

# Consultation Report

Kilkenny Economic and Community Plan (LECP)



December 2022



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12<sup>th</sup> December 2022

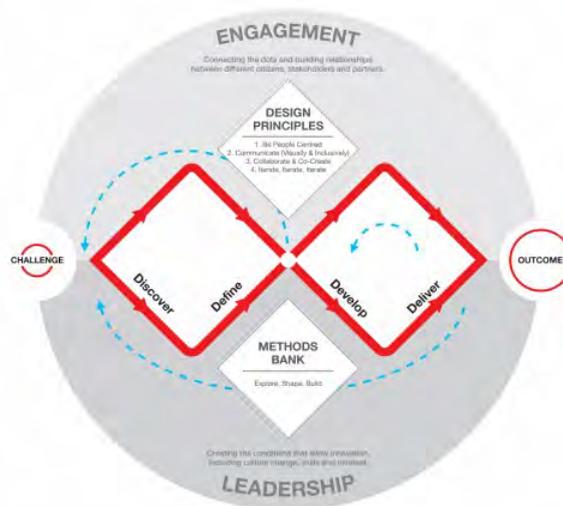
## Executive Summary

1. An early consultation process with County Kilkenny's stakeholder groups and the public was undertaken to gather feedback on the draft high-level goals and objectives contained within a draft Socio-Economic Statement, that will in turn inform the Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP), and the vision and outcomes people want to see materialise for County Kilkenny as a result.
2. The consultation coalesced around a baseline survey (open for five weeks from 26th August to 30th September), an in-person workshop and four virtual workshops with the public and key stakeholder groups.
3. The sample of 344 people who responded to the baseline survey, are a broadly representative sample of the current 103,685 population size of the county, at 90% confidence and a margin of Error of  $\pm 4.427\%$ .
4. The sample was made up of those who live, visit, run businesses and represent organisations in the county and draws from both the city and rural areas, and was weighted for age, gender and geography.
5. Whilst the consultation resulted in a number of minor changes to the wording of the high-level goals and objectives, the very strong in principle support, detailed within this report, has resulted in the key areas of focus for each goal being retained. Namely:
  - Climate & Sustainability
  - Supporting Businesses
  - Culture, Heritage & Tourism
  - Rural Economy
  - Education & Skills
  - Attracting Graduates
  - Health Inequalities
  - Community Development
  - Social Investment
  - Housing
6. When asked to provide their vision for Kilkenny county and to sum it up, there was a broadly positive outlook, with a focus on ensuring the county's unique heritage and sectors are preserved and enhanced, all while maintaining an inclusive community.
7. Respondents were most likely to use words like *beautiful*, *historic* and *friendly* to describe the county, and their own visions for the LECP echoed and emphasised similar themes, such as housing, education, heritage and tourism, economic growth, the community, and environment.

# 1. Stakeholder Engagement Methodology

## Co-design process

- 1.1 The baseline survey was the first part of a two stage, four phased consultation and co-design process, utilising the UK Design Council's "Double Diamond" Methodology.
- 1.2 The early "discovery" phase consultation process began with the county wide launch of the survey, seeking views and input into draft High Level Goals and objectives, based on research undertaken as part of the draft Socio-Economic Statement
- 1.3 Further engagement workshops with key stakeholders helped further "define" the high-level goals and objectives.
- 1.4 The insights from the survey and workshops have been shared with the project team, the LECP advisory group, before development and adoption of the final high-level goals and objectives of the LECP by a joint meeting of the SPC 1/LCDC.
- 1.5 Further stakeholder consultation will take place in early 2023 to consider the actions and interventions as part of an implementation plan for the LECP which will focus on achieving the high-level goals and objectives "delivery".



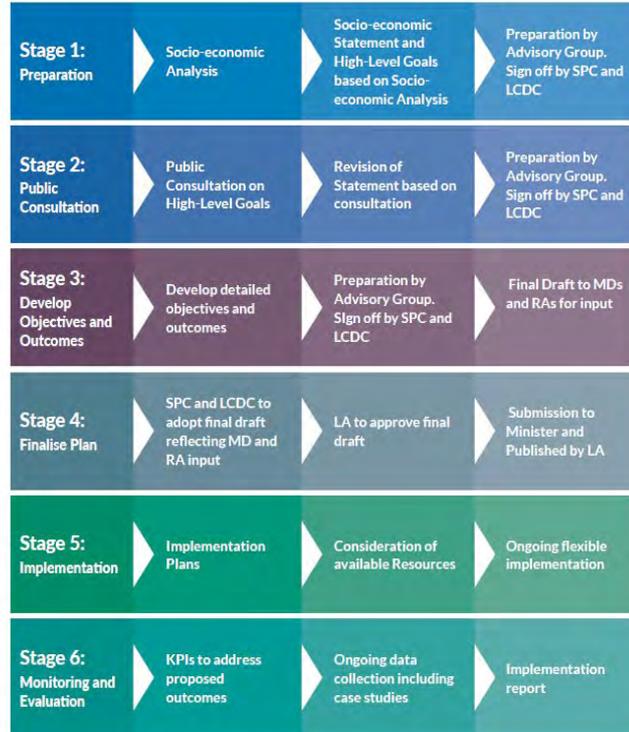
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Figure 1.1: The *Double Diamond* model

## Overall approach

- 1.6 The consultation forms stage 2 of the LECP development process. This follows stage 1, which included a socio-economic analysis of County Kilkenny, a Socio-economic statement and the draft high-level goals and objectives which have been consulted on in the baseline survey. A copy of the Socio-economic Statement is included in Appendix 1.

1.7 This report concludes stage 2 of the process and will be followed by stage 3, which entails developing detailed objectives and outcomes to be delivered by the LECP. A further three stages will see the LECP refined, adopted by the local authority and monitoring of its implementation.



**Figure 1.2: The staged process for developing Kilkenny’s LECP**

### Early consultation survey

- 1.8 The primary purpose of the survey was to gather quantitative and qualitative insights on our draft high-level goals and associated objectives.
- 1.9 A total of 15 questions (closed and open queries) informed the survey.
- 1.10 The respondents represented a range of stakeholders with an interest in Kilkenny, including residents, employees, visitors and elected representatives.
- 1.11 The survey was hosted on a dedicated project website, which summarised the survey’s purpose and provided a copy of the Draft LECP [www.yourkilkennylecp.ie](http://www.yourkilkennylecp.ie).
- 1.12 The survey received a total of 344 responses, which broadly equates to a statistically valid representative sample of the population county of Kilkenny (2020 Census), at 90% confidence and a margin of Error of  $\pm 4.427\%$ . The sample was weight for age, gender and geography.
- 1.13 The survey was promoted via a social media advertising campaign, which a reach of 161,686 impressions across County Kilkenny.

- 1.14 The project website received 4,715 page views and 3,007 individual users, illustrating a conversion rate of 11.43%.

### **Stakeholder workshops**

- 1.15 The workshops were promoted through a series of stakeholder letters (see Appendix 2) which were issued electronically from Turley Strategic Communications on behalf of Kilkenny County Council to 51 stakeholders across the community and economic sectors.
- 1.16 The aim of the workshops was to promote the baseline survey and gather feedback on the draft LECP's goals and objective, as well as understand what outcomes stakeholders want to see delivered as part of the LECP.
- 1.17 Two virtual stakeholder workshops took place; one focusing on community stakeholders and one focusing on economic stakeholders.
- 1.18 A total of 13 people attended the community stakeholder workshop on 19th September. (Notes in Appendix 3)
- 1.19 A total of 13 people attended the economic stakeholder workshop on 26th September (Notes in Appendix 4)
- 1.20 A number of the project team were present at the workshops, including representatives from Kilkenny County Council, the LCDC, Turley Economics and Turley Strategic Communications.
- 1.21 At each workshop event, the project team presented a summary of the LECP, its socio-economic context and preliminary results from the survey. A copy of the presentation is included in Appendix 5.
- 1.22 The project team also asked each stakeholder about their impression of the preliminary results, what they think about the draft goals and what outcomes they would like to see delivered.

### **Public workshops**

- 1.23 One physical public workshop and two further virtual public workshops were hosted to gather feedback from members of the public about the high-level goals and what outcomes they would like to see delivered as part of the LECP.
- 1.24 A total of 24 people registered to attend the Kilkenny City public workshop, with 26 people attending the event on 5th October at the Ormonde Hotel, Kilkenny.
- 1.25 Information banners and feedback forms were available for visitors to read (see Appendix 6 and 7).
- 1.26 A total of 25 people registered to attend the Castletomer & Callan-Thomastown virtual public workshop, with 8 people attending the event on 10th October.

- 1.27 A total of 11 people registered to attend the Piltown virtual public workshop, with 4 people attending the event on 10th October.
- 1.28 A number of the project team were present at all public workshops, including representatives from Kilkenny County Council, the LCDC, Turley Economics and Turley Strategic Communications.
- 1.29 At each workshop event, the project team presented a summary of the LECP, its socio-economic context and preliminary results from the survey.
- 1.30 The project team also asked each stakeholder about their impression of the preliminary results, what they think about the draft goals and what outcomes they would like to see delivered.
- 1.31 The feedback from the survey and stakeholder workshops was presented to the LECP advisory group on 4<sup>th</sup> November, resulting in further comments and proposed revisions to the High Level Goals and Objectives.
- 1.32 A final draft of the goals and objectives was presented with a interim findings report to a joint meeting of the SPC 1 / LCDC, held on 16<sup>th</sup> November at Ormonde Hotel in Kilkenny, where each goal and objectives were reviewed, amended where necessary, and adopted as presented within this document and the final Socio-Economic Statement.

## 2. Survey Analysis – Respondent Profile

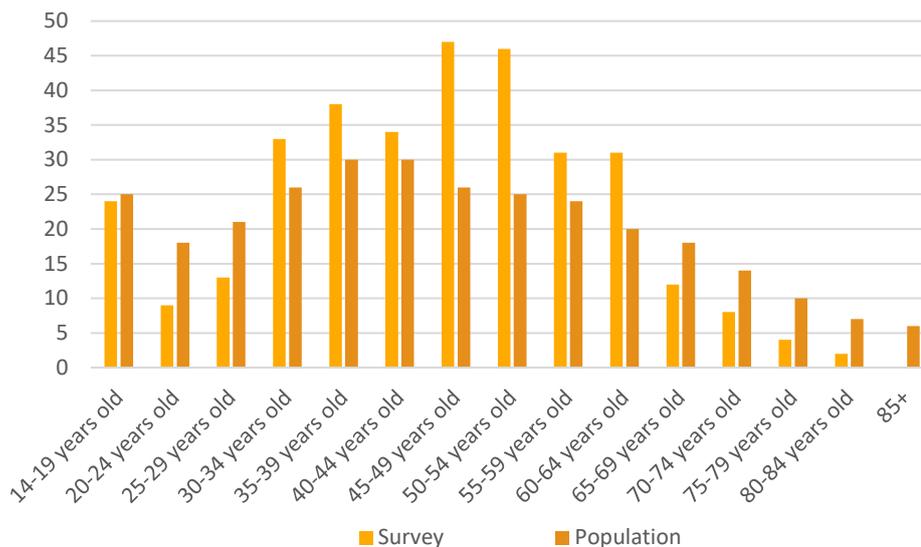
2.1 The survey received 341 respondents.

2.2 In order to assess the age profile of the survey's results, respondents were asked to indicate their age range.

2.3 Of the 332 responses to this question,

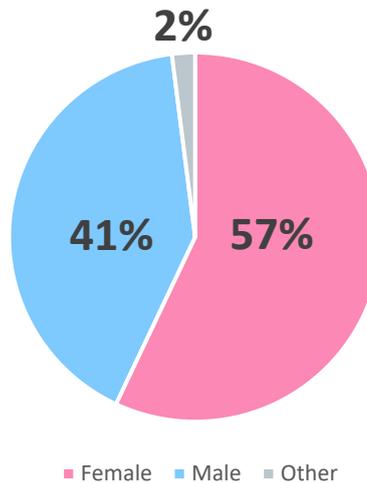
- 7.2% (24 respondents) were 14-19 years old,
- 2.7% (9 respondents) were 20-24 years old,
- 3.9% (13 respondents) were 25-29 years old,
- 9.9% (33 respondents) were 30-34 years old,
- 11.4% (38 respondents) were 35-39 years old,
- 10.2% (34 respondents) were 40-44 years old,
- 14.2% (47 respondents) were 45-49 years old,
- 13.9% (46 respondents) were 50-54 years old,
- 9.3% (31 respondents) were 55-59 years old,
- 9.3% (31 respondents) were 60-64 years old,
- 3.6% (12 respondents) were 65-69 years old,
- 2.4% (8 respondents) were 70-74 years old,
- 1.2% (4 respondents) were 75-79 years old, and
- 0.6% (2 respondents) were over and including 80 years old.

2.4 In **figure 2.1** below the age profile of the survey's respondents is compared with the age profile of County Kilkenny recorded at the 2016 census. This shows that the adult age profile of the survey is broadly representative of local population.



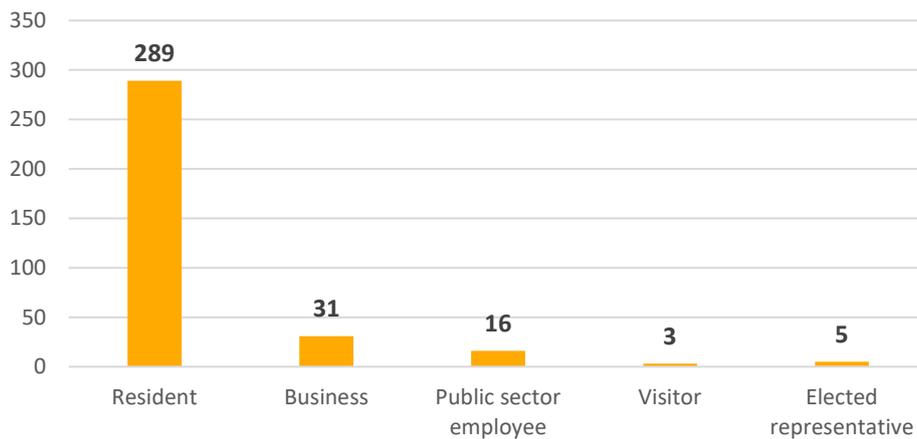
**Figure 2.1: Age breakdown of respondents and the population of county Kilkenny at the 2016 Census**

- 2.5 As part of the analysis of the results, respondents were placed in two groups depending on their age; those aged 0-39 years-old were placed in one group and those aged 40 years-old and above were placed in another.
- 2.6 Those in the younger age groups were more likely to prioritise and support the Education and Skills and Social Investment high-level goals and objectives than older age groups.
- 2.7 On the other hand, those in the older age groups were more likely to support and prioritise the Rural Economy and Culture, Heritage and Tourism high-level goals and objectives than younger groups.
- 2.8 In order to assess the gender balance of the survey's results, respondents were asked to indicate their gender. Of the 329 responses to this question, 57% (188 responses) indicated they were *female*, 41% (134 responses) indicated they were *male* and 2% (7 responses) selected *other*.



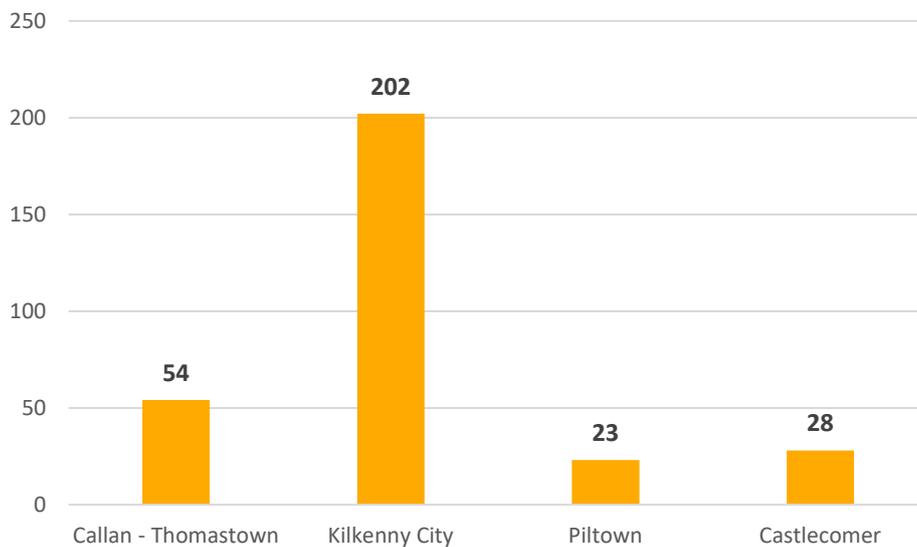
**Figure 2.2: Gender profile of respondents**

- 2.9 As **figure 2.2** above shows, the gender balance of respondents is skewed towards those indicating female. While the survey aimed to control for gender, the results have shown a bias towards female respondents.
- 2.10 To understand respondents' connection to County Kilkenny the survey asked in what capacity the respondent was engaging with the survey. Of the 344 responses to this question, 84% (289 responses) indicated they were responding as a resident of County Kilkenny, 9% (31 responses) as a business in County Kilkenny, 0.9% (3 responses) as a visitor to County Kilkenny, 4.7% (16 responses) as a public sector employee, and 1.5% (5 responses) as an elected representative.



**Figure 2.3: How respondents described their connection to county Kilkenny**

2.11 In order to understand the geographic breakdown of the responses, the survey asked respondents from which municipal district they resided or that their organisation was based. Of the 307 responses the majority were from Kilkenny City on 65.8% (202 responses), 17.6% (54 responses) were from Callan-Thomastown, 9.1% (28 responses) were from Castlecomer, and 7.5% (23 responses) were from Piltown.



**Figure 2.4: Breakdown of which municipal district residents/organisations were based in county Kilkenny**

2.12 As part of the analysis of the results, respondents were placed in two groups depending on their location; those living in Kilkenny City MD were placed in one group denoted *urban* and those living in either Callan-Thomastown, Piltown or Castlecomer MDs were placed in another denoted *rural*.



2.18 This has been analysed along the core themes of respondents' visions in the table below.

Theme	Comment	Representative Comments
Transport	Some respondents wanted to see Kilkenny facilitating more active/sustainable travel options, particularly for better public transport connections from rural respondents.	<p><i>"walking and cycling"</i></p> <p><i>"provide a network of bus routes and sustainable timetables for all the towns in the country."</i></p> <p><i>"Make the current bus connections between the county and college towns better."</i></p> <p><i>"Clean green city with eco-friendly means of transport."</i></p> <p><i>"Like to have a city which is easily accessible by bike."</i></p> <p><i>"Improve public transport."</i></p> <p><i>"less traffic and more walking cycling and walking."</i></p> <p><i>"More Bikes and Electric Scooters."</i></p>
	Some respondents focused on how to improve traffic flows in Kilkenny city centre as a part of their vision. Some thought this should be achieved by prioritising pedestrians over cars.	<p><i>"Pedestrianise High Street with a modern outlook."</i></p> <p><i>"Less traffic, more public space."</i></p> <p><i>"The movement of Traffic while essential should not limit pedestrians and High Street should be pedestrianized."</i></p>
	However, others argued for improvements to the existing infrastructure to make it easier for cars to get through the city centre.	<p><i>"Develop extra roads to make traffic flow more efficient."</i></p> <p><i>"Speed restrictions on Ring road and road leading into city."</i></p> <p><i>"Completion of the ring road being a priority."</i></p>
	Another point raised was to improve the availability of parking in the city centre.	<p><i>"More parking is needed especially for older people whose mobility is less than in earlier years."</i></p> <p><i>"Review all parking availability in Kilkenny and county towns."</i></p>
Safety	Many respondents included mention of Kilkenny being a safe place, which properly tackles crime.	<p><i>"Safe from street violence."</i></p> <p><i>"That it's a safe place."</i></p>

Education	<p>Many respondents noted a third-tier education facility in the county as part of their vision.</p>	<p><i>“it could add an educational aspect it would be complete.”</i></p> <p><i>“Create a university campus in kilkenny city.”</i></p> <p><i>“Kilkenny should add a campus as part of the growth of SETU to give locals an option to study here.”</i></p> <p><i>“A third level college is an obvious much needed addition to our city.”</i></p> <p><i>“strive for a material 3rd level education campus.”</i></p>
Housing	<p>Respondents urged the need to resolve issues around the supply of housing in the county.</p>	<p><i>“I would like to see more housing developments around the county.”</i></p> <p><i>“we also need houses for the people who come to work in them.”</i></p> <p><i>“A walkable sustainable city where about 10,000 more residents are accommodated within the existing development boundaries with an exceptional standard of design, not just the generic housing-del-dia.”</i></p> <p><i>“Develop communities by building houses.”</i></p>
Tourism	<p>Respondents acknowledged the role tourism plays in Kilkenny at present, but noted which aspects to emphasise as part of their vision.</p>	<p><i>“Less coffee shops, more activity attractions.”</i></p> <p><i>“Continuing the promotion of history to our visitors.”</i></p> <p><i>“continuing the great nightlife esp with stags/hens.”</i></p> <p><i>“To progress as an historical, tourist and thriving city.”</i></p>
	<p>Some respondents felt that the tourism sector had become too dominant and lost its focus on what makes Kilkenny such an attractive destination.</p>	<p><i>“creating employment outside of tourism.”</i></p> <p><i>“supporting the arts and tourism sector that makes our county special.”</i></p>
	<p>Some respondents asked that the heritage that is core to Kilkenny’s tourism offer also feature the towns and villages.</p>	<p><i>“To have the rural areas of the county and their heritage attract similar recognition, funding and support as the urban areas.”</i></p>

Heritage	<p>Many respondents gave significant weight to Kilkenny's heritage as part of their vision and wished to see this maintained, in particular asking that other aspects of the county's development be subjugated to heritage's needs.</p>	<p><i>"although the city will become significantly larger, that it will retain its' Medieval centre where people can amble along the streets and the riverside and be a city of mindful escapism."</i></p> <p><i>"Services for shopping, commerce, business will need to be strategically located, so as not to devalue the medieval-ness of the city centre."</i></p> <p><i>"protecting the medieval fabric of the town."</i></p> <p><i>"Ideally I would like to see a reduction in the amount of modern stylised architecture that is cropping up in the country designed to make everything look like a square/rectangle."</i></p> <p><i>"maintain heritage and culture."</i></p> <p><i>"To protect &amp; nurture its heritage and its environment."</i></p>
Economy	<p>An important part of respondents' vision for the county was the state of the economy, specifically jobs and employment.</p>	<p><i>"Focus on attracting highly skilled jobs."</i></p> <p><i>"To bring full employment."</i></p> <p><i>"To attract young people to return to the city. Our vision is that Kilkenny's local economy will grow and have a positive knock on effect once this is achieved."</i></p>
	<p>Respondents focused on which areas they believed should grow.</p>	<p><i>"It has attracted a lot of new business [and] industry."</i></p> <p><i>"Wishing Kilkenny to be a IT capital of Ireland."</i></p> <p><i>"Continually welcoming for new retail and food and drink business."</i></p>
	<p>However, some respondents urged that growth be sustainable, including environmental sustainability.</p>	<p><i>"Sustainable development allowing for expansion."</i></p> <p><i>"Taking care to balance appropriate economic development with good quality of life."</i></p> <p><i>"development of the county to be planned for in a genuinely sustainable way that facilitates only necessary growth."</i></p>

	Some respondents included the means with which to boost economic growth in their vision.	<p><i>“Develop industrial estates in the major towns of the county. Create enterprise centres in all county towns to help new and small businesses get started.”</i></p> <p><i>“More development of old shops closed down.”</i></p>
Environment	Respondents mentioned a health and positive environment was a part of their vision of Kilkenny.	<p><i>“Constantly strives to embrace the real challenge of climate.”</i></p> <p><i>“Respect for natural environment.”</i></p>
Social and Community	Many respondents built a welcoming, diverse and harmonious county.	<p><i>“To be a city and county that people would want to live in.”</i></p> <p><i>“I see the future of Kilkenny as an multicultural, friendly and prosper region Ireland and Europe.”</i></p> <p><i>“Kilkenny as a hub of the south east.”</i></p> <p><i>“A positive inclusive land that is Kilkenny building an inclusive social community that is self sustaining.”</i></p> <p><i>“Developing a people-centred plan that enhances the unique qualities of the city and its surrounds, preserving its culture, values and resources in a sustainable fashion.”</i></p> <p><i>“A county where city and rural towns and villages are rejuvenated with community's encouraged and assisted to feel part of their place.”</i></p>
	There was emphasis on how accepting the county and the LECP should be to the elderly.	<p><i>“To be a safe place for all senior. citizens to live in and to be able to enjoy living in.”</i></p> <p><i>“[centre] for older people.”</i></p>

- 2.19 Most respondents saw the county’s vision as being inclusive and welcoming, emphasising the cohesion between younger and older groups, with the views of both groups given the attention they deserve.
- 2.20 Numerous respondents took pride in county Kilkenny’s heritage and wanted the county to preserve its heritage. Some respondents were sceptical of the ability for the important tourism sector to grow while heritage could be preserved. However, more respondents were optimistic that Kilkenny could continue to sustainably exploit its unique tourist offer while maintaining the historic character of the city.
- 2.21 Moreover, respondent acknowledged county Kilkenny’s rural heritage and their vision saw the towns and villages of Kilkenny better served within the county’s tourism offer.

However, respondents stressed the need for Kilkenny to move away from its reliance on tourism, in some instances by building on its specialisms, such as arts and crafts.

- 2.22 The need to better connect the county's towns with Kilkenny city featured prominently in respondents' vision of Kilkenny, containing reliable and frequent bus and potentially rail connections across county Kilkenny.
- 2.23 Within Kilkenny city, respondents were split between the need to reduce car movements and create a more pedestrian-priority environment, and the need to ease congestion and improve traffic flows. The desire to see more quality cycle and walking connections featured frequently among respondents.
- 2.24 An important theme in the vision for county Kilkenny was a proactive planning process which successfully meets the challenges of climate change and produces a society with sustainability at its core, with particular attention on its biodiversity and agriculture.
- 2.25 Respondents were keen for county Kilkenny to offer more to its residents so that they could more easily enjoy their leisure time in the county, such as more attractions and events not just geared towards tourists. This focused on crafting a hospitality sector which is more consistent, rather than cyclically bent towards the tourist seasons. Respondent awarded significant focus to the need for young people to have activities to do, such as sport and more outdoor activities.
- 2.26 Many respondents wanted to see county Kilkenny take on a more regional role, including more cooperation with Waterford (a predominant view of those in the south of the county) and become 'a hub of the south east', leading in high-productivity industries such as finance, tech and pharmaceuticals. The establishment of a third-level education campus in county Kilkenny was a frequent part of respondents' visions.
- 2.27 This has informed a suggest vision statement for the LECP as outlined below:

*"Kilkenny is not immune from the fast-evolving 21st century. As the county moves full forward into a new Local Economic and Community Plan period, we are setting out a future-ready, citizen-centric plan that responds to the greatest challenge of climate change; contributes to the transition to a low-carbon circular economy; and continues to provide jobs and attract or grow cutting edge highly productive industries, all while emissions fall.*

*We want to do this together, reflecting the warm, positive and friendly community we are; welcoming new visitors to explore the beauty of our county's built and natural heritage, celebrating our creativity with us; attracting, retaining and training a highly skilled and productive workforce through new third-level education infrastructure; and building on partnerships that deliver inclusive services to meet the changing needs of our whole community. Like a team of players, by doing lots of small things well together, we believe that we can achieve much more."*

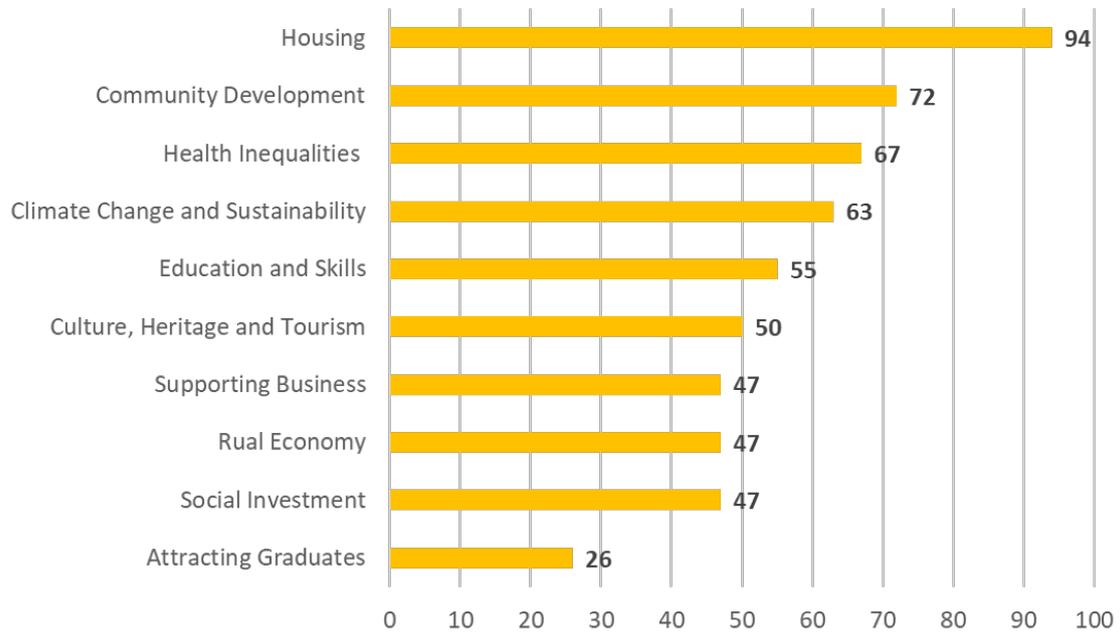
- 2.28 A copy of the vision's context is included in Appendix 8.

*“Developing a people-centred plan that enhances the unique qualities of the city and its surrounds, preserving its culture, values and resources in a sustainable fashion”*

*“A county where city and rural towns and villages are rejuvenated with community's encouraged and assisted to feel part of their place”*

*“A county treated equitably, a population with access to all opportunities fairly and without obstruction”*

2.29 The survey asked respondents to indicate which goals were important to them. Respondents were able to choose one, none or multiple goals as a priority.



**Figure 2.6: Responses to which goals are most important.**

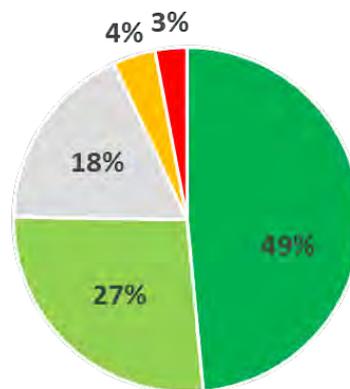
2.30 Housing was most frequently selected as a priority (94 responses), followed by Community Development and Health Inequalities in second and third (72 and 67 responses respectively). The goal viewed least as a priority was Attracting Graduates with 26 responses.

### 3. Survey Analysis – Draft Goals and Objectives

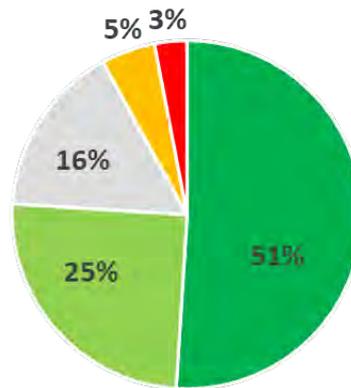
- 3.1 The survey asked respondents to what extent they agreed or disagreed (via an asymmetric Likert scale) with each objective within the high-level goals within the LECP, ranging from *strongly agree* to *strongly disagree*.
- 3.2 Respondents were also asked if they had any further comments and which outcomes they would like to see delivered as part of each goal.

#### Goal 1: Climate Change and Sustainability

- 3.3 Respondents were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with Objective 1(A) of the draft LECP. Of the 156 responses, 49% (76 responses) strongly agreed and 27% (42 responses) agreed. 18% (27 responses) were neutral, and 7% (10 responses) disagreed or strongly disagreed (6 and 4 responses respectively).



