



SECTION 25A REPORT

REPORT DATE	LOCAL AUTHORITY	PREPARED BY
Date	Kerry County Council	Name

The purpose of the table below is to assist the local authority in completing the Section 25A (1) report to the Regional Assembly. This report will be used by the Regional Assembly to complete the Section 25A (2) Monitoring Report to be submitted to NOAC and which will focus on progress made in securing the overall objectives of the RSES.

It is intended that the Monitoring Report will be succinct, covering the 2-year period 2022-2024, and therefore we would ask that the response to the questions are as short as possible and for example we do not need the full detail of each policy or programme outlined.

The Regional Assembly is keen to capture examples of good practice initiatives and actions undertaken by the Local Authority which relate to the objectives of RSES and would welcome the inclusion of such examples where appropriate.

For further information, please contact Brigh Ryan at bryan@southernassembly.ie or Claire Breen at cbreen@southernassembly.ie

Please return the report to this office by **Friday, 26th January 2024**.

This can be submitted by email to: cbreen@southernassembly.ie

RSES THEME & RPO REFERENCE	RSES IMPLEMENTATION IN DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICY & SUPPORTING PROJECTS/INITIATIVES
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SUSTAINABLE PLACE FRAMEWORK & A TAILORED APPROACH RPOS 2 TO 30	Please complete the following table relating to the status of your County/City Development Plan
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Name and Date Made	Date Came into Effect	Direction	Judicial Review	Variations
Kerry County development plan 2022-28	15 th August 2022	5 th December 2022	N/A	Nil

	Please outline briefly how the Core Strategy supports the guiding principles and Settlement Typology contained in the RSES
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	<p>The KCDP Core Strategy includes details of the settlement hierarchy and where future growth is to be distributed in the County together with details of population and household projections. It was considered as part of the Core Strategy, that by 2031, the population of the County would most likely grow by 19,000-23,000 people to reach a potential population of 170,500 people. However, because of those fleeing the war in Ukraine, the population in Kerry has increased by over 9,000 since March 2022, a 6% increase on the 2022 Census figure which is equivalent to the rate of growth of the preceding 6 years, between 2016 and 2022. This growth will require additional support services, infrastructural and employment supports.</p> <p>The KCDP is underpinned by a strategic vision which is intended to guide the future development of the County in a sustainable manner, in a way that reflects the existing character and amenities of the county and improves quality of life for the existing and future population. In line with this the promotion and consolidation of the towns and villages of the plan through reuse, restoration and regeneration, and the creation of a vibrant urban form, resulting in settlements that are attractive places in which to live, work and visit is essential. The regeneration of the urban core of towns and villages will set the framework for the creation of a sustainable economic base to facilitate integrated communities while balancing future development with the conservation and enhancement of the natural and built environment of each settlement and surrounding areas.</p>
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	Please provide details on progress with the preparation of any Local Area Plans or other area-based plans (e.g. Masterplans) in your Local Authority
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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kenmare MD LAP 2023-29 is currently at material amendment stage. Estimated date of adoption is April 2024. Draft Tralee MD LAP 2024-30, estimated publication June 2024. Draft Killarney MD LAP 2024-30, estimated publication July 2024. Fenit Village Design Masterplan adopted in 2022. Draft Milltown Masterplan currently being finalized. Tender being published for Castleisland Masterplan. |
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**SUPPORTING GROWTH /
DEVELOPMENT OF KEY TOWNS**
RPO 11 Key Towns

Please outline progress made in developing Tralee and Killarney's role as Key Towns as envisaged in RPO 11 Key Towns and RPO 15 Tralee and RPO 18 Killarney. Please identify progress on delivering some of the key development sites/projects identified in the RSES

Tralee:

URDF, Tralee, Regional Economic Driver and Destination Town: The aim is 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.

Following a three-month consultation period and 800 submissions, a Masterplan was prepared and adopted by the Members of Tralee Municipal District which provides for a new linear park and the development of four individual investment sites surrounding the park. The linear public realm space is now complete, the Court Service will occupy one of the adjoining development sites alongside a social housing 27-unit apartment development, an office building, and a community space.

Island of Geese: The Island of Geese Project is a Designated Urban Centre Grant Scheme under the Regional Operational Programme 2014–2020 and is funded by the European Regional Development Fund and Kerry County Council and managed by Kerry County Council in partnership with the Southern Regional Assembly.

The ERDF 'Island of Geese (IOG)' regeneration has transformed the western end of Tralee town centre in terms of aesthetics, permeability and creating further capital opportunities for housing, retail, community, legal and amenity. The funding has enabled Kerry County Council to demolish an old derelict factory and to transform a significant brownfield site in Tralee Town Centre. A masterplan was produced and adopted for the regeneration of the area which has created a new linear park providing much improved access to the town centre and four investment ready serviced sites. The site was renamed The Island of Geese because of its historical location. The demolition of the linear park at the Island of Geese, has had a major visual impact, but it's also improved the connectivity of the town centre. The ERDF funding and the support of the Southern Regional Assembly has enabled the local authority and the community to utilise the space to offer much more in terms of public events.

Kerry County Council are continuing to look at ways to improve the town centre, the latest of which is the addition of a new covered public amphitheater and performance space in the centre of the Island of Geese. Funding secured under URDF funding will also further improve the public realm and accessibility, through exemplar pavement and streetscape design (Pavements Phase 3 – planning secured), thus linking the IOG to The Mall (Phase 1 and 2). Additional URDF funding, will also help decrease dereliction around the site, develop strategic designs for the Town Square and Market Quarter, and invigorate the eastern end of the town through a new Development Masterplan.

Destination Town Tralee: Tralee was identified as having the highest potential as a destination town within the county, because it possesses the greatest scope for transformative potential regarding the "key criteria" and "additional considerations" outlined in Failte Ireland's "Development Guidelines for Tourism Destination Town," This project, funded by Failte Ireland and Kerry County Council seeks to improve Tralee's visitor orientation and wayfinding infrastructure and will be completed in 2023, following extensive consultation with the Elected Members, the Tralee Chamber Alliance and other key stakeholders.

Greenway, Tralee to Fenit:

The Tralee Fenit Greenway is a railbed conversion of the Fenit branch line which runs for 14km from Tralee to the scenic coastal village and port of Fenit. The completed greenway was opened in June 2022. An interpretation Plan is currently being developed in conjunction with Fáilte Ireland which will further improve facilities and experience for visitors along the Greenway. Funding has also been secured from Fáilte Ireland to develop a modern outdoor changing facility, to be located at the Fenit end of the Greenway, an essential facility for the promotion of adventure tourism.

MTU, Tralee: MTU is a multi-campus technology university where a major new campus development in Tralee will see an Expansion of the North Campus and the construction of a new Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Building.

Kerry Technology Park adjoins the campus of MTU and is a joint enterprise and education infrastructure with over 350 employees and 40+ businesses. It encompasses the Business Innovation Centre, 50 acres of enterprise space and a range of office suites and business units. A €330million transformative expansion is planned for Astellas Pharma at the Kerry Technology park which will result in significant employment in the area.

Killarney:

URDF, World Class Tourist Destination: *The vision for Killarney is to mirror the National Park with an exceptional Urban experience that sets Killarney apart as a world class tourism destination.*

Plans have been prepared to interweave the fabric of the Urban Core of Killarney seamlessly into the National Park through a series of interrelated transport and public realm improvements and a traffic management strategy that removes as far as possible transitory traffic from the urban core. These plans aim to develop Killarney Town as a world class tourist destination, seeks to expand and diversify the Town Core's 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 Core experience.

The vision supports universal access throughout the town core, the transition from car predominance to pedestrian priority and for providing for low carbon mobility solutions within the town core area, replicating and building upon the environmental quality of the UNESCO Biosphere of the National Park and adjoining areas.

The objectives aim to:

1. Maximise the opportunity for Killarney as a Gateway status to the Wild Atlantic Way by enshrining Killarney as a World Class tourism experience by Creation of a World Class Environment governed by the Principal of Universal Access.
2. Improve connectivity throughout the town and orientate the town to the National Park.
3. Alleviate traffic congestion by the transition to Low carbon and Sustainable Mobility Policies.
4. Develop new visitor experiences by Enhancing and Extending the "Authentic" Killarney Offer.
5. Town Centre Regeneration & Development (Áras Phádraig)

Public Realm Plans are being advanced to upgrade the town centre streets. A Masterplan has also been prepared and adopted for the Aras Phádraig site to regenerate this derelict Town Centre Site (Áras Phádraig) to provide a community centered, cultural and commercial hub including a Primary Care Facility to support the compact growth of the town and the integration of its community. It will create a public amenity space for the promotion of community and the betterment of its health and wellbeing and will enhance the Arts/Cultural Heritage Experience. Plans are being finalised to advance this project to planning approval stage in 2024.

