

**CLARE
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BOARD**

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NEWS



Winter 2000

Minister Addresses Clare CDB



CLLR. SEAN HILLERY, Cathaoirleach Clare CDB, **SILE DE VALERA, T.D.**, Minister for Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands, **AINE MELLETT**, Board Member, **EAMONN NAUGHTON**, Director Clare CDB.

At its September meeting, Minister Sile de Valera, Minister for Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands addressed the Clare CDB.

Cathaoirleach of the Board Cllr. Sean Hillery welcomed the Minister to the meeting and outlined the progress to date. This included the ongoing preparation of a detailed socio-economic analysis of the county and an interim report which has been prepared regarding the audit of services for Clare.

The Minister thanked the Board for their efforts and congratulated their progress to date. She believes that the work of the Board Members will have far reaching benefits for the County.

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News

Visit of Coleraine Borough Council and Denbighshire County Council

As part of a fact finding visit, a group of councillors with an interest in tourism from Coleraine Borough Council recently visited Clare. They received a comprehensive overview of the structure and work of the Board and its progress to date. They visited some of the major tourist attractions in North Clare in the company of Cllr. Flan Garvey, a Board member, and Martin O'Loughlen, Community and Enterprise Section, Clare County Council.

There was also a visit from members of Denbighshire County Council in Wales to Clare. The purpose of this visit was to gain an insight into the local economy of Co. Clare. They received a presentation on the initiative of the CDB in fostering a new and intergrated approach to partnership in local government.

New Web Site

A new web site outlining the role and activities of the Clare CDB will shortly be available. The aim of the web site is to help create an awareness in the minds of the public as to the role and remit of the CDB. The web site will be updated on a regular and ongoing basis.

The web address is

{ **HYPERLINK**

<http://www.clarecdb.ie> }

Staff Appointments in the Community and Enterprise Section

The Office of the Director of Community and Enterprise took on board a number of staff during the months of August and September. Mr. Donal Guerin was appointed as a Research Co-ordinator to work on a comprehensive analysis of the county as part of the Integrated Strategy for Clare covering the next ten years. Two Community and Enterprise Officers have also been recruited - Ms. Nora Daly and Mr. Martin O'Loughlen. Both officers are involved in supporting the Working Groups plus the facilitation of the local Area Network meetings and the Clare Community Forum. Ms. Mary Kinane, a student on placement from NUI Galway, will be with the Board until Christmas to assist in the research collaboration.

Research Update

As part of the preparation of the Integrated Strategy, a detailed analysis of the County is being completed. This research process concerns the collection of information on the range of factors affecting quality of life in Clare such as: who lives in Clare? - population trends and where people are living; what drives the economy of Clare? - employment patterns and levels of unemployment; social exclusion in Clare? - levels of social exclusion in Co. Clare; agriculture and rural development in Co. Clare? - numbers engaged in agriculture and extent of economic viability; preserving the heritage of Co. Clare - the quality of the natural environment and extent of conservation of the built environment.

Analysis

The analysis will form the bedrock for setting the objectives of the Strategy. Crucial for its success will be its ability to draw upon any completed research studies on any aspect of life within the County. Mr. Donal Guerin (Research Co-ordinator) and Ms. Mary Kinane (Research Assistant) are leading the preparation of the study. Please send to Donal any studies, which your organisation may have published or been involved with.

Throughout the course of our work,

the following are some of the issues or points which we highlighted in our research.

Health

In relation to health, a comparison was made between Clare and the other counties in the Mid-Western Health Board region. Clare can be characterised as having an improving standard mortality ratio and lower levels of premature mortality. Slightly negative trends in mortality from circulatory disease, cancers and injuries and poisonings was also discovered.

Social Exclusion

In researching social exclusion, evidence suggests that the areas of greatest deprivation are in the west of the county and to a lesser extent in the Scariff area. The numbers applying for social housing with the local authorities shows demand continuing to exceed supply. Presently, there are 1,050 households on the waiting list with Clare County Council. Research also highlighted that there are 53 indigenous Traveller families in immediate need of permanent accommodation.

Planning and Infrastructure

Research on planning and infrastructure shows Clare to have the lowest share of national primary road in its network than any other county

in the west of Ireland. Not only this but as a percentage of its total roads, the figure falls well below that of the national average (1.3% compared to 3% of all road types). It is believed that there is sufficient potential demand to support the introduction of a suburban rail service between Ennis and Limerick with a spur line to Shannon.

Agriculture

A notable feature of agriculture in Clare is the high proportion of small-medium scale drystock and dairy farming enterprises. Milk production

generates £30m per annum for the dairy farm households of Co. Clare, yet while Clare has 5% of Ireland's dairy farmers, it only has 2.5% of its milk pool. This is due to the relatively small size of its dairy units when compared with the national profile.

Tourism

Figures on tourism show that the counties, which experienced the highest levels of overseas visitor growth in the Western Development Commission region between 1993 and 1997, were Clare and Galway.