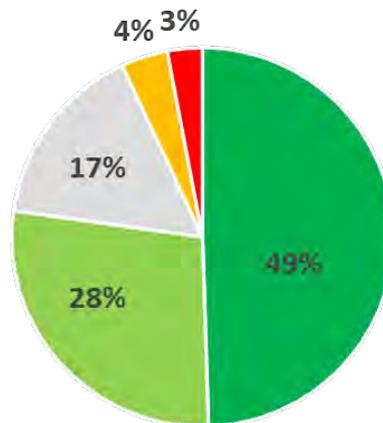
- 3.4 Opinion was divided on the emissions reduction targets set out in objective 1(A), with some arguing that the targets were too low and lacked ambition on the part of County Kilkenny. However, others viewed the targets as too ambitious within the timeframe of the plan, especially that the plan will be adopted two years into the period.
- 3.5 Respondents were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with Objective 1(B) of the draft LECP. Of the 156 responses, 51% (79 responses) strongly agreed and 25% (39 responses) agreed. 16% (25 responses) were neutral, and 8% (12 responses) disagreed or strongly disagreed (7 and 5 responses respectively).



3.6 On objective 1(B) respondents reflected on the current global energy crisis faced by the nation and how that will affect businesses and residents alike. There was a desire from both of these groups that more support be afforded to residents and organisations in the county.

3.7 Several respondents acknowledged the need for a multi-sector approach, arguing that the issue of climate change feeds into various areas of work.

3.8 Respondents were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with Objective 1(C) of the draft LECP. Of the 155 responses, 49% (76 responses) strongly agreed and 28% (43 responses) agreed. 17% (25 responses) were neutral, and 7% (10 responses) disagreed or strongly disagreed (6 and 4 responses respectively).



3.9 Respondents highlighted the potential ignorance of the term ‘circular economy’ and that this would need explaining. Others asked that as part of this objective, there be support for “locally-targeted” circular economy initiatives in each town.

3.10 The responses also contained broader comments on the goal itself. There were several comments which rejected the focus on climate change, with one respondent disputing the existence of climate change and two respondents argued that the climate change goal was an excuse to pursue harmful economic and energy-related policies. There were several mentions of the opposition to windfarms.

- 3.11 However, some respondents felt that the goal's scope should be broadened. Some additional respondents asked that mention be made to the biodiversity crisis, which runs concurrently with the climate crisis, and some respondents asked that energy generation, with an emphasis on renewables, be incorporated into this goal.
- 3.12 Feedback from the joint SPC 1 / LCDC sought the inclusion of an objective associated with Active Travel.
- 3.13 Adopted High-level Goal and Objectives:

**Goal 1: To ensure that climate action is embraced, and that our actions and interventions are embedded across all areas of the LECP to contribute positively to the global climate and biodiversity crisis affecting our citizens and support Ireland to achieve its climate and biodiversity goals and obligations, we will...**

**Objective 1a:** implement the Council's Climate Change Adaptation Strategy (2019 – 2024) and a future Climate Action Plan due for publication in 2023, which will set out how the local authority intend to reduce the carbon emissions associated with the services we deliver by at least 7% per annum and by 51% by 2030

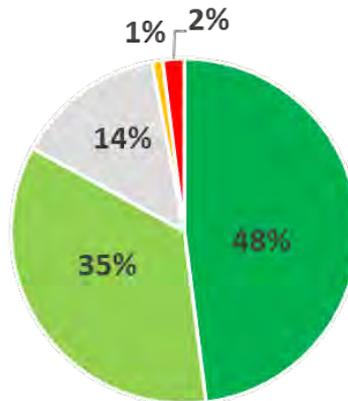
**Objective 1b:** support the commitment underpinning the ISO5001 certification to deliver a 50% improvement in the energy efficiency target over the ten years from 2021 and elevate take-up of grants available as a response to the current energy crisis and ensure long-term improvement in energy efficiency or the installation of renewable energy technologies.

**Objective 1c:** implement measures associated with the Circular Economy (eliminating waste and pollution through a transition to renewable energy and materials) to deliver a resilient system to the benefit of the businesses, environment, and residents in the County.

**Objective 1d:** Implement measures associated with Active Travel initiatives

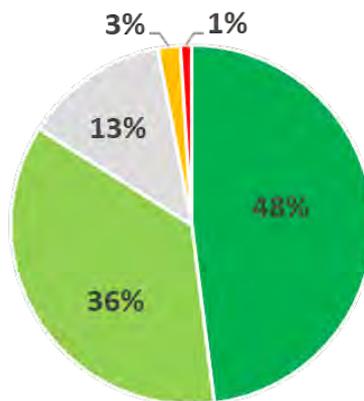
## Goal 2: Supporting Businesses

3.14 Respondents were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with Objective 2(A) of the draft LECP. Of the 151 responses, 48% (72 responses) strongly agreed and 35% (52 responses) agreed. 14% (21 responses) were neutral, and 3% (5 responses) disagreed or strongly disagreed (2 and 3 responses respectively).



3.15 There were numerous responses that described the challenges facing businesses in County Kilkenny were the barriers to expansion, not establishing a business in the county.

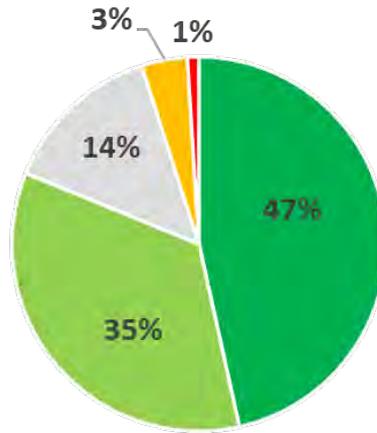
3.16 Respondents were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with Objective 2(B) of the draft LECP. Of the 151 responses, 48% (71 responses) strongly agreed and 36% (54 responses) agreed. 13% (20 responses) were neutral, and 4% (5 responses) disagreed or strongly disagreed (4 and 1 responses respectively).



3.17 Some respondents asked that support for and the nature of businesses be in-keeping with the first goal (climate change and sustainability) and incorporate environmental themes into this goal and objective.

3.18 Respondents were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with Objective 2(C) of the draft LECP. Of the 151 responses, 47% (71 responses) strongly agreed and 35%

(52 responses) agreed. 14% (21 responses) were neutral, and 4% (6 responses) disagreed or strongly disagreed (5 and 1 responses respectively).



- 3.19 One respondent argued that there should be more regional coordination of business support and acknowledgment that the south east region can support each other, not just a focus on each county, including County Kilkenny. One respondent noted that the success County Carlow has had in attracting new businesses hasn't been reflected in County Kilkenny and that this ought to be investigated as part of the LECP.
- 3.20 Some respondents focused on specific sectors and make-up of County Kilkenny's economy. Two respondents felt that the pharmaceutical industry should be awarded more recognition. Respondents argued that the focus of the goal should be on encouraging start-ups in the county. A number of respondents highlighted the county's overreliance on the tourism sector, as a challenge for the LECP to recognise and overcome.
- 3.21 One respondent wanted to see specific actions and measures published to accompany the goal and objectives for supporting businesses.
- 3.22 Adopted High-level Goal and Objectives:

**Goal 2: To build a resilient, sustainable business base and support new and existing businesses to grow, be enterprising and take advantage of new opportunities, we will...**

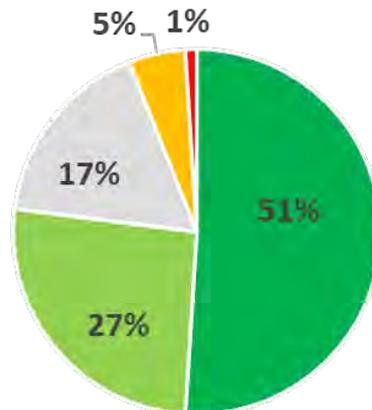
**Objective 2a:** support the growth of existing and emerging higher-value sectors within our economy, including engineering, health (including. medtech), craft and design, ICT, Green Tech and fintech companies to realise the benefits of clustering

**Objective 2b:** facilitate sustainable entrepreneurship and innovation by encouraging design thinking, providing support and infrastructure to our businesses enabling them to achieve their strong ambitions for expansion and growth and to increase their scale and resilience

**Objective 2c:** ensure our local economy contributes proportionately and integrates with the growth of the region and maximises its international reach by improving the attractiveness of Kilkenny as a place to do business

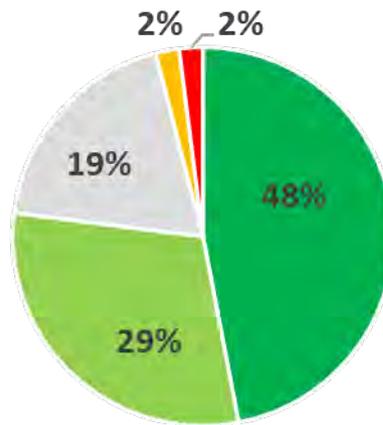
### Goal 3: Culture, Heritage and Tourism

3.23 Respondents were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with Objective 3(A) of the draft LECP. Of the 150 responses, 51% (76 responses) strongly agreed and 27% (39 responses) agreed. 17% (25 responses) were neutral, and 6% (9 responses) disagreed or strongly disagreed (7 and 2 responses respectively).



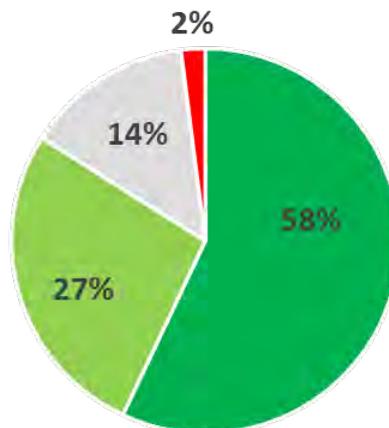
3.24 A number of respondents highlighted the need to support businesses and workers in the tourism sector in the off-peak seasons, such as building a stronger tourism offer during these months.

3.25 Respondents were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with Objective 3(B) of the draft LECP. Of the 150 responses, 48% (71 responses) strongly agreed and 29% (44 responses) agreed. 19% (28 responses) were neutral, and 4% (6 responses) disagreed or strongly disagreed (3 responses each).



3.26 Some respondents asked that the objective make explicit reference to ensuring the tourism sector is supported in an environmentally sustainable way.

3.27 Respondents were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with Objective 3(C) of the draft LECP. Of the 147 responses, 58% (84 responses) strongly agreed and 27% (39 responses) agreed. 14% (20 responses) were neutral, and 2% (3 responses) strongly disagreed.



3.28 Respondents highlighted that the county’s heritage, in particular its rural heritage, was intrinsic to the way of life for most in County Kilkenny and will underpin work in other goals.

3.29 There were numerous comments that argued the tourism sector in the county has run contrary to preserving the county’s heritage, with its focus on pubs and drinking-related events (such as stag-dos and hen-dos) to generate visits.

3.30 Respondents sought an emphasis on tourism that promoted the county’s “Unique Selling Point (USP)”, explicitly its unique heritage offer. Several respondents were critical of planning decisions in the county, which the respondent believed was not effective at preserving the county’s heritage.

3.31 A small number of respondents believed the county could make more tactical decisions to benefit the tourism offer through an emphasis on outdoor infrastructure, such as greenways and waterways projects.

3.32 Adopted High-level Goal and Objectives:

**Goal 3: To realise the economic and social value of Kilkenny’s built and natural heritage, cultural reputation and offer and growing tourism and creative and cultural sectors, we will...**

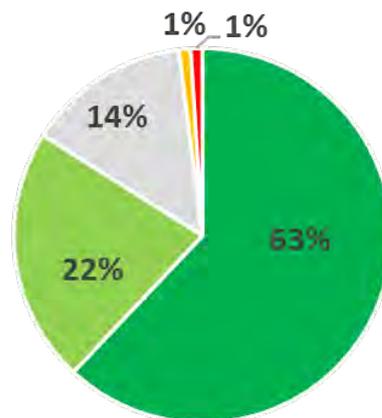
**Objective 3a:** ensure communities can partake in, and get the maximum benefit from improvements to the cultural life of the City and County

**Objective 3b:** build on Kilkenny’s reputation as a county of ‘must visit’ experiences and balance the visitor experience through an expanded yearlong offer, which encourages our visitors to stay longer and explore more of our County’s landscape and heritage

**Objective 3c:** support growth in sustainable and accessible businesses and information in these sectors, ensuring balanced representation across the County

#### Goal 4: Rural Economy

3.33 Respondents were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with Objective 4(A) of the draft LECP. Of the 148 responses, 63% (92 responses) strongly agreed and 22% (32 responses) agreed. 14% (21 responses) were neutral, and 2% (2 responses) disagreed or strongly disagreed (1 response each).



3.34 Most responses reflected on the rural economy and its connection with infrastructure. This included the need to install good internet to sustain and then enhance the rural economy. This focused on a need to improve the active travel offer between the towns and particularly with Kilkenny city, such as the construction of cycleways. Public

transport was also highlighted as an area in need of improvement, such as bus and rail connections across the county.

- 3.35 The comments on infrastructure fed into a broader range of comments about access to services, such as providing more services within the towns and villages, rather than concentrating them in Kilkenny city. One respondent asked that post offices be included in each settlement and some respondents focused on the hospitality offer within towns, such as cafes. Respondents did not feel that the distribution of funding in the county was fair.
- 3.36 A small number of respondents encouraged the adoption of ‘Smart Villages’ in line with a policy from the European Union, which are especially important given the shift to remote working caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 3.37 There were a number of responses which found the overall goal too vague and devoid of specifics. It was viewed that ‘sustain’ should be replaced with ‘improve’ or ‘enhance’.
- 3.38 Adopted High-level Goal and Objectives:

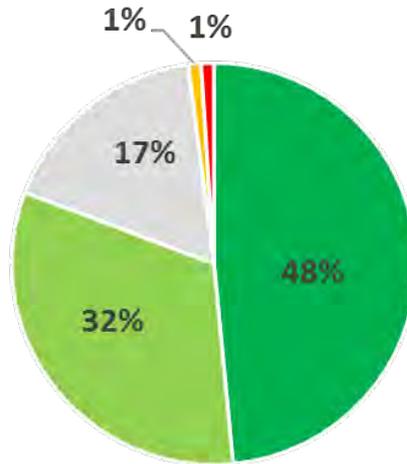
**Goal 4: To ensure our rural economy and communities are supported to develop sustainably, we will...**

**Objective 4a:** enhance the quality of life in rural communities, by protecting habitats and maintaining a balanced sustainable environment, and agricultural economy

**Objective 4b:** sustain and improve services and infrastructure, developing “Smart”, “Accessible” and “Connected” rural towns and villages to help them realise their potential as attractive places to live and visit

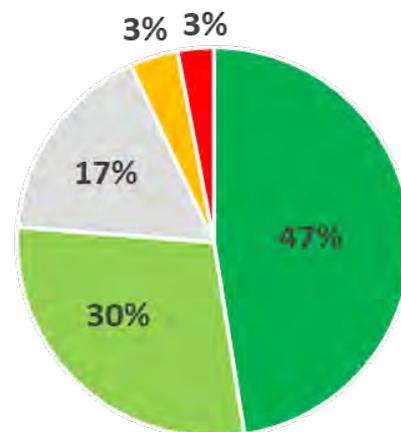
## Goal 5: Education and Skills

3.39 Respondents were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with Objective 5(A) of the draft LECP. Of the 144 responses, 48% (68 responses) strongly agreed and 32% (46 responses) agreed. 17% (25 responses) were neutral, and 2% (4 responses) disagreed or strongly disagreed (2 responses each).



3.40 Some respondents argued that the objective's focus on graduates potentially missed the county's need to fill skills gaps which don't require a degree, such as the hospitality and tourism sectors. Two respondents made explicit reference to expanding or setting up apprenticeship schemes in the county, instead of being required to travel to Dublin.

3.41 Respondents were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with Objective 5(B) of the draft LECP. Of the 144 responses, 47% (68 responses) strongly agreed and 30% (42 responses) agreed. 17% (24 responses) were neutral, and 6% (9 responses) disagreed or strongly disagreed (5 and 4 responses respectively).



- 3.42 The opportunity presented by SETU and the desire to establish a university in Kilkenny was recognised by respondents. One respondent thought this would suit Kilkenny's lower-than-average cost of living for student accommodation.
- 3.43 A small number of respondents argued that for the goal to be a success the jobs must also be created for any new education and skills to be applied within. One respondent argued that even those with degrees in County Kilkenny are employed elsewhere and did not see how encouraging more third-level qualifications will directly help the county.
- 3.44 Feedback from the joint SPC 1 / LCDC sought an explicit reference to further and higher education "infrastructure" within both the goal and objective 5b.
- 3.45 Adopted High-level Goal and Objectives:

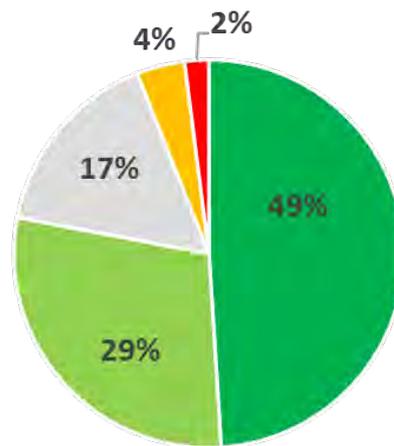
**Goal 5: To increase the number of economically active people in the County by ensuring access to further and higher education infrastructure and to lifelong learning for every working age resident who wants to work to enhance their educational qualifications and achieve the skills required, we will...**

**Objective 5a:** work with our businesses to ensure they have a labour-force which has the flexibility to respond to current and changing skill-based requirements, including those arising from new emerging sectors

**Objective 5b:** continue to support improvements in continuous educational attainment, with a particular focus on the delivery of further and third level educational infrastructure, including industry led apprenticeships

### **Goal 6: Attracting Graduates**

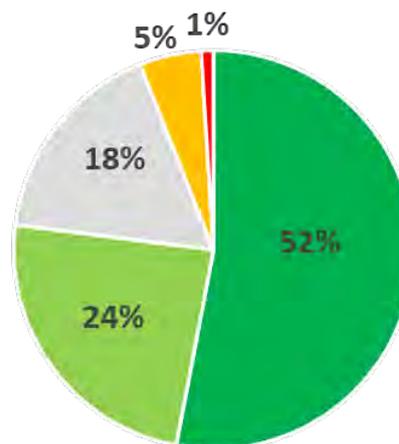
- 3.46 Respondents were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with Objective 6(A) of the draft LECP. Of the 150 responses, 49% (72 responses) strongly agreed and 29% (43 responses) agreed. 17% (25 responses) were neutral, and 6% (9 responses) disagreed or strongly disagreed (6 and 3 responses respectively).



3.47 Some respondents argued that there needn't be an explicit focus on SETU and that links with other third-level institutions outside the county (such as NCAD and Trinity College Dublin) will still be valuable and should be explored . A small number of respondents believed County Kilkenny should aspire to build national links and not limit its connections to the south east of Ireland.

3.48 Some respondents questioned the ability of the county to establish the links with these institutions and then facilitate a third-level education institution, such as a university.

3.49 Respondents were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with Objective 6(B) of the draft LECP. Of the 148 responses, 52% (77 responses) strongly agreed and 24% (35 responses) agreed. 18% (26 responses) were neutral, and 6% (9 responses) disagreed or strongly disagreed (7 and 2 responses respectively).



3.50 Several respondents noted that the existing conditions needed to be addressed first. Three respondents indicated that adequate housing should be available in the county to attract and retain graduates. Additionally, one respondent highlighted that the transport infrastructure held the county back in attracting talent, as graduates would be unable to travel to County Kilkenny.

- 3.51 Respondents also asserted that there currently weren't enough positions available for graduates to fill and that attracting investment from new and existing employers was required first. One respondent was concerned that the objective would lead to the prioritisation of graduates over those without third level qualifications, in spite of them potentially having more work experience.
- 3.52 There was disagreement between respondents as to whether County Kilkenny should have a university campus of its own. While some respondents acknowledged the advantage Carlow and Waterford have over the county when it comes to attracting investment because they already have tertiary-level skills, it was appreciated by the vast majority of respondents that a campus in county Kilkenny is preferable to young people being forced to leave to obtain a degree.
- 3.53 Like in goal 5, respondents highlighted that county Kilkenny required a broader skill set, not just training for third-level degrees.
- 3.54 The adopted High-level goal and objectives are:

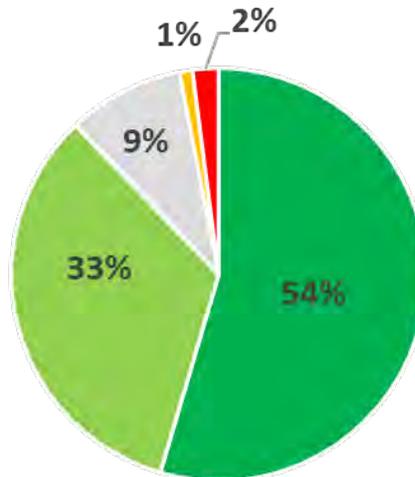
**Goal 6: To grow the number of third level graduates working in County Kilkenny, we will...**

**Objective 6a:** capitalise on existing and planned investment, such as Ireland's newest Technological University (SETU) by making regional and national links between our business community, our universities and graduates

**Objective 6b:** increase the share of all recent graduates who obtain a job in the County

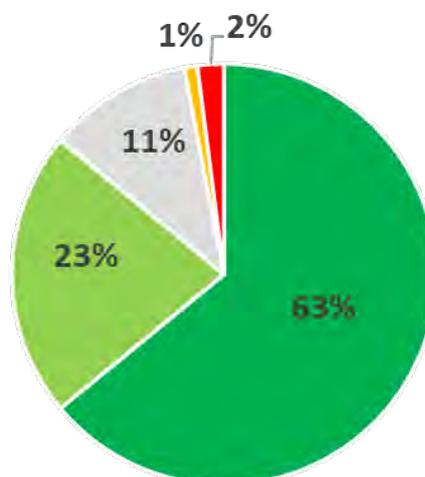
## Goal 7: Health Inequalities

3.55 Respondents were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with Objective 7(A) of the draft LECP. Of the 149 responses, 54% (80 responses) strongly agreed and 33% (49 responses) agreed. 9% (14 responses) were neutral, and 3% (5 responses) disagreed or strongly disagreed (2 and 3 responses respectively).



3.56 One respondent felt that the effort to combat health inequalities locally required a national framework to achieve the desired results laid out by the LECP. Additionally, one respondent expressed their wish to see this objective applied across the county, not just in the city, and a further respondent asked that more community consultation be undertaken to establish the needs of the whole county to address health inequalities.

3.57 Respondents were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with Objective 7(B) of the draft LECP. Of the 149 responses, 63% (94 responses) strongly agreed and 23% (34 responses) agreed. 11% (16 responses) were neutral, and 3% (4 responses) disagreed or strongly disagreed (1 and 3 responses respectively).



- 3.58 Respondents highlighted this objective required across numerous sectors and that the goal fed into the other goals, which may help explain its high importance ranking relative to all goals.
- 3.59 One respondent viewed the solution through education, and another believed that tackling mental health, especially within younger demographics, was important to the delivery of the LECP goal. A small number of respondents emphasised mental health as the primary challenge within the health inequalities goal.
- 3.60 The adopted High-level Goal and objectives are:

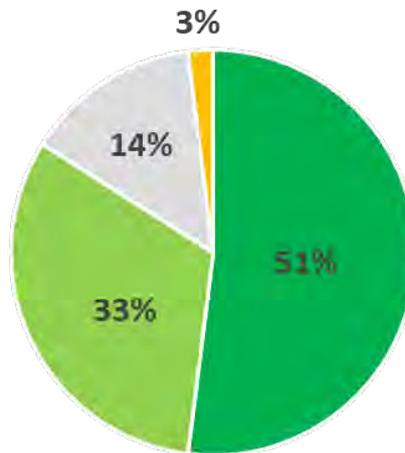
**Goal 7: To reduce inequalities and promote and enhance the importance of health and wellbeing, we will...**

**Objective 7a:** focus on addressing the wider social determinants of health – the circumstances in which people are born, grow, live, work and age – to create economic, social, culture, recreation and sport opportunities and a physical environment that will foster improved healthy living

**Objective 7b:** support improvements to mental health, including a pro-active approach to recognising the importance of wellbeing, environmental context and encouraging creativity

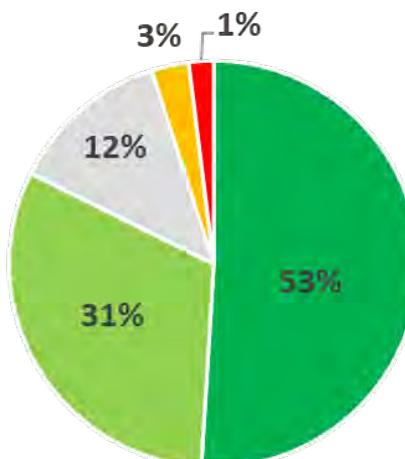
## Goal 8: Community Development

3.61 Respondents were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with Objective 8(A) of the draft LECP. Of the 153 responses, 51% (78 responses) strongly agreed and 33% (49 responses) agreed. 14% (21 responses) were neutral, and 3% (4 responses) disagreed.



3.62 A small number of respondents highlighted that deprivation will be spread out and not be neatly found in pockets across the county, and that it will not always be visible or easily noticed. One respondent noted that community development should not just focus on deprivation in Kilkenny city, but also prioritise rural deprivation. One respondent sought more clarification on the phrase 'meaningful engagement'.

3.63 Respondents were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with Objective 8(B) of the draft LECP. Of the 154 responses, 53% (79 responses) strongly agreed and 31% (48 responses) agreed. 12% (19 responses) were neutral, and 4% (6 responses) disagreed or strongly disagreed (5 and 1 responses respectively).



- 3.64 A respondent asked what specific principles of community development would be aspired to as part of the goal. One respondent believed that building a vibrant and enterprising spirit in communities was required to deliver the goal.
- 3.65 Several respondents sought explicit references within the goal, including the links between community development, economic inequality and environmental sustainability. Some respondents highlighted specific social programmes, such as Programme Goals SICAP, Rural Development Programme & FRCs.
- 3.66 A small number of respondents argued that older people should become an explicit target of this goal.
- 3.67 The adopted High-level Goal and objectives are:

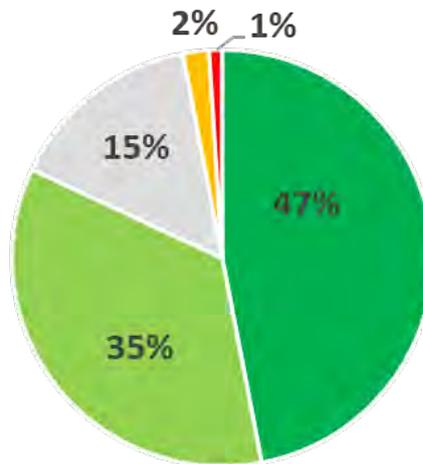
**Goal 8: To reduce the number of people living in deprivation and promote community development, climate justice, diversity and social inclusion, we will...**

**Objective 8a:** dedicate targeted resources and integrated approaches across all service delivery areas to those people and places where issues of deprivation and poverty are concentrated

**Objective 8b:** promote and support intercultural awareness, integration and diversity through meaningful engagement with citizens, to ensure equality of opportunity for older people, those living with a disability and all minority groups

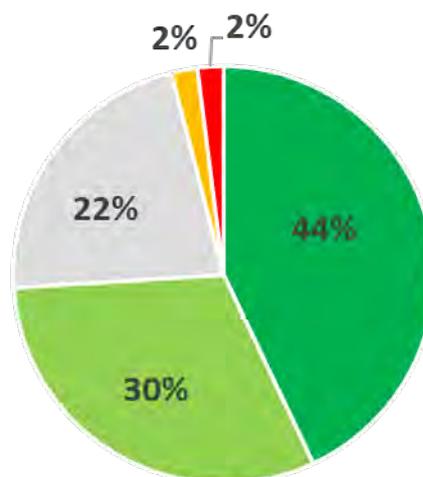
### Goal 9: Social Investment

3.68 Respondents were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with Objective 9(A) of the draft LECP. Of the 158 responses, 47% (75 responses) strongly agreed and 35% (54 responses) agreed. 15% (24 responses) were neutral, and 3% (4 responses) disagreed or strongly disagreed (3 and 1 responses respectively).



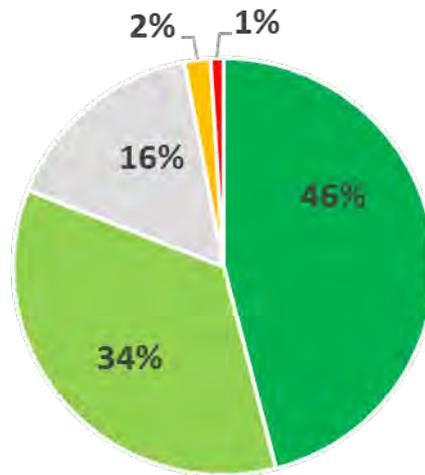
3.69 One respondent highlighted the interconnectedness of this goal with issues such as transport, education and skills, and community development.

3.70 Respondents were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with Objective 9(B) of the draft LECP. Of the 158 responses, 44% (68 responses) strongly agreed and 30% (48 responses) agreed. 22% (35 responses) were neutral, and 4% (6 responses) disagreed or strongly disagreed (3 responses each).



3.71 One respondent pinpointed investment in public services as an area that should be prioritised, due to the knock-on effect for other goals within the LECP, such as health inequalities.

3.72 Respondents were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with Objective 9(C) of the draft LECP. Of the 157 responses, 46% (72 responses) strongly agreed and 34% (54 responses) agreed. 16% (25 responses) were neutral, and 3% (5 responses) disagreed or strongly disagreed (3 and 2 responses respectively).



- 3.73 Several respondents highlighted older people should become a specific target of this goal, due to their extra needs and tendencies to be more socially excluded.
- 3.74 Six respondents indicated they felt the goal was too vague and lacked explicit targets or expectations.
- 3.75 The adopted High-level Goal and objectives are:

**Goal 9: To develop increased local capacity and improve targeting of social investment through increased engagement and participation with local community groups that will deliver improved community facilities, supports and services, we will...**

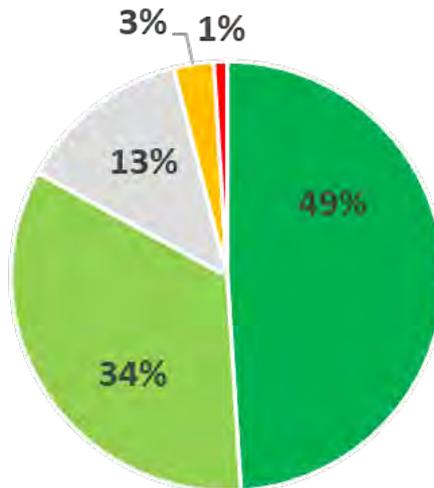
**Objective 9a:** respond positively to the implications of a changing age profile and the associated risk of individuals in rural and urban areas becoming socially excluded

**Objective 9b** learn from successes and broadening participation to assist the specific groups who remain discouraged or lacking in confidence to engage more pro-actively with their communities

**Objective 9c:** identify, define, and report on community needs and capacity, to target the delivery of future support and infrastructure

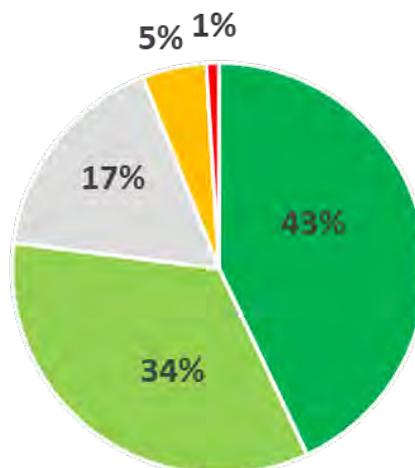
## Goal 10: Housing

3.76 Respondents were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with Objective 10(A) of the draft LECP. Of the 177 responses, 49% (86 responses) strongly agreed and 34% (61 responses) agreed. 13% (23 responses) were neutral, and 4% (6 responses) disagreed or strongly disagreed (5 and 1 responses respectively).