Centre of Excellence for Tourism, Killarney

A new centre of excellence for tourism is also planned for Killarney at a key strategic site at the former Sara Lee factory in the town. The proposed new college of further education will see a derelict site in a prominent location in the town, brought back to use. This will be the town's first third level college, managed by the Kerry education and Training Board. It will cater for 4,000, 3rd Level students and provide skills and upskilling in hospitality as well as apprenticeships for construction and new energy skills.

REGENERATION & SUPPORT FOR COMPACT GROWTH

RPO 34 Regeneration, Brownfield and Infill Development

RPO 35 Support for Compact Growth

RPO 36 LDA

RPO 37 Active Land Management

RPO 38 Retrofitting Initiative Priorities

RPO 176 "10-minute" city and town concepts

Please provide details on the implementation of your Core Strategy to date, including the achievement of compact growth targets (include details of planning permissions, housing commencement and completion figures in the table below, where available)

Please outline briefly, examples of significant regeneration projects/Initiatives planned or recently delivered, or innovative examples of delivering quality high density residential development, or any projects to develop lands planned in conjunction with the LDA.

Please identify details (including amounts) of any funding sources identified to deliver such projects

Please provide details on progress in the delivery of enabling infrastructure and identification of any capacity issues or challenges faced in progressing such projects, including details of programmed delivery of Uisce Éireann's Investment Plan and prioritisation programme

Please identify any challenges faced in delivering objectives for development of compact growth, in particular the unlocking of key regeneration sites and/or development of brownfield land.

Details of planning permissions, housing commencements and completions

Housing requirement identified in Core Strategy	Units completed since beginning of Development Plan period	Units from extant planning permission – commenced	Units from extant planning permission – not yet commenced
7000	711 (CSO New Dwelling Completions 2022Q3-2023Q3)	309 (relates to development in urban areas only, commencements for one-off dwellings unknown)	1,214 (relates to development in urban areas only) 217 rural applications have been granted under new CDP

Uisce Eireann Investment Programme Update

Kenmare WwTP Treatment Upgrade:

At construction stage, scheduled for completion in 2025.

Kilcummin Sewerage Scheme: A wastewater collection network project is currently being progressed to connect Kilcummin to the Killarney sewer network, and consequently Killarney Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP). This project is currently at construction stage.

Small Towns and Villages Growth Programme (STVGP):

Fenit WWTP is progressing through the STVGP and is at Stage 3 (Preliminary Business Case).

Knightstown WWTP is also progressing through the STVGP and is at Construction.

Castlegregory is also progressing through the STVGP and is at Data collection & Analysis Stage, which is expected to be completed by the end of 2024 at which time Uisce Éireann will be better able to give a timescale for completion of the project.

Glenbeigh WWTP is also progressing through the STVGP and is at Data collection & Analysis Stage, which is expected to be completed by the end of 2024 at which time Uisce Éireann will be better able to give a timescale for completion of the project.

Drainage Area Plans:

General information: The Drainage Area Plans for each settlement identified below will identify the upgrades needed to the wastewater network to cater for growth and alleviate hydraulic and environmental constraints.

Killarney - A Drainage Area Plan (DAP) is underway for the Killarney agglomeration and is nearing completion of Stage 4 (Strategy, Optioneering and Future solutions design) scheduled for Q1 2024.

Tralee - A Drainage Area Plan (DAP) is underway for the Tralee agglomeration and is nearing completion of Stage 4 (Strategy, Optioneering and Future solutions design) scheduled for Q2 2024.

DAPs are also being finalised for Listowel and Ballylongford both of which are also nearing completion of Stage 4.

Kenmare - A DAP has been completed for the Kenmare agglomeration, identifying upgrade needs to cater for growth and alleviate hydraulic and environmental constraints. Based on the findings of the DAP, the terminal pumping station at Cromwell's Bridge is being upgraded as part of the Kenmare WWTP upgrade project. Further, the Pier Road WWPS is included on Uisce Éireann's WwPS Upgrade programme and is currently at detailed design stage.

Wastewater Pumping Stations

In addition to the details above for Cromwell's Bridge and Pier Road Wastewater Pumping Stations in Kenmare the following pumping station upgrades are also being progressed:

Reenrusheen WwPS No. 2 in Caherciveen is included on the WWPS Upgrade programme and currently at detailed design.

Sneem WwPS is included on the WWPS Upgrade programme and currently at detailed design.

Ballinskelligs WwPS - On the Dungeagan/Ballinskelligs SS is included on the WwPS Upgrade programme and currently at detailed design.

Water Supply Capacity

UE is working to address drinking water supply constraints including:

Mid Kerry WRZ

An options report is currently being prepared to investigate the most appropriate route selection to interconnect a number of different schemes to improve long term resilience and meet the projected deficit in this WRZ. An upgrade scoped to improve treatment has been advanced.

Kenmare/Kilgarvan WRZ

Project with UE IDD to complete options appraisal for the development of new raw water source. Feasible options include both GW and SW solutions. For the GW piece, SDB Programme is currently investigating GW options in the area. Desktop studies complete. Field work will commence once land access and wayleaves are agreed. If suitable GW water resources are identified, it will aid IDD to determine the preferred solution, for which a business case will then be developed. It is advised to check back with UE for further updates as 2024 progresses.

Sneem WRZ

Sneem WTP has capacity based on the demand and the capacity of the WTP. The National Water Resources Plan preferred approach for Sneem WRZ is to increase surface water abstraction and

upgrade the WTP. A feasibility study will verify these findings, and a capital project will be advanced based on the output.

Emlaghpeasta/Portmagee/Maulin WRZ

Scope development to investigate increased groundwater potential at Portmagee has recently been completed. If successful, a production well could provide additional capacity at Portmagee. A long-term deficit will be met when a feasibility study is completed and the National Water Resources Plan preferred approach to increase surface water abstraction, will be verified.

Listowel WRZ – capacity constraints exist

UE is currently investigating GW options in the area. Desktop studies complete. Field work will commence once land access and wayleaves are agreed. If suitable water resources are identified, a project will be scoped to abstract and supplement existing supply. It is advised to check back with UE for further updates as 2024 progresses.

National Water Resources Plan – Update:

Following public consultation, the National Water Resources Plan - Framework Plan was adopted in Spring 2021. This was followed by the development of four regional water resources plans to identify plan-level approaches to address the identified need in a sustainable manner. The South West Regional Water Resources Plan, which includes County Kerry, was adopted in Spring 2023 following public consultation.

SMALLER TOWNS AND VILLAGES

RPO 26 Towns & Villages
RPO 31 Sustainable Place Framework

Please outline progress made in strengthening the role and viability of towns and villages identified in the Development Plan, including details of housing units planned/developed through programmes such as the RRDF funding and ‘Town Centre First’

Kerry County Council received funding under RRDF for the following towns; Killorglin, Listowel and Cahersiveen. Some of these projects are currently at design stage and others have recently received part 8 planning and will be submitted under call 5 of the RRDF for capital funding.

A summary of the projects are as follows:

RRDF – Listowel, Listowel ‘Where Stories Begin’ : A new Chapter in Listowel’s Economic Transformation and Prosperity.

This application is for a transformative project for the North Kerry designated regional town of Listowel and specifically the rejuvenation of Listowel Town Centre. The delivery of the Listowel ‘Where Stories Begin’ project is a new chapter in Listowel’s economic transformation and prosperity, benefitting not only the town itself but the significant rural catchment area of North Kerry. This project will revitalise the liveability and economy of Listowel Town and the rural catchment area it supports and position Listowel for future growth, which will play a significant part in attracting people to live and work in Listowel.

RRDF funding of € €729,304 secured for Listowel. Consists of 9 different projects under the umbrella of ‘Where Stories Begin’.

Redevelopment of Vacant Units at Blennerville Windmill

Kerry County Council secured grant approval of €500,000 (90% rate) under the Town & Village Renewal Scheme in February 2022 for the re-purposing of disused craft workshops at the Blennerville Windmill Centre into a Community Bakery and Baking School. The project is a collaboration between the Council, Blennerville Windmill Company CLG and Kerry Education and Training Board (KETB).

Fáilte Ireland’s Platforms for Growth,

Kerry County Council was successful in securing funding for Ballybunion Beach Shared Facilities Centre, Fenit Beach Shared Facility Centre and Magherabeg Shared Facilities Centre under this scheme. The funding will be used to develop water sports activity facilities which will provide a hub in each locality from where multiple water sport operators can base themselves. These best-in-class facilities will include; changing facilities, showers, toilets, secure storage and enclosed spaces for inductions to take place.

RRDF Killorglin, SMART Rural Regeneration Project.

