

Kilkenny

Maximising the potential

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County and City of Kilkenny

Introduction

Context – city and general economic

Kilkenny – Economic Snapshot

Region County and City

Institutional Responses

Economic drivers and approaches – urban
development, tourism, arts, heritage, 3rd
level, services and investment
promotion, people support

General Economic Development

City Context

- Beautiful Medieval City
- Great Presence and Identity
- City of strong churches, narrow streets, lovely buildings
- National brand and identity – tourism, arts, culture, heritage, design, townscape and urbanism, crafts.
- River, Castle, Rothe Hse, St Canices, City Hall, High St, Kieron st, lanes and streets
- Internationally recognised as a Great Town –best of old best of new

The Past

- Ireland underdeveloped - poor, rural - low urbanisation, dependant on agriculture,
- Poverty - long periods of economic decline
- Education, Health and Housing success stories - long view
- Whittaker/ Lemass axis state led recovery – understanding of macro-economic processes, dev of open economy, linkage to Europe

General Economic Context

- Recession/depression/credit/trade/manufacturing/services/retail – world wide
- Public, business and family financing crises
- New EU and national central banks architecture and resourcing
- Billions in cuts, taxes, capitalisation
- 450,000 unemployed projected by Taoiseach by year end

Snapshot

- 2600 businesses from 2000
- 6 companies above 200 staff – large cohort of SMEs
- 2500 farmers – 1800 fulltime average size 100 acres –
- Population of 87,558
- No of community groups – 120 registered – likely 240

Snapshot

- Regional Closures – Galmoy, Waterford Glass, Bausch and Lomb and others
- Financial pressures – many sectors
- Successes – Retail, Hotels, Glanbia, Film
- Council Indicators – planning applications halved, increase in vacant property, reduction in rates income, rental income decrease, bad debts increase
- No of unemployed – 5986 Feb 09 from 3167 – Feb 08

Economic catchment – region, county and city

- Regional, County and City Interdependancy – economic catchment
- Waterford Gateway – Kilkenny and Wexford Hubs
- N9 – N7 - high speed dual carraigeways 2010 – transforming infrastructure
- New Strategic Sectoral Alliances?
- Renewables/bio-fuel, pharma, medical devices, port activities, agri-business, food, 3rd level (tourism in place), Gateway, others

Institutional Economic Responses

- IDA – consolidate proposals in pipeline
- Enterprise Ireland – HPSU- potential from closures/downturn –increase in enquiries re start ups to EI and CEBs
- CDB/Council/CEB – new economic subgroup – review of economic strategy
- Leader/Partnership – new programmes
- FAS – expansion of courses
- ITs – new courses
- Supports from Science Foundation Ireland, PRTLTI, private funding

Kilkenny –Economic Drivers/Strategies

- Urban/City Development
- Tourism, Heritage, Arts, Crafts, Heritage, design
- 3rd Level
- Services and Investment Promotion

Urban development

- City in a competitive environment for tourism, retail, investment
- Improve appearance of City – remove sense of traffic domination in High St, John St and Rose Inn St – widen and improve footpaths - one way system – pedestrian priority – Part 8
- New bridge – Central Access Scheme – to support city centre

Urban Development

- Major Opportunity Sites – Mart and Diageo? – unique scale of city centre land availability
- Support High St, Rose Inn St and John St.
- Support long term development of larger central business District – an expanded and joined up city centre

Tourism – Arts – Heritage

- Acknowledge work of Kilkenny tourism sector, Kilkenny Tourism and Failte Ireland – support strategies
- Very strong hotel investment and performance
- Excellent tourism offer
- Opportunities with downturn in overseas travel
- Improve public domain – appearance of City –Tidy Town, Flowers, Facilities
- Conferences and Weekends

Tourism – Arts -Heritage

- Brand and Offer Enhancement
- Arts – Facilities – Evans Home/Butler Gallery- Arts Festival – literature – music
- Rothe House Restoration Project – Library- Garden – St Marys – City Walls
- Castle – new policy – major resource for private and public sectors and amenity
- Amenities Development – Linear Parks – Watershed - Facilities

3rd Level Education and R&D

- National Review Underway
- Awareness of importance of Kilkenny campus and of role of St Kierans College, of NUIM and IT Carlow
- Key task to widen and expand Kilkenny 3rd level presence in knowledge economy with NUIM and Carlow IT
- Support for WIT and Kildalton College National Crop and plant technology Centre Carlow
- Support for Crafts Council Training and Development
- Support business R &D
- Align 3rd level, research and regional economic development policies

Services and Investment Promotion

- Global Services – international pro-activity with IDA and existing companies
- Support business park developments - large and SME – city and county
- Investment in City, Tourism, Arts, Heritage, Facilities – investment in economic development for FDI and national.
- Govt Services expansion - long term - Arts
- Agri-business – sector support and development – agriculture support and interdependency

Services and Investment Promotion

- Encourage Linkages – USA, Japan and China.
- Protect/promote Kilkenny brand

People Support

- Urgent and immediate task for Kilkenny to re-orientate public, community, sporting and religious groups to support new unemployed
- Examining mechanisms including new IT network for services, skills, facilities, link to community, sports etc, facilities and audit, enterprise supports?

General Economic Development

- Development/expansion of City's strengths – long lead time for delivery
- Smart cohesive and collaborative approaches possible way forward with competitive elements - regional, national, county & city and thematic collaborations?
- “Best in” approach
- Planning for short and long term - critical