3.77 One respondent called for a more effective planning system, which would be more successful in responding to supply and demand pressures to provide housing in county Kilkenny. One respondent argued that the system should receive more input from experts in the field. One respondent highlighted the need for communities to take a diverse mix of housing to meet the diverse housing needs of the county.

3.78 Respondents were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with Objective 10(B) of the draft LECP. Of the 173 responses, 43% (74 responses) strongly agreed and 34% (58 responses) agreed. 17% (29 responses) were neutral, and 6% (11 responses) disagreed or strongly disagreed (9 and 2 responses respectively).



- 3.79 Several respondents questioned how this objective would be implemented and measured, and the view of the Advisory Group and joint SPC 1 / LCDC indicated that the goal should emphasis and clarify the LECP's role in setting goals and objectives for community support associated with housing delivery, rather than direct housing delivery.
- 3.80 Several respondents asked about the pace of delivery and flagged the sense of urgency involved in addressing this goal, considering current housing need. A small number of respondents flagged the need to address the issue of anti-social behaviour arising from social housing.
- 3.81 The adopted High-level Goal and objectives are:

**Goal 10: To maintain the provision of appropriate community supports and services for new and existing housing developments, *we will...***

**Objective 10a:** embed support within communities for the most vulnerable households

**Objective 10b:** be proactive in the face of fluctuating and emerging demand pressures across Ireland, and as those in need of accommodation present themselves within the county.

## 4. Conclusion

- 4.1 The high-level goals and objectives contained within this Socio-Economic Statement have been refined as part of consultation process with County Kilkenny's stakeholder groups and the public
- 4.2 The goals and objective will in turn inform the Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP), and feedback from the consultation will establish the vision and outcomes people want to see materialise for County Kilkenny as a result of the LECPs implementation plan.
- 4.3 The consultation coalesced around a baseline survey (open for five weeks from 26<sup>th</sup> August to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2022), an in-person workshop and five virtual workshops with the public and key stakeholder groups. Feedback has been collated, analysed, and presented in report, as a record of the public and stakeholder engagement in the LECP development process.
- 4.4 Overall, the results of the baseline survey showed that the people of Kilkenny have a positive outlook for the county and want it to be an economic, environmental and social success, which celebrates its heritage as the crowning jewel in its unique offer to Ireland and Europe.
- 4.5 In spite of this, it was clear there is room for refinement and residents and organisations have identified outcomes for Kilkenny to reach its full potential within our broad themes.
- 4.6 There is broad support for the goals and objectives that the LECP sets for Kilkenny. The conclusions drawn from this survey will be further defined during further stages of the LECP development process, before being adopted and the outcomes identified are implemented.
- 4.7 There is little difference in the priorities between different stakeholders group. However, younger and more urban residents were more likely to emphasise social investment and education & skills, whereas older and more rural residents placed greater emphasis on the rural economy and health inequalities.
- 4.8 Housing, climate change and community development were viewed as the most important themes for the people of Kilkenny, with strong support for the specific objectives contained within them.
- 4.9 As laid out in this report, the consultation methodology has been robust and broadly representative in its aim to capture the views of those who live, work and visit county Kilkenny. The workshops and survey that have informed this report and worked to refine the high-level goals and objectives serve as a strong foundation on which to generate the positive outcomes Kilkenny deserves by 2028.

## **Appendix 1: Socio-economic Statement**

# Kilkenny Socio-Economic Statement 2023 - 2028

Kilkenny Economic and Community Plan (LECP)

August 2022



Kilkenny County Council  
Comhairle Chontae Chill Chainnigh

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**Client**  
Kilkenny County Council

**Our reference**  
KILB3011

July 2022

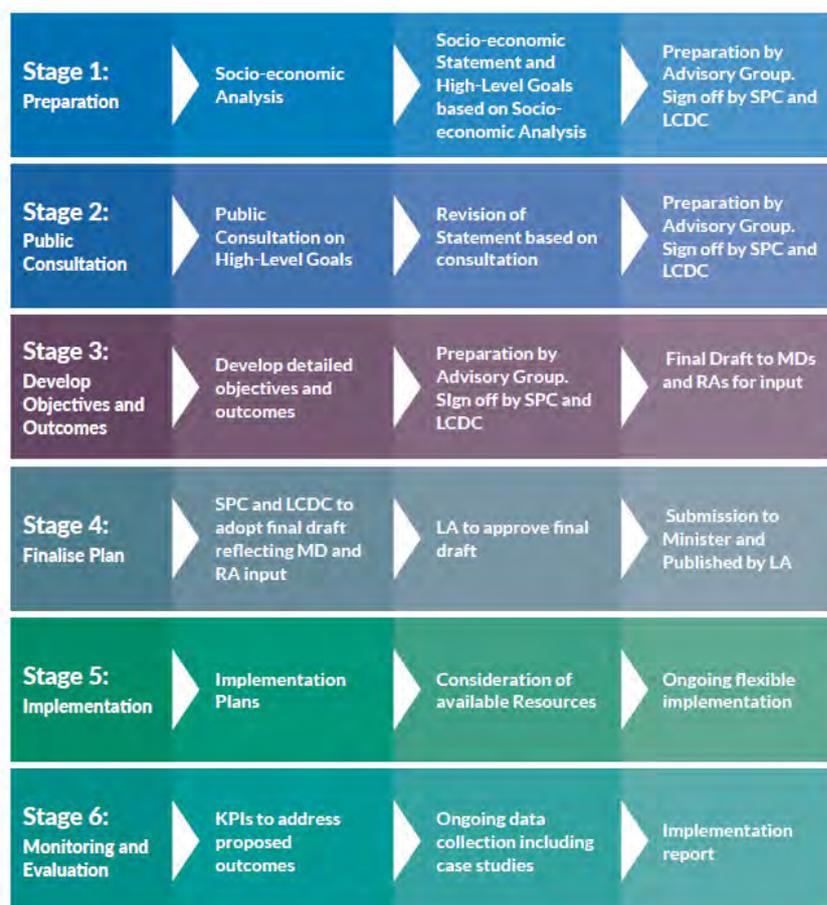
# 1. Introduction

- 1.1 We have begun the process of preparing a new Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP). This will build upon and replace the previous Plan<sup>1</sup>, which covered the period 2016 – 2021.
- 1.2 The new LECP will set out, for the period 2023 – 2028, the objectives and actions we believe are needed to promote and support the economic development and the local and community development of County Kilkenny.

## Overview of the process

- 1.3 We are at the start of what will be a 9-to-12-month process that will conclude with the publication of a new LECP. The 2021 national Guidelines<sup>2</sup> set out in diagrammatic form the process which we are required to follow. This is replicated at Figure 1.1.

**Figure 1.1: LECP Development Stages**



Source: LECP Guidelines, 2021

<sup>1</sup> [https://kilkennycoco.ie/eng/your\\_council/lcdc/lecp-plan/](https://kilkennycoco.ie/eng/your_council/lcdc/lecp-plan/)

<sup>2</sup> Government of Ireland (2021) Local Economic and Community Plans Guidelines 2021

- 1.4 This document represents our **Socio-Economic Statement**, prepared as **the output of Stage 1** as shown in the preceding diagram. It provides a summary of the latest statistics and analysis we have assembled to inform this and other strategies. This evidence, which takes account of the monitoring and evaluation of our previous LECP<sup>3</sup>, provides us with an important insight into the opportunities and ongoing challenges to which its replacement must respond.
- 1.5 We set out in this document our **initial views on the High-Level Goals** we believe we should look to achieve through this LECP. These Goals recognise the wider social and economic challenges that we have faced over recent years, continue to face and will no doubt face over the lifetime of the new LECP.
- 1.6 In developing these Goals, we have taken the opportunity to reflect on those which we set out in our previous LECP. Through our evaluation processes, it is apparent that whilst we have made demonstrable progress in working towards the Goals we set ourselves, the aspirations they represent continue to represent a work in progress. We have reflected this by looking to adapt where appropriate previous Goals whilst also ensuring the new LECP looks to the future with regards changes of priority and new opportunities and challenges.
- 1.7 It is important that **the Goals we set ourselves are focussed, locally relevant, realistic but aspirational. We invite your feedback and views on these Goals.** Your insight will be vital in ensuring that they reflect these aims, resulting in a Plan which can have a meaningful impact in allowing representatives from the Council, communities and businesses to work together so that our investments support an improved quality of life for people living and working in the County.
- 1.8 We set out in Section 6 of this document next steps, which include our careful consideration of the feedback and responses we receive on the consultation of this document. As Figure 1.1 shows, we will account for the responses we receive in the final preparation of a new LECP, integrating our confirmed High-Level Goals and aligned Sustainable Objectives. This will then in turn be followed by the preparation of an **Implementation Plan** which will outline the specific, time-bound and measurable actions to be delivered over the lifetime of the Plan based on evidence-based prioritisation and taking into account the resources that we have and expect to have available to us.

## Introducing Kilkenny

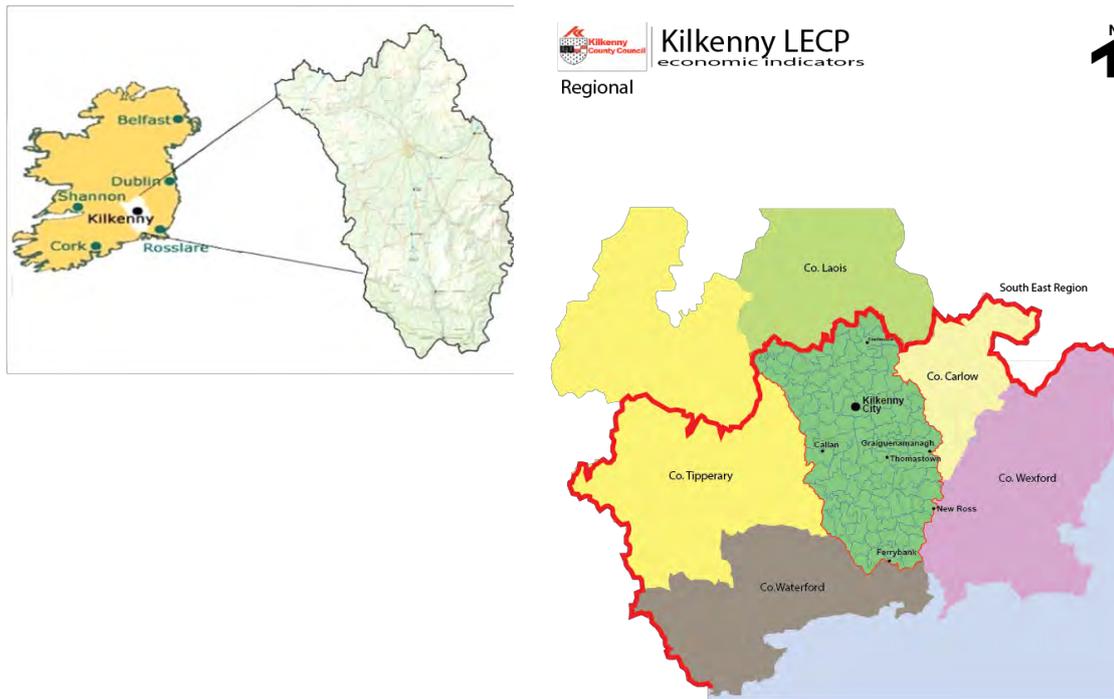
- 1.9 County Kilkenny is a medium-sized inland county located in south Leinster, covering just under 2,100 square kilometres. County Kilkenny is part of the newly configured Southern Region and is strategically located within the southern half of the state. The county has direct access to the Irish Sea, through Belview Port on the River Suir and through New Ross on the River Barrow.

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<sup>3</sup> The evaluation of the 2016-2021 LECP is contained within two reports prepared by the SPC and LCDC, these being the '*LECP Economic Implementation Plan 2016 – 2021: End of Programme Update*' (SPC1 – 25.03.22) and the '*4<sup>th</sup> Reporting Period – Community Plan*' (LCDC, March 2022)

- 1.10 Kilkenny City is the largest settlement in the county and dominates the local economy. It is close to Dublin (115km) and other major urban centres including Cork (145km), Limerick (110km) and Waterford (48km). Kilkenny is also close to Shannon International Airport (155km) and Rosslare Europort (105km).
- 1.11 The River Nore runs through Kilkenny City and bisects the county on a north-south axis. The Rivers Barrow and Suir are natural boundaries to the east and to the south of the county, respectively.

**Figure 1.2: Kilkenny Location Context**



- 1.12 As part of the local government reforms, County Kilkenny has been divided into 4 electoral areas and 4 Municipal Districts, namely Callan/Thomastown Municipal District, Castlecomer Municipal District, Kilkenny City Municipal District and Piltown Municipal District (Figure 1.3).

Figure 1.3: Map of Kilkenny showing electoral areas and divisions



- 1.13 Kilkenny County is located within the Southern Region within the National Planning Framework (NPF) which provides a strategy to shape growth and development in Ireland to 2040. The Southern Region contains a further three city-regions, with Kilkenny County located within the South-East along with Counties Carlow, Waterford and Wexford. Waterford is identified as the focal city. The NPF observes that whilst the sub-region has a strong urban structure, much of the area is rural in character and includes some of Ireland’s most productive agricultural land.
- 1.14 It identifies important regional opportunities around leveraging growth associated with strong national and international connectivity, especially via ports proximate to continental Europe; strengthening Higher Education Institutes (HEIs); and further balancing employment and housing development in key settlements and County towns, with this understood to include Kilkenny City. It observes that such growth must

be based on infrastructure and quality of life, rather than long distance commuting to Dublin.

### **National, Regional and Local Context**

- 1.15 The purpose of LECPs, as provided for in the Local Government Reform Act 2014, is to set out, for a six-year period, the objectives and actions needed to promote and support the economic development and the local and community development of the relevant local authority area, both by the local authority directly and in partnership with other economic and community development stakeholders.
- 1.16 The LECP must form part of the overall process for national transformation set out in Project Ireland 2040 and which includes the NPF, introduced above, and the National Development Plan (NDP), as well as Housing for All: A New Housing Plan for Ireland. It must also provide a key framework through which the national process to develop a statutory basis for climate change intervention including the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Bill 2021 and the ongoing implementation of Climate Action Plans at a local level.
- 1.17 Acknowledging the economic challenges faced in recent years, the LECP must also recognise the actions and priorities developed nationally to set Ireland on a path towards creating a more resilient national economy, recognising the importance of the rural economy in this journey. It must therefore help to bring forward relevant actions arising from the National Recovery and Resilience Plan, National Economic Recovery Plan and the Our Rural Future – Rural Development Policy 2021-2025.
- 1.18 Furthermore, as specified in article 66B of the above noted 2014 Reform Act, it must be developed within the context of the principles of sustainable development, including the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set out in the UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This recognises that the Irish Government has made commitments in both the Programme for Government – Our Shared Future 2020 and the Sustainable Development Goals National Implementation Plan 2018 to ensure that the SDGs are fully considered in all Government policies and planning processes.
- 1.19 As the framework for the economic and community development of the local authority area, the LECP is the primary mechanism at the local level to bring forward the relevant actions arising from national strategy but also importantly regional strategies and policies that have a local remit. This includes, for example the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Southern Region. This strategy identifies Kilkenny as a key town recognising its role as a self-sustaining regional driver and a major centre for the delivery of public services as well as its economic and business role and higher order retail function. Policy RPO 11 of the RSES supports the local authority to target growth of more than 30% for Kilkenny City, subject to capacity analysis and sustainability.
- 1.20 Regional co-operation and collaboration with the South East local authorities on key infrastructural and regional enhancement projects is of vital importance to Kilkenny. A number of regional priorities have been identified by the First Citizens forum including a focus on the enhancement of the IDA Office; Investment in the South East ports

(Belview and Rosslare); the upgrade project on N24/N25 and the South East Technological University (SETU).

- 1.21 From a local perspective, this LECP will need to be consistent with the core strategy and objectives of the Kilkenny City and County Development Plan 2021-2027 and the existing Corporate Plan 2019 – 2024 and will, in its implementation, assist in delivering identified existing and emerging actions within these documents. The LECP will also need to have a relationship with several of our other more topic-based local strategies, a number of which will be refreshed and revisited over the lifetime of the LECP. The Implementation Plan, which will accompany the final LECP, will make clear through its identified actions the linkages between these strategic local documents.

### Structure of this Statement

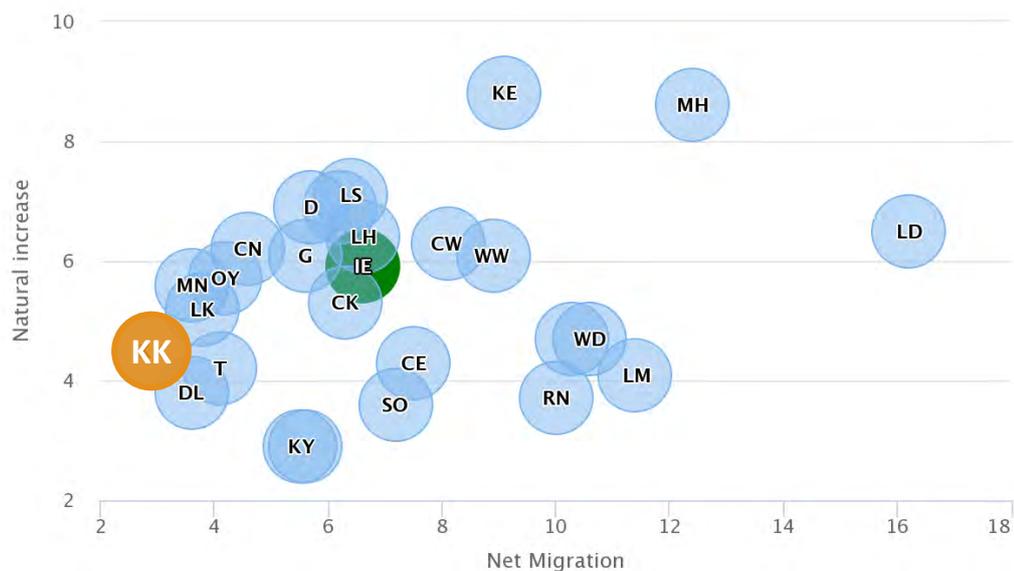
- 1.22 This statement is intended to assist in starting an ongoing conversation to ensure that everyone who wishes to has had the opportunity to help shape the final LECP. It forms the basis for a consultation process which will commence in summer 2022.
- 1.23 To assist in the process of obtaining insight and feedback, this statement is structured to include in:
- **Section 2** a summary of the key socio-economic highlights. These are intended to give a flavour of the key issues and opportunities facing our businesses and communities, providing an understanding of how key indicators have changed over time.
  - **Section 3** our distillation of this information into strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT). These are not intended to be all encompassing and we welcome any additions or reflections on those which are identified.
  - **Section 4** our emerging thoughts on the High-Level Goals we will set ourselves to deliver against our SWOT.
  - **Section 5** further complementary explanation to justify the High-Level Goals, also starting to identify underpinning objectives which will provide the framework for appropriate related outcomes which we consider will be necessary to enable their achievement and monitoring.
  - **Section 6** the next steps in the process of developing the LECP, importantly outlining how stakeholder, community feedback and engagement will be used to develop the LECP and the accompanying Implementation Plan.

## 2. Socio-Economic Highlights

### Demographics and Housing

- 2.1 **Some 103,685 people currently live in County Kilkenny**, according to the preliminary findings of the 2022 Census<sup>4</sup>. While the population has grown since the last Census in 2016, the rate of growth (4.5%) was the second lowest of the state's 26 counties, marginally ahead of only County Donegal. The population of the state, in contrast, grew by some 7.6% over this period.
- 2.2 Circa 61% of the population growth recorded in County Kilkenny between Census years related to natural increase, as births outnumbered deaths. The rest was accounted for by net in-migration, albeit it is of note – and shown at Figure 2.1, where Kilkenny is labelled as “KK” – that **the rate of net inward migration was relatively low when compared to other counties**, based on a standardised rate per 1,000 residents.

**Figure 2.1: Average Annual Natural Increase and Estimated Net Migration per 1,000 Residents (2016-22)**



Source: CSO

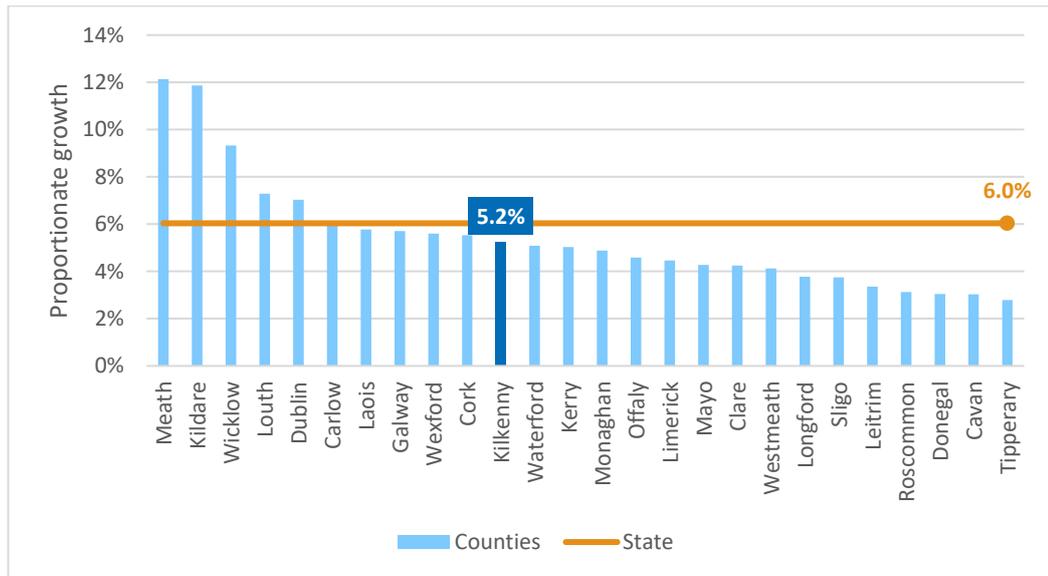
- 2.3 The RSES introduces official projections, developed by the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI), which are based to 2016 but suggest that County Kilkenny could have as many as 110,000 residents by 2026. The Council has extrapolated this projection to estimate that there could subsequently be circa 111,077 residents in 2027, and it follows that **there could be around 112,154 residents in 2028** – the final

<sup>4</sup> CSO (2022) Census of Population 2022 - Preliminary Results

year to be covered by the new LECP – based on the same logic<sup>5</sup>. This would make the population some 8.2% larger than it is in 2022.

- 2.4 Residents lived in one of the **41,279 dwellings that existed throughout the County in 2022**, with the housing stock having grown by circa 5.2% since 2016<sup>6</sup>. This represents growth at a rate that exceeded all but ten of the state’s 26 counties, approaching the state average of 6.0%.

**Figure 2.2: Benchmarking Growth in Housing Stock (2016-22)**



Source: CSO

- 2.5 **Circa 1,619 households were recorded on the County Kilkenny Housing List** in 2021, having been approved for social housing support. This was the fewest since 2010, with the number of households on the list continuing to fall year-on-year over the last five years<sup>7</sup>. Despite this positive trend nearly 300 households were reportedly homeless as of April 2022.
- 2.6 In terms of ethnicity, **the majority of the County’s residents (88%) were classified as “White Irish”** as of the 2016 Census, with equivalent data from 2022 yet to be published<sup>8</sup>. A further 8% had another “White” background, with this including a small number of Irish travellers (0.6%). Most of the remainder had Black or Asian ethnicity, excluding the small number that did not respond to this question (1.5%).

<sup>5</sup> The Council calculated the average annual population growth between 2016 and 2026 (1,077) and added this to the latter to arrive at an estimate for 2027, so the same has been done here to produce an estimate for 2028

<sup>6</sup> CSO (2022) Census of Population 2022 - Preliminary Results

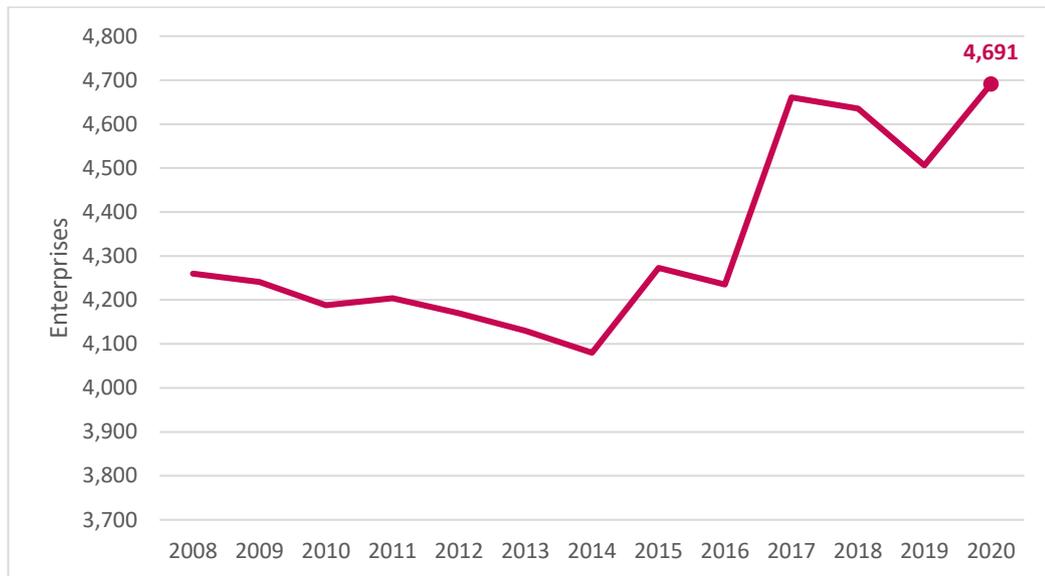
<sup>7</sup> Table 13 of Kilkenny Housing Strategy (2021-27) includes numbers on the housing list for the period 2010 – 2019. Data for the last three years confirms numbers have continued to reduce: 2019 – 1,988 households, 2020 – 1,899 households, 2021 – 1,619 households

<sup>8</sup> The CSO have indicated that the first ‘official’ results from Census 2022 will be published between April 2023 and December 2023. These timeframes are outside of the programme for the preparation of this LECP.

## The Local Economy and Labour Force

**2.7** County Kilkenny had circa 4,691 enterprises in its private business economy in 2020, according to the Business Demography Survey. This was the most recorded in any year since at least 2008, having grown by some 15% from the low recorded in 2014. Kilkenny City is the 8<sup>th</sup> largest employer in the state and has an ambition to be the most liveable city in Ireland.

**Figure 2.3: Change in Number of Enterprises in County Kilkenny**



Source: Business Demography Survey

- 2.8** Some 93% of the County's businesses employed fewer than ten people, slightly exceeding the state average of 92%. Only six businesses employed more than 250 people, such businesses being almost half as prevalent as seen nationally<sup>9</sup>. This includes an under-representation of FDI businesses, with a key priority for Kilkenny being the strategic development of investment initiatives such as the Abbey Quarter and Belview Port so that the infrastructure is in place for FDI investment.
- 2.9** Businesses employing more than 50 people were also less prevalent in the County than across the state, but have notably increased in number since 2014 by almost half (47%).
- 2.10** Over a quarter of the County's businesses (26%) operated in the construction sector, which is proportionately larger than the state average (22%) and has grown its business base by some 20% since 2014. Nearly a fifth of businesses (19%) are in the wholesale and retail sector, which is likewise larger than it is nationally (17%) but has grown at a much slower rate of 5%. Roughly one sixth of the County's businesses (16%) involve professional, scientific or technical activities, falling slightly short of the state average (17%) but notably growing by more than a quarter (26%) since 2014. No other one sector accounts for more than 8% of the County's private businesses.

<sup>9</sup> Circa 0.24% of businesses in the state employed more than 250 people in 2020, compared to 0.13% in County Kilkenny

- 2.11 Nearly 3,500 people were employed in the County’s agriculture, forestry and fishing sector** as of the 2016 Census, rising by around 3% since 2011. Recent decades have seen growth in the number of large farms, spanning more than 50 hectares, and a reduction in the number of small farms. Forests account for around 11% of the County’s useable land and the majority of this (82%) relates to commercial forestry, coming into maturity over the next twenty years.
- 2.12 The County attracted 727,000 tourists in 2019**, the last complete year unaffected by Covid-19. This was relatively evenly split between domestic and international tourists, albeit with the former slightly more prevalent accounting for 53% of this total. Kilkenny was Ireland’s second most popular domestic short-break destination and the City supported a significant number of festivals and events. There is a strong pipeline of planning permissions for additional hotel rooms within the City, which if delivered will continue to grow the capacity of Kilkenny to accommodate increased numbers of tourists on overnight breaks.
- 2.13 At least two thirds (65%) of the County’s residents had a broadband internet connection** as of the 2016 Census, falling slightly below the state average<sup>10</sup> (71%). While there is no more recent data available for the County, the latter is believed to have risen to the point where 85% of households throughout Ireland had fixed broadband as of 2021. This notably compared to the figure reported for the South-East Region alone, of which County Kilkenny is part<sup>11</sup> (84%).
- 2.14** The 2016 Census showed that County Kilkenny, like the wider state, has seen **declining levels of lower education attainment and increasing levels of third level educational attainment**. The County nonetheless continued to lag behind the state average for third level education (36/40%) albeit it is hoped that the establishment of the South East Technological University (SETU) in May 2022 – creating the region’s first such university – will have a positive impact in encouraging greater numbers of residents to continue studying.
- 2.15 County Kilkenny saw its younger working age population, aged 20 to 34, reduce over the five years to the 2016 Census.** This also occurred across the state but at a slightly less pronounced rate (11/13%). Equivalent data from the 2022 Census is not yet available.

### Health and Wellbeing

- 2.16 Some 89% of the County’s residents reported that they were in good or very good health** at the 2016 Census, surpassing the state average of 87%. Less than 2% reported themselves to be in bad or very bad health. This was generally consistent with the findings of the preceding Census.
- 2.17 Circa 13% of residents reported that they had at least one disability as of 2016**, falling slightly below the state average (14%). Over a third of these residents (37%) were aged 65 or above, while 66% were aged 45 or over.

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<sup>10</sup> These are minimum figures given that this was “not stated” in some responses

<sup>11</sup> CSO (2021) Internet Coverage and Usage in Ireland 2021

- 2.18 **Nearly half (46%) of those reporting disabilities had difficulty with pain, breathing or another chronic illness**, with slightly fewer (43%) having difficulties with basic physical activities. One quarter had a learning difficulty.
- 2.19 **People with disabilities were less than half as likely to work as the general population (22/53%)** and less than half as likely to have access to a car or van (8/20%). Circa 15% lived in social housing compared to 9% of the general population.

#### **Deprivation, Poverty and Social Exclusion**

- 2.20 **County Kilkenny saw a dramatic increase in deprivation** over the five years to 2011, following the economic collapse of 2008. A partial recovery occurred over the subsequent period to 2016, albeit deprivation levels continued to exceed the state average. County Kilkenny's relative deprivation score<sup>12</sup> of -0.3 classified the County's measure of affluence as 'marginally below average' in 2016 as compared to the baseline state average of 0.9 ('marginally above average')
- 2.21 Across the County, scores across all 113 Electoral Divisions range from categorisations of 'Disadvantaged' to 'Affluent'. At higher geographical levels, however, pockets of relative deprivation can be masked. In total there are **2,763 people living within Small Areas which fall within the category of 'Very Deprived'**.
- 2.22 With lone parents generally at greater risk of poverty and social exclusion, it is of note that there were **around 4,260 households in County Kilkenny led by lone parents** as of the 2016 Census. This equated to circa 18% of all households and fell below the state average of 20%.
- 2.23 There has been a **gradual reduction in the number of crimes recorded** in the Kilkenny/Carlow Garda Division. Circa 5,140 crimes were recorded in 2019 compared to 8,590 in 2010, and this fell further to 4,370 in 2020 albeit this may have been influenced by reduced mobility during the pandemic.