Building on the town’s undoubted strengths while seeking to mitigate its weaknesses, a Vision for the development of Killorglin was agreed with the community through a Socio-Economic Plan process. This Vision provides a focus for a progressive and vibrant Killorglin as “A Town for the Ages; representative and inclusive of all ages, boldly optimistic for its future, while being mindful of its present and honouring its past.” RRDF funding was secured to support this vision of Killorglin as A Town for the Ages and are designed to provide leadership in addressing deficiencies, unlocking investment, and building confidence In Killorglin town centre.

Cahersiveen, Daniel O’Connell Quarter. Capital Projects Unit / Kenmare MD

The Cahersiveen RRDF is a comprehensive response to the serious structural, economic and social challenges currently facing Cahersiveen. The Cahersiveen Town Centre Regeneration Project builds on the significant locational, environmental, historical, tourism and cultural assets and The opportunities that Cahersiveen possesses as well as the strong relationships developed with third level educational institutions. The proposal sets out a cohesive multi-faceted approach to strengthening its sense of place both for locals and visitors, while at the same time fortifying the physical, social and economic capacity of the town. This approach is based on the development of a number of transformational and inter-related urban regeneration projects which target both physical renewal, reorientation of the town towards the sea and a comprehensive rebranding of the town as a progressive innovative, creative, environmentally sensitive, culturally rich tourist, education and innovation destination.

In relation to housing units planned, please see summary below:

Housing units planned

Section 179a houses		units
KCC	No. 5 & 6 Bridge Rd. Abbeydorney	2
KCC	Garryruth, Tralee	19
KCC	Ballybeg, Dingle Ballybeg, Dingle	34
KCC	Lohercannon phase 2, Tralee	89

RURAL AREAS / RURAL DEVELOPMENT / NETWORKS & CROSS BOUNDARY INITIATIVES

- RPO 27 Rural
- RPO 28 Collaboration/Partnership
- RPO 29 Rural Settlement Networks
- RPO 43 Rural Economy & EU Good Practice
- RPO 44 Common Agricultural Policy
- RPO 45 Action Plan for Rural Development
- RPO 46 Digital and Physical Infrastructure in Rural Areas
- RPO 47 Rural Partnership Models

Please outline progress made in supporting vibrant rural communities and sustainable economic development, such as initiatives to develop networks/shared resources between settlements.

Rural Collaboration Partnership Models

Kerry Economic Stakeholder Forum

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, in consultation with key stakeholders, developed an Economic Recovery Plan for County Kerry in 2021 which 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. 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.

Local Community Development Committee (LCDC)

The LCDC is charged with responsibility to co-ordinate local and community development activity in the County for the purposes of reducing overlap, avoiding duplication and improving the targeting of resources. The LCDC is the contracting authority for the Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme (SICAP) where the Kerry LCDC is also the Local Action Group (LAG) and is the main approval body for the LEADER programme investing €10.2 million in Kerry between 2014-2020. In 2021, a transitional LEADER fund in the sum of €2,090,428 was made available to the Kerry LAG with a further €929,079 in additional allocation from EURI funds. The LCDC has overseen the implementation of the Community elements of the Local economic and Community Plan (LECP). Additionally, the work undertaken by the LCDC has enhanced collaboration and is assisting in future work programme planning, this is evidenced through the progression of the delivery of actions in the Kerry Age Friendly Strategy and the Healthy Kerry Framework. Significant efficiencies have also been achieved through enhanced strategic planning and the targeting and coordination of resources. An example is the targeting of rural grants in the county including the Town and Village Renewal Schemes, CLAR, Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme and the Community Enhancement Programme. Each of the rural grants which are applied for reference key actions of the LECP and Kerry has been successful over the years in securing funding under several schemes, each of which has enhanced local walks, public realm in towns and villages, community, and outdoor facilities and amenities.

Kerry Community Response Forum

To ensure a coordinated response to support the people fleeing the war in Ukraine, a clear governance structure and high-level framework was developed in Kerry. This framework was mainly modelled on a similar approach which worked very efficiently to coordinate the response to the COVID-19 pandemic – the Community Response Forum. Building on existing structures and relationships, the Community Response forum was repurposed; ensuring a local authority led community response to the crisis. To ensure effective coordination of local health, education, social and other integration needs the Community Response Forum was strengthened to include the establishment of sub-structures which included: 4 local area response teams; A countywide coordination team; Working Groups and a HSE In reach team.

The Local Area Response Teams and the County Coordination Team have enabled all those involved at a local level to work together to support the integration of Ukrainian refugees. These structures ensure that any issues or concerns arising at a local level are elevated at a county level through the Forum, which allows for a consistent approach and response across the county. There is also a

commitment at Forum level that the agencies represented advocate issues through their national networks. The demand-led nature of the Forum requires that the model and role of the Forum is constantly evolving and requires regular reviews to meet the ongoing integration needs.

To address the integration needs a survey of the integration priorities was carried out in 2022 and a number of working groups have been established to develop integration responses such as: Pathways to employment group; English language support group; Bereavement support group; Accommodation provider network. The model in Kerry has been recognised nationally by NOAC as a model of good practice.

Kerry's Older People Council

The objective was to develop an Over 55s Network group as a Linkage Group of Kerry PPN to enhance and support its role in policy development and the link to the Strategic Policy Committees. The consultation process in 2022 and 2023 involved online and in person consultation, a review of the Terms of Reference and consultation with Kerry PPN Secretariat. Over 60 groups are registered with Kerry PPN as an over 55 network. There will be a plenary meeting of this grouping in Q1 2024.

Older People's Convention

The National Age Friendly Older People's Convention 2023 hosted by Kerry County Council took place in Tralee on the 11th and 12th May. This event is one of Age Friendly Ireland's main national events. The theme was Reconnecting | Fáilte ar ais – Welcome back! Representatives from Older Peoples' Councils spanning across the 31 Local Authority areas attended.

Kerry Age Friendly Steering Group

The Kerry Age Friendly Steering Group is an interagency group with a focus on input and development of policy relating to people as they age.

Kerry Chamber Network

Nine Chamber Alliances have been developed throughout the County in the last five years. Information sharing sessions have been held between the Chamber Alliances and learnings have been transferred to different areas. The Chambers have been active in progressing projects with the Council in particular in relation to festivals and events, public realm enhancements and local tidy town and biodiversity initiatives.

Active Ageing Festival

Following on from a successful inaugural event in 2022, this free Active Ageing Festival is in partnership with Munster Technological University. Second Year students from the Health & Leisure Degree Programme at MTU hosted this fun, social, and informative day for older adults focusing on balance, strength and functional movement, as well as taster sessions of some of the activities Kerry Recreation & Sports Partnership host throughout the county, including: Pickleball, Bowls, Dancing, Age & Opportunity etc.

The Kerry Public Participation Network (PPN)

Kerry Public Participation Network (Kerry PPN) is an independent umbrella network of community & voluntary, environmental and social inclusion groups active within the county. Public Participation Networks (PPNs) were established by the Irish government under the Local Government (Reform) Act 2014 to be the main link through which the Local Authority connects with these groups. PPNS give members a greater say in local government decisions which affect their own communities – through the five Strategic Policy Committees, Local Community Development Committee and the Joint Policing Committee. The PPN is also developing a disability linkage group in addition to the age friendly group. Kerry PPN is governed by the Secretariat, a voluntary board elected from the Kerry PPN membership whose responsibility is to oversee the development of the network and ensure that the objectives of the PPN are carried out. The PPN in Kerry is hosted by Kerry County

Council.

Healthy Kerry

Healthy Kerry is a project of the LCDC, supported by the Community, Arts and Culture Unit and is funded by the Healthy Ireland Fund (HIF). It is a key objective in the LECP to 'develop healthy towns and communities.' Healthy Kerry provides a platform for cross-sectoral interagency work and seeks to tackle health inequalities, which has resulted in the development of Kerry's first 'Healthy Kerry Framework'.

The Healthy Kerry Framework (2021-2027) was developed in 2021 to support the implementation of the national Healthy Ireland Framework and campaigns in response to the needs of the local community over the next five years. Echoing the national Framework, the vision of the Healthy Kerry Framework is that everyone can enjoy physical and mental health and wellbeing to their full potential in a county where wellbeing is valued and supported at every level of society. Three aspects were agreed to be prioritised for a Healthy Kerry. These include building healthy communities, promoting wellbeing in the workplace (including Remote working) and supporting the implementation of national and local policies and plans in Kerry.

With support from the Healthy Ireland Fund, annual Kerry Mental Health and Wellbeing Fest is held every year to highlight World Mental Health Day on 10th October. The organising committee is a collaboration between Connecting for Life Kerry, Healthy Kerry, Kerry County Council, the HSE, NEWKD, SKDP, Kerry Mental Health Association, Jigsaw Kerry, Munster Technological University and Kerry Volunteer Centre.

