – 2025 – Our Rural Future

The vision of “Rural Development Policy 2021 – 2025 – Our Rural Future” is for a thriving rural Ireland which is integral to our national economic, social, cultural and environmental wellbeing and development. It recognises the interdependence of urban and rural areas as well as the centrality of people, the importance of vibrant and lived-in rural places, and the potential to create quality jobs and sustain our shared environment.

Our Rural Future focuses on the following thematic objectives:

- Optimising the opportunities for rural communities from high speed broadband.
- Supporting improved quality employment and career opportunities in rural areas.

- Assisting the regeneration, repopulation and development of rural towns and villages.
- Enhancing the participation, leadership and resilience of rural communities.
- Enhancing public services in rural areas
- Supporting a Just Transition to a climate neutral economy.
- Supporting the sustainability of Agriculture, the Marine and Forestry.
- Supporting the sustainability of our island and coastal communities.
- Nurturing our culture and heritage.

To deliver on the objectives set out in this policy the Government will:

- Invest significantly in remote working infrastructure to provide an opportunity for people to continue to live in rural communities while following their career ambitions.
- Invest in rural towns and villages as hubs of economic and social activity.
- Transform the opportunity for the diversification of rural economies, including through the delivery of high speed broadband to every part of the country.
- Adopt a place-based approach to rural development to meet the needs of different areas in a holistic way and maximise the impact of investment in those areas.
- Invest in and empower rural communities to design and deliver responses that meet their local needs.
- Actively involve young people in rural areas in decisions that affect them and their future.

Making Remote Work: National Remote Working Strategy

“Making Remote Work” is Ireland's National Remote Work Strategy. The Strategy's objective is to ensure that remote working is a permanent feature in the Irish workplace in a way that maximises economic, social and environmental benefits.

The Remote Work Strategy is built on three fundamental pillars which will be bolstered by underpinning conditions.

1. Creating a conducive environment for the adaption of remote work.
2. Development and leverage of remote work infrastructure.
3. Build a remote work policy and guidance framework.

Headline actions in the Strategy include:

- Legislate to provide employees the right to request remote working
- Introduce a legally admissible code of practice on the right to disconnect from work – covering phone calls, emails and switch-off time
- Invest in remote work hubs, ensuring they are in locations that suit commuters and are close to childcare facilities
- Explore the acceleration of the National Broadband Plan
- Review the treatment of remote working for the purposes of tax and expenditure in the next Budget
- Lead by example by mandating that home and remote working should be the norm for 20% of public sector employees

Enterprise 2025 – Renewed

Enterprise 2025 – Renewed is Ireland's national enterprise policy. Enterprise 2025 Renewed reinforces the core premise of Ireland's enterprise model to deliver higher standards of living for all based on export-led growth and higher productivity, placing a greater emphasis on:

- Supporting the development of Irish owned enterprises so that they are a driver of growth over the period to 2025;
- Placing a spotlight on innovation, skills and on leveraging Ireland's strengths in technologies;
- A focus on regional development through investment in placemaking;
- Stimulating greater levels of clustering; and on
- Developing Ireland's international relationships.

Future Jobs Ireland

To ensure Ireland's economy is well positioned to adapt and prosper in the future, in 2019, the Government launched a new economic pathway for Ireland based on embracing innovation and technological change, improving productivity, increasing labour force participation, enhancing skills and developing talent and transitioning to a low carbon economy. Future Jobs Ireland aims to drive our development as a resilient, innovative, and globally connected economy, capable of coping with technological and other transformational changes ahead.

Future Jobs Ireland, along with Project Ireland 2040, Global Ireland 2025 and the Climate Action Plan represents an integrated approach to prepare for the opportunities and challenges of the future economy.

Future Jobs Ireland focuses on five pillars namely:

1. Embracing Innovation and Technological Change
2. Improving SME Productivity
3. Enhancing Skills and Developing and Attracting Talent
4. Increasing Participation in the Labour Force
5. Transitioning to a Low Carbon Economy

South West Regional Enterprise Plan to 2020

The South-West Regional Enterprise Plan (SWREP) is one of the key policy documents through which the Government pursues its approach to balanced regional development. The SWREP is one of nine plans that seek to enhance the overall enterprise environment in each region to support regions to realise their enterprise and job creation potential and thereby reduce disparities. The SWREP is a bottom-up initiative that draws on the unique strengths in the region through enhanced collaboration and partnership among stakeholders in the region. The actions contained in the plan aim to add value to the work of key actors including the Local Authorities, the enterprise agencies, the LEOs, private enterprise, higher education, and industry. In light of COVID-19 it is important that the impacts of the pandemic and the economic recovery need to be considered from a regional perspective. Therefore, the Steering Committees in each region (including the South-West), have been identified as being well placed to identify the key challenges presented, and the Plans as live documents can capture and prioritise the collaborative responses needed at regional level.

The South-West Regional Enterprise Plan Steering Committee is currently in the consultation phase of developing a Plan for 2021 to 2024.