#### **Climate Change and Energy**

- 2.24 The Council's Climate Change Adaptation Strategy describes how **climate change is already having a significant impact on the County**, with these effects likely to increase in their frequency and intensity<sup>13</sup>.
- 2.25 Over the decade to 2019, the County recorded **increases in both the number of days with heavy rainfall and the number of flooding events**. It also experienced extreme temperatures over the same period, with 2018 for instance seeing red warnings for snow in February followed by one of the hottest summers on record.
- 2.26 According to the Strategy, the most accurate information on total emissions throughout County Kilkenny was based on data from the 2006 Census, with calculations suggesting that **some 565,730 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> were emitted in that year**.

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<sup>12</sup> The deprivation index scores are rescaled allowing assignment to an 8 point scale of descriptive labels ranging from -30 (extremely disadvantaged) to above 30 (extremely affluent)

<sup>13</sup> Kilkenny County Council (2019) Climate Change Adaptation Strategy 2019-2024

The residential and transport sectors were responsible for most of these emissions (40/35%) followed by the commercial sector (17%).

### 3. Economic and Community SWOT Analysis

Strengths and Opportunities	Weaknesses and Threats
<b>Central location</b> within the South East Strategic Planning Area with good road and rail links to Dublin and elsewhere	<b>Slowing population growth</b> with relatively little in-migration
<b>A popular tourist destination</b> , hosting numerous festivals and events with the potential to increase the length of visitor stays and their contribution to our local economy	<b>A diminishing number of young adult residents</b> with this having an impact on labour availability as well as the demographic profile of many of our communities outside of Kilkenny City
<b>A track record of partnership work</b> , based on integrated delivery mechanisms	<b>A continued need for social and affordable housing</b> and evidence of homelessness
Established <b>community networks</b> and voluntary sector	<b>Overreliance on construction and retail sectors</b> , with room for greater diversity
<b>A growing number of private businesses</b>	Under-representation of <b>larger employers, including FDI businesses</b>
<b>An increasingly skilled population</b> , set to benefit from the newly established South East Technological University	<b>Third level education attainment</b> continues to lag behind the state average
<b>A healthy pipeline of homes with planning permission</b> suggesting that the County will be well placed to <b>sustain the comparatively positive recent growth of its housing stock</b>	<b>Persistent deprivation</b> at a level that exceeds the state average, with evidence of clear concentrations of more acute deprivation
An established <b>natural heritage and built environment</b>	A lack of certainty around <b>how tourism will recover from Covid-19</b>
<b>A rural economy</b> that is established and growing in an outstanding natural setting	<b>Climate change</b> is already having a significant impact in the County

## 4. Statement of High-Level Goals and Ambition

- 4.1 The last few years have presented unprecedented challenges to our economy and our communities, including most recently the consequences of the conflict in Ukraine.
- 4.2 It is inevitable that over the lifetime of the new LECP we will face a range of new challenges and opportunities. Whilst many of these have yet to present themselves, we do know that we have a responsibility to ensure that the new LECP helps us to take every opportunity to build resilience within our communities, businesses and our workers.
- 4.3 It is also apparent, in the context of national and international agreements and commitments, that this LECP must play its part in addressing the inter-generational challenges associated with climate change.
- 4.4 These responsibilities are reflected within our Corporate Plan (2019-2024) and the Mission Statement we have set ourselves:
- “Kilkenny County Council is committed to working with the people of Kilkenny to develop sustainable, connected, economically thriving and proud communities with the consideration of climate change embedded into all of our policies and services”*
- 4.5 This LECP provides us with the opportunity to build from this statement and to reflect our **ambition** to ensure that every resident, community, visitor, employee and employer in Kilkenny is helped by this LECP to realise their potential and to make their best contribution to enable a positive future for our County over its lifetime and beyond.
- 4.6 We welcome your views on this ambition and how this LECP can build from the Mission Statement the Council has set itself corporately. We will reflect on the outcomes of the consultation on this statement to develop a Vision which captures our ambition and will ensure our LECP reflects our distinct local priorities.
- 4.7 In delivering against both our ambition and the vision we will set ourselves, we need to refresh our **High-Level Goals**.
- 4.8 To start this process, we have set out **ten High-Level Goals** overleaf which we consider will, if delivered against successfully, enable us to ensure that this LECP will be an instrument of positive change. We consider these goals to be stretching but also achievable and realistic. We are committed to achieving them through the **delivery of the objectives and related outcomes** we set out in the following section of this statement.

**Goal 1: To ensure our actions and interventions contribute positively to the overarching objective of addressing the current climate crisis and supporting Ireland to achieve its climate goals and obligations**

**Goal 2: To build a resilient business base and support businesses to grow, be enterprising and take advantage of new opportunities**

**Goal 3: To realise the economic and social value of Kilkenny's heritage, tourism and cultural reputation and offer**

**Goal 4: To ensure our rural economy and communities are supported to grow sustainably**

**Goal 5: To increase the number of economically active people in the County by ensuring that every working age resident who wants to work can enhance their educational qualifications and achieve the skills required**

**Goal 6: To grow the number of graduates working in County Kilkenny**

**Goal 7: To reduce inequalities and promote the importance of health and wellbeing**

**Goal 8: To reduce the number of people living in deprivation and promote community development, diversity and social inclusion**

**Goal 9: To develop increased local capacity, by improving targeting of social investment through increased engagement and participation with local community groups to improve community facilities, supports and services**

**Goal 10: To improve our housing offer to ensure that our residents are accommodated in housing that meets their individual housing needs and that we have a housing offer capable of responding to changing levels of demand**

## 5. Sustainable Community and Economic Objectives and Desired Outcomes

- 5.1 Within this section we take each of the proposed High-Level Goals and identify one or more objectives. These objectives, where appropriate, start to introduce the potential intended by integrating potential related outcomes against which progress will be monitored and measured. It is the intention to make these outcomes more specific and targeted as the LECP progresses in its development, directly aligning them to attributed actions within the Implementation Plan.
- 5.2 The High-Level Goals are categorised, where relevant, to enable a distinction between economic and sustainable community objectives. It is important to recognise, however, that economic development and local and community development, while distinct functions, are mutually supportive in building sustainable communities with strong local economies. Whilst a distinction is made, it is the case that many of the objectives will have areas of common interest and action.

**Goal 1: To ensure our actions and interventions contribute positively to the overarching objective of addressing the current climate crisis and supporting Ireland to achieve its climate goals and obligations, *we will...***

**Objective 1a:** implement the Council's Climate Change Adaptation Strategy (2019 – 2024) and a future Climate Action Plan due for publication in 2023, which will set out how the local authority intend to reduce the carbon emissions associated with the services we deliver by at least 7% per annum and by 51% by 2030

**Objective 1b:** support the commitment underpinning the ISO5001 certification to deliver a 50% improvement in the energy efficiency target over the ten years from 2021 and elevate take-up of grants available to improve energy efficiency or the installation of renewable energy technologies

**Objective 1c:** proactively support measures associated with the Circular Economy to the benefit of businesses and residents in the County

## Economic Objectives

**Goal 2: To build a resilient business base and support businesses to grow, be enterprising and take advantage of new opportunities, we will...**

**Objective 2a:** support the growth of existing and emerging higher-value sectors within our economy, including engineering, health, design, ICT, Green Tech and fintech companies to create increased economies of scale and realise the benefits associated with agglomeration

**Objective 2b:** facilitate entrepreneurship and innovation by providing support and infrastructure to our businesses with strong ambitions for expansion and growth and enabling them to increase their scale and resilience

**Objective 2c:** ensure it contributes proportionately to the growth of the region and maximises its international reach by improving the attractiveness of Kilkenny as a place to do business

**Goal 3: To realise the economic and social value of Kilkenny's heritage, growing tourism and cultural reputation and offer, we will...**

**Objective 3a:** elevate Kilkenny into a 'must visit' experience and balance the visitor experience through an expanded offer, which encourages our visitors to stay longer and explore more of our County and heritage

**Objective 3b:** support sustainable growth in businesses in the tourist and creative and design sectors, ensuring representation of the latter more broadly across the County

**Objective 3c:** ensure communities get the maximum benefit from improvements to the cultural life of the City and County

**Goal 4: To ensure our rural economy and communities are supported to grow sustainably, we will...**

**Objective 4a:** sustain quality of life and services within our rural towns and villages to realise their potential

**Goal 5: To increase the number of economically active people in the County by ensuring that every working age resident who wants to work can enhance their educational qualifications and achieve the skills required, we will...**

**Objective 5a:** work with our businesses to ensure they have a labour-force which has the flexibility to respond to changing skill-based requirements, including those arising from new emerging sectors

**Objective 5b:** continue to support improvements in educational attainment, with a particular focus on third level educational attainment

**Goal 6: To grow the number of graduates working in County Kilkenny, we will...**

**Objective 6a:** capitalise on existing and planned investment which has delivered Ireland's newest Technological University (SETU) by making links between our business community, the university and graduates

**Objective 6b:** ensure a greater share of all graduates can obtain their first job in the County

## **Sustainable Community Objectives**

**Goal 7: To reduce inequalities and promote the importance of health and wellbeing, we will...**

**Objective 7a:** focus on addressing the wider social determinants of health – the circumstances in which people are born, grow, live, work and age – to create economic, social, culture, recreation and sport opportunities and the physical environment that will foster improved healthy living

**Objective 7b:** support improvements to mental health, including a pro-active approach to recognising the importance of wellbeing, environmental context and encouraging creativity

**Goal 8: To reduce the number of people living in deprivation and promote community development, diversity and social inclusion, we will...**

**Objective 8a:** dedicate targeted resources and integrated approaches to those areas where issues of deprivation and poverty are concentrated

**Objective 8b:** promote and support intercultural awareness and diversity, equality of opportunity, people living with a disability, integration and minority groups through meaningful engagement, community development principles and approaches

**Goal 9: To develop increased local capacity, by improving targeting of social investment through increased engagement and participation with local community groups to improve community facilities, supports and services, we will...**

**Objective 9a:** respond positively to the implications of a changing age profile and an increasing associated risk of individuals becoming socially excluded

**Objective 9b:** learn from successes in broadening participation through the circumstances faced during 2020 /21 but also acknowledge and address examples where specific groups remain discouraged or lack confidence to engage within their communities

**Objective 9c:** identify, define, and report on community needs and capacity

**Goal 10: To improve our housing offer to ensure that our residents are accommodated in housing that meets their individual housing needs and that we have a housing offer capable of responding to changing levels of demand, we will...**

**Objective 10a:** work to address the consequences of supply falling short of demand including helping those in most acute need and ensuring that people can live near where they work and benefit from sustainable mobility options

**Objective 10b:** be proactive in the face of fluctuating and emerging demand pressures presenting themselves in Ireland and needing accommodation

## 6. Next Steps

- 6.1 As is clear from Figure 1.1 of this report we are at the start of a journey to develop our new LECP. In undertaking this journey, we value the role that stakeholders and our communities have played in driving forward the actions set out in our previous LECP.
- 6.2 In order to build on the successes to date and ensure that our new LECP provides a valuable resource across our business and resident communities, we are seeking feedback and opinion on the High-Level Goals and objectives we have set out within this statement.
- 6.3 A comprehensive process of engagement will commence in summer 2022 to maximise the breadth and number of people engaged in the process. This will include:
- Virtual and in-person workshops;
  - A county wide online survey; and
  - Wider engagement with stakeholders
- 6.4 We will then take time to collate and review the feedback we have received. This will be used to identify an overarching vision to frame our refined High-Level Goals and Sustainability Objectives within a draft version of our LECP.
- 6.5 This draft LECP will be presented to both the Municipal districts and the Regional Assemblies to ensure consistency with their Plans and Strategies. A final version will be prepared responding to comments through this process and presented to the Local Authority for approval.
- 6.6 On approval we will develop an Implementation Plan that will set out actions to deliver against the agreed Goals, objectives and outcomes. This in turn will be subjected to a process of internal audit and review before being agreed.
- 6.7 It is currently anticipated that the LECP framework will be launched publicly in April 2023, with this timetable designed to allow for and maximise the process of engagement.
- 6.8 The LECP will be kept under review through detailed monitoring. This will ensure that it stays alive to changing economic and societal changes as well as wider national agendas and insight provided through the constant release of new data and information.

**Turley**  
1 New York Street  
Manchester  
M1 4HD

T 0161 233 7676

**Turley**



Kilkenny County Council  
Comhairle Chontae Chill Chainnigh

## **Appendix 2: Stakeholder letter**

## Delivered by mail

29<sup>th</sup> August 2022

Dear [name]

I am getting in touch with you on behalf of Kilkenny County Council regarding the preparation of a new Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) and inviting your business to submit your feedback.

The plan will set out for the period 2023 – 2028, the objectives and actions we believe are needed to promote and support the economic development and the local and community development of County Kilkenny. As part of our community consultation, we would like to hear your views on our 10 draft high-level goals and the sustainable community and economic objectives set out within the Socio-Economic Statement (see attached), alongside your desired outcomes and vision for Kilkenny.

### How can I help?

Currently we are undertaking a baseline online survey which people can respond to at [www.yourkilkennylecp.ie](http://www.yourkilkennylecp.ie), which will close for responses on Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> September. We would be grateful if you could complete this survey on behalf of your organisation and share amongst your network and colleagues to help inform the plan.

### Next steps?

We will also be hosting an online workshop with [community/economic] stakeholders from across County Kilkenny on **[Monday 19<sup>th</sup>/Monday 26<sup>th</sup>] September** from 14:00 to 16:00.

We would like to invite you, and your organisation to this event and would appreciate your sharing this event with any colleagues who may wish to participate in helping us develop the draft plan for Kilkenny. Importantly, anyone who wishes to attend must register via <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZMkcO2vpzMqHdI0tZoezJnkRcw5eYJ3cwyD> in advance of the workshop.

### Public Workshops

A series of online workshops and one in-person public consultation event will also be taking place, as follows:

#### Online Workshops

- Castlecomer (virtual event) – Friday 7th October, 11:00-13:00  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZckdemorjlpHtGUEQT8DUblwib61WE7PYHN>
- Callan-Thomastown (virtual event) – Monday 10th October, 14:00-16:00  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZUrcOGqrDkpHtcgH12IPT6KOEBrxSlPexZT>
- Piltown (virtual event) – Wednesday 12th October, 14:00-16:00  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZwuce2trT4jGt0zDloYcxGuNZTZOkRQNivo>

#### In-person event

- Kilkenny City (Springhill Court Hotel, Waterford Road, Kilkenny, R95 NX32) – Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> October, 19:00-21:00 [www.yourkilkennylecp.ie](http://www.yourkilkennylecp.ie)

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at [contact@yourkilkennylecp.ie](mailto:contact@yourkilkennylecp.ie)

Yours sincerely,

Ryan Simpson

## **Appendix 3: Community Stakeholder Workshop notes**

## COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP (19th September 2022)

### **Ronan Ryan, KCC Estate Management**

- Overhaul of the planning system probably needed to deliver outcomes required.

### **Sheila Donnelly, Newpark Family Resource Centre**

- Housing outcomes need to be actioned quickly.
- Outcome from Goal 6, we should have a higher retention of people who up-skill in Kilkenny to stay in Kilkenny.

### **Martin Rochford, Environmental PPN**

- Pleased to see it is goal 1 and overarching, but feels its omission from the other goals, it will be overlooked. Particularly Economy Development and Tourism should contain a mention of 'sustainable development', on the latter tourism shouldn't bring more cars to the county.
- Transport is omitted from the goals. Should transport be included, this should be seen through a sustainability lens.
- Goal 6 should also be about apprenticeships.

### **Martin Butler**

- Climate change has a greater effect on different sectors, such as poorer people in society.
- Social inclusion should be an overarching theme like climate change.

### **Nicola**

- Sport mentioned just once under sports and wellbeing. Sport events also has effects on other goals, such as tourism, supporting businesses and community development.
- Support to prepare funding bids which increasingly need to demonstrate sustainability. In some sectors this is harder than others.
- As an outcome from housing, the infrastructure for sport should be considered as part of the planning process.

### **Josephine Coyne, KCC Library**

- Outcomes need to be achievable and measurable.

### **Janette Boran, Healthy Ireland coordinator**

- Worried that 10a will raise expectations beyond what is deliverable.

## **Appendix 4: Economic Stakeholder Workshop notes**

## ECONOMIC STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP (26th September 2022)

### **Cllr Maria Dollard**

- Climate action is most important for her. All the goals need to come together, not one over the other.
- Some concepts are not well explained, like circular economy. They don't know what that does.
- We should take advantage of remote working jobs which are available nationally.
- This is all predicated on housing, if people can't afford to live in Kilkenny.
- The plan needs to incorporate people disabilities.
- The goals should mutually benefit each other. Priority is to attract a third-level presence. Housing is essential, it's like Maslow's hierarchy of needs.
- Kilkenny is a 'World Crafts Region' and doesn't capitalise on this.

### **Declan Rice, KLP**

- Surprised by climate change's position in ranking.
- We must establish relevance in the goals, how will people prioritise issues that perhaps don't affect them directly. "They are not going to get the juices flowing" "It has to get people excited"
- Community development is a priority, such as lack of services (petrol stations for example) which are disappearing.
- For supporting businesses, what real support is there?
- Can't take for granted that SETU would actually be a benefit. The county doesn't necessarily get the control you expect. Perhaps attract a national centre for art and design.

### **Aidan Shine (South East Innovation Centre)**

- Struck with the breadth and variety in the plan, but drawn to goals 2 and 6.
- Need to acknowledge that different businesses need different support. Some want to grow and expand outside of Kilkenny. For some that is not the aim. Acknowledge the differing size of businesses.
- Bringing SETU won't completely solve 'brain drain' but it'll help keep graduates, which is needed for start-ups.

### **Fiona O'Neill (Rep of social inclusion PPN)**

- Every other goal needs to make reference to inclusion, not just goal 8.

### **Pat Crotty, Kilkenny City Centre Task Force**

- “motherhood and apple pie”, “you could copy and paste this for every county in Ireland”, it needs to be Kilkenny orientated.
- Worries about highly supportive surveys, as higher-level goals may give KCC a carte blanche to do as they please. This consultation could supersede consultation further down the line.
- Couple of things Kilkenny has already, such as tourism and agri-business, so let’s build around that.
- If we’re going to maintain our second place in domestic tourism, we need to train hospitality staff in the winters. Worried that he can’t staff his businesses mid-week during the winter.
- Not keen for us to start on new stuff, let’s focus on what we have.

### **Siobhan O’Brein, ETB**

- Employment and tourism are probably the same thing in Kilkenny.
- On goal 5, not everyone is ready to go to graduate level, perhaps target training for levels 4/5 in training. We should fulfil those needs for service sector, which doesn’t come through goal 6.

### **Claire Jackman**

- Wants to run a level 4 tourism training course, because that plays to Kilkenny’s strengths in tourism.

### **Richard Hickey, Ireland South East Development Office**

- Goal 2 and 6 cross over.
- Goal 6 is very high level, what does ‘capitalising’ mean?
- Capitalising on the SETU should mean using research there to support the county’s economic strengths, like tourism and arts, such as technology’s increasing role within tourism, ie virtual reality. SETU should replicate other colleges.

### **Martin Rochford, Environment PPN**

- If climate change and sustainability isn’t made explicit in other goals, it won’t be actioned upon. Needs mention in goals 2 & 3 specifically.
- 7% reduction isn’t good enough, needs to be 8% or 9%. We’re already 2 years into the 10 year period to cut by 7%.

### **Edmond Connolly, South East Regional Skills Forum**

- Goal 6 should be ‘third-level’, not graduate as this is exclusionary. Training centre in Waterford is something to emulate, Kilkenny doesn’t have one and KCC should set this as an objective.
- In Goal 2, recruitment is held back by housing.

- Agriculture is absent and should be included.
- Tourism is changing to a focus on active/outdoors tourism which doesn't have mention.

#### **Rosemary Steen, Design and Crafts Council**

- Craft and design should be better exploited. Need to expand the multi-use community facility in Abbey Quarter to do this.
- Already started doing Level 8 qualifications in Thomastown and thinks this should be a model.
- Need to build international links to support businesses, something that she felt was missing.
- Manufacturing hub, which businesses can take advantage of economies of scale through shared use.

#### **John Hurley, Chamber of Commerce**

- Businesses under great strain already and will be at a loss of capacity to take on anything the LECP comes out with.

#### **Martina Comerford, KCC Tourism Officer**

- Name the share of the economy that is associated with tourism, would help base the second goal.
- Tourism numbers may become less important as an indicator. Measuring success could be better determined by how sustainable tourism is or how much is spent from tourism.

## **Appendix 5: Workshop presentation**

# Kilkenny Socio-Economic Statement 2023 – 2028 (Draft)

*Stakeholder Workshop*

*19<sup>th</sup> September 2022*

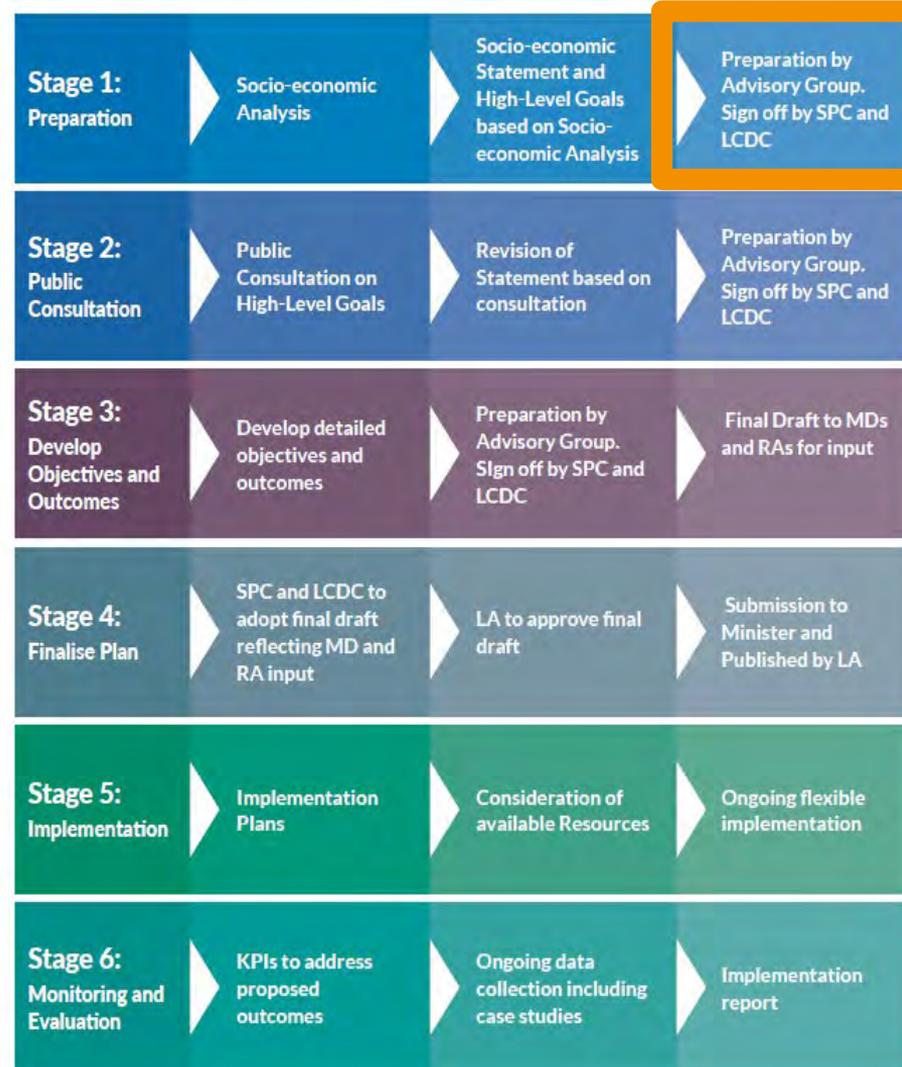
# Structure

- Setting the Context
- Socio-Economic Highlights & SWOT
- High-Level Goals and Objectives
- Next Steps

# Setting the Context

# The Process

- New 2021 National Guidelines
- Opportunity to reflect on evaluation of existing LECP (2016 – 2021)
- Subsequent Public Consultation process will be used to:
  - Define a Vision
  - Refine High-Level Goals / Objectives
  - Establish measurable outcomes



# National, Regional and Local Context

- Local Government Reform Act 2014
  - LECP to promote and support economic development and the local and community development
  - Local authority in partnership with other economic and community stakeholders
- Support process for national transformation:
  - Project Ireland 2040
  - National Planning Framework / National Development Plan
  - Housing for All
  - Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Bill / Climate Action Plans
  - National Recovery and Resilience Plan
  - Our Rural Future – Rural Development Plan
- Enable contribution to regional ambitions – South East Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy
- Consistent with County Development Plan / Corporate Plan
- Linkages to other existing and emerging local strategies



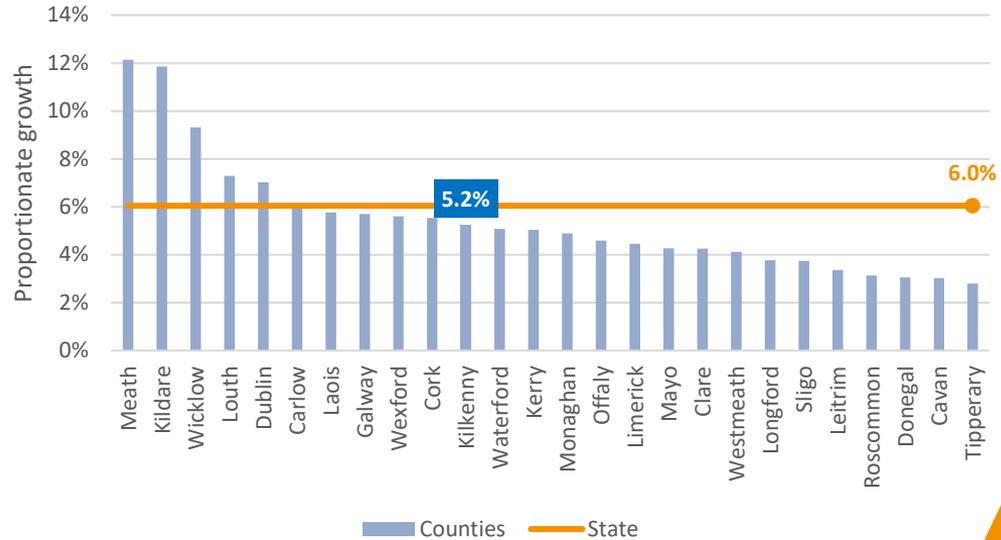
# Socio-Economic Highlights & SWOT



# Housing

**41,279**  
dwellings,  
rising by 5.2%  
since 2016

Circa **1,619**  
households on the  
Housing List in 2021,  
lowest since 2010  
But  
**300** households  
reported homeless  
(April 2022)



# Local Economy

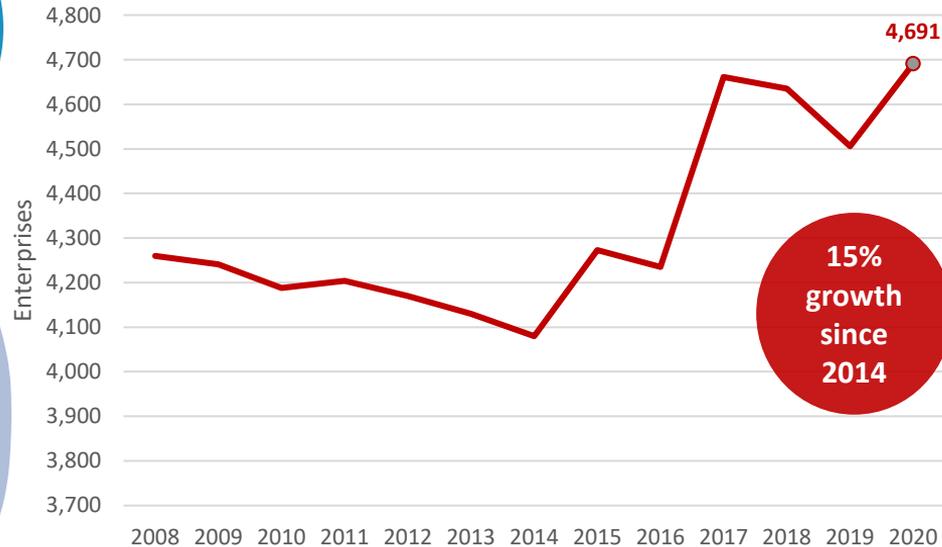
Some **93%** of the County's businesses employ **fewer than 10 people**

Only **6 businesses** employ more than **250 people**

**26%** in construction sector  
**19%** in wholesale and retail  
**16%** in professional, scientific or technical  
Latter has **grown most strongly since 2014**

**4,691 enterprises** in its private business economy in 2020

**727,000 tourists in 2019**  
Ireland's second most popular domestic short-break destination



# Labour force

2016 Census showed **declining** levels of **lower educational** attainment and **increasing** levels of **third level** educational attainment

County still lags **behind** state average for **third level education** (36% / 40%)

Establishment of the **South East Technological University** in May 2022

**Younger working age population (aged 20-34) shrank between 2011 and 2016**  
Likely to have continued given wider population trends

# Health and Wellbeing

Some **89%** of the County's residents reported that they were in **good or very good health** (2016 Census)  
**Surpasses state average (87%)**

Circa **13%** of residents reported they had had at **least one disability** (2016 Census)  
**Slightly below state average (14%)**

Nearly **half (46%)** of those reporting disabilities had **difficulty with pain, breathing or another chronic illness**

**People with disabilities were less than half as likely to work as the general population (22/53%)**  
Circa 15% lived in social housing compared to 9% of the general population

# Deprivation, Poverty and Social Exclusion

Despite improvement since 2011 in 2016 deprivation levels in Kilkenny continue to exceed the state average -**0.3 classified measure of affluence as 'marginally below average'**

In total there are **2,763 people** living within Small Areas which fall within the category of **'Very Deprived'**

With lone parents generally at higher risk of poverty and social exclusion of note **4,260 households led by lone parents** (2016 Census)

**General reduction in the number of crimes recorded**  
Circa 4,370 crimes recorded in 2020 compared to 5,140 in 2019

# Climate Change and Energy

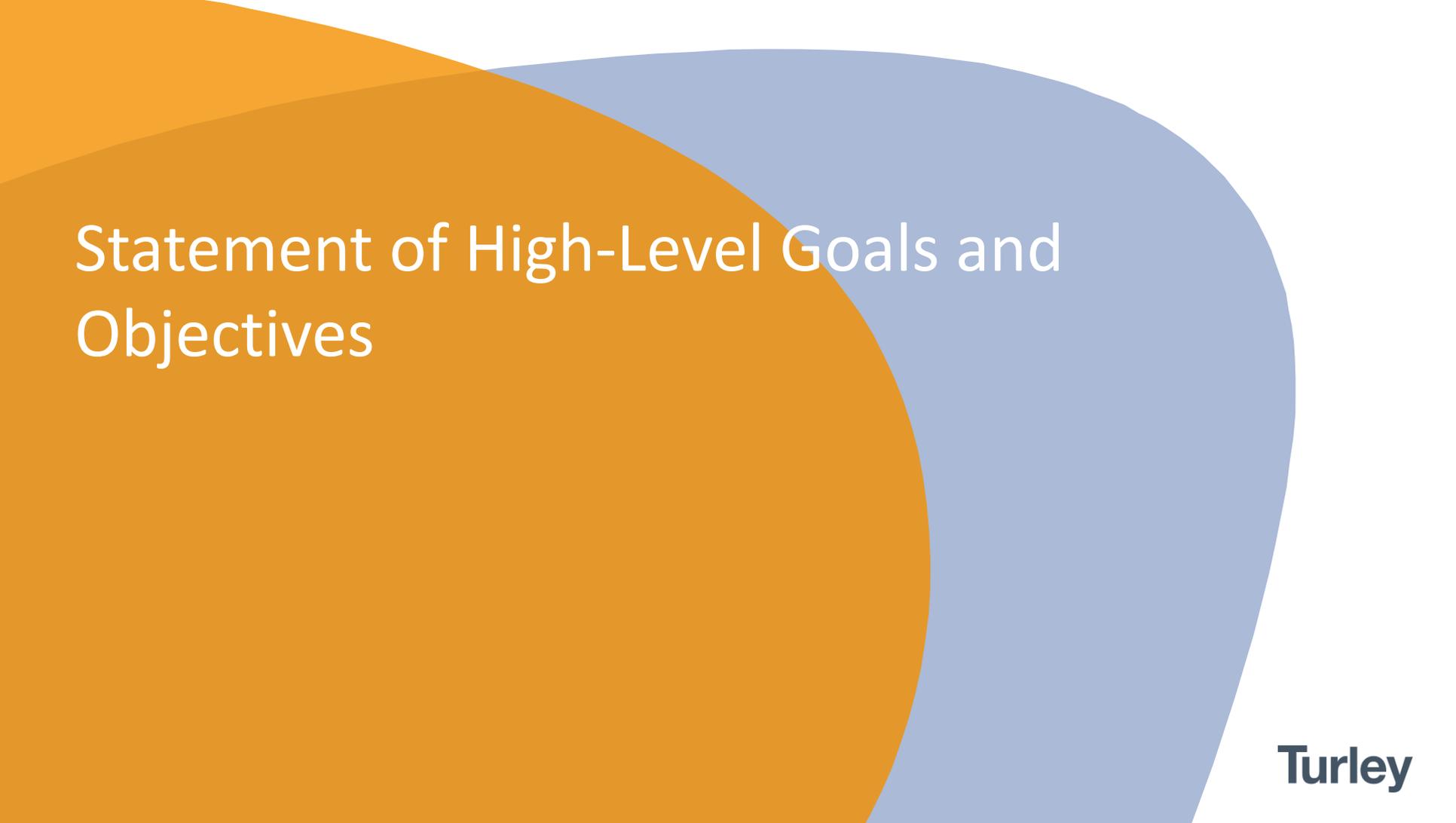
**Council's Climate Change Adaptation Strategy** describes how climate change is already having a significant impact on the County