The Kerry Comhairle na nÓg – Young People's Council

The Department of Children and Youth Affairs oversees Comhairle na nÓg, the delivery of which is the responsibility of each Local Authority. There are 31 Comhairlí na nÓg nationally and the aim is to ensure that the voice of young people is heard when developing policy and local services. Young people aged 12-18 are invited to participate in the Comhairle. The Steering Group in Co. Kerry is managed by the Community Department, Arts and Culture Department. Strengthening the links with schools at county level is one of the key areas that the Comhairle in Kerry wishes to develop further.

Kerry Recreation & Sports Partnership (KRSP)

The Kerry Recreation and Sports Partnership is a sub-committee of the LCDC in Kerry and is a key lead in the delivery of a number of actions in the LECP, in particular those that aim to increase participation levels in sport and physical activity in the county. The Partnership works with relevant partner organisations and NGB's to coordinate sport programmes, events and activities to increase participation levels in sport and physical activities across the five municipal districts of Kerry. It supports clubs and communities to target increased participation in conjunction with key partners with an emphasis on low participation groups and coordinates the involvement of schools to take part in programmes and events that strengthen school-club links and provide school children with opportunities to access and enjoy new sports.

Another example of collaboration was the hosting of the Kerry Club and Volunteer Fairs. The Kerry Recreation & Sports Partnership and Kerry Volunteer Centre teamed up to host a series of Club and Volunteer Fairs in 2023. The Club and Volunteer Fairs celebrated and promoted the extensive range of fantastic local community not-for-profit clubs and organisations throughout Kerry. The events were free to attend and enabled members of the public come and see what is available for them in their community and to speak and engage with the clubs and organisations directly.

PLACEMAKING

RPO 31 Sustainable Place Framework
RPO 61 Health Place Audit (HPA) for
Place-making
RPO 70 Bidding capacity

Please provide a brief summary of progress on major projects and initiatives identified through the Development Plan to support Placemaking such as improvements to the public realm, developing new streets/spaces/pocket parks. Details of funding sources (including amounts) to deliver such projects should also be included.

Tralee: Failte Ireland funding of €550,000 to develop a Wayfinding Strategy, and design and install signage as part of Destination Town Tralee.

Tralee: URDF & Community Recognition Funding of €2,500,000 to design, construct and fit out a new Boxing Club at Deans Lane.

Blennerville: Town & Village funding of €500,000 to develop a bakery and bakery school which will transform derelict units at the Old Blennerville Windmill Complex;

Spa Village, Tralee- To Develop a pathway to link Spa Village with the Tralee Bay Coastal Amenity Trail- €96,705.00 under Town and Village Renewal Scheme (TVR)

Listowel: RRDF funding of €730,000 to develop designs for the Seanchái Centre/Kerry Writers Museum, public realm improvements in the 'Small Square, an area masterplan for the Neodata Site (encompassing the current Town Council Depot and the dis-used handball alley), and re-use of existing 'Enterprise Units'.

Listowel: ORIS funding of €500,000 to build new public conveniences and changing facilities at a derelict site in a prominent location in the town.

Listowel: NTA Active Travel funding of €900,000 for the construction of a new Cycleway to connect the Town center to the Greenway which was completed in 2023.

Fenit, Ballyunion & Maherabeg: Failte Ireland 'platforms for Growth' funding of €3,600,000 to design and construct modern water-sport beach facilities on three blue-flag beaches.

Killarney URDF€16.068m – Public Realm improvement in New Street, Beech Road, High Street, College Street and Lewis road.

Caherciveen Public Realm Improvement Plan €2.056m RRDF for Design stage – Plan to upgrade public realm in the Daniel O'Connell Quarter, develop the waterfront amenity including a boardwalk and trail head for the South Kerry Greenway.(to be submitted under call 5 RRDF)
South Kerry Greenway currently under construction.

Killorglin €0.9m RRDF Project for design stage – Upgrade Public Realm in Killorglin Town centre to be submitted under Call 5 RRDF.

Kenmare: Purchase and redevelopment of a derelict convent to accommodate a family resource centre and other community services.

Milltown – Completion of a Masterplan as part of the Town Centre First Initiative (€100,000)

Castleisland – Development of a Masterplan as part of the Town Centre First initiative

Listowel- Upgrade of the town entrance to Listowel including extension of cycling ways, visual and safety enhancements €200,000 under Town and Village Renewal Scheme (TVR)

Portmagee- Public Realm Enhancements including the undergrounding of the overhead utility network: The project also proposes incorporation of EV charging and Wi-Fi access points. €200,000.00 under Town and Village Renewal Scheme (TVR)

Ballyunion- The provision of improved signage and parking capacity to improve visitor experience in the town- €100,000.00 under Town and Village Renewal Scheme (TVR)

Rathmore- The undergrounding of existing overhead ESB Network(phase 3)- €70,000.00 under Town and Village Renewal Scheme (TVR)

Kilcummin- To provide underground electricity services, additional lighting and a new footpath connecting a housing estate to the village. €99,551 under Town and Village Renewal Scheme (TVR)

The Dingle Way - Upgrading works to the final section of the 178km National Walking Trail – The Dingle Way at Más an Tiompáin near Cloghane. €200,000.00 under Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS)

Ballyseedy Woods- The enhancement works to the existing paths will improve accessibility and ensure visitors have an enjoyable experience as well as encouraging new visitors. €29,560.06 under Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS).

RSES ECONOMIC STRATEGY

RPO 40 Regional Economic Resilience
RPO 64 Facilitate new business formation, growth and industrial re-organisation
RPO 72 Brexit
RPO 74 Economic Risk Management System
RPO 62 Locations for Employment Development

Please provide details of progress in supporting the RSES Economic Strategy and the role of the Region's Economic Drivers. Details on progress with the delivery of Strategic Locations for Employment Development should also be included

- **Delivery of LECP 2016-2022**

The Local Economic and Community Plan 2016-2022 (LECP) sets out the actions and objectives needed to promote, support and strengthen the sustainable development of the economy and communities of Kerry. It promotes a coordinated inter-agency approach to tackling key economic and social concerns which have been identified through in-depth research and an extensive consultation process. The economic elements of the LECP are overseen by the Strategic Policy Committee (SPC) for Economic Development, Enterprise and Planning. The community elements of the LECP are overseen by the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC).

The LECP contains the following three elements:

- Economic Development and Job Creation,
- Quality of Life
- Community and Social Inclusion

The LECP Monitoring group, an internal monitoring group of senior staff in the council has been established under the Directorate of Economic and Community Development to review the LECP and completion of actions, feedback will be provided to the Strategic Forums for discussion.

To date, the LECP has largely been delivered with several high-level collaborative actions and transformational projects progressed and completed across the County.

Like all rural counties there have been significant social and economic challenges facing the county and its population over many decades. Despite these challenges there is an entrepreneurial spirit and drive within the County that has resulted in significant indigenous industries being established which have become global leaders in innovation and research. Kerry County Council has strategically invested in this research in developing the economic reputation of the County in collaboration with Higher Education, the private sector and the community. The engagement with communities in respect of several enhancement projects has enriched communities and individuals involved. There exists, because of these processes, willing community groups and sectoral representative organisations eager to build upon existing achievements, and collaboratively assist the Council in the delivery of additional projects.

The Implementing Partners have prioritised the allocation of existing resources and targeted additional resources to ensure the actions agreed in the LECP are delivered. Significant financial and human resources are committed to the delivery of the LECP. Funding has been secured through Enterprise Ireland, Fáilte Ireland, the Town and Village Renewal Scheme, LEADER, CLÁR, the Outdoor Recreation Fund and the Community Enhancement Scheme to implement actions in the Plan. The LECP has set the foundation for community and economic innovation and regeneration, where the Council will work with the implementation partners to ensure all grant opportunities are maximised.

Examples of strategic projects delivered:

- Economic Development Officer appointed in 2016

- Broadband Officer appointed in 2016
- Atlantic Economic Corridor Officer appointed in 2018
- Economic infrastructure – RDI Hub, Agritech Centre of Excellence, Dingle Hub, Sneem Digital Hub, Castleisland Carnegie Co working, Skellig CRI, Listowel Food Hub, Firies Food Hub.
- Marketing of the County – KerrySciTech was established, Discover Kerry brand and website launched
- Rural Regeneration – 3 regeneration sites in progress – Killorglin, Listowel, and Cahersiveen.
- Urban Regeneration – Tralee, Killarney
- Community regeneration – Úibh Ráthaigh Taskforce, marketing campaign and analysis of vacancy in this region
- Valentia Transatlantic Cable Station – tentative list for UNESCO

- **Preparation of LECP 2023 – 2029**

Preparation of the new LECP is in progress. Draft High-Level Goals and Objectives have been developed with the LECP Advisory Group. Targeted stakeholder consultation has taken place and public consultation is scheduled to take place in early February.