However, there is evidence that the economic value of tourism is unequally distributed, as the main providers of accommodation are to be located in the Ennis/Shannon and Northwest regions of the county.

These findings were subsequently presented to the Working Groups during the month of October for further discussion.

Working Groups

There are presently six sectoral working groups operating under the Board. Their brief is to concentrate on specific policy concerns through which the key strategic needs of the county can be addressed in a comprehensive way. The following is a list of the groups and members (additional members will be appointed to some groups):

1. Infrastructure, Planning, Spatial Development and the Environment Working Group

CLLR. TOM BURKE	Clare County Council
WILLIAM MOLONEY	Clare County Manager
SEAMUS O'SULLIVAN	Employers/Business Organisations Pillar
JOHN QUINLIVAN	Shannon Development
IAN DODSON	Bus Eireann
BRIAN KELLY	Iarnrod Eireann
BRIAN PUNCH	ESB
MICHAEL LEAHY	The Royal Institute of the Architects of Ireland
PJ RYAN	Clare Community Forum
TOM CAREY	Clare County Engineer

2. Economic Development, Innovation and Skills Capacity Working Group

JANE FOLEY	Clare County Enterprise Board
JIM LYONS	Clare VEC
CHRIS DELANEY	FAS
EAMONN KELLY	Clare County Enterprise Board
CLLR. PATRICIA MCCARTHY	Clare County Council
TONY KENNY	Trade Union Pillar
EUGENE HAYES	Ulster Bank
MICHAEL NAGLE	Clare Community Forum
MARY BUCKLEY	IDA Ireland
SEAMUS O'GRADY	NUI Galway
JOHN O'NEILL	Tellabs

3. Health and Social Services Working Group

CLLR. PAUL BULGER	Clare County Council
MICHAEL GRIFFIN	Mid-Western Health Board
JOHN COSTELLO	Clare Community Forum

4. Social Inclusion Working Group

DERMOT HAYES	Clare Community Forum
AINE MELLETT	ADM Groups
MICHAEL CORRY	Dept of Social, Community and Family Affairs

5. Culture, Heritage and Tourism Working Group

DOIRIN GRAHAM	Rural Resource Development (LEADER)
CLLR. FLAN GARVEY	Clare County Council
CLLR. TOM GLYNN	Town Authorities
TOM SHANAHAN /	
FREDDIE O'MAHONY	Teagasc
MARIAN O'CALLAGHAN	Clare Community Forum
MARY KEARNS	Clare Archaeological & Historical Society
RORY CASEY	Comhaltas Ceoltoiri Eireann
MARTIN MORONEY	Shannon Traffic Marketing (Aer Rianta)
TOM MCINERNEY	
JOHN QUINLIVAN	Shannon Development

6. Agriculture and Rural Development Working Group

SEAMUS KELLY	Farming Pillar
FR. HARRY BOHAN	Rural Resource Development (LEADER)
CLLR. MICHAEL HILLERY	Clare County Council
TOM SHANAHAN	Teagasc
NICK RYAN / JIM DILLION	Coillte
EAMONN FLANAGAN	Golden Vale
VERA HEFFERNAN	BIM
STEVEN WALSH	Clare Community Forum

These working groups will prepare a report/recommendations for consideration by the full Board at its scheduled meetings.

LOCAL AREA NETWORKS

A series of local Area Network meetings were held during the month of October throughout the county. The East Clare Area Network met on Monday, 16th October in the Teagasc Centre, Scariff and again on Tuesday, 17th October in Clonlara. A representative group from the area identified the relevant issues of concern for the future development of their communities. These issues were wide ranging from public transport, traffic congestion, and signpost deficiencies to health facilities, childcare, litter and pollution to enterprise supports, agriculture, employment and tourism.

Other Area Network meetings were held that week in Ennistymon and Kilrush, and the following

week in Shannon and Ennis. The purpose of these meetings is to ensure that the needs of all groups are heard and taken into consideration when formulating the Integrated Strategy for County Clare.

It is proposed that the five local Area Networks meet on four occasions throughout the year. In addition to this, the Clare Community Forum, which is comprised of 25 representatives from these local networks, continues to facilitate feedback from the County Development Board.

This was the first occasion that the new personnel from the Community and Enterprise Section of Clare County Council met with these groups.

Consultation Process

The development and implementation of an effective and inclusive programme of consultation is a critical factor in the realisation of the objectives of the Clare CDB. The structure of the consultation programme ensures that all representative groups are enabled and encouraged to have a direct input into the formulation of the Strategy at key stages.

To date, as part of this consultative

process, the staff of the Community and Enterprise Office have been actively identifying key organisations. This is an on-going process. Meetings and consultation days have been held during this first phase, which runs until Christmas 2000. Both the meetings and consultation days have generated a wide variety of concerns and issues. A second phase of the consultation process will commence from January, 2001.

If you have any comments regarding the newsletter or any items for inclusion in future editions please contact us at (065) 6846222 or email dceoff@clarecoco.ie