This plan will focus on:

1. Resilience and Recovery
2. Transition (Climate/Digitalisation)
3. Enterprise Innovation/Smart Specialisation
4. Eco-system strengthening & Competitiveness

Enterprise Ireland

Powering the Regions is Enterprise Ireland's response to Government regional initiatives including the Future Jobs Ireland framework, the Regional Assemblies, Regional Enterprise Plans and Project Ireland 2040. It provides an overarching national plan underpinned by nine regional specific plans to drive scale and expand reach of our indigenous enterprise.

The plan proposes six new national initiatives which aims to futureproof the regions through enhanced productivity and resilience, drive new entrepreneurship, develop urban centres of growth, support the expansion of scaling companies into the regions and attract foreign direct investment in the food sector.

Working in partnership with regional stakeholders it will see Enterprise Ireland maximise its investment through the Regional Enterprise Development Fund to strengthen regional infrastructure and drive the growth of businesses across Ireland.

Tourism Recovery Plan 2020

A Tourism Recovery Taskforce was appointed in May 2020 to prepare a Tourism Recovery Plan including recommendations on how best the Irish tourism sector can adapt and recover in a changed tourism environment as a result of the crisis.

The Taskforce makes a number of recommendations, both to help ensure the survival of tourism businesses and jobs and also to help the sector to stabilise and recover in the years to come. Within this, it has identified a number of priority recommendations aimed at ensuring the survival of tourism businesses and jobs, in areas such as:

- Business continuity grants and additional operational supports for enterprises
- Professional development supports for workers in the sector
- Liquidity measures to support vulnerable but viable businesses
- Facilitating the resumption of inbound international tourism
- Improving competitiveness through a VAT reduction and actions to improve the cost and supply of insurance
- Increased domestic and overseas marketing expenditure

Transport

National Transport Authority (NTA) Statement of Strategy sets out the work programme for the organisation for the period 2018 to 2022.

The Strategy outlines the Authority's vision: "To provide high quality, accessible, sustainable public transport connecting people across Ireland."

According to the document, in order to deliver this vision, the NTA will:

- Secure the provision of an efficient, accessible and integrated transport system in rural and urban Ireland;
- Transform and elevate customers' transport experience;
- Regulate privately operated transport services for the benefit of consumers;
- Contribute to the effective integration of transport and land use policies; and
- Advance Ireland's transition to a low emissions transport system.

Food Wise 2025

Food Wise 2025 sets out a ten year plan for the agri-food sector. It underlines the sector's unique and special position within the Irish economy, and it illustrates the potential which exists for this sector to grow even further.

The Food Wise 2025 strategy was agreed by a committee of 35 stakeholders from the agri-food sector. It foresees a sector that acts more strategically and achieves a competitive critical mass in the international marketplace while targeting more quality conscious consumers who will recognise and reward Ireland's food producers for their sustainable production and high quality produce.

The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine Statement of Strategy (2021-2024) alongside an Action Plan for 2021, which outlines 75 actions to further develop a sustainable, innovative and competitive agri-food, forestry and seafood sector was published in April 2021.

Food Wise 2025 identifies ambitious and challenging growth projections for the industry over the next ten years including:

- 85% increase in exports to €19 billion;
- 70% increase in value added to €13 billion
- 65% increase in primary production to €10 billion and
- The creation of 23,000 additional jobs all along the supply chain from producer level to high end value added product development.

Creative Ireland 2017-2022

Creative Ireland is a five-year all-of-government initiative, from 2017 to 2022, which at its core is a wellbeing strategy which aims to improve access to cultural and creative activity in every county across the country. Creative Ireland prioritises children's access to art, music, drama and coding; enhance the provision of culture and creativity in every community; further develop Ireland as a global hub for film and TV production; empower and support our artists; drive investment in our cultural institutions; and further enhance our global reputation abroad. Creative Ireland is built around five pillars:

- Pillar 1: Enabling the Creative Potential of Every Child
- Pillar 2: Enabling Culture and Creativity in Every Community
- Pillar 3: Investing in our Cultural Infrastructure
- Pillar 4: Ireland: A Centre of Excellence in Media Production
- Pillar 5: Unifying our Global Reputation

Draft National Marine Planning Framework

The Government published the draft National Marine Planning Framework (NMPF) in July 2020.

Marine spatial planning is a process that brings together multiple users of the ocean to make informed and coordinated decisions about how to use marine resources sustainably. It is a process by which the relevant public authorities analyse and organise human activities in marine areas to achieve ecological, economic and social objectives. The output from this process will be a national plan for Ireland's seas, to be known as the National Marine Planning Framework (NMPF).

The NMPF will set out, over a 20-year horizon, how we want to use, protect and enjoy our seas. The NMPF will sit at the top of the hierarchy of plans and sectoral policies for the marine area. It will be informed by existing sectoral plans and will, in turn, be used to inform future cycles of those plans in an ongoing feedback loop. It will provide a coherent framework in which those sectoral policies and objectives can be realised. It will become a decision making tool for regulatory authorities and policy makers into the future in a number of ways including, decisions on individual consent applications which will have to have regard to the provisions of the plan in the same way that terrestrial plans form part of the decision making tool-kit in the on-land planning process.

The Government has chosen the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government (DHPLG) as lead Department for marine planning and it will manage the NMPF process. It will prepare any legislation and policy guidance that is required and the Marine Institute (MI) will support the process by providing the necessary technical and scientific advice.



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