- **Facilitate delivery of South-West Regional Enterprise Plan 2021 -2024 - ongoing**

The Council has provided strategic input to the current Regional Enterprise Plan and ensured actions are aligned with the LECP deliverables. A programme manager was appointed to oversee the coordination and implementation of the Plan. The consultation process to develop the SW REP was enhanced by an understanding among stakeholders of the importance of ownership, collaboration and the definition and delivery of specific measurable actions that could add value to the existing activities being undertaken by the Enterprise agencies, LEO's, Local Authorities and other relevant bodies involved in supporting enterprise development. A Regional Enterprise Steering Group oversees the implementation of the REP. The Steering Group meets regularly and is provided updates on progress of actions by the Programme Manager. There are 6 Working Groups supporting the 6 Strategic Objectives. Kerry County Council is represented in all 6 working groups. Regular progress reports are provided to the Department of Enterprise. The following is a summary of the high-level achievements to date:

- A Clusters Managers Forum has been set up and all Clusters in the South West Region are engaged and driving forward with collaborations on projects into 2024;
- The iEd Hub is a new HCI funded collaborative initiative involving UCC, MTU and industry stakeholders providing training for unmet industry needs through a range of new post graduate courses.
- The Agri-tech cluster/ACE and VistaMilk have collaborated on one completed and further planned projects including an MOU between Teagasc-MTU
- Cork and Kerry Hubs Networks have been successfully established and are working collaboratively on events and projects into 2023 and 2024.
- The Impact Hub at the Crann Centre opened in 2022 and is serving as an exemplar in inclusivity in hubs. Training is available in connection with the Rubicon/MTU and LEOs.
 - The Space Industry Cluster feasibility study has been completed and the REISS supported Re-Create Shandon Hub feasibility report has also been completed with governance in place.
- SWREP and SRA are committed to working together to progress the recommendations of the Southern Smart Region – Towards a Learning Region report.

- Munster Animation Forum has completed a feasibility study mapping a path for progress towards a Munster Animation Cluster with a shared strategy and vision for the sector.
- **Establishment of the Kerry Economic Stakeholder Forum**

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 led 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, in consultation with key stakeholders, developed an Economic Recovery Plan for County Kerry in 2021 which 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. 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. The Economic Recovery Plan will form the basis for the new LECP 2023-2029.

Please provide details of progress that has been made with respect to the preparation of the Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) for your Local Authority

The existing LECP Desktop review will be completed in Q1 2024. The Draft Socio Economic Statement, High Level Goals and Objectives and SCOT analysis have been prepared. Public Consultations and Stakeholder Engagement are underway. The draft High Level Framework document is currently being drafted and the two Implementation Plan will be prepared following the Consultation process.

ECONOMIC CORRIDORS

RPO 41 Atlantic Economic Corridor (AEC)

Please provide details of progress that has been made to advance development of the Atlantic Economic Corridor

The AEC initiative aims to support the need for rebalanced economic activity and promote regional development along the Atlantic coastline from Donegal to Kerry. The primary objective of

the AEC is to maximize regional assets collaboratively, integrating economic centers, clusters, and catchments to create a compelling value proposition for investment, job creation, and population growth, with a strong emphasis on enhancing the quality of life.

2023 saw the coordinated development of a draft AEC Strategy, which aims to serve as a pivotal component of the regional development policy agenda, offering a counterbalance to the overheated regions of the country. Project Ireland 2040 / National Planning Framework has explicitly designated the AEC as the central policy and strategy platform for targeted investment and enterprise development. In the spirit of collaboration, the development of the AEC strategy involved the AEC Officers (Local authorities), the Western Development Commission and The Department of Rural and Community Development.

The draft strategy is being reviewed by the Department of Rural and Community Development.

TOURISM

RPO 53 Tourism
RPO 54 Tourism & the Environment

Please outline any recently completed or planned projects of significance to support tourism development, culture, heritage or the arts in your Local Authority

Key Strategic Economic and Tourism Projects

Kerry County Council are currently in the process of developing a new Tourism Strategy (2024 – 2029) which will have a clear focus on sustainability and regenerative tourism. The strategy is currently being developed in consultation with Key stakeholders and is in line with the high level goals and objectives of the new LECP.

In addition to the key capital projects referenced in previous sections. Other significant tourism projects include:

Discovery Kerry Platform

A new Kerry brand and webportal was launched on the 25th January 2024. [DiscoverKerry.com](https://www.discoverkerry.com) is the online home for the new place brand, serving as the go-to resource for a wide audience.

The Kerry brand and website forms part of an overall strategy to promote Kerry as a place to visit, live, work and invest. The brand guidelines outline a comprehensive new messaging framework and narrative, to aid marketing activities and promote Kerry as a destination to live, work and visit.

The Marketing Kerry partnership formed between Kerry County Council, KerrySciTech and Kerry Tourism Industry Federation has led to the development of the new place brand for the region. Through this collaboration across public and private sectors, many key stakeholders and volunteers from the region and beyond were engaged in the brand creation. These include representatives from diaspora, local and national government agencies, the tourism sector and the enterprise sector including start-ups, SMEs, large corporations, digital hubs, education, local chambers and community organisations.

Kingdom of Kerry Greenways/walkways/trails

The Kingdom of Kerry Greenways were launched in 2022 and the promotion and development of these important tourism attractors was a key undertaking in 2023. As well as marketing and promotion, Kerry County Council commissioned two reports – on the biodiversity and history/cultural aspects of the Greenways which are an essential input to the interpretation plan for the Greenways, which is being carried out by Fáilte Ireland. These Greenways are the first in a series of Greenways planned in Kerry over the coming years. They provide safe, clean, accessible and sustainable experience for users of all abilities. The Greenways are an important resource for local people and are proving to be a key driver of regional, national and international tourists to Kerry. They provide an important additional tourism product for the county.

Ongoing investment in the County's recreational infrastructure and the development of new walks and trails will be advanced in 2024 under the Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS) and CLÁR to ensure standards are retained and new trails are advanced. The unit will also continue to promote and develop visitor resources such as the Kerry Trails Maps, Activity Brochure and other similar initiatives.

Adventure Activity Tourism

The Adventure Activity tourism sector has huge potential countywide in Kerry with numerous opportunities for hiking, walking, biking kayaking, surfing, and other outdoor water-based activities. The significant increase in outdoor activities is expected to grow year on year and not just during the summer months. Some of the initiatives currently underway include developing shared beach facilities for water sport activities at Fenit, Ballybunion and Maharabeg to enhance the visitor experience. Kerry County Council secured funding under Fáilte Ireland's Platforms for Growth programme to develop the facilities. They will include all weather changing rooms, hot showers, secure storage, equipment cleaning and toilet facilities and will be fully accessible. The centres will be built using sustainability best practices, such as solar heating panels. They will support the local economy and the outdoor activity sector by significantly enhancing the overall visitor experiences. They will assist in providing new business opportunities in local communities and support the extension of the tourism season beyond the traditional summer months. The development of these projects will commence in 2024.

Bray Head Signature Discovery Point

Kerry County Council in collaboration with Fáilte Ireland will focus on developing a Wild Atlantic Way Signature Discovery Point and enhanced visitor experiences at Bray Head. The works to stabilise and conserve the existing Signal Tower building will result in the provision of a new roof top viewing platform which will afford stunning views of the Skellig Islands and surrounding landscape. Bray Head is the closest land point to Skellig Michael and has dramatic sea views. It is one of 188 current Discovery Points along the Wild Atlantic Way.

UNESCO World Heritage Sites

The potential of UNESCO designations in the county is a key priority for 2024 with the inclusion of the Valentia Trans-Atlantic Cable Station on Ireland's Tentative List as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. It is over ten years since the list has been updated and Valentia is only one of three heritage sites to be selected. Valentia and its partner station in Hearts Content, Newfoundland, will be progressed as a trans-national or joint application to UNESCO, Paris in 2024.

Kerry County Council will also continue to promote the Kerry Biosphere Reserve, Killarney and Skellig Michael UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

Film and Festival Development

Film and festival development are an integral part of our economic and tourism offering and afford an opportunity for local people to promote their areas and attract increased visitors and revenue into their community. Community Groups, Chambers and Tourism Alliances around the county make a great contribution to Kerry tourism by organising festivals and events that showcase culture, people, and places. The tourism unit will continue to support the county's wide range of festivals and events with mentoring and workshops for festival providers and marketing and promotion supports (e.g. events calendar and social media). Kerry County Council will also assist in the development of off-peak festivals to extend the tourism season, where particular emphasis will be on greening festivals in 2024.

Film development and production also has the potential not only to showcase the County internationally but also to generate jobs, revenue, and related infrastructure development, providing a boost to the local creative economy. The Council will work with agencies and key stakeholders to promote Kerry as a location for film and to advance Kerry's competitive positioning for film/tv and screen content during 2024.