Over the decade to 2019, the County recorded **increases in both the number of days with heavy rainfall and the number of flooding events**

**Some 565,730 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> emitted in 2006** (last recorded data)

# SWOT

Strengths and Opportunities	Weaknesses and Threats
<p><b>Central location</b> within the South East Strategic Planning Area with <b>good road and rail links</b> to Dublin and elsewhere</p>	<p><b>Slowing population growth</b> with relatively little immigration</p>
<p><b>A popular tourist destination</b>, hosting numerous festivals and events with the potential to increase the length of visitor stays and their contribution to our local economy</p>	<p><b>A diminishing number of young adult residents</b> with this having an impact on labour-availability as well as the demographic make-up of many of our communities outside of Kilkenny City</p>
<p><b>A track record of partnership work</b>, based on integrated delivery mechanisms</p>	<p><b>A continued need for social and affordable housing</b> and evidence of homelessness</p>
<p><b>Established community networks</b> and voluntary sector</p>	<p><b>Overreliance on construction and retail sectors</b>, with room for greater diversity</p>
<p><b>A growing number of private businesses</b></p>	<p>A lack of certainty around how <b>tourism</b> will recover from Covid-19</p>
<p><b>An increasingly skilled population</b>, set to benefit from the newly established South East Technological University</p>	<p><b>Third level education attainment</b> continues to lag behind the state average</p>
<p><b>A healthy pipeline of homes with planning permission</b> suggesting that the County will be well placed to sustain the comparatively positive recent growth of its housing stock</p>	<p><b>Persistent deprivation</b> at a level that exceeds the state average, with evidence of clear concentrations of more acute deprivation</p>
<p>A <b>rural economy</b> that is established and growing in an outstanding natural setting</p>	<p><b>Climate change</b> is already having a significant impact in the County</p>



# Statement of High-Level Goals and Objectives

# Setting out our ambition

- Acknowledge last few years defined by unprecedented challenge
- Responsibility to build resilience
- Address inter-generational challenge of climate change
- Opportunity to reflect a new **ambition** to:

*...ensure that every resident, community, visitor, employee and employer in Kilkenny is helped by this LECP to realise their potential and to make their best contribution to enable a positive future for our County over the lifetime of this Plan and beyond*

*Kilkenny County Council is committed to working with the people of Kilkenny to develop sustainable, connected, economically thriving and proud communities with the consideration of climate change embedded into all of our policies and services*

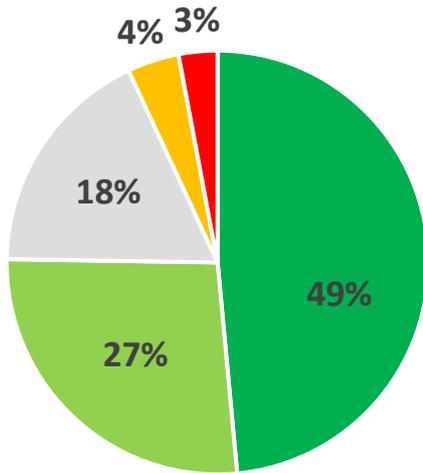
Kilkenny Corporate Plan (2019 – 2024)  
(Mission Statement)



# Goal 1

*To ensure our actions and interventions contribute positively to the overarching objective of addressing the current climate crises and supporting Ireland to achieve its climate goals and obligations, we will...*

## Objective A

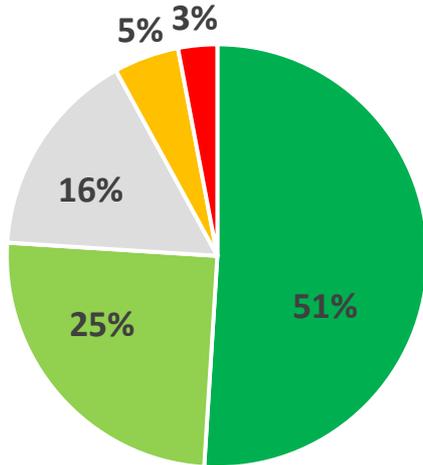


*“implement the Council’s Climate Change Adaptation Strategy (2019 – 2024) and a future Climate Action Plan due for publication in 2023, which will set out how the local authority intend to reduce the carbon emissions associated with the services we delivery by at least 7% per annum and by 51% by 2030”*

# Goal 1

*To ensure our actions and interventions contribute positively to the overarching objective of addressing the current climate crises and supporting Ireland to achieve its climate goals and obligations, we will...*

## Objective B

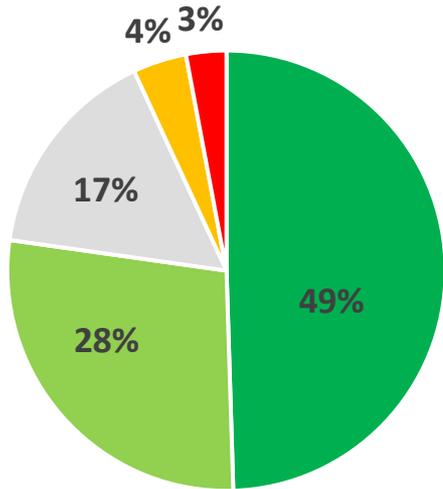


*“support the commitment underpinning the ISO5001 certification to deliver a 50% improvement in the energy efficiency target over the ten years from 2021 and elevate take-up of grants available to improve energy efficiency or the installation of renewable energy technologies”*

# Goal 1

*To ensure our actions and interventions contribute positively to the overarching objective of addressing the current climate crises and supporting Ireland to achieve its climate goals and obligations, we will...*

## Objective C

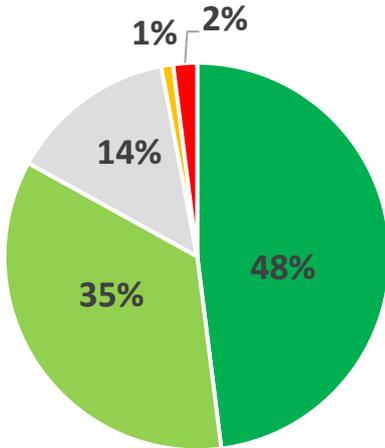


*“proactively support measures associated with the Circular Economy to the benefit of businesses and residents in the County”*

## Goal 2

*To build a resilient business base and support businesses to grow, be enterprising and take advantage of new opportunities, we will...*

### Objective A

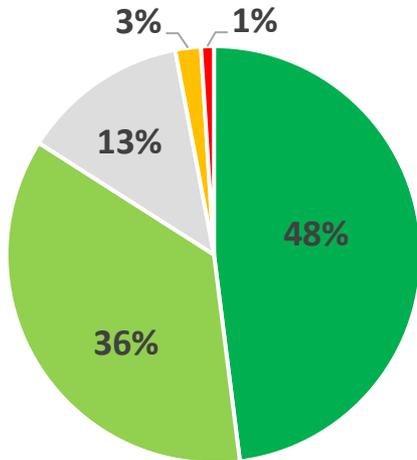


*“support the growth of existing and emerging higher-value sectors within our economy, including engineering, design, ICT, Green Tech and fintech companies to create increased economies of scale and the benefits associated with agglomeration”*

## Goal 2

*To build a resilient business base and support businesses to grow, be enterprising and take advantage of new opportunities, we will...*

### Objective B

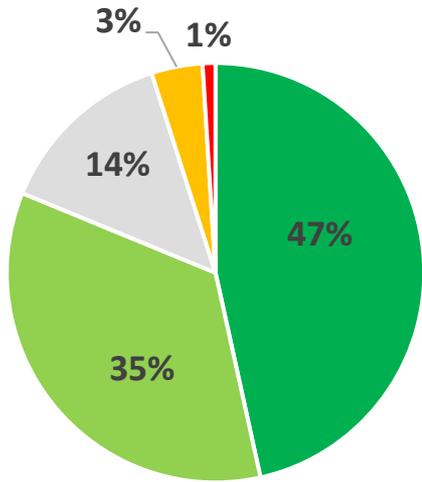


*“facilitate entrepreneurship and innovation by providing support and infrastructure to our businesses with strong ambitions for expansion and growth and enabling them to increase their scale and resilience”*

## Goal 2

*To build a resilient business base and support businesses to grow, be enterprising and take advantage of new opportunities, we will...*

### Objective C

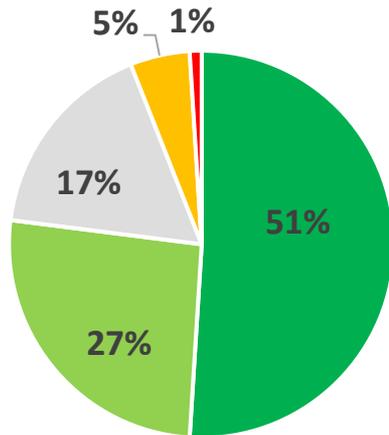


*“ensure it contributes proportionately to the growth of the region and maximises its international reach by improving the attractiveness of Kilkenny as a place to do business”*

## Goal 3

*To realise the economic and social value of Kilkenny's heritage, growing tourism and cultural reputation and offer, we will...*

### Objective A

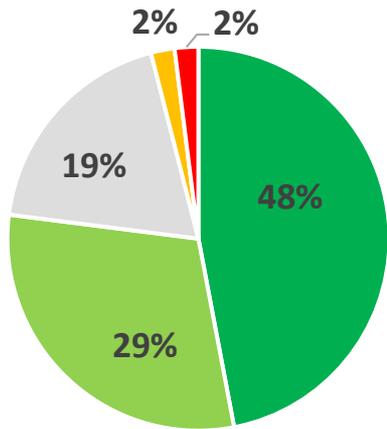


*“elevate Kilkenny into a ‘must visit’ experience and balance the visitor experience through an expanded offer, which encourages our visitors to stay longer and explore more of our County and heritage Objective 3c: ensure communities get the maximum benefit from improvements to the cultural life of the City and County”*

# Goal 3

*To realise the economic and social value of Kilkenny’s heritage, growing tourism and cultural reputation and offer, we will...*

## Objective B

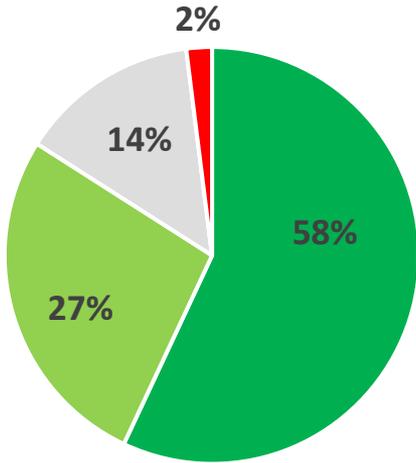


*“support sustainable growth in businesses in the tourist and creative and design sectors, ensuring representation of the latter more broadly across the County”*

# Goal 3

*To realise the economic and social value of Kilkenny’s heritage, growing tourism and cultural reputation and offer, we will...*

## Objective C

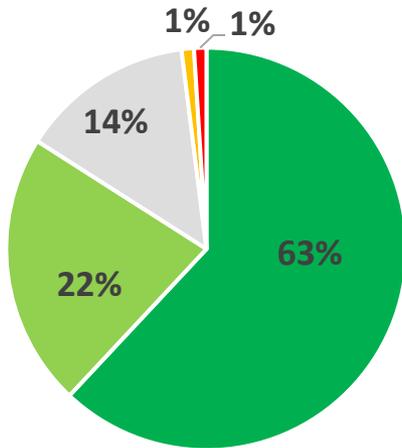


*“ensure communities get the maximum benefit from improvements to the cultural life of the City and County”*

# Goal 4

To ensure our rural economy and communities are supported to grow sustainably, we will...

## Objective A

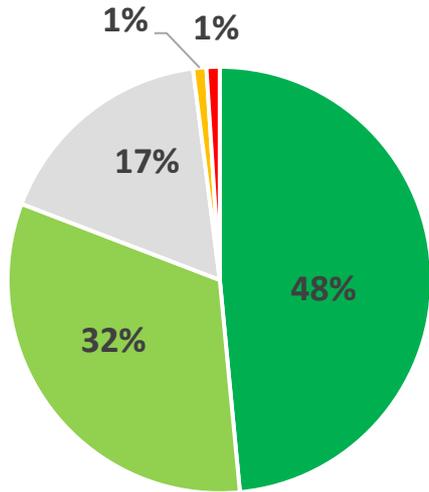


*“sustain quality of life and services within our rural towns and villages to realise their potential”*

## Goal 5

*To increase the number of economically active people in the County by ensuring that every working age resident who wants to work can enhance their educational qualifications and achieve the skills required, we will...*

### Objective A

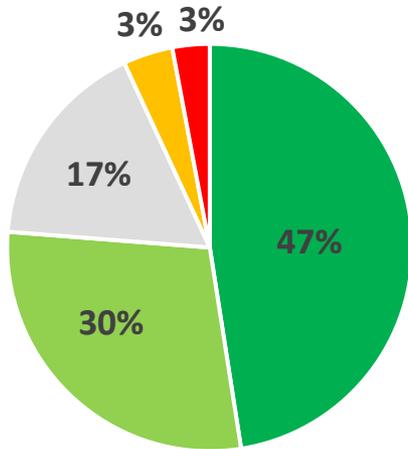


*“work with our businesses to ensure they have a labour-force which has the flexibility to respond to changing skill-based requirements, including those arising from new emerging sectors”*

## Goal 5

*To increase the number of economically active people in the County by ensuring that every working age resident who wants to work can enhance their educational qualifications and achieve the skills required, we will...*

### Objective B

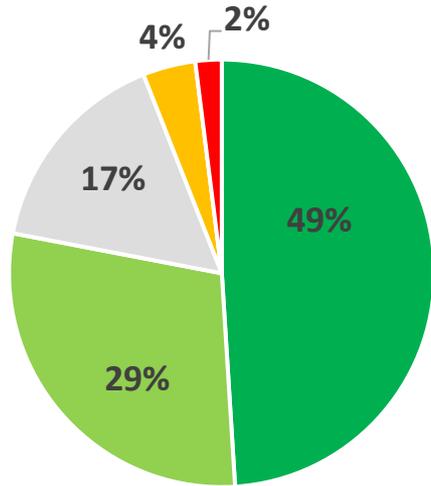


*“continue to support improvements in educational attainment, with a particular focus on third level educational attainment”*

# Goal 6

To grow the number of graduates working in County Kilkenny, we will...

## Objective A

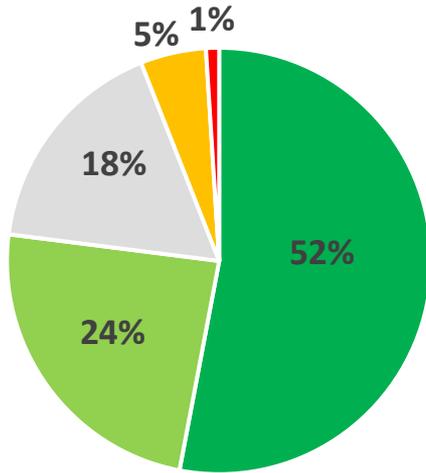


*“capitalise on existing and planned investment which has delivered Ireland’s newest Technological University – South East Technological University (SETU) by making links between our business community, the university and graduates”*

# Goal 6

To grow the number of graduates working in County Kilkenny, we will...

## Objective B

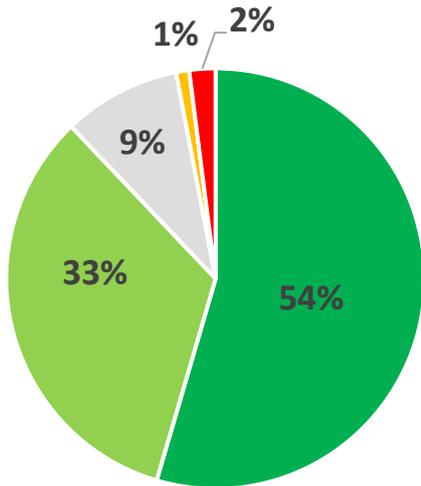


*“ensure a greater share of all graduates can obtain their first job in the County”*

# Goal 7

To reduce inequalities and promote the importance of health and wellbeing, we will...

## Objective A

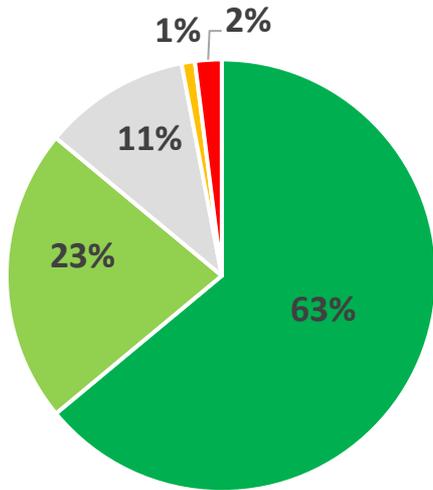


*“focus on addressing the wider social determinants of health – the circumstances in which people are born, grow, live, work and age – to create economic, social, culture, recreation and sport opportunities and the physical environment that will foster improved healthy living”*

# Goal 7

To reduce inequalities and promote the importance of health and wellbeing, we will...

## Objective B

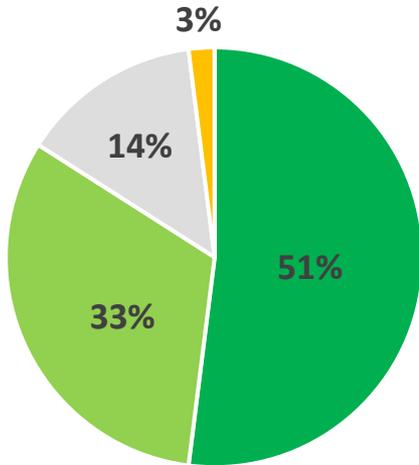


*“support improvements to mental health, including a pro-active approach to recognising the importance of well-being, environmental context and encouraging creativity”*

# Goal 8

*To reduce the number of people living in deprivation and promote community development, diversity and social inclusion, we will...*

## Objective A

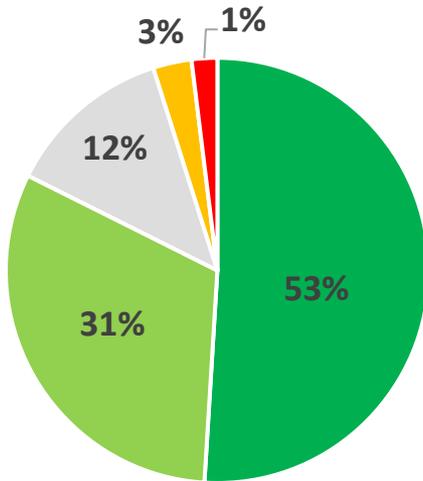


*“dedicate targeted resources and integrated approaches to those areas where issues of deprivation and poverty are concentrated”*

# Goal 8

To reduce the number of people living in deprivation and promote community development, diversity and social inclusion, we will...

## Objective B

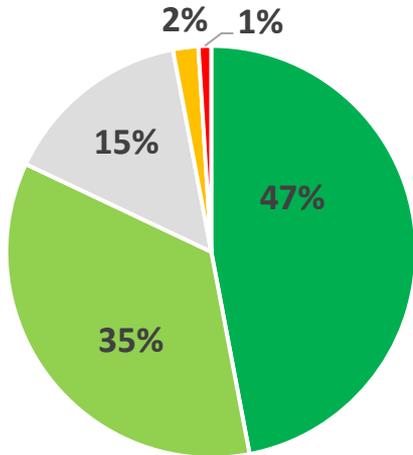


*“promote and support intercultural awareness and diversity, equality of opportunity, people living with a disability, integration and minority groups through meaningful engagement, community development principles and approaches”*

# Goal 9

To develop increased local capacity, by improving targeting of social investment through increased engagement and participation with local community groups to improve community facilities, supports and services, we will...

## Objective A

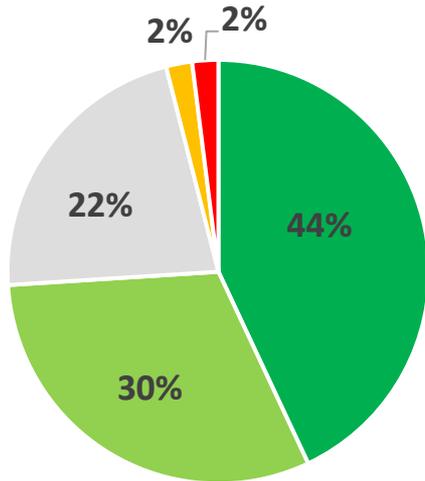


*“respond positively to the implications of a changing age profile and an increasing associated risk of individuals becoming socially excluded”*

# Goal 9

*To develop increased local capacity, by improving targeting of social investment through increased engagement and participation with local community groups to improve community facilities, supports and services, we will...*

## Objective B

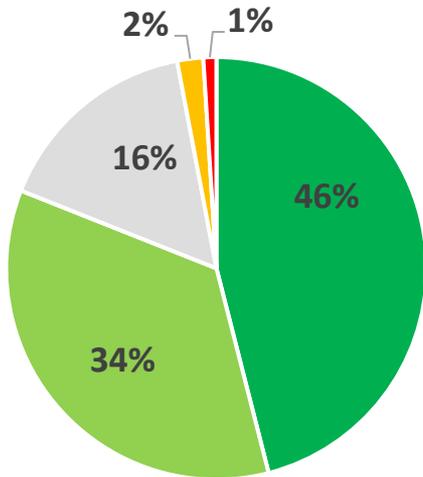


*“learn from successes in broadening participation through the circumstances faced during 2020 /21 but also acknowledge and address examples where specific groups remain discouraged or lack confidence to engage within their communities”*

# Goal 9

*To develop increased local capacity, by improving targeting of social investment through increased engagement and participation with local community groups to improve community facilities, supports and services, we will...*

## Objective C

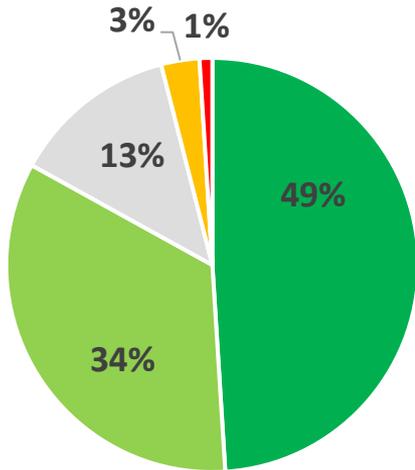


*“identify, define, and report on community needs and capacity”*

# Goal 10

*To improve our housing offer to ensure that our residents are accommodated in housing that meets their individual housing needs and that we have a housing offer capable of responding to changing levels of demand, we will...*

## Objective A

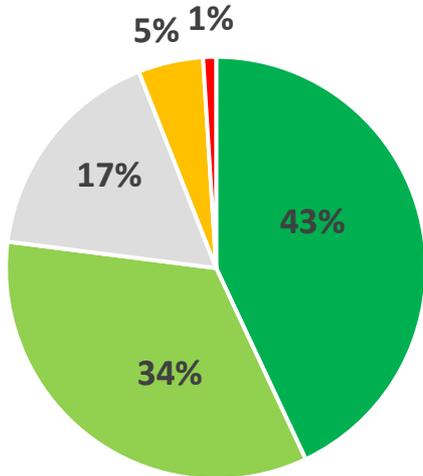


*“work to address the consequences of supply falling short of demand including helping those in most acute need and ensuring that people can live near where they work and benefit from sustainable mobility options”*

# Goal 10

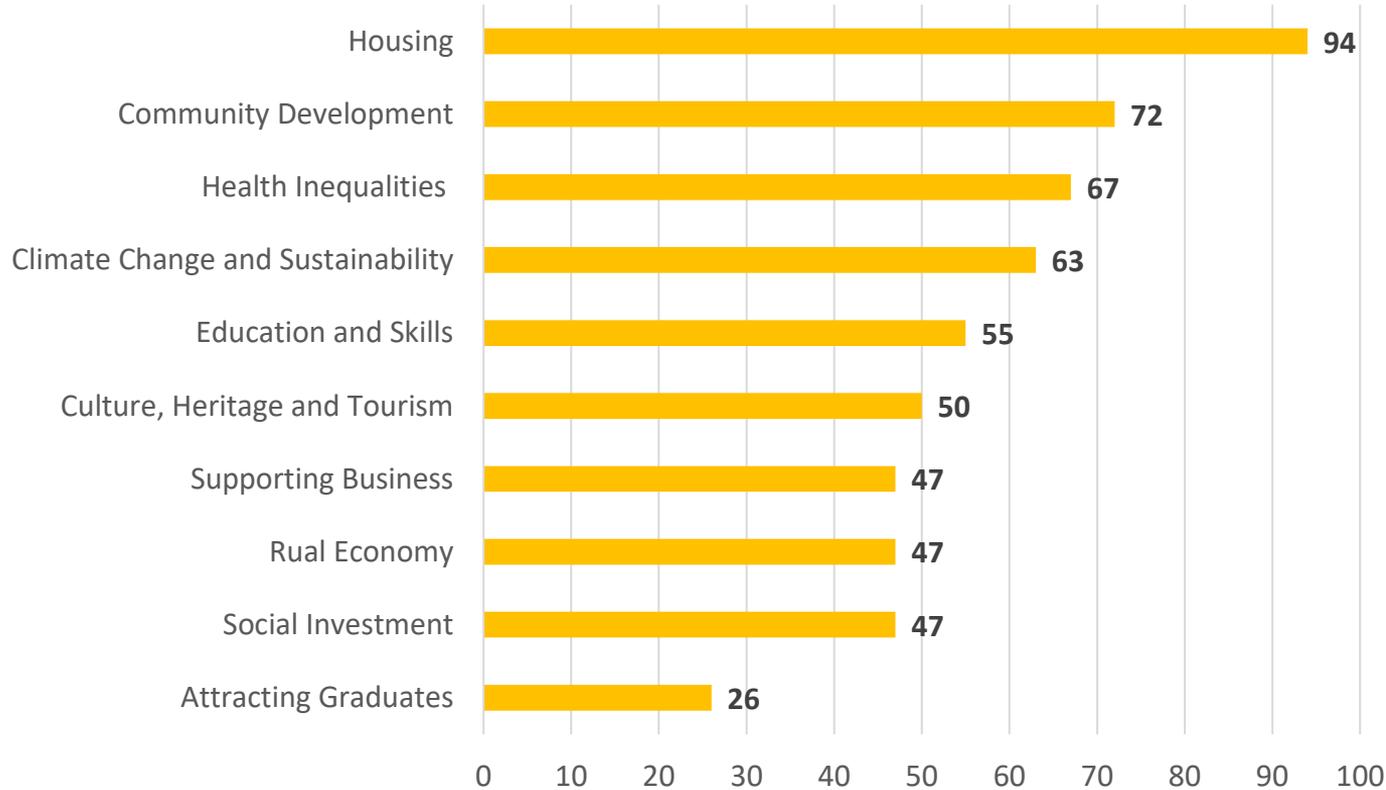
To improve our housing offer to ensure that our residents are accommodated in housing that meets their individual housing needs and that we have a housing offer capable of responding to changing levels of demand, we will...

## Objective B



*“be proactive in the face of fluctuating and emerging demand pressures presenting themselves in Ireland and needing accommodation”*

# Ranking Kilkenny's Goals



*no. respondents who consider each goal a priority for Kilkenny County*

## Your Comments

*“This is one of the biggest challenges, as attracting people to work and live in the county implies providing decent accommodation.”*

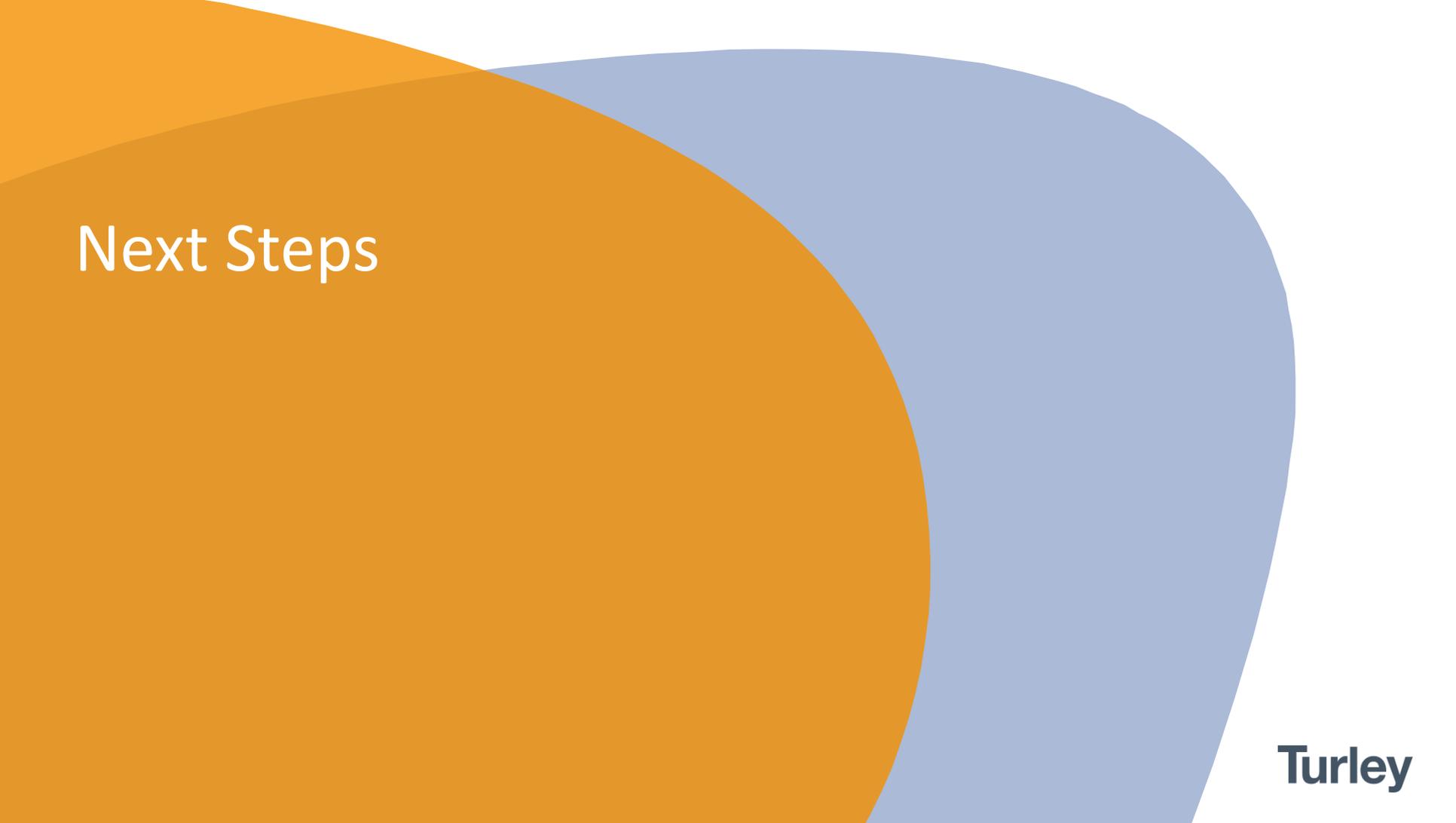
*“A growing population is good for overall economic activity”*

*“Work with communities to address their needs.”*

*“More direct focused community engagement and follow through actions in a short timeframe.”*

## Your Feedback

- What do you think of the goals for Kilkenny?
- What do you think of the objectives for Kilkenny?
- Which outcomes would you like to see delivered as a result of Kilkenny's LECP?