Some additional examples of Tourism projects include:

- Redevelopment of Blennerville Windmill. The project will involve the redevelopment of currently derelict buildings adjoining the Blennerville Windmill in Tralee.
- Navilens Project - Greenways DCEDIY - Installation of Navilens signage on the Greenways to support way finding and provision of interpretation information to the visually impaired. Project partially completed in 2023.
- Greenway Furniture & Marketing- Marketing of North Kerry Greenways, purchase of street furniture and development of a biodiversity trail. Project completed January 2024.
- Greenway Website/Content Pool - Kingdom of Kerry Greenways Development of Greenway Website and develop a content pool. Project completed January 2024.
- Fenit Beach Shared Facility Centre, Fenit - Development of a water sports activity facility to include; changing facilities, showers, toilets, secure storage and enclosed spaces for inductions to take place. Project under way.
- Magherabeg Shared Facilities Centre, Castlegregory - Development of a water sports activity facility to include; changing facilities, showers, toilets, secure storage and enclosed spaces for inductions to take place. Project under way.
- Ballybunion Beach Shared Facilities Centre, Development of a water sports activity facility to include; changing facilities, showers, toilets, secure storage and enclosed spaces for inductions to take place. Project under way.
- Ballybunion Beach – Project Development Measure to progress Universal access to Ballybunion beaches. Project underway.
- Destination Town Tralee - Provision of Way Finding Signage and Interpretation in Tralee. Project underway.
- Four Points of Ireland - Project to market four extreme points of Ireland as a new tourism product. Feasibility study and typographical surveys completed in 2023.
- Project Development Measure - Sustainable Outdoor Recreation Visitor and Community Mobility Management Plan for Valentia.
- Global Irish Festival Series – An Turas Mór Festival to attract Kerry’s Diaspora home from October 18th to November 1st.
- Féile Thrá Lí - Five day street festival coinciding with the International Rose of Tralee.
- Supports are also provided to a number of initiatives through the Creative Ireland including Festivals, Culture Night and Crinniú na Nóg,
- The LIVE project, set up to promote the natural and cultural assets of the Iveragh Peninsula to create opportunities for sustainable tourism concluded in 2023. It was a collaboration between partners in south-west Ireland and North Wales.

MARINE ECONOMY

RPO 76 Marine Economy
RPO 77 Maritime Spatial planning -
Consistency and Alignment
RPO 78 First Mover under the National
Marine Planning Framework
RPO 79 Shannon Estuary and Other
Harbour Plans
RPO 81 Fishery Harbour Centres and
Local Authority Harbours
RPO 82 Seafood Sector
RPO 83 Island and Coastal
Communities
RPO 84 Fishing Local Area Group
(FLAG) Development Strategies
RPO 85 Renewable offshore energy
effects on European Sites and
potential for adverse effects on the

Please provide a brief summary of relevant recent initiatives, planned or completed projects that support development of our marine and coastal assets

RPO 86 Marine Cluster	<p>Kerry County Council has in the last two years carried out substantial improvements to the Marine Infrastructure under the Brexit Adjustment Local Authority Marine Infrastructure (BALAMI) Scheme.</p> <p>Approx. €2.5m has been spent on the following projects: Kay Rock and Valentia River Navigational Aids; Kilmacalogue Pier, Kenmare; Fenit Harbour Dredging; Knightstown Breakwater and Scraggane Pier, Castlegregory. These projects support a number of marine industry areas such as fishery catch and processing, marine leisure and tourism, island and coastal communities' connectivity, as well as safety measures for marine vessels in general.</p> <p>Works have also been carried out to the slipway at Tarbert to facilitate the Tarbert-Killimer Car Ferry which is a vital link in the county's Tourism and Transport infrastructure. Works are ongoing at Reenard Pier, which will see over €1m invested in upgrading this important pier. This pier is used by the seasonal Knightstown-Reenard Car Ferry, as well as servicing landings for a major fish processing industry at Reenard. Other coastal assets where works have recently taken place include Rock Revetments to protect; Promenade at Waterville; R558 Regional road at Kilfenora servicing Fenit Port; Ballyheigue- Kerryhead Road servicing Dromatoor Pier; R564 Regional Road at Rossbeigh. Further works are planned for Portmagee, Reenard and Fenit Port in the fishery, tourism and transport elements of our marine infrastructure.</p>
<p>CLIMATE ACTION AND DECARBONISATION: TRANSITION TO A LOW CARBON ECONOMY & SOCIETY</p> <p>RPO 56 Low Carbon Economy RPO 57 National Policy Statement on Bio-economy RPO 85 Renewable offshore energy RPO 88 National Mitigation Plan and National Adaptation Framework RPO 89 Building Resilience to Climate Change RPO 90 Regional Decarbonisation. RPO 91 Decarbonisation in the Transport Sector RPO 94 Decarbonisation in the Agricultural Sector</p>	<p>Please provide a brief summary of relevant recent initiatives, planned or completed projects to address Climate Action, including progress with the preparation of your Local Authority's Climate Action Plan and Decarbonisation Zone</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kerry County Council has now filled all Climate Action posts within its Climate Action Unit – Climate Co-ordinator, Climate Action Officer and Community Climate Action Officer, • On 22nd January 2024 Kerry County Council adopted its Local Authority Climate Action Plan 2024-2029 in compliance with Section 16 of the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021, • The LACAP 2024-2029 includes a specific section on the Dingle Peninsula Decarbonisation Zone as required by the aforementioned act. This will see the Local Authority work in partnership with stakeholders to roll out climate action to meet targets to reduce GHG emissions by 51% to 2030 and climate neutrality by 2050. • Kerry County Council's Community Climate Action Programme fund has been launched which will see €663,000 allocated to community-led climate action projects across the county. The closing date for this process is 6th March, following which the applications will be evaluated and awarded. There is an 18 month project duration phase to have projects completed. • Activating projects in the Dingle DZ is ongoing with many groups very proactive in the area, the Dingle Hub, West Kerry Dairy Farmers SEC and The Tourism and Hospitality SEC are all rolling out Climate Action project and being supported by Kerry County Council Climate Action Unit.

<p>RESOURCE EFFICIENCY INCL. RENEWABLE ENERGY RPO 98 Regional Renewable Energy Strategy RPO 109 Bio-Energy Implementation Plan</p>	<p>Please provide details of renewable energy targets, projects or initiatives to support renewal energy</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Kerry County Council County Development Plan provides a framework for approximately 389MW of additional renewable energy to be potentially generated over the lifetime of the plan through a variety of renewable sources. • The KCDP contains a number of specific objectives to support and facilitate the development of appropriate renewable energy projects in suitable locations. • Internally, Kerry County Council strives to be an exemplar local authority in terms of energy efficiency having implemented an ISO50001:2018 Energy Management System and reporting a 44.6% improvement in energy efficiency across Council operations in 2022. • The LACAP will see KCC aim to achieve a 51% reduction in carbon emissions by 2030 which will include an increase in renewable energy projects – particularly solar PV across a number of KCC sites. Plans are being developed to deploy solar PV installations at County Buildings and the Killarney Sports and Leisure Centre, in addition to the existing solar PV array at Ashe Hall. • Public Lighting in County Kerry, on unmetered electricity supplies, accounts for approximately 60% of the Council's annual electricity consumption and is powered by an OGP contract that provides 100% renewable electricity.
<p>BLUE GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE RPO 110 Ecosystem Services RPO 122 Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) RPO 124 Green Infrastructure RPO 125 Green Infrastructure Corridors RPO 126 Biodiversity RPO 127 Invasive Species RPO 128 All-Ireland Pollinator Plan 2015 – 2020</p>	<p>Please provide details of any recently completed or planned projects or other actions to support the development of Blue Green Infrastructure, ecosystem services and biodiversity</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kerry County Council (KCC) is a member of the management committee for the Kerry UNESCO Biosphere Reserve. KCC have also supported an application made by the Biosphere team for funding to deliver a project focusing on installing rain gardens at strategic locations around Killarney within the Biosphere area. KCC supports Tralee Bay Wetlands Eco and activity park. • The implementation of the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan is supported by the Kerry County development plan 2023-2028. Tralee Municipal District in collaboration with several community organisations have delivered training relating to implementation of the Pollinator Plan targeting both council staff and the general public: • KCC throughout 2022 and 2023 have provided funding to support three coastal community groups (Maharees coastal Conservation group, Banna Coast care and Fenit Coastal conservation group) in sand dune protection and restoration projects through the purchase of chestnut fencing. • In November 2023 four areas of native trees have been planted within the Tralee MD area in collaboration with Moyderwell Community gardens as part of a funded project promoting the use of Korean natural farming to increase the biodiversity of the soil microbiome, thus increasing the Co2 absorption capacity and resilience of plants to disease. Monitoring of these project outcomes is ongoing. • Invasive species eradication works along regional roads are underway in Dingle (year 4), Castleisland (year 2) and Listowel (year 1). This work has been to date supported by the

	<p>Local Biodiversity action Fund and will be continued pending further approval of funding through to completion.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are currently three greenways in Kerry, two of which are open to the public and the third remains under construction. Hedgerows and native vegetation have been maintained along the routes and further biodiversity actions are being considered through the development of a biodiversity plan for one of these led by local community groups and supported by KCC and other funders. <p>New road infrastructure within the county includes SUDs to manage rainfall and support water quality.</p>
<p>RECREATION & SPORTING FACILITIES INCL. BLUEWAYS & GREENWAYS</p>	<p>Please provide details of any recently completed or planned projects or other actions to support support recreation and sporting facilities including blueways and greenways</p>
	<p>Kerry County Council completed two Greenways in late 2022 as follows, where 80km of Greenways is planned across the County;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Tralee to Fenit Greenway 11.3km completed to add to the existing 2.3km - Total 13.6km 2) Listowel to Limerick Greenway 10.3km and a Town link (in 2023) 1.3km long. Total 11.6km <p>The South Kerry Greenway which secured planning consent for 27km is now under construction using a Phased approach.</p> <p>Planning Approval for the Cockleshell Road to Spa 2.2km project has been secured. This is currently at land acquisition stage.</p> <p>The Tralee to Listowel Greenway (28km) is at Planning and Development stage. The first Public Consultation commenced in December 2023.</p>
<p>WATER FRAMEWORK DIRECTIVE</p> <p>RPO 110 Ecosystem Services RPO 111 Water Resources RPO 112 Water Quality RPO 121 Effective Collaboration to Implement River Basin Management Plans and Water Framework Directive RPO 122 Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) RPO 123 River Basin Management Plan and Spatial Planning RPO 124 Green Infrastructure RPO 126 Biodiversity RPO 127 Invasive Species</p>	<p>Please provide details of any recently completed or planned projects or other actions to support the implementation of the Water Framework Directive including ecosystem services, SuDS and biodiversity</p>
	<p>KCC Coordinated with the Local Authorities Water Programme (LAWPro) in carrying out or water quality functions and we actively participated in the Water Framework Directive (WFD) Regional Operating Committee structure.</p> <p>KCC continued to implement the relevant Programmes of Measures set out in the WFD River Basin Management Plan, including in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complaint investigations • Domestic Wastewater Treatment System inspections under the National Inspection Plan; • Farm inspections (both routine and non-routine); • Monitoring and Regulation of Discharge Licenses;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring of water quality, including bathing waters, etc. • Assessment of Planning Applications with particular focus on water quality. <p>Kerry County Council's Climate Action Plan 2024 to 2029 and Biodiversity Action Plan 2022 to 2028 strongly support the implementation of Sustainable Drainage Systems and Nature Based Solutions.</p>
<p>DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY/SMART REGION/SMART CITIES RPO 133 Smart Cities RPO 134: Smart Cities and Smart Region:</p>	<p>Please provide details of any recently completed or planned projects or other actions to support the development of a Smart Region/Smart City/Smart Towns. In rural areas, please outline progress made in the development of Remote Working & Digital Hubs and other relevant initiatives for the optimisation of digital connectivity.</p>
	<p>Kerry is fortunate to have a number of well-established and quality enterprise hubs which provide an alternative option to working from a home office for those working in a remote/blended role. These include a mix of public and privately funded enterprise hubs, with a geographical spread throughout the County. The hubs in Kerry are modern centres in which entrepreneurs, innovators and enterprise come together to collaborate and innovate. Kerry has a total of 12 enterprise hubs.</p> <p>Many of the Kerry hubs are members of the national Connected Hubs network which supports the enterprise hubs, their employees and companies looking for solutions to retain their staff and productivity. Information on Kerry hubs may be found by visiting: www.connectedhubs.ie</p> <p>Details of the Hubs operating in Kerry were provided previously in the report.</p>
<p>INTERNATIONAL CONNECTIVITY/ PORTS/AIRPORTS, FREIGHT & LOGISTICS RPO 139 Low Carbon International Connectivity RPO 145: Ports and Harbour Strategy for the Southern Region RPO:149: Airport Strategy for the Southern Region RPO 141: Regional Freight Strategy RPO 143 Ports and Airports</p>	<p>Please provide details of any recently completed or planned projects or other actions to support development of the Region's International Connectivity, development of ports, airports, freight and logistics.</p>
	<p>Kerry County Council has made submissions to the All-Island Strategic Rail Review, the Ports and Harbour Strategy and the Mid-term Review of the Regional Airport Strategy.</p> <p>In summary all the submissions highlighted Kerry's strategic location in the Southwest, its proximity to the Shannon Estuary and the potential of the Kerry hub and knowledge triangle. However, the provision of sustainable mobility can be a challenge where continued investment in regional airports, public transport, the rail network, ports, and harbours are critical. In particular, the provision of additional capacity, higher frequency of service, improved inter-connectivity and journey times will lead to more sustainable end to end journeys.</p> <p>Kerry International Airport is also an important strategic asset in strengthening transportation links both nationally and internationally. It not only drives tourism but is also a catalyst for economic growth and employment, attracting new companies and foreign investment. It also enables a</p>

greater proportion of the population in the Southwest region to have access to air transport, particularly those living in rural communities, which not only extends the opportunity for people to visit other countries it also contributes to people's quality of life. The expansion of regional airports such as Kerry International Airport, has the potential to reduce congestion at major hub airports such as Dublin, which will widen consumer choice and stimulate growth across regions.

The location of Kerry International Airport within the Kerry Hub & Knowledge Triangle and its proximity to the Shannon Estuary also has huge potential for securing future investment and high-quality job creation in the county. The Shannon Estuary and its potential as an Energy Hub for industrial development is an immensely important asset and one of the most valuable natural resources not only in the South and Mid-West Regions but also nationally with potential to service international energy demands also. The ability for these businesses to have ready access to an airport, to ports and an efficient and regular rail network will be essential for their effective operation and growth. The N22 Farranfore to Killarney Project which is 27km approx. is currently at Option Selection stage and will also improve access to Kerry Airport Ireland.

Fenit Port is Kerry's primary port which sees regular international traffic through the export of prefabricated crane parts by Liebherr Container Cranes Ltd. This heavy freight is exported all over the world for assembly on site and Fenit Port is a vital cog in this process. The continual ongoing maintenance of the deep berth at Fenit through regular dredging allows the export of this valuable cargo. Fenit also has a 130-berth marina which is available to both national and international tourism craft. This marina area, along with the main pier servicing the large local fishing/angling fleet, was dredged in 2023 to ensure adequate water depth for all vessels.

It is envisaged that Fenit would be used as a service hub for the offshore wind industry in the future given its proximity to chandlery and engineering facilities, as well as its good road link to Kerry airport. This link would allow ease of access for specialist personnel to prospective offshore wind sites, as both development stage and ongoing maintenance stage.

ENHANCED REGIONAL CONNECTIVITY

RPO 169 Strategic Road Network Improvement Priorities
RPO 170 Rail
RPO 171 Bus

Please provide details of any recently completed or planned projects or other actions to support enhanced regional connectivity – by road, rail and public transport.

Please see piece included under International Connectivity above.

The **N69 Listowel Bypass** comprising 3.7km of offline and 2.3km of online improvements totaling 6km is currently under construction and is due to open to traffic in Q2 2024.

The **N22 Farranfore to Killarney Project** which is 27km approx. is currently at Option Selection stage.

The **N86 Tralee to An Daingean Project** which secured statutory approval for 28km of improvements in 2015. and is being constructed in phases as funding approval is secured. A 1.5km section between Ballinclare and Annascaul was completed in 2023.

Statutory approval has been granted for a 4.2km scheme on the N70 between **Sneem and Blackwater** . Tender approval will be sought in 2024.

A number of smaller improvement projects on the National Secondary network are at planning stage.

Fáilte Ireland and Kerry County Council have also been working in partnership through the Kerry Tourism Industry Federation, The Dingle Peninsula Tourism Alliance and the Dingle Hub in relation to the Dingle Peninsula Destination and Experience Development Plan to promote accommodation, activities, attractions and festivals and also to promote tourism sustainability and regeneration. The objective of this partnership is to:

- Deliver specific marketing and/or industry activation initiatives to support tourism businesses and sustainability on the Dingle Peninsula.
- Support the Actions and delivery of the Dingle Peninsula Destination and Experience Development Plan, particularly relating to traffic management challenges and sustainability projects.
- The provision of new signage to encourage traffic to utilise the Sleah Head Drive in a clockwise direction.
- The provision of an operative in the summer season to at Coomeenole Beach Junction on the Sleah Head Drive to assist tourists unfamiliar with the traffic arrangements.
- The provision of a new footbridge adjacent to Milltown Bridge to enable the provision of Active Travel measures.