Next Steps

**Turley**

# Public Consultation

- Baseline survey running until **Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> September**.
- Hosting workshops with community and economic stakeholders on **Monday 19<sup>th</sup> September** and **Monday 26<sup>th</sup> September** respectively.
- Hosting public workshops in each municipal district (MD) in Kilkenny:
  - Kilkenny City on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> October
  - Castlecomer on Friday 7<sup>th</sup> October
  - Callan-Thomastown Monday 10<sup>th</sup> October
  - Piltown Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> October

## **Appendix 6: Workshop banners**

# Help us **shape a plan** for your future

Kilkenny County Council and the Kilkenny Local Community Development Committee want you to tell us about the opportunities and challenges you face, that affect your lives.

To inform the next Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) for the county we want you to share with us your vision for Kilkenny, feedback on our proposed goals and objectives, and help us establish the key outcomes we will deliver across 10 key areas:

-  Climate & Sustainability
-  Supporting Businesses
-  Culture, Heritage & Tourism
-  Rural Economy
-  Education & Skills
-  Attracting Graduates
-  Health Inequalities
-  Community Development
-  Social Investment
-  Housing

## What is the Kilkenny LECP?

Kilkenny County Council and the Kilkenny Local Community Development Committee has begun the process of preparing a new Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP). This Plan will build upon and replace the previous Plan, which covered the period 2016 – 2021.

The new LECP will set out, for the period 2023 – 2028, the objectives and actions we believe are needed to promote and support the economic and local community development of County Kilkenny.

As part of the first step to inform our new plan Kilkenny County Council have prepared a draft Socio-Economic Statement.

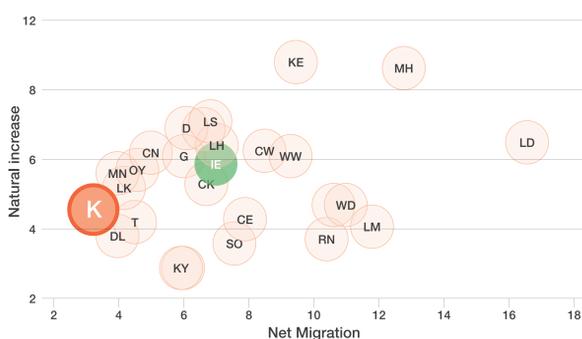
As part of our community consultation, we would like to hear your views on our 10 draft high level goals and the sustainable community and economic objectives set out within it, alongside your desired outcomes and vision for Kilkenny.

**Turley**

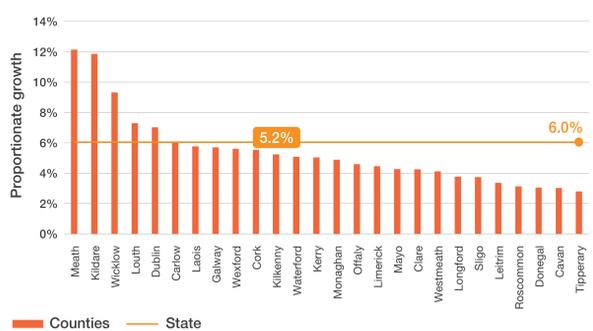
**LCDC**  
 Caisleán um Fhorbairt Pobail Aitiúil  
 Chill Chainnigh  
 Kilkenny Local Community Development  
 Committee

 Comhairle Chontae Chill Chainnigh  
 Kilkenny County Council

# Socio-economic Highlights



▲ Average Annual Natural Increase and Estimated Net Migration per 1,000 Residents (2016-22)



▲ Benchmarking Growth in Housing Stock (2016-22)

## Demographics

Some 103,685 people currently live in County Kilkenny, according to the preliminary findings of the 2022 Census. While the population has grown since the last Census in 2016, the rate of growth (4.5%) was the second lowest of the state’s 26 counties, marginally ahead of only County Donegal. The population of the state, in contrast, grew by some 7.6% over this period.

Circa 61% of the population growth recorded in County Kilkenny between Census years related to natural increase, as births outnumbered deaths. The rest was accounted for by net in-migration, albeit it is of note – and shown in the graph, where Kilkenny is labelled as “KK” – that the rate of net inward migration was relatively low when compared to other counties, based on a standardised rate per 1,000 residents.

The RSES introduces official projections, developed by the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI), which are based to 2016 but suggest that County Kilkenny could have as many as 110,000 residents by 2026. The Council has extrapolated this projection to estimate that there could subsequently be circa 111,077 residents in 2027, and it follows that there could be around 112,154 residents in 2028 – the final year to be covered by the new LECP – based on the same logic. This would make the population some 8.2% larger than it is in 2022.

## Housing

Residents lived in one of the 41,279 dwellings that existed throughout the County in 2022, with the housing stock having grown by circa 5.2% since 2016. This represents growth at a rate that exceeded all but ten of the state’s 26 counties, approaching the state average of 6.0%.

Circa 1,619 households were recorded on the County Kilkenny Housing List in 2021, having been approved for social housing support. This was the fewest since 2010, with the number of households on the list continuing to fall year-on-year over the last five years. Despite this positive trend nearly 300 households were reportedly homeless as of April 2022.

## Health and Wellbeing

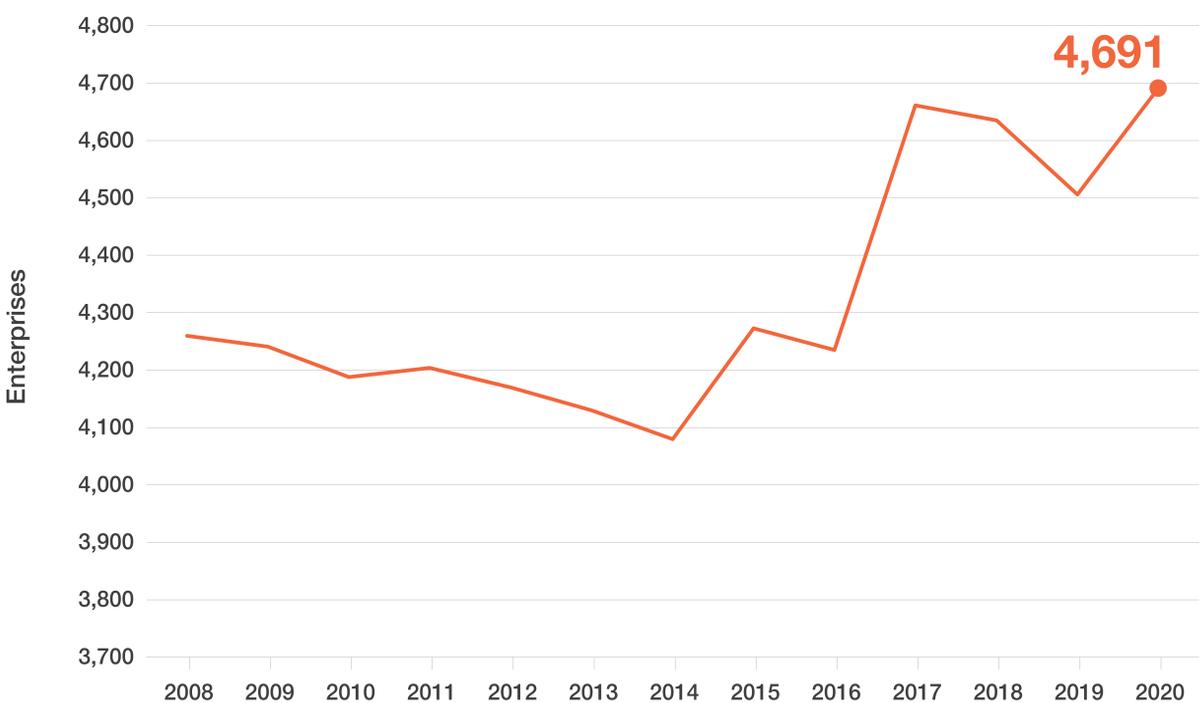
Some 89% of the County’s residents reported that they were in good or very good health at the 2016 Census, surpassing the state average of 87%. Less than 2% reported themselves to be in bad or very bad health. This was generally consistent with the findings of the preceding Census.

Circa 13% of residents reported that they had at least one disability as of 2016, falling slightly below the state average (14%). Over a third of these residents (37%) were aged 65 or above, while 66% were aged 45 or over.

Nearly half (46%) of those reporting disabilities had difficulty with pain, breathing or another chronic illness, with slightly fewer (43%) having difficulties with basic physical activities. One quarter had a learning difficulty.

People with disabilities were less than half as likely to work as the general population (22/53%) and less than half as likely to have access to a car or van (8/20%). Circa 15% lived in social housing compared to 9% of the general population.

# Local Economy



▲ Change in Number of Enterprises in County Kilkenny

## Local Economy

County Kilkenny had circa 4,691 enterprises in its private business economy in 2020, according to the Business Demography Survey. This was the most recorded in any year since at least 2008, having grown by some 15% from the low recorded in 2014. Kilkenny City is the 8th largest employer in the state and has an ambition to be the most liveable city in Ireland.

Some 93% of the County’s businesses employed fewer than ten people, slightly exceeding the state average of 92%. Only six businesses employed more than 250 people, such businesses being almost half as prevalent as seen nationally. This includes an under-representation of FDI businesses, with a key priority for Kilkenny being the strategic development of investment initiatives such as the Abbey Quarter and Belview Port so that the infrastructure is in place for FDI investment.

Over a quarter of the County’s businesses (26%) operated in the construction sector, which is proportionately larger than the state average (22%) and has grown its business base by some 20% since 2014. Nearly a fifth of businesses (19%) are in the wholesale and retail sector, which is likewise larger than it is nationally (17%) but has grown at a much slower rate of 5%. Roughly one sixth of the County’s businesses (16%) involve professional, scientific or technical activities, falling slightly short of the state average (17%) but notably growing by more than a quarter (26%) since 2014. No other one sector accounts for more than 8% of the County’s private businesses.

Nearly 3,500 people were employed in the County’s agriculture, forestry and fishing sector as of the 2016 Census, rising by around 3% since 2011. Recent decades have seen growth in the number of large farms, spanning more than 50 hectares, and a reduction in the number of small farms. Forests account for around 11% of the County’s useable land and the majority of this (82%) relates to commercial forestry, coming into maturity over the next twenty years.

The County attracted 727,000 tourists in 2019, the last complete year unaffected by Covid-19. This was relatively evenly split between domestic and international tourists, albeit with the former slightly more prevalent accounting for 53% of this total. Kilkenny was Ireland’s second most popular domestic short-break destination and the City supported a significant number of festivals and events. There is a strong pipeline of planning permissions for additional hotel rooms within the City, which if delivered will continue to grow the capacity of Kilkenny to accommodate increased numbers of tourists on overnight breaks.

County Kilkenny saw its younger working age population, aged 20 to 34, reduce over the five years to the 2016 Census. This also occurred across the state but at a slightly less pronounced rate (11/13%). Equivalent data from the 2022 Census is not yet available.

# Local Economy

## Deprivation, Poverty and Social Exclusion

County Kilkenny saw a dramatic increase in deprivation over the five years to 2011, following the economic collapse of 2008. A partial recovery occurred over the subsequent period to 2016, albeit deprivation levels continued to exceed the state average. County Kilkenny's relative deprivation score of -0.3 classified the County's measure of affluence as 'marginally below average' in 2016 as compared to the baseline state average of 0.9 ('marginally above average').

Across the County, scores across all 113 Electoral Divisions range from categorisations of 'Disadvantaged' to 'Affluent'. At higher geographical levels, however, pockets of relative deprivation can be masked. In total there are 2,763 people living within Small Areas which fall within the category of 'Very Deprived'.

With lone parents generally at greater risk of poverty and social exclusion, it is of note that there were around 4,260 households in County Kilkenny led by lone parents as of the 2016 Census. This equated to circa 18% of all households and fell below the state average of 20%.

There has been a gradual reduction in the number of crimes recorded in the Kilkenny/Carlow Garda Division. Circa 5,140 crimes were recorded in 2019 compared to 8,590 in 2010, and this fell further to 4,370 in 2020 albeit this may have been influenced by reduced mobility during the pandemic.

“

There has been a gradual reduction in the number of crimes recorded in the Kilkenny/Carlow Garda Division.

## Climate Change and Energy

The Council's Climate Change Adaptation Strategy describes how climate change is already having a significant impact on the County, with these effects likely to increase in their frequency and intensity.

Over the decade to 2019, the County recorded increases in both the number of days with heavy rainfall and the number of flooding events. It also experienced extreme temperatures over the same period, with 2018 for instance seeing red warnings for snow in February followed by one of the hottest summers on record.

According to the Strategy, the most accurate information on total emissions throughout County Kilkenny was based on data from the 2006 Census, with calculations suggesting that some 565,730 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> were emitted in that year.

“

Climate change effects likely to increase in their frequency and intensity.

**Turley**

**LCDC**  
 Ciste um Fhorbairt Pobail Aitiúil  
 Chill Chainnigh  
 Kilkenny Local Community Development  
 Committee

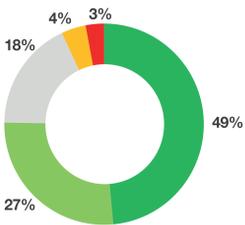
**Comhairle Chontae Chill Chainnigh**  
 Kilkenny County Council

## Goals (1-2)



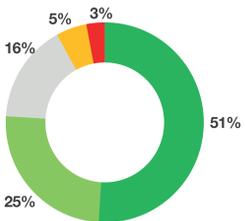
### Goal 1: Climate and Sustainability

To ensure our actions and interventions contribute positively to the overarching objective of addressing the current climate crises and supporting Ireland to achieve its climate goals and obligations, we will...



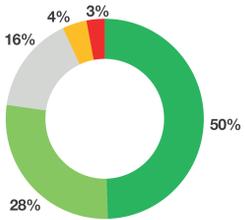
**Objective A** – “implement the Council’s Climate Change Adaptation Strategy (2019 – 2024) and a future Climate Action Plan due for publication in 2023, which will set out how the local authority intend to reduce the carbon emissions associated with the services we delivery by at least 7% per annum and by 51% by 2030”.

**Total: 154**



**Objective B** – “support the commitment underpinning the ISO5001 certification to deliver a 50% improvement in the energy efficiency target over the ten years from 2021 and elevate take-up of grants available to improve energy efficiency or the installation of renewable energy technologies”.

**Total: 154**



**Objective C** – “proactively support measures associated with the Circular Economy to the benefit of businesses and residents in the County”.

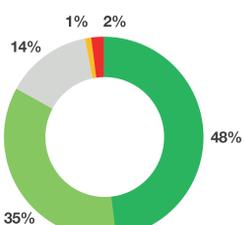
**Total: 153**

■ Strongly agree 
 ■ Agree 
 ■ Neutral 
 ■ Disagree 
 ■ Strongly disagree



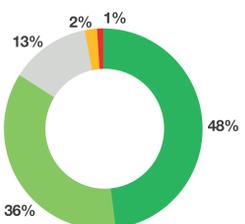
### Goal 2: Supporting Businesses

To build a resilient business base and support businesses to grow, be enterprising and take advantage of new opportunities, we will...



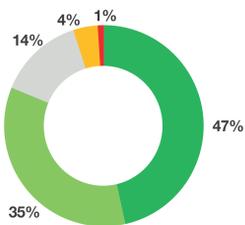
**Objective A** – “support the growth of existing and emerging higher-value sectors within our economy, including engineering, design, ICT, Green Tech and fintech companies to create increased economies of scale and the benefits associated with agglomeration”.

**Total: 149**



**Objective B** – “facilitate entrepreneurship and innovation by providing support and infrastructure to our businesses with strong ambitions for expansion and growth and enabling them to increase their scale and resilience”.

**Total: 149**



**Objective C** – “ensure it contributes proportionately to the growth of the region and maximises its international reach by improving the attractiveness of Kilkenny as a place to do business”.

**Total: 149**

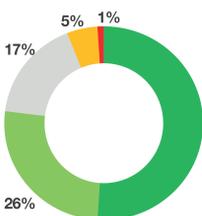
■ Strongly agree 
 ■ Agree 
 ■ Neutral 
 ■ Disagree 
 ■ Strongly disagree

## Goals (3-5)



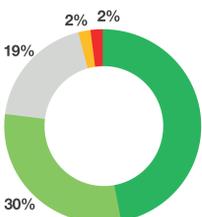
### Goal 3: Culture, Heritage and Tourism

To realise the economic and social value of Kilkenny’s heritage, growing tourism and cultural reputation and offer, we will...



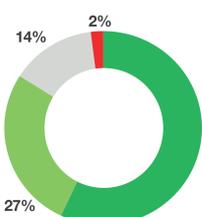
**Objective A** – “elevate Kilkenny into a ‘must visit’ experience and balance the visitor experience through an expanded offer, which encourages our visitors to stay longer and explore more of our County and heritage.”

**Total: 148**



**Objective B** – “support sustainable growth in businesses in the tourist and creative and design sectors, ensuring representation of the latter more broadly across the County”.

**Total: 148**



**Objective C** – “ensure communities get the maximum benefit from improvements to the cultural life of the City and County”.

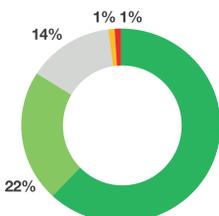
**Total: 145**

Legend: Strongly agree (dark green), Agree (medium green), Neutral (grey), Disagree (yellow), Strongly disagree (red)



### Goal 4: Rural Economy

To ensure our rural economy and communities are supported to grow sustainably, we will...



**Objective A** – “sustain quality of life and services within our rural towns and villages to realise their potential”.

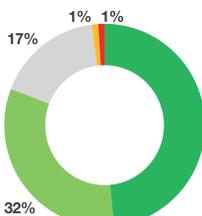
**Total: 146**

Legend: Strongly agree (dark green), Agree (medium green), Neutral (grey), Disagree (yellow), Strongly disagree (red)



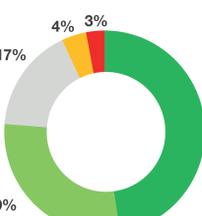
### Goal 5: Education and Skills

To increase the number of economically active people in the County by ensuring that every working age resident who wants to work can enhance their educational qualifications and achieve the skills required, we will...



**Objective A** – “work with our businesses to ensure they have a labour-force which has the flexibility to respond to changing skill-based requirements, including those arising from new emerging sectors”.

**Total: 148**



**Objective B** – “continue to support improvements in educational attainment, with a particular focus on third level educational attainment”.

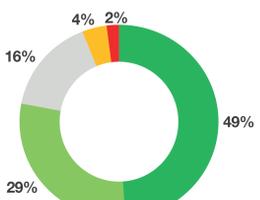
**Total: 146**

Legend: Strongly agree (dark green), Agree (medium green), Neutral (grey), Disagree (yellow), Strongly disagree (red)

## Goals (6-8)

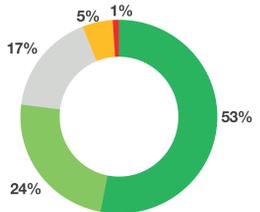
### Goal 6: Attracting Graduates

To grow the number of graduates working in County Kilkenny, we will...



**Objective A** - “capitalise on existing and planned investment which has delivered Ireland’s newest Technological University – South East Technological University (SETU) by making links between our business community, the university and graduates”.

**Total: 148**



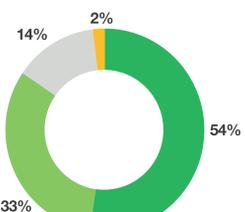
**Objective B** - “ensure a greater share of all graduates can obtain their first job in the County”.

**Total: 146**

**Strongly agree** **Agree** **Neutral** **Disagree** **Strongly disagree**

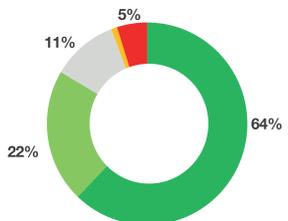
### Goal 7: Health Inequalities

To reduce inequalities and promote the importance of health and wellbeing, we will...



**Objective A** - “focus on addressing the wider social determinants of health – the circumstances in which people are born, grow, live, work and age – to create economic, social, culture, recreation and sport opportunities and the physical environment that will foster improved healthy living”.

**Total: 147**



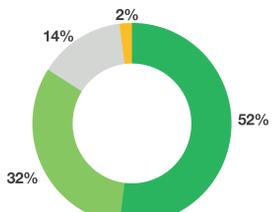
**Objective B** - “support improvements to mental health, including a pro-active approach to recognising the importance of well-being, environmental context and encouraging creativity”.

**Total: 147**

**Strongly agree** **Agree** **Neutral** **Disagree** **Strongly disagree**

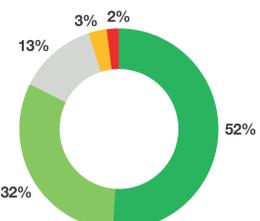
### Goal 8: Community Development

To reduce the number of people living in deprivation and promote community development, diversity and social inclusion, we will...



**Objective A** - “dedicate targeted resources and integrated approaches to those areas where issues of deprivation and poverty are concentrated”

**Total: 151**



**Objective B** - “promote and support intercultural awareness and diversity, equality of opportunity, people living with a disability, integration and minority groups through meaningful engagement, community development principles and approaches”

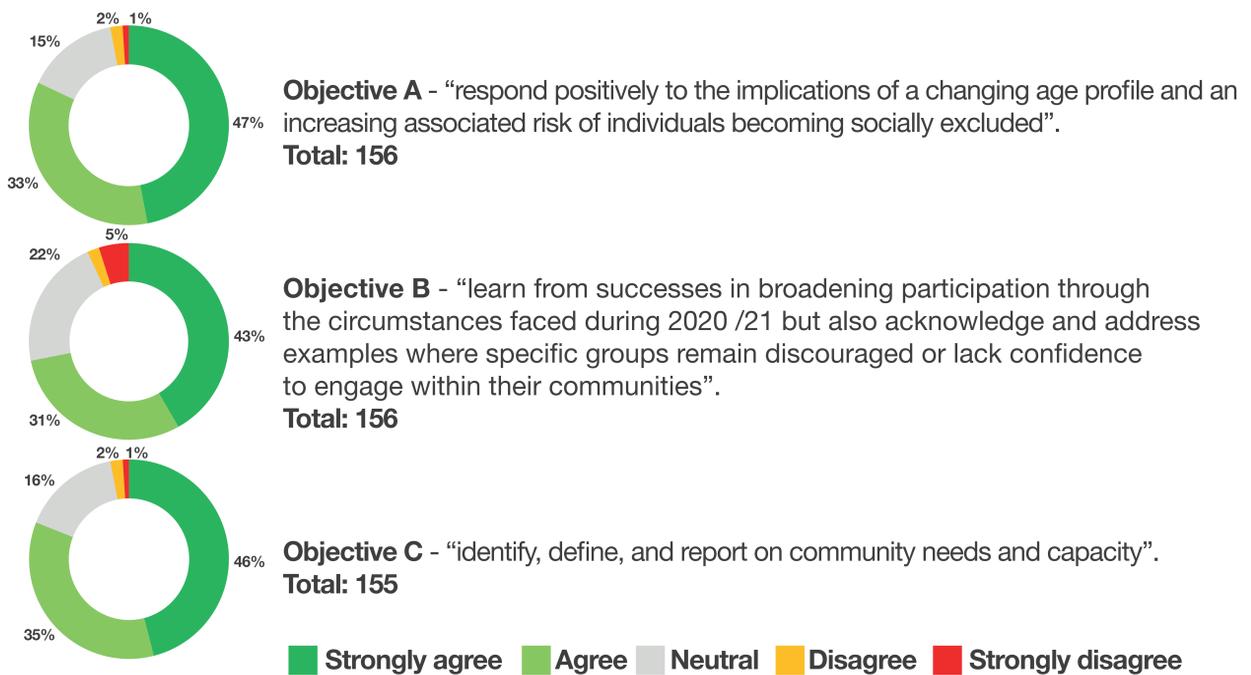
**Total: 151**

**Strongly agree** **Agree** **Neutral** **Disagree** **Strongly disagree**

## Goals (9-10)

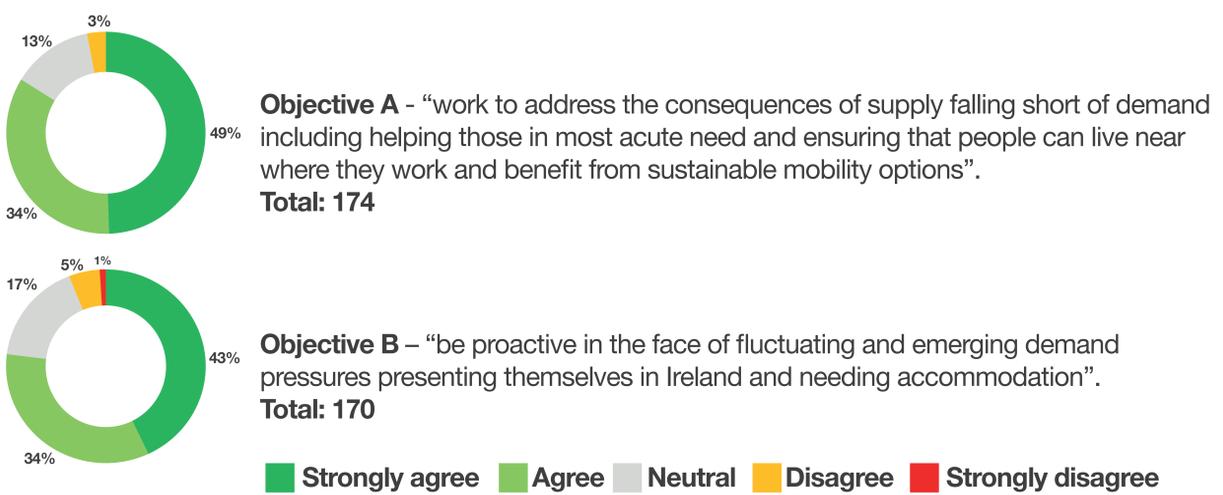
### Goal 9: Social Investment

To develop increased local capacity, by improving targeting of social investment through increased engagement and participation with local community groups to improve community facilities, supports and services, we will...



### Goal 10: Housing

To improve our housing offer to ensure that our residents are accommodated in housing that meets their individual housing needs and that we have a housing offer capable of responding to changing levels of demand, we will...





## **Appendix 7: Workshop feedback form**

**Your views are important to us and we welcome all feedback on the new proposals**  
(Please indicate your response by circling a box)

Q1: I support the proposed goals and objectives outlined in the Kilkenny Local Economic & Community Plan (LECP).

**Strongly Agree      Agree      Undecided      Disagree      Strongly Disagree**

Q2: I believe that it is important to support the growth and development of Kilkenny.

**Strongly Agree      Agree      Undecided      Disagree      Strongly Disagree**

Q3: I believe that the appropriate sectors are included within the 10 key areas identified within the LECP which include: **Climate & Sustainability, Supporting Business, Culture, Heritage & Tourism, Rural Economy, Education & Skills, Attracting Graduates, Health Inequalities, Community Development, Social Investment and Housing.**

**Strongly Agree      Agree      Undecided      Disagree      Strongly Disagree**

Q4: What outcomes would you like to see delivered as part of the Kilkenny LECP?

All feedback submitted will be summarised in a Pre-Application Community Consultation Report which will be submitted alongside the planning application. Your information will only be shared with third parties for the express purpose of keeping you informed of the proposals, or the relevant local authority where there is a legal obligation to do so. It will not be forwarded on to any other third parties. We will not contact you in relation to any other project or for marketing purposes. The information you provide will be stored securely until determination of the planning applications. Following determination, this information will be deleted. Unless you have indicated otherwise on this feedback form, we will not contact you about this development.

You can contact us at any time to request the deletion of your information. Please contact us at [contact@yourkilkennylecp.ie](mailto:contact@yourkilkennylecp.ie)

Q5: Do you have any further comments about the Kilkenny LECP or the identified goals or objectives?

Print Name .....

Email .....

Address .....

Postcode .....

Responding As ..... (Resident, Cllr, Group etc.)

Age Range:  <18  18-29  30-39  40-49  50-59  60-69  70+ over

Should you wish to be contacted about the development, please tick here

All feedback submitted will be summarised in a Pre-Application Community Consultation Report which will be submitted alongside the planning application. Your information will only be shared with third parties for the express purpose of keeping you informed of the proposals, or the relevant local authority where there is a legal obligation to do so. It will not be forwarded on to any other third parties. We will not contact you in relation to any other project or for marketing purposes. The information you provide will be stored securely until determination of the planning applications. Following determination, this information will be deleted. Unless you have indicated otherwise on this feedback form, we will not contact you about this development.

You can contact us at any time to request the deletion of your information. Please contact us at [contact@yourkilkennylecp.ie](mailto:contact@yourkilkennylecp.ie)

## **Appendix 8: Vision Statement**

## **2030: Kilkenny's Vision**

2030 will close another decade in the fast-evolving 21<sup>st</sup> century, which Kilkenny is not immune from. People who live and work in Kilkenny are experiencing that change and have given us a flavour of their vision for how the county will behave in by conclusion of the LECP.

Kilkenny is a warm and welcoming city, where all, no matter their gender, age, origin or town, are treated fairly and with respect. People who live and work in Kilkenny take pride in calling this county their home; they feel that they have a stake in its success.

Kilkenny has a bold vision to step up to the greatest challenge facing humanity this century; and that is climate change. As we surmount this obstacle to human existence, our lives will adapt, and with it Kilkenny. In the city centre and surrounding towns and villages, there will be greater pedestrianisation, fewer cars and more people arrive by bike and on foot, carried there by new spaces dedicated to a more sustainable means of travel. As people breathe in the cleaner air in our green spaces, they will be surrounded by a thriving ecosystem of wildlife and habitats, who co-exist with our built environment and now benefit by it. As we shop, we are conscious of the circular economy, reducing our waste and re-using precious resources where possible. People will be proud of Kilkenny's contribution to turning the tide against rising temperatures and bio-diversity collapse.

Kilkenny's economy is robust, resilient and resolute. By attracting new highly productive industries, such as fintech, gaming and design, and pharmaceuticals, the economy provides more jobs for residents. Working together, the county's economy grows while emissions fall, and less environmentally intense sectors are supported in the transition to a low-carbon economy. On Kilkenny's high street, more units are occupied and bustling with trade, with the right and proper interventions to support them. In towns across the county, enterprise hubs serve as incubation spaces for new start-ups to propel new opportunities for growth, making Kilkenny a top destination for starting, growing and succeeding as a business. By attracting new jobs and workers, we have the capacity to house them in our communities.

Kilkenny is proud of its heritage and the rest of the world is taking note. The county has cemented itself as a top Irish and European tourist destination and is increasingly punching into the global tourism scene. Its unique architecture and arts & craft offer attracts tourists and their spending power, which support a bustling tourism sector. Visitors spend time, not just in the city, but exploring what the rural county has to offer, particularly active excursions along new waterway routes connecting the south east. The celebration of Kilkenny's heritage makes it a firm nodal point in all aspects of decision-making in the county.

Kilkenny is a rural county, with a web of towns, villages and farms, who all contribute an enormous amount to Kilkenny's success. They will be well- and reliably connected with one another, Kilkenny City and the rest of Ireland. The county's agriculture sector remains a core tenant of economic activity and plays its part to fight climate change, by utilising more sustainable and efficient practices. Rural communities are treated with respect and equality; serviced by a strong foundational offer that is locally available and not dependent on Kilkenny city.

Kilkenny's workforce can outwit the best. Well-trained and well-educated, a dedicated cohort of professionals have been raised within the county, without the need to travel far from their origins. A

new university provides a menu of third-level education options, including apprenticeships for our hospitality sector and graduates for our cutting-edge industries.

## **Appendix 9: Draft Findings Report**

# **Revised High Level Goals and Objectives**

## **Kilkenny Economic and Community Plan (LECP)**

### **Draft Findings Report**

October 2022

# Stakeholder Engagement Methodology

1. An early consultation process with County Kilkenny's stakeholder groups and the public was undertaken to gather feedback on the draft high-level goals and objectives contained within a draft Socio-Economic Statement, that will in turn inform the Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP).
2. The consultation will also help establish the vision and outcomes people want to see materialise for County Kilkenny as a result of the LECPs implementation plan.
3. The consultation coalesced around a baseline survey (open for five weeks from 26<sup>th</sup> August to 30<sup>th</sup> September), an in-person workshop and five virtual workshops with the public and key stakeholder groups.

## Consultation Survey

4. The primary purpose of the survey was to gather quantitative and qualitative insights on our draft high-level goals and associated objectives.
5. This preliminary data has been analysed and presented in graphs and prose throughout.
6. The survey received a total of 344 responses, which broadly equates to a statistically valid representative sample of the county of Kilkenny, at 90% confidence and a margin of Error of  $\pm 4.427\%$ . The sample was weight for age, gender and geography.
7. The respondents represented a range of stakeholders with an interest in Kilkenny and, including residents, employees, visitors and elected representatives.
8. A total of 15 questions (closed and open queries) informed the survey.
9. The survey was hosted on a dedicated project website, which summarised the survey's purpose and provided a copy of the Draft LECP [www.yourkilkennylecp.ie](http://www.yourkilkennylecp.ie).
10. The survey was promoted via a social media advertising campaign, which a reach of 161,686 impressions across County Kilkenny.
11. The project website received 4,715 page views and 3,007 individual users. As such the 344 sample size demonstrates a conversion rate of 11.43% of users to respondents.

## Stakeholder Workshops

12. Two virtual stakeholder workshops took place; one focusing on community stakeholders and one focusing on economic stakeholders.
13. The aim of the workshops was to promote the baseline survey and gather feedback on the draft LECP's goals and objective, as well as understand what outcomes stakeholder want to see delivered as part of the LECP.
14. A total of, 13 people attended the community stakeholder workshop on 19<sup>th</sup> September. (Notes in Appendix 1)

15. A total of 13 people attended the economic stakeholder workshop on 26<sup>th</sup> September (Notes in Appendix 1)
16. A number of the project team were present on the webinar, including representatives from Kilkenny County Council, the LCDC, Turley Economics and Turley Strategic Communications.
17. At each workshop event, the project team presented a summary of the LECP, its socio-economic context and preliminary results from the survey.
18. The project team also asked each stakeholder about their impression of the preliminary results, what they think about the draft goals and what outcomes they would like to see delivered.

### **Public Workshops**

19. One physical public workshop and two further virtual public workshops were hosted to gather feedback from members of the public about the high-level goals and what outcomes they would like to see delivered as part of the LECP.
20. A total of 24 people registered to attend the Kilkenny City public workshop, with 26 people attending the event on 5<sup>th</sup> October at the Ormonde Hotel, Kilkenny.
21. Information banners and feedback forms were available for visitors to read.
22. A total of 25 people registered to attend the Castlecomer & Callan-Thomastown virtual public workshop, with 8 people attending the event on 10<sup>th</sup> October.
23. A total of 11 people registered to attend the Piltown virtual public workshop, with 4 people attending the event on 10<sup>th</sup> October.
24. A number of the project team were present at all public workshops, including representatives from Kilkenny County Council, the LCDC, Turley Economics and Turley Strategic Communications.
25. At each workshop event, the project team presented a summary of the LECP, its socio-economic context and preliminary results from the survey.
26. The project team also asked each stakeholder about their impression of the preliminary results, what they think about the draft goals and what outcomes they would like to see delivered.

### **Additional consultation**

27. The consultation project established a dedicated Freephone number 0808 168 8296 and the project team could also be contacted via a dedicated email address [contact@yourkilkennylecp.ie](mailto:contact@yourkilkennylecp.ie)

## GOAL RANKING

28. Respondents were asked to rank each of the following goals, the results are illustrated below:

**Goal 1 (Climate Change and Sustainability):** To ensure our actions and interventions contribute positively to the overarching objective of addressing the current climate crisis and supporting Ireland to achieve its climate goals and obligations

**Goal 2 (Supporting Business):** To build a resilient business base and support businesses to grow, be enterprising and take advantage of new opportunities

**Goal 3 (Culture, Heritage and Tourism):** To realise the economic and social value of Kilkenny’s heritage, tourism and cultural reputation and offer

**Goal 4 (Rural Economy):** To ensure our rural economy and communities are supported to grow sustainably

**Goal 5 (Education and Skills):** To increase the number of economically active people in the County by ensuring that every working age resident who wants to work can enhance their educational qualifications and achieve the skills required

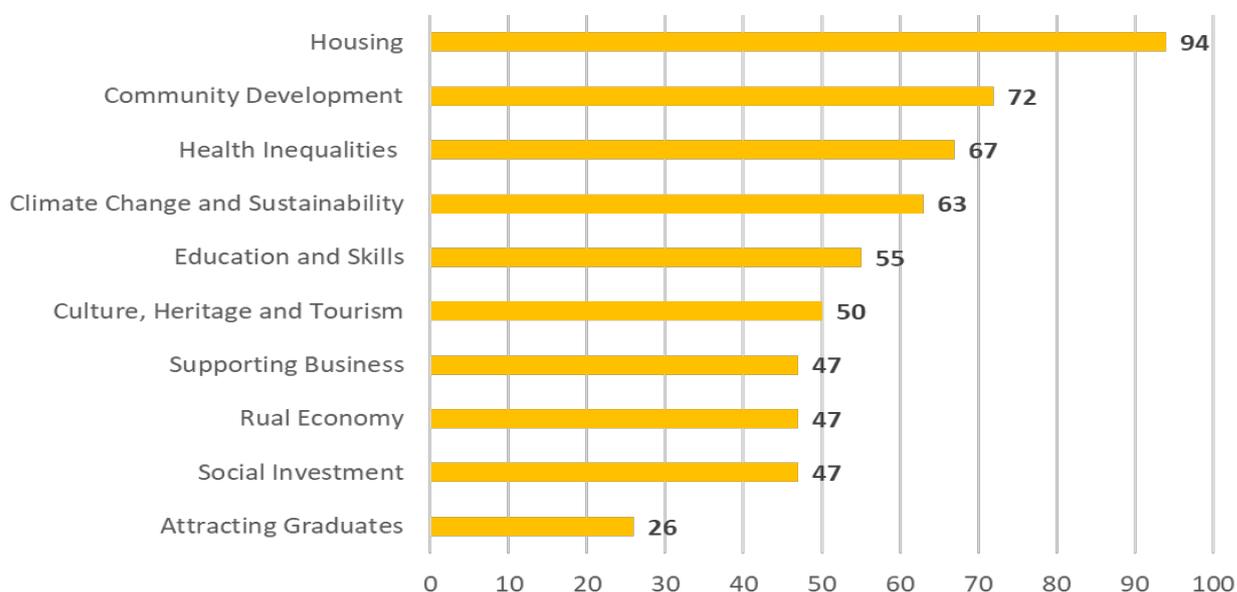
**Goal 6 (Attracting Graduates):** To grow the number of graduates working in County Kilkenny

**Goal 7 (Health Inequalities):** To reduce inequalities and promote the importance of health and wellbeing

**Goal 8 (Community Development):** To reduce the number of people living in deprivation and promote community development, diversity and social inclusion

**Goal 9 (Social Investment):** To develop increased local capacity, by improving targeting of social investment through increased engagement and participation with local community groups to improve community facilities, supports and services

**Goal 10 (Housing):** To improve our housing offer to ensure that our residents are accommodated in



*no. respondents who consider each goal a priority for Kilkenny County*

# GOAL 1

Original Goal and Objectives:

**Goal 1: To ensure our actions and interventions contribute positively to the overarching objective of addressing the current climate crisis and supporting Ireland to achieve its climate goals and obligations, we will...**

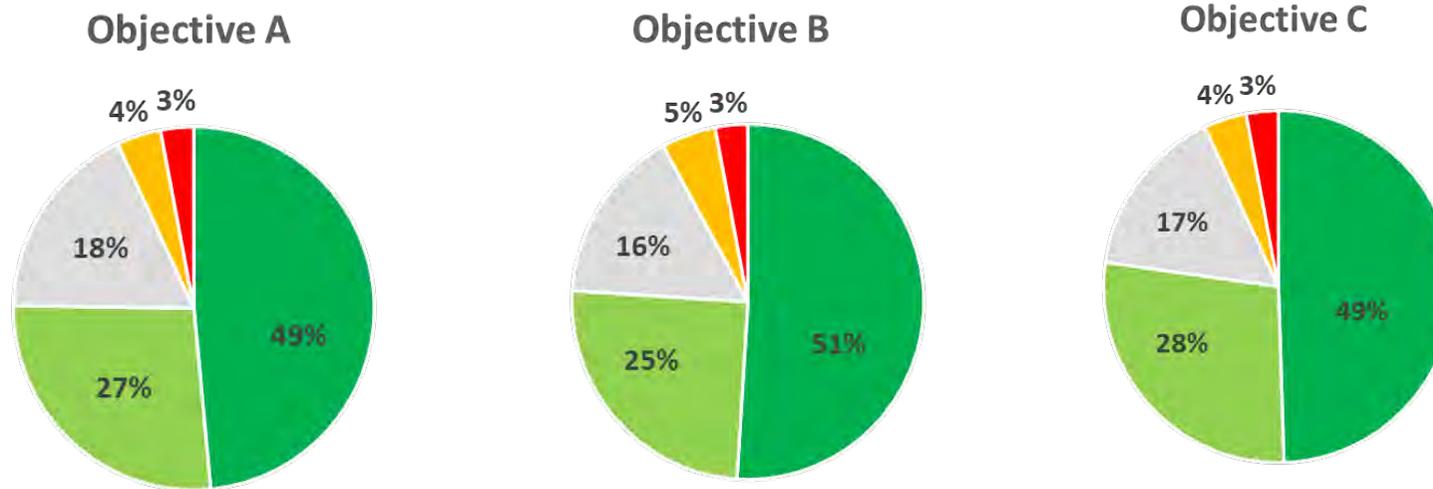
**Objective 1a:** implement the Council's Climate Change Adaptation Strategy (2019 – 2024) and a future Climate Action Plan due for publication in 2023, which will set out how the local authority intend to reduce the carbon emissions associated with the services we deliver by at least 7% per annum and by 51% by 2030

**Objective 1b:** support the commitment underpinning the ISO5001 certification to deliver a 50% improvement in the energy efficiency target over the ten years from 2021 and elevate take-up of grants available to improve energy efficiency or the installation of renewable energy technologies

**Objective 1c:** proactively support measures associated with the Circular Economy to the benefit of businesses and residents in the County

Quantitative Feedback:

- Objective 1a: An overwhelming majority 76% of 156 respondents to the question supported the objective. **49% Strongly Agreed, 27% Agreed, 18% Neutral, 4% disagreed and 3% strongly disagreed.**
- Objective 1b: An overwhelming majority 76% of 156 respondents to the question supported the objective. **51% Strongly Agreed, 25% Agreed, 16% Neutral, 5% disagreed and 3% strongly disagreed.**
- Objective 1c: An overwhelming majority 77% of 155 respondents to the question supported the objective. **49% Strongly Agreed, 28% Agreed, 17% Neutral, 4% disagreed and 3% strongly disagreed.**



Summarised Qualitative Survey Feedback relating to changes or additions to the goals and objectives:

Theme	Comment	Revisions
Goal	LECP prioritises tourists over residents	Revised to reflect comments
	Proposed revision of the Goal	Proposed Revision Accepted

	Goal should also contain mention of energy generation and transport	<p><i>"Should electricity generation be included here, solar, wind, biodigesters? Should transport be brought in here too. Great work already on the eBikes."</i></p> <p><i>"The number 1 focus for anyone (individual, community, council, government) interested in stopping rapid climate change is to stop the burning of Fossil Fuels. Providing Mobility options like Integrated Public Transport (County wide) &amp; Safe Cycling Infrastructure in every town, are key ways the council can have a dramatic impact on lowering peoples reliance on Fossil fuels"</i></p>	Noted
	Include bio-diversity crisis alongside climate crisis in the goal	<i>"recognise their interconnectedness"</i>	Proposed Revision Accepted
Objective A	Emission reduction target is too high in such a short time	<p><i>"Target set too high in a short timeframe"</i></p> <p><i>"The percentage of measures to be met in such a short period of time are too high"</i></p>	Noted
	Climate change objectives are too low	<i>"The wording of the objectives above makes me a little suspicious that Kilkenny would be happy to be a 'follower' (albeit a very good one) on these."</i>	Noted
Objective B	Objective 1B should reflect current Energy Crisis	<p><i>"Particular emphasis should be put on objective 1 b in view of the current energy crisis."</i></p> <p><i>"Business supports [should be] widened to combat the energy crisis"</i></p> <p><i>"Ordinary people can't afford to pay for gas electricity, cars food heating etc all these things cost money and as usual the rich can afford to live in a society like that but the poor are cold hungry and some have no where to live"</i></p>	Proposed Revision Accepted
	Objective 1B needs to consider broader work across multiple sectors to meet the goal	<i>"1.b could strengthened. This probably needs a broader multisectoral strategy of its own."</i>	Noted
Objective C	Circular Economy	<p><i>"Circular economy is too abstract and won't be understood without explanation"</i></p> <p><i>"Encourage and support circular economic initiatives in every town in the county"</i></p>	Proposed Revision Accepted

Broader Comments	<i>Climate Change scepticism, anti-renewable energy or carbon reduction policies</i>	<i>“There are no strong scientific support for the theory of climate change. Acting politically under this narrative is just a good excuse to impose more regulations.”</i>	Rejected
		<i>“Forget the nonsense carbon commerce etc, concentrate on rewilding, less chemicals pesticide and pollution, less rape of the Earth, become good stewards of this land respecting and taking responsibility for our indigenous floral and faunal neighbours and the rest will follow”</i>	Noted
		<i>“1a seeks to retrospectively justify the scandalous windfarm policy adopted in 2021.”</i>	Noted
	Relate the objectives directly to individuals and communities	<i>“Based on the feedback on this survey to date, more works need to be done on sharpening the relevance of this Goal to individuals and communities. Initiatives that reward participation need to be considered”</i>	Revised to reflect comments
	The county should become a trailblazer for fighting climate change	<i>“The wording of the objectives above makes me a little suspicious that Kilkenny would be happy to be a ‘follower’ (albeit a very good one) on these. Why not take on the challenge of being a/the leader.....nothing less than the gold, silver or bronze medal amongst the local authority population is good enough!”</i>	Revised to reflect comments

#### Revised Goals and Feedback

**Goal 1: To ensure that climate action is embraced, and that our actions and interventions are embedded across all areas of the LECP to contribute positively to the global climate and biodiversity crisis affecting our citizens and support Ireland to achieve its climate and biodiversity goals and obligations, we will...**

**Objective 1a:** implement the Council’s Climate Change Adaptation Strategy (2019 – 2024) and a future Climate Action Plan due for publication in 2023, which will set out how the local authority intend to reduce the carbon emissions associated with the services we deliver by at least 7% per annum and by 51% by 2030

**Objective 1b:** support the commitment underpinning the ISO5001 certification to deliver a 50% improvement in the energy efficiency target over the ten years from 2021 and elevate take-up of grants available as a response to the current energy crisis and ensure long-term improvement in energy efficiency or the installation of renewable energy technologies.

**Objective 1c:** implement measures associated with the Circular Economy (eliminating waste and pollution through a transition to renewable energy and materials) to deliver a resilient system to the benefit of the businesses, environment, and residents in the County.

## GOAL 2

Original Goal and Objectives:

**Goal 2: To build a resilient business base and support businesses to grow, be enterprising and take advantage of new opportunities, we will...**

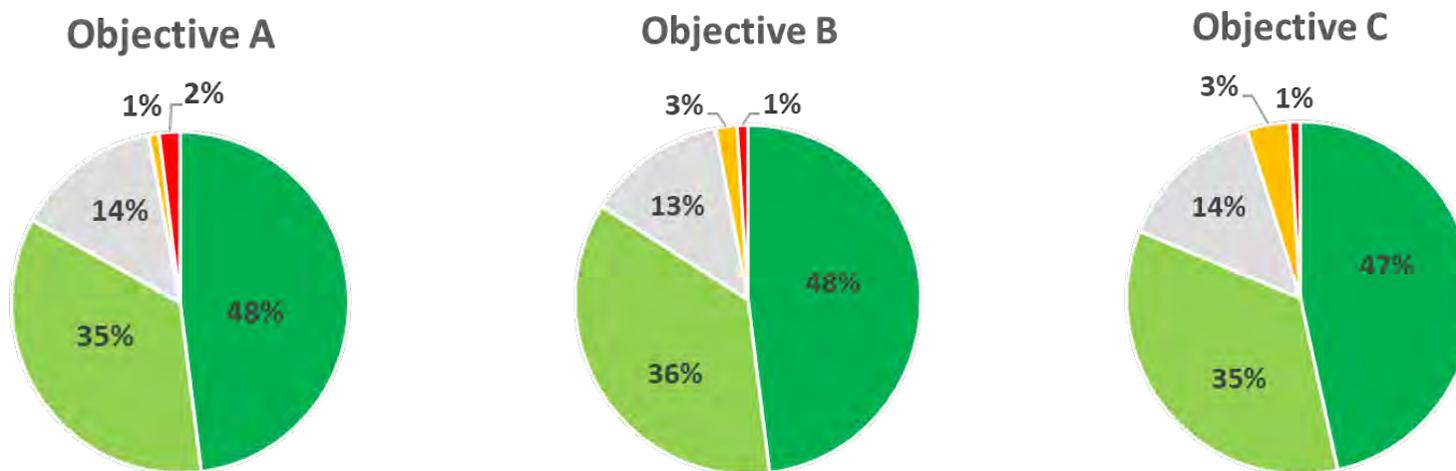
**Objective 2a:** support the growth of existing and emerging higher-value sectors within our economy, including engineering, health, design, ICT, Green Tech and fintech companies to create increased economies of scale and realise the benefits associated with agglomeration

**Objective 2b:** facilitate entrepreneurship and innovation by providing support and infrastructure to our businesses with strong ambitions for expansion and growth and enabling them to increase their scale and resilience

**Objective 2c:** ensure it contributes proportionately to the growth of the region and maximises its international reach by improving the attractiveness of Kilkenny as a place to do business

Quantitative Feedback:

- Objective 2a: An overwhelming majority 83% of 151 respondents to the question supported the objective. **48% Strongly Agreed, 35% Agreed, 14% Neutral, 1% disagreed and 2% strongly disagreed.**
- Objective 2b: An overwhelming majority 82% of 151 respondents to the question supported the objective. **48% Strongly Agreed, 36% Agreed, 13% Neutral, 3% disagreed and 1% strongly disagreed.**
- Objective 2c: An overwhelming majority 82% of 151 respondents to the question supported the objective. **47% Strongly Agreed, 35% Agreed, 14% Neutral, 3% disagreed and 1% strongly disagreed.**



Summarised Qualitative Survey Feedback relating to changes or additions to the goals and objectives:

Theme		Comment	Revisions
Goal	Include MedTech sector, UPMC is a big employer in the county	<i>"Include Medtech in this goal, we have UPMC as a very large employer locally and their sector should be represented here too."</i>	Proposed Revision Accepted
	Sustainability	<i>"Goal 2 should be qualified with the expression 'environmentally sustainable'. Although Goal 1 is to be an overarching objective, unless it is mentioned specifically mentioned in individual goals it will be an afterthought or not considered at all."</i>	Proposed Revision Accepted
Objective A	Business Expansion	<i>"Starting a business isn't the challenge; it's expanding and staying in Kilkenny" "I see lots of businesses starting up. It's the staying that they have trouble with." "It does not seem to be too difficult for people to start new businesses."</i>	Partially revised to reflect comments

		<i>"We must also help the small local businesses to reach a point where they can expand. Taking on your first employee is the hardest step. Plenty of opportunities exist within our current business community."</i>	
Objective B	Sustainable Growth	<i>Include mention of "environmentally sustainable" in reference to new businesses</i>	Proposed Revision Accepted
Objective C	More regional coordination of business support	<i>"2 (c) - a more integrated approach at regional level makes for a better business environment and also a better foot print for the examination and planning for business and climate challenges."</i>	Partially revised to reflect comments
Broader Comments	Pharmaceuticals	<i>"great to hear of big pharma business coming etc to town. the smaller to medium businesses are so busy trying to keep their head above water and are usually 2-4 employees that having time to network, review practices, engage in training and focus groups is way down on priority list. is there any mobile options-bring the "clinic" to the business?"</i>	Noted
	Carlow Competition	<i>"none of the decent employers that have come to Carlow for example in the last ten years came to kilkenny so you need to find out why"</i>	Noted
	Restrictions	<i>"To many restrictions on setting up a business and no allowance for starting up a fledging business re. rates etc"</i>	Noted
	Measurable Objectives	<i>"Again, set &amp; publish measurable objectives and action plans"</i>	Noted
	Tourism	<i>"Less reliance on tourism-based economy and doing what it can to promote sustainable local startups."</i>	Noted

## Revised Goals and Feedback

**Goal 2: To build a resilient, sustainable business base and support new and existing businesses to grow, be enterprising and take advantage of new opportunities, *we will...***

**Objective 2a:** support the growth of existing and emerging higher-value sectors within our economy, including engineering, health (including. medtech), craft and design, ICT, Green Tech and fintech companies to realise the benefits of clustering

**Objective 2b:** facilitate sustainable entrepreneurship and innovation by encouraging design thinking, providing support and infrastructure to our businesses enabling them to achieve their strong ambitions for expansion and growth and to increase their scale and resilience

**Objective 2c:** ensure our local economy contributes proportionately and integrates with the growth of the region and maximises its international reach by improving the attractiveness of Kilkenny as a place to do business

## GOAL 3

Original Goal and Objectives:

**Goal 3: To realise the economic and social value of Kilkenny's heritage, growing tourism and cultural reputation and offer, we will...**

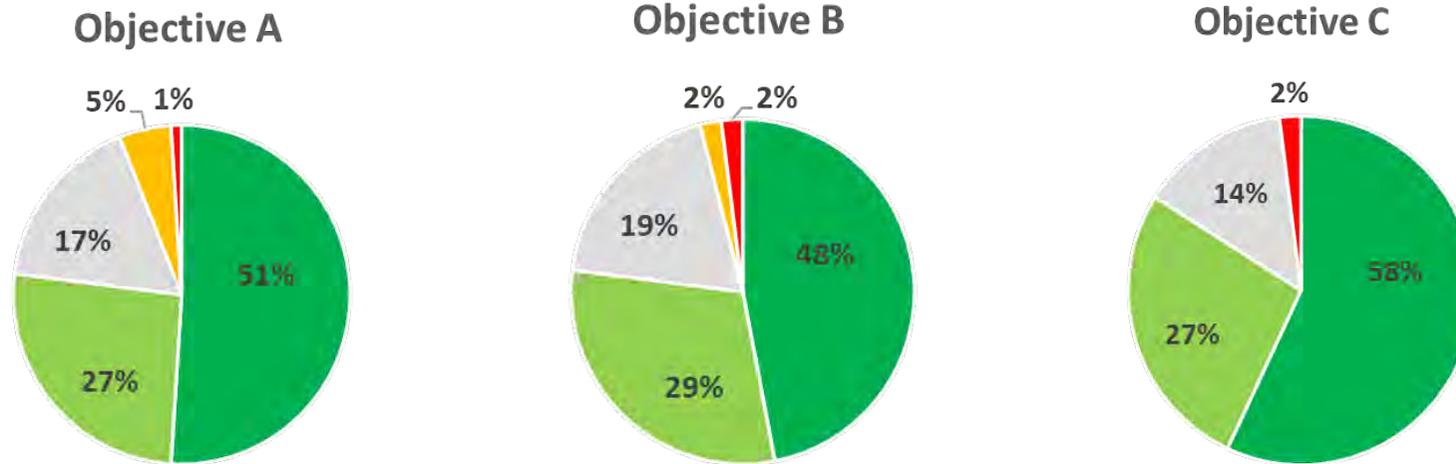
**Objective 3a:** elevate Kilkenny into a 'must visit' experience and balance the visitor experience through an expanded offer, which encourages our visitors to stay longer and explore more of our County and heritage

**Objective 3b:** support sustainable growth in businesses in the tourist and creative and design sectors, ensuring representation of the latter more broadly across the County

**Objective 3c:** ensure communities get the maximum benefit from improvements to the cultural life of the City and County

Quantitative Feedback:

- Objective 3a: An overwhelming majority 78% of 150 respondents to the question supported the objective. **51% Strongly Agreed, 27% Agreed, 17% Neutral, 5% disagreed and 1% strongly disagreed.**
- Objective 3b: An overwhelming majority 77% of 150 respondents to the question supported the objective. **48% Strongly Agreed, 29% Agreed, 19% Neutral, 2% disagreed and 2% strongly disagreed.**
- Objective 3c: An overwhelming majority 85% of 147 respondents to the question supported the objective. **58% Strongly Agreed, 27% Agreed, 14% Neutral, 0% disagreed and 2% strongly disagreed.**



Summarised Qualitative Survey Feedback relating to changes or additions to the goals and objectives:

Theme	Sub-theme	Comment	Revisions
Goal	Kilkenny must maintain its USP	<i>“These attractions must have a competitive advantage in that it will have a USP (unique selling point), as Kilkenny City and County must offer a unique historical, cultural and heritage landscape and tells the story of ALL locals who worked there for centuries to make Kilkenny the wonderful vibrant place it is today. These Projects must differentiate its projects from similar rural visitor attractions in Irelands Ancient East...and beyond.”</i>	Revised to reflect comments
	Accessibility	<i>“There is an opportunity to high light Age Friendly business and their role in these high-level goals through appropriate wording.”</i>	Revised to reflect comments
	Co-ordination with other development	<i>“Agree with the Goals. But once again, even at a high level, there should ideally be a reference to the tactical approach to ensure that the City and County</i>	Revised to reflect comments

		<i>will cooperate in development of tourism: e.g., greenways, walkways, etc”</i>	
	<i>Broader view of heritage</i>	<i>“This goal takes quite a narrow view of what heritage is and how it’s valued. Heritage, as addressed in the Kilkenny County Council Cultural Strategy and delivered by the Heritage Office of Kilkenny includes built, natural and cultural heritage. I recommend more of an emphasis on supporting our cultural resources - not just growing our cultural reputation. Our heritage underpins our tourism sector, which is very important in terms of employment, but it also has other equally important values which should also be reflected in this goal. Our heritage underpins our sense of identity, sense of place and our health and well-being. Our natural heritage has its own intrinsic value. It is a vital part of our green infrastructure and provides essential ecosystem services such as food production.”</i>	Propose Revision Accepted
Objective A	A more resilient tourism sector in the off-peak season,	<i>“Need to develop a stronger business tourism sector for off peak months and days of the week.”</i>	Revised to reflect comments
Objective B	Include mention of ‘environmentally sustainable’ in reference to tourism,	<i>“I see the word ‘sustainable’ in goal 3b which on its own implies tourism which can be maintained, which is a desirable goal. I would also like to see an ‘environmentally sustainable’ aspiration or something similar relating to tourism.</i>	Proposed Revision Accepted
Objective C	Heritage is an asset and underpins sense of the community identity	<i>“Our heritage underpins our sense of identity, sense of place and our health and well-being. Our natural heritage has its own intrinsic value. It is a vital part of our green infrastructure and provides essential ecosystem services such as food production”</i>	Revised to reflect comments
		<i>“In the past and the present in fact, there has been far too much emphasis on the tourist economy.”</i>	Noted

Broader Comments	Too much emphasis on the tourism sector	<p><i>“I think Kilkenny thrives on tourism and hospitality an they dominate the experience of people in the city. It’s great but I feel like the price for that is at the expense of residents and as a result it is beginning to feel like tourism and hospitality is the facade which acts as a smoke screen for the more pressing issues faced by residents. I feel that tourism and hospitality in the city benefits a minority and does nothing or very little for the majority. I love participating in the events that are often held on the parade or in the castle and they’re both affordable, accessible, varied and interesting. But I don’t think it really needs more investment than it already has. The gap between those events and the reality of peoples lives is growing and I think there needs to be more resources invested in things that benefirt residents rather than visitors”</i></p>	Noted
		<p><i>“Tourism in Kilkenny mainly benefits pubs. Isn’t sustainable or of any real benefit to the town, if it was we would have decent hotels. Focus on making Kilkenny a great place to live instead of making it a stag party destination.”</i></p>	Noted
		<p><i>“Kilkenny is totally tourist driven, this seriously affects local communities grow due to lack of local facilities and diverse opportunities</i></p>	Noted
		<p><i>“There has been far too much emphasis on the tourist economy. Some of it hypocritical: market the medieval mile but build a bridge and busy thoroughfare through it with trucks etc passing through. Allowing for gaudy shopfronts on high street”</i></p>	Noted

<p>Planning Decisions</p>	<p><i>“Start by taking a look on the ground at what your planning department are shunting through, factory sized farming operations slam bang in the middle of the first sweeping vista on the main Michelin mentioned route from Cashel to Kilkenny bang in between two UNESCO corridors, without so much as Environmental Impact assessment. I refer specifically to planning application 2014 which was illegal, immoral and ecodical on so many levels, what would be called in the UK as a Planning crime. Kilkenny needs to assess the balances with Dairy farming and the promises it's made to its children. Kilkenny is a beautiful place and tourists come here to see the greenery and the old architecture, not factory sized cow sheds or great ugly monolithic new builds or dormer bungalows.”</i></p>	<p>Noted</p>
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**Goal 3: To realise the economic and social value of Kilkenny’s built and natural heritage, cultural reputation and offer and growing tourism and creative and cultural sectors, we will...**

**Objective 3a:** ensure communities can partake in, and get the maximum benefit from improvements to the cultural life of the City and County

**Objective 3b:** build on Kilkenny’s reputation as a county of ‘must visit’ experiences and balance the visitor experience through an expanded yearlong offer, which encourages our visitors to stay longer and explore more of our County’s landscape and heritage

**Objective 3c:** support growth in sustainable and accessible businesses in these sectors, ensuring balanced representation across the County



Revised Goals and Objectives

# GOAL 4

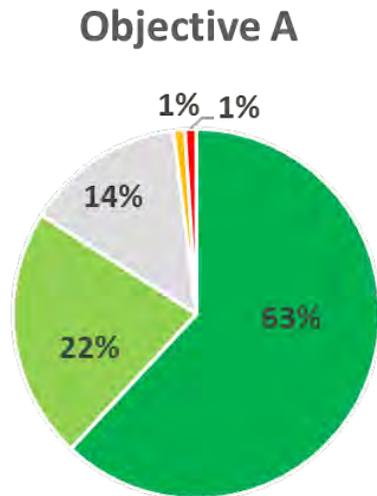
Original Goal and Objective:

**Goal 4: To ensure our rural economy and communities are supported to grow sustainably, we will...**

**Objective 4a: sustain quality of life and services within our rural towns and villages to realise their potential**

Quantitative Feedback:

- Objective 4a: An overwhelming majority 85% of 148 respondents to the question supported the objective. **63% Strongly Agreed, 22% Agreed, 14% Neutral, 1% disagreed and 1% strongly disagreed.**



Summarised Qualitative Survey Feedback relating to changes or additions to the goals and objectives:

Theme		Comment	Revisions
Goal	Goal vague / lacks objectives	<p><i>"This goal needs exploration."</i></p> <p><i>"This objective should read 'sustain and improve'."</i></p> <p><i>"The ambition to 'sustain' is chronically lacking in insight and need to be expanded to 'enhance'."</i></p> <p><i>"The word 'sustain' seems to lack ambition and measurability."</i></p> <p><i>"This is incredibly vague. What does it mean?"</i></p>	Revised to reflect comments
Objective A	Better Infrastructure and Connectivity	<i>"It needs more than sustained it needs to be enhanced. Better infrastructure and transport, good internet"</i>	Revised to reflect comments
Broader Comments	Equal Access to Resources and Services	Across several comments' desired outcomes indicated the need to include reference to greater access to rural services, sustaining and improving access and provision and reflecting ambition for services to be "Smart", "Age Friendly" and "Accessible" to all	Revised to reflect comments
	Fair distribution of funding	<i>"Rural Ireland is the poor relation when it comes to expenditure by KK CC needs to be a fairer distribution of funding"</i>	Noted
	Gaps in Services	<p><i>"There should be reference to supporting communities in their 'plugging the gaps' in services: shops, cafes/ tearooms, tourism centres, activity hubs."</i></p> <p><i>"I would also like to see a joined up and grown up approach to services."</i></p> <p><i>"Loss of services such as PO etc and reduction in opportunities to meet socially"</i></p>	Revised to reflect comments
	Smart Villages	<i>"Reference to the need to build Smart Villages and Towns (in line with evolving EU policy), capable of recognising opportunities and being resilient to set backs should be included"</i>	Proposed Revision Accepted

	<i>“The pandemic has shown us that with the introduction of future remote working practices this will further help achieve this goal”</i>	
Transport	There is a strong emphasis across desired outcomes feedback through multiple comments on the need to build better transport network/infrastructure, and public transport resources, particularly buses run between the towns/villages into Kilkenny city and more frequently and this should be reflected in the goal and objectives.	Proposed Revision Accepted
	There was also a focus on creating active travel infrastructure, such as cycle paths between the towns/village and Kilkenny city, which would feed into our climate & sustainability and health inequalities objectives.	Revised to reflect comments

Revised Goals and Objectives

**Goal 4: To ensure our rural economy and communities are supported to develop sustainably, we will...**

**Objective 4a:** enhance the quality of life in rural communities, by protecting habitats and maintaining a balanced sustainable environment, and agricultural economy

**Objective 4b:** sustain and improve services and infrastructure, developing “Smart”, “Accessible” and “Connected” rural towns and villages to help them realise their potential as attractive places to live and visit

## GOAL 5

Original Goal and Objective:

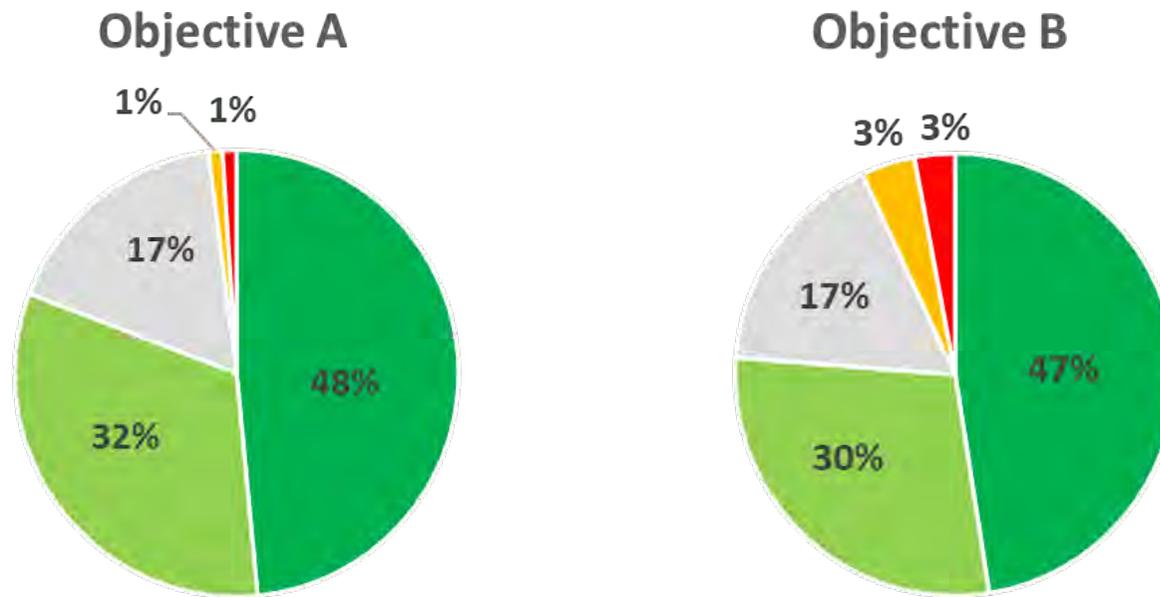
**Goal 5: To increase the number of economically active people in the County by ensuring that every working age resident who wants to work can enhance their educational qualifications and achieve the skills required, *we will...***

**Objective 5a:** work with our businesses to ensure they have a labour-force which has the flexibility to respond to changing skill-based requirements, including those arising from new emerging sectors

**Objective 5b:** continue to support improvements in educational attainment, with a particular focus on third level educational attainment

Quantitative Feedback:

- Objective 5a: An overwhelming majority 80% of 144 respondents to the question supported the objective. **48% Strongly Agreed, 32% Agreed**, 17% Neutral, 1% disagreed and 1% strongly disagreed.
- Objective 5b: An overwhelming majority 77% of 144 respondents to the question supported the objective. **47% Strongly Agreed, 30% Agreed**, 17% Neutral, 3% disagreed and 3% strongly disagreed.



Summarised Qualitative Survey Feedback relating to changes or additions to the goals and objectives:

Theme	Sub-theme	Comment	Revisions
Goal	Employment	<i>"Great am all for working for improved education but the jobs have to be there too."</i>	Revised to reflect comments
		<i>"50% of people in Kilkenny and Carlow have third level or higher and probably 25 of those work in another county. Education must be available but how this will contribute to county directly not sure"</i>	
	Lacks focus	<i>"Those goals need refinement or focus: they are worthy, but currently somewhat bland"</i>	Revised to reflect comments

	Apprenticeships	<p><i>“An underlying assumption in this goal is that graduates will be more economically active. However, there is a severe shortage of the practical skills which will be needed for the widescale home improvements and insulation which will be needed during the term of the report to meet emission reduction commitments. It would be good to see apprenticeships given equal status to academic education as they are often undervalued.”</i></p> <p><i>“Construction apprentices are an excellent well played career, thus I would argue against the particular focus on third level educational attainment”</i></p> <p><i>Its not all about college graduates. Encourage Apprenticeships</i></p>	Proposed Revision Accepted
Objective A	Correct skills businesses need	<p><i>“We must not forget the small businesses that need quality staff but they need not be graduates or the works be generic e.g. data entry, admin, and (general admin, pa, office manager roles that one or 2 person businesses need. People who are confident enough to help run a small business. This allows these businesses to grow and create good jobs.)”</i></p> <p><i>“There is a severe shortage of the practical skills which will be needed for the widescale home improvements and insulation which will be needed during the term of the report to meet emission reduction commitments.”</i></p>	Revised to reflect comments
	Third Level Colleges	<p><i>“Focussing particularly on third level educational attainment requires outlets for people with these qualifications. More third-level</i></p>	

		<i>colleges are needed in the area concentrating on the skills referred to in 5 a"</i>	
Objective B	Need for a university	<i>"No university in Kilkenny. This point is moot."</i>	Revised to reflect comments
		<i>"With regard to (B), the newly formed SETU is an ideal opportunity offers an ideal opportunity to promote third level education."</i>	
	Wider 3rd level focus	<i>"It would be good to see apprenticeships given equal status to academic education as they are often undervalued."</i>	Revised to reflect comments
		<i>"Objective 5b I think focusing on 3rd level attainment is not, in my opinion, the best way to ensure a skilled workforce. There is no 3rd level in Kilkenny and students leave Kilkenny to attain this education. Not everyone is suitable for 3rd level education or can afford 3rd level."</i>	Proposed Revision Accepted
		<i>"You need to focus on apprenticeships too. Look at the German model. The continued focus on 3rd level is what leaves us without the skills to build houses. This is the way of the future. Make sure KK doesn't miss the boat on this one."</i>	Revised to reflect comments
		<i>"Important to focus on non graduate level roles. KK has a thriving service industry that may not suit some graduates. Important to focus too on apprentices and such roles"</i>	
		<i>"Third level education may not be appropriate for all , apprenticeship and mentoring programmes ?"</i>	

Revised Goals and Objectives

**Goal 5: To increase the number of economically active people in the County by ensuring accessibility to lifelong learning for every working age resident who wants to work to enhance their educational qualifications and achieve the skills required, *we will...***

**Objective 5a:** work with our businesses to ensure they have a labour-force which has the flexibility to respond to current and changing skill-based requirements, including those arising from new emerging sectors

**Objective 5b:** continue to support improvements in continuous educational attainment, with a particular focus on further and third level educational attainment, including industry led apprenticeships.

## GOAL 6

Original Goal and Objective:

**Goal 6: To grow the number of graduates working in County Kilkenny, we will...**

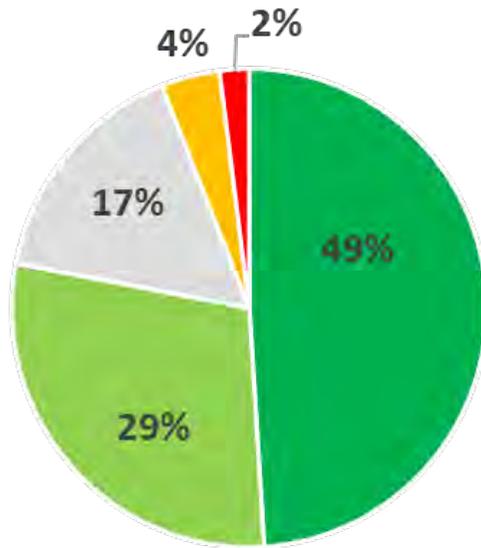
**Objective 6a:** capitalise on existing and planned investment which has delivered Ireland's newest Technological University (SETU) by making links between our business community, the university and graduates

**Objective 6b:** ensure a greater share of all graduates can obtain their first job in the County

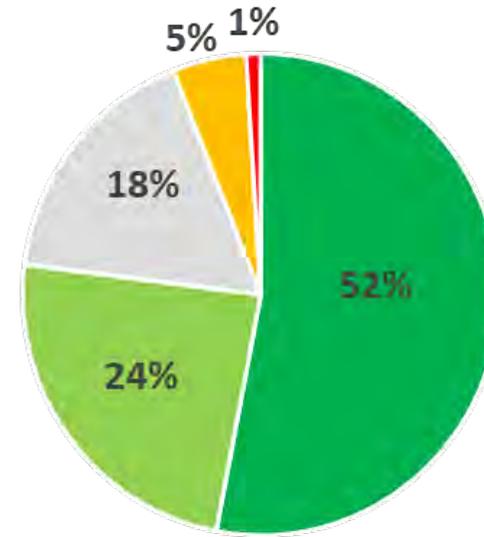
Quantitative Feedback:

- Objective 6a: An overwhelming majority 78% of 150 respondents to the question supported the objective. **49% Strongly Agreed, 29% Agreed**, 17% Neutral, 4% disagreed and 2% strongly disagreed.
- Objective 6b: An overwhelming majority 76% of 148 respondents to the question supported the objective. **52% Strongly Agreed, 24% Agreed**, 18% Neutral, 5% disagreed and 1% strongly disagreed.

### Objective A



### Objective B



Summarised Qualitative Survey Feedback relating to changes or additions to the goals and objectives:

Theme	Sub-theme	Comment	Revisions
Goal	Broader skills set	<p><i>"I think that Kilkenny should concentrate more on opportunities for people without a college education to enter the workforce."</i></p> <p><i>"There are a lot of people who have come from countries with varying opportunities, not all kids are able or suitable for college education and there are families with one parent who need flexible options for providing an income. These are the people who are seeking work in Kilkenny right now. It would be</i></p>	Noted

		<i>great if there were more opportunities for graduates but you would be catering resources towards a minority of job seekers. If at some point there was a university campus in the city, perhaps that would change but right now the nearest ones are in Waterford and Carlow."</i>	
	Current Disadvantage	<i>"We are at a serious disadvantage to Carlow and Waterford due to the lack of a proper college and will definitely affect the decision of some employers when looking for areas for opportunities especially IT and pharmaceutical."</i>	Noted
		<i>"We should have a University in the city for our local children and not have them travelling to Dublin and Cork and no place to stay sort it for our next generation."</i>	
Objective A	Wider geographic reach	<i>"Widen the remit from SETU to bring in Munster and Leinster educational establishments, Kilkenny should be a sought after living location nationally for young people, vibrant city and county is required for the next generation. Affordable house links in here as a must have for young people."</i>	Noted
	Additional institutional links	<i>"Links must be developed with 3rd level institutions but that doesn't need to be SETU."</i>	Revised to reflect comments
	Question capacity to deliver	<i>"I really get the feeling KKCoCo does not understand what it takes to be a university. I would suggest discussing with an appropriate consultant. What can KK add/offer to a university campus - one which WD has fought for over 25 years and put in hard graft raising their status on the international research stage. Maybe its strength is art &amp; design."</i>	Noted
		<i>"I think too much focus is on universities more focus should be on blended learning theory and practice"</i>	
Objective B	Housing	<i>"It needs more accommodation and better infrastructure to attract them back."</i>	Noted

		<i>"Hard to attract graduates when there is a lack of housing"</i>	
		<i>"Only issue here is the shortage of accommodation necessary to make this a happen."</i>	
	Infrastructure	<i>"Again infrastructure, transportation to have these links. If students can't get here they won't pick here"</i>	Noted
	No opportunities at present	<i>"I agree... but all new graduates will probably go somewhere else like bigger Irish cities and abroad. There is not enough opportunities here"</i>	Noted
	Apply to all graduates	<i>"All graduates rather more than new graduates ought to be encouraged and this must start a replacement of who you know to what you know at council level."</i>	Revised to reflect comments
	Equality of Access	<i>"Whilst I agree with 6b, I do think it is important not to disadvantage those with years of experience by automatically offering graduates positions. Fairness and equality need to remain."</i>	Noted
	Quantify this objective	<i>"Re 6b, quantify the objective, from x% to vx%"</i>	Noted
Broader Comments	Need for campus	<i>"Having our own campus would make a huge difference to this goal."</i>	Noted
		<i>"We need a campus in Kilkenny, allowing locals to start their post secondary education in Kilkenny"</i>	
		<i>"Yes it's important but without a college campus in Kilkenny itself, I think it would be a waste of resources at this time. Graduates often settle where they study unless they return to their parents post study, that is why town or cities with a campus continue to grow and develop."</i>	
		<i>"Yes it's important but without a college campus in Kilkenny itself, I think it would be a waste of"</i>	

	<p><i>resources at this time... without a college campus in Kilkenny itself, I think it would be a waste of resources at this time."</i></p> <p><i>"I would line to see a meaningful &amp; relevant (art/craft/animation.....???) SETU faculty/campus in Kilkenny. Kilkenny suffers from not having a 3rd level college/community/population"</i></p> <p><i>A distinct lack of third level educational facilities hampers these objectives</i></p>	
No need for campus	<p><i>"I do not believe a campus is necessary In the city as we are 30 mins by bus from either campus but having student accommodation here might be useful. Is it possible that students would like to live in Kilkenny while studying in either Waterford or Carlow?"</i></p> <p><i>We have Carlow and Waterford institutes that is enough !</i></p>	Noted
Problems of not attracting graduates	<p><i>"There is a gap in the age profile - lack of 3rd level student - knock on effect on social life and sporting clubs etc."</i></p>	Noted

Revised Goals and Objectives

**Goal 6: To grow the number of third level graduates working in County Kilkenny, we will...**

**Objective 6a:** capitalise on existing and planned investment, such as Ireland’s newest Technological University (SETU) by making regional and national links between our business community, our universities and graduates

**Objective 6b:** increase the share of all recent graduates who obtain a job in the County

## GOAL 7

Original Goal and Objective:

**Goal 7: To reduce inequalities and promote the importance of health and wellbeing, *we will...***

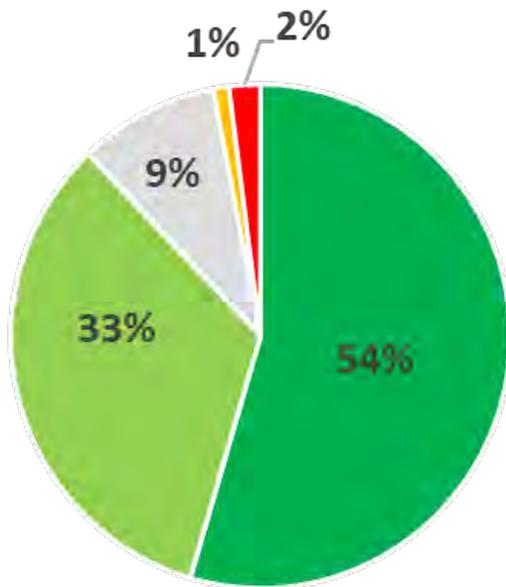
**Objective 7a:** focus on addressing the wider social determinants of health – the circumstances in which people are born, grow, live, work and age – to create economic, social, culture, recreation and sport opportunities and the physical environment that will foster improved healthy living

**Objective 7b:** support improvements to mental health, including a pro-active approach to recognising the importance of wellbeing, environmental context and encouraging creativity

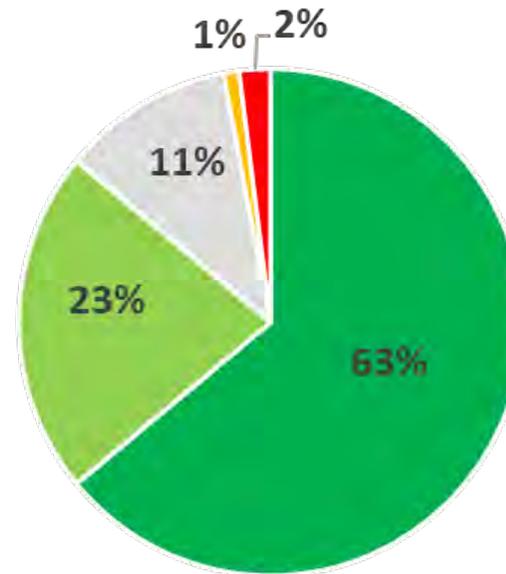
Quantitative Feedback:

- Objective 7a: An overwhelming majority 87% of 149 respondents to the question supported the objective. **54% Strongly Agreed, 33% Agreed, 9% Neutral, 1% disagreed and 2% strongly disagreed.**
- Objective 7b: An overwhelming majority 86% of 149 respondents to the question supported the objective. **63% Strongly Agreed, 23% Agreed, 11% Neutral, 1% disagreed and 2% strongly disagreed.**

## Objective A



## Objective B



Summarised Qualitative Survey Feedback relating to changes or additions to the goals and objectives:

Theme	Sub-theme	Comment	Revisions
Goal	Delivery beyond Kilkenny City	<i>"Can we ensure that the delivery of this goal is county wide and not just concentrated in Kilkenny city. Why is there no public swimming pool outside the city?"</i>	Noted
	Importance of the goal	<i>"This is a very important Goal in my view with Ageing Population and Obesity/mental health</i>	Noted

		<i>issues amongst young people this is a key objective in my view."</i>	
	Need for more education	<i>"People need to be educated and supported"</i>	Noted
	Community Based Services	<i>"The role of Community based Services, both State funded and Voluntary should be recognized here. There are numerous Community based services that provide a social outlet for people of all ages and this social interaction can benefit those who suffer isolation,(Rural &amp; urban) loneliness and health issues including mental health problems. Local Solutions exist that are not expensive and are not complicated."</i>	Noted
	Interlinking of other goals	<i>"All of these objectives are interlinked - you can have good mental health if someone feels excluded/marginalised"</i>	Noted
	Well-being	<i>"I don't find well-being activities really address the day to day struggles of living with mental illness. They provide an outlet for reregulation but going back into daily life is improved minimally once that activity ends"</i>	Noted
	Provide examples	<i>"Why not provide examples of what this actually means and then ask the public to contribute."</i>	Noted
Objective A	Support at a National level	<i>"Not sure how this can be done locally without a proper and workable plan at national level"</i>	Noted
Objective B	Need to address external factors	<i>"Public service has an odd approach/understanding of wellbeing. I just hope addressing wellbeing isn't about telling ppl how they can 'get over' their</i>	Noted

		<i>circumstances but includes addressing the external factors impacting wellbeing e.g. Safe communities, appropriate housing placements, services, recreation opportunities for all ages - not just sports"</i>	
Broader Comments	Wider Community Consultation	<i>"Consultation with the local community to ascertain all local needs, not just the City but the whole county. Then to develop a plan outlining needs of the communities based on the findings"</i>	Noted

Revised Goals and Objectives

**Goal 7: To reduce inequalities and promote the importance of health and wellbeing, we will...**

**Objective 7a:** focus on addressing the wider social determinants of health – the circumstances in which people are born, grow, live, work and age – to create economic, social, culture, recreation and sport opportunities and a physical environment that will foster improved healthy living

**Objective 7b:** support improvements to mental health, including a pro-active approach to recognising the importance of wellbeing, environmental context and encouraging creativity

## GOAL 8 (Community Development)

Original Goal and Objective:

**Goal 8: To reduce the number of people living in deprivation and promote community development, diversity and social inclusion, we will...**

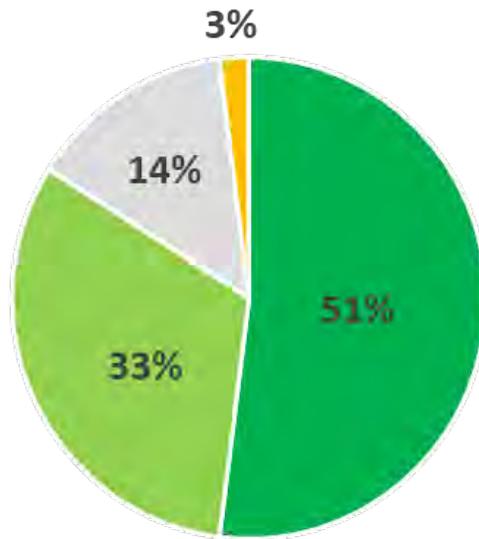
**Objective 8a:** dedicate targeted resources and integrated approaches to those areas where issues of deprivation and poverty are concentrated

**Objective 8b:** promote and support intercultural awareness and diversity, equality of opportunity, people living with a disability, integration and minority groups through meaningful engagement, community development principles and approaches

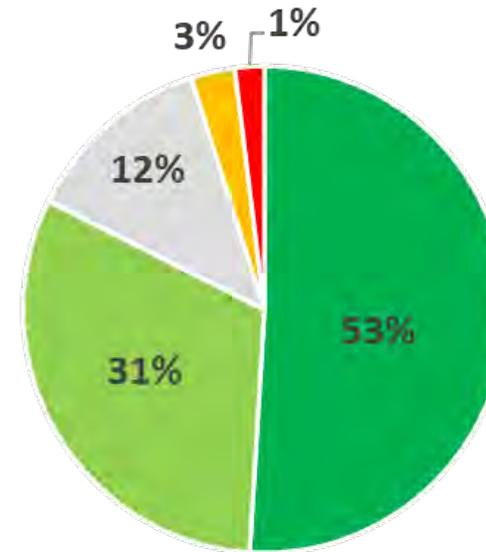
Quantitative Feedback:

- Objective 8a: An overwhelming majority 84% of 153 respondents to the question supported the objective. **51% Strongly Agreed, 33% Agreed, 14% Neutral, 3% disagreed and 0% strongly disagreed.**
- Objective 8b: An overwhelming majority 84% of 154 respondents to the question supported the objective. **53% Strongly Agreed, 31% Agreed, 12% Neutral, 3% disagreed and 1% strongly disagreed.**

## Objective A



## Objective B



Summarised Qualitative Survey Feedback relating to changes or additions to the goals and objectives:

Theme	Sub-theme	Comment	Revisions
Goal	Need to cross-reference other programme goals & aims	<i>"Programme Goals SICAP, Rural Development Programme &amp; FRC's should be cross referenced here"</i>	Revised to reflect comment
	Climate & Justice	<i>"This goal should reference climate justice and ensure that the LECP recognises that different communities will be affected by climate change differently, and understand that people living in deprivation and experiencing social exclusion may experience the impacts of climate change differently, and harder. I recommend including an</i>	Revised to reflect comment

		<i>objective or action relating to addressing climate justice.”</i>	
	Use of inclusive language and space	<i>“8a. Just an observation that has been made re FRCs. They are seen as a place for a particular people which is contrary to the objective. It might be more inclusive not to label serviced as particularly for 'the deprived'. Library spaces might help or community centres, just to move out of that mindset. Even youth cafés for all.”</i>	Noted
	Vague	<i>“This survey for example should be written in Plain English to allow more community participation.” “These are not goals and objectives - they are sweeping statements”</i>	Noted
	Older People	<i>“Given that our population as a whole is getting older Older People should be named as a target group in this high level goal”</i>	Revised to reflect comment
Objective A	What is Meaningful Engagement?	<i>“Meaningful engagement needs to be defined and there may be advice needed on how to do consultation well with minority groups”</i>	Noted
	Focus on mixed social areas needed	<i>I disagree with point 8a there shouldn't be "wealthy" areas and "areas where issues of deprivation and poverty are concentrated" housing economic levels should be all mixed up with areas of different social class living together in the same places. This is healthier and encourages better diversity and integration of community naturally.</i>	Noted
		<i>8a. Just an observation that has been made re FRCs. They are seen as a place for a particular people which is contrary to the objective. It might be more inclusive not to label serviced as particularly for 'the deprived'. Library spaces might help or community centres, just to move out of that mindset. Even youth cafés for all.”</i>	Revised to reflect comment

		<i>“Again very aspirational. People socially excluded or deprived do not all live neatly in the one area. I agree some areas have anti-social tendency which needs to be stamped out”</i>	Noted
Objective B	Principles	<i>“Not clear values again and principals... it is not enough to say that community development principles exist, they have to be named if am asked to agree on them”</i>	Noted
Broader Comments	Community Enterprise	<i>“The long-term objective will be the development of a vibrant Community Enterprise culture”</i>	Noted
	Hidden Poverty	<i>“Remember not all poverty is visible, carers and people who carry the burden of caring for medical or those with disabilities are...very much ignored and hidden group in society because they struggle through . Some caring for multiple [people] [are] treated as if there only caring for one”</i>	Noted
	Rural Areas	<i>“It is important to realise this is not just an urban issue, but an isolated rural issue”</i>	Noted

#### Revised Goals and Objectives

**Goal 8: To reduce the number of people living in deprivation and promote community development, climate justice, diversity and social inclusion, we will...**

**Objective 8a:** dedicate targeted resources and integrated approaches across all service delivery areas to those people and places where issues of deprivation and poverty are concentrated

**Objective 8b:** promote and support intercultural awareness, integration and diversity through meaningful engagement with citizens, to ensure equality of opportunity for older people, those living with a disability and all minority groups

## GOAL 9 (Social Investment)

Original Goal and Objective:

**Goal 9: To develop increased local capacity, by improving targeting of social investment through increased engagement and participation with local community groups to improve community facilities, supports and services, *we will...***

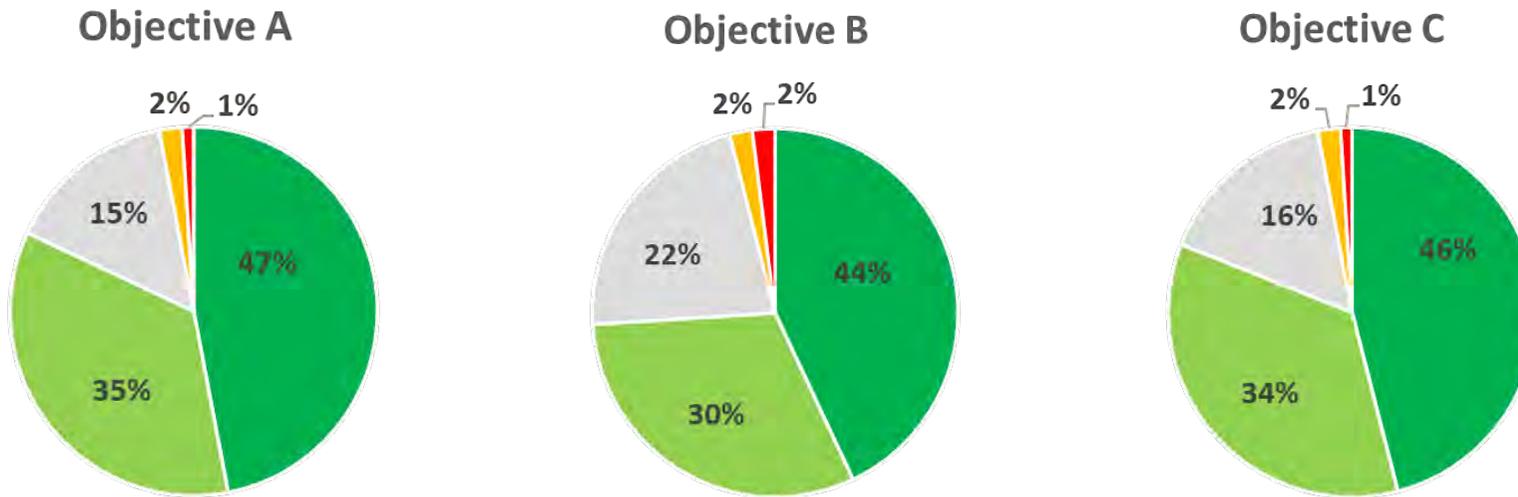
**Objective 9a:** respond positively to the implications of a changing age profile and an increasing associated risk of individuals becoming socially excluded

**Objective 9b:** learn from successes in broadening participation through the circumstances faced during 2020 /21 but also acknowledge and address examples where specific groups remain discouraged or lack confidence to engage within their communities

**Objective 9c:** identify, define, and report on community needs and capacity

Quantitative Feedback:

- Objective 9a: An overwhelming majority 82% of 158 respondents to the question supported the objective. **47% Strongly Agreed, 35% Agreed, 15% Neutral, 2% disagreed and 1% strongly disagreed.**
- Objective 9b: An overwhelming majority 74% of 158 respondents to the question supported the objective. **44% Strongly Agreed, 30% Agreed, 22% Neutral, 2% disagreed and 2% strongly disagreed.**
- Objective 9c: An overwhelming majority 80% of 157 respondents to the question supported the objective. **46% Strongly Agreed, 34% Agreed, 16% Neutral, 2% disagreed and 1% strongly disagreed.**



Summarised Qualitative Survey Feedback relating to changes or additions to the goals and objectives:

Theme	Sub-theme	Comment	Revisions
Goal	Clarity of Goals	<p><i>"This is not easy to understand. Is the Goal 'To develop increased local capacity'?"</i></p> <p><i>"The goals are vague without specifics attached. How will these be achieved? What is the key measurement for success.?"</i></p> <p><i>"By "changing age profile", do you mean an ageing population? If so, state it. If not ageing, then is Kilkenny's demographic profile getting younger? If so, state"</i></p> <p><i>Identify, define and report on community needs and capacity, include plan and strategy for response to needs</i></p>	Revised to reflect comments

	Need for Realism	<p><i>“Realism is required here, you can’t do everything nor will all sectors of the community meaningfully engage”</i></p> <p><i>“I believe the above are ambition statements, not objectives - they are far too generic and high level to enact any real impact or to set measurable targets against. In principle everyone will agree with these statements, it does