There has also been extensive investment and additional services provided by Local link with in excess of 150 regular bus routes operating all over the County. Local link are also in the processes of securing two electric bus vehicles for transport around the Dingle Peninsula.

**SUSTAINABLE MOBILITY /
LOCAL TRANSPORT PLANS
(AND OBJECTIVES/INITIATIVES**

- RPO 151 Integration of Land Use and Transport
- RPO 152 Local Planning Objectives
- RPO 154 Land Use Plans
- RPO 157 Local Transport Plans (LTP)
- RPO 163 Sustainable Mobility Targets
- RPO 165 Higher Densities

Please provide details of any recently completed or planned projects or other actions to support sustainable mobility e.g. public transport, walking cycling, the 10 minute city/town concept, sustainable mobility targets. Please also provide details of any Local Transport Plans in respect of relevant settlements in your Local Authority.

The '10-Minute' Town concept is supported in the Kerry County Development Plan. The urban communities in Kerry will need sufficient densities to sustain important local services, public transport networks and realise 10-minute town concepts. It will require thoroughly integrated land use and transport as well as a proactive, infrastructure led approach to the promotion of attractive active modes. The concept will be complemented by the Town Centre First policy and in the Town Centre First Plans. It is an objective of the Council to: KCDP 4-16 Ensure that all new town centre developments, including developments relating to the enhancement of civic spaces and streetscapes, are based on the principles of universal access. KCDP 4-17 Facilitate the development of sustainable compact settlements with the "10-minute" town concepts, whereby, a range of community facilities and services are accessible in short walking and cycle timeframes from homes, with walkways and link routes to Greenways or are accessible by high quality public transport services connecting people to larger scaled settlements delivering these services. KCDP 4-18 To prioritise walking routes and to deliver a high level of priority and permeability for walking, cycling and public transport modes, in accordance with the principles of movement, place and permeability as laid out in the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets 2019, to ensure the creation of accessible, permeable links to places of work, retail, services, educational and community facilities. KCDP 4-19 Support the provision of Autism friendly car parking spaces.

NIFTI (National Investment Framework for Transport in Ireland) sets out a hierarchy of travel modes to be accommodated and encouraged when investments and other interventions are

made. Sustainable modes, starting with active travel and then public transport, will be encouraged over less sustainable modes such as the private car.

The national Climate Action Plan requires a significant cut in transport emissions by 2030, with an increase in active travel mode being key to meeting these targets, specifically completing (or in construction) 1,000km of cycling and walking infrastructure by the end 2025. It outlines the national objective to make Ireland a climate resilient and environmentally sustainable society and economy by 2050. It's a detailed plan for taking decisive action to achieve a 51% reduction in overall greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 and sets us on a path to reach net-zero emissions by no later than 2050

Active Travel is travelling with a purpose, using your own energy. Generally, this means walking (including all users of footpaths) or cycling as part of a purposeful journey, for example:

- Walking as part of a commute to work
- Cycling to the shop
- Scooting to school

The provision of active travel infrastructure is a key strategic priority for the Council. In Summary the current initiatives include:

Tralee: NTA Active Travel funding of €410,000 to design 3 cycleways in Tralee Town, 5 'Safe Routes to Schools' schemes and a new Local Transport Plan (LTP).

South Kerry: NTA active Travel schemes in Rock Road, Park Road, Lewis Road and Deerpark Road. Rock Road will go to construction in 2024. Local Transport Plan (LTP being prepared for Killarney).

INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES & PLACES -IMPROVING WELLBEING AND QUALITY OF LIFE

RPO 181 Equal Access
RPO 182 Ageing Population

Please provide details of any recently completed or planned projects or other actions to support and develop Inclusive Communities and Places and Improved Quality of Life

Projects have been undertaken to improve accessibility and connectivity, in line with universal design principles in many of the towns and villages through programs such as the Urban and Rural Regeneration schemes (URDF/RRDF), Town and Village Renewal Scheme, ORIS and Clár, as referenced previously in the report.

There has also been improved bus connectivity and new services provided throughout the County through Local Link Kerry and Bus Eireann, where local link services are in excess of 150 regular bus routes operating all over the County. Active travel infrastructure is being developed to support sustainable modes of transport within the County. Walkability Audits are being undertaken and actions are continually being implemented through Kerry's Age Friendly Strategy. Some key initiatives supporting an ageing population include; the establishment of Kerry's Older People's Council and an age friendly steering group where Kerry County Council hosted the Older People's convention in 2023 and supported a number of age-friendly initiatives through the councils Community Support Fund and the Community Enhancement Programme.

LEARNING REGION

RPO 186: Lifelong Learning & RPOs 39, 63,
Also RPO 187 Education & Training,
RPO 190 Lifelong Learning & Healthy Cities Initiative

Please provide details of any recently completed or planned projects or other actions to support lifelong learning and development of a Learning Region

Kerry is a University County with the designation of Munster Technological University. The Kerry Education and Training provide a wide range of courses through the County.

MTU is a multi-campus technology university where a major new campus development in Tralee will see an Expansion of the North Campus and the construction of a new Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Building.

Centre of Excellence for Tourism, Killarney

A new centre of excellence for tourism is also planned for Killarney at a key strategic site at the former Sara Lee factory in the town. The proposed new college of further education will see a derelict site in a prominent location in the town, brought back to use. This will be the town's first third level college, managed by the Kerry education and Training Board. It will cater for 4,000, 3rd Level students and provide skills and upskilling in hospitality as well as apprenticeships for construction and new energy skills.

GAELTACHTAÍ, GAELTACHT SERVICE TOWNS(GSTs) & IRISH LANGUAGE NETWORKS

Please provide details of any recently completed or planned projects or other actions to support Gaeltachtaí, Gaeltacht Service Towns (GSTs) & Irish Language Networks

- There have been a number of initiatives at a local level in the gaeltacht areas aimed at promoting the use of the Irish language, examples include supporting Tobar Dhuibhne in an initiative whereby training was provided for those involved in sports training as Irish language mentors.
- Policy in place in relation to an Irish language skills competency test for social housing applicants for a specified percentage of houses in Gaeltacht areas.
- All applications for 2 or more residential units in Gaeltacht areas are referred to An Coimisinéir Teanga for comment.
- All applications for 2 or more dwelling units must be accompanied by a linguistic Impact Assessment.
- It is an Objective of the Kerry County Development Plan 2022 – 2028 to reserve at a minimum 66% of completed residential units on Residentially zoned land in all Gaeltacht areas for Irish speakers.
 - A language enurement condition (25 years) is imposed on such decisions to grant reserving 66% of the completed units for Irish speakers to be implemented by way of a section 47 agreement.
 - The Section 47 Agreement must identify the specific dwellings reserved for Irish Speakers.
 - The standard of Irish required is determined and assessed by Kerry County Council by way of interview.
- Kerry County Development Plan 2022 – 2028 has identified 4 (No.) settlements (2 in the Corca Dhuibhne and 2 in the Uibh Rathaigh Gaeltacht areas) where small-scale clusters of housing served by their own wastewater treatment system may be permitted for local people.
-
- **Plean Teanga Chathair Saidhbhín Le Gaeilge**

Under the Gaeltacht Act 2012, Caherciveen has been designated as a town which could be recognised as a Gaeltacht service town by agreeing a language plan with the community and for that plan to be approved by the Minister for the Gaeltacht. A Gaeltacht service town is a town situated in or adjacent to a Gaeltacht Language Planning area and which plays a significant role in the provision of public services, recreational, social and commercial facilities for that area.

In 2019 Kerry County Council was appointed as the lead organisation of the language planning process. Cathair Saidhbhín Le Gaeilge was established to put the plan together in partnership with Kerry County Council. The plan has been approved by the Minister for the Gaeltacht, in 2023 and the implementation of the plan, will commence following the appointment of a Language

Planning Co-ordinator for the project in early 2024. This language plan will be implemented over a period of seven years.. Above all else, this language plan belongs to the community and there will be continuous opportunities for the community to have input into the plan and to make recommendations. This is a purposeful, pragmatic plan which is focused on having more of the Irish language seen and heard in Cahersiveen in the coming years.

Please provide any other comments that you would like to make with respect to your Local Authority and implementing the RSES. This may include any recommendations that you consider would facilitate this process, reduce barriers to implementation or ways to improve implementation.

Insert answer here

PLEASE PROVIDE A CONTACT POINT IN THE EVENT THAT WE NEED TO CONTACT YOU ABOUT THIS FORM.

Name: Niamh O'Sullivan

Position: Director of Services, Economic and Community Development

Email:

Contact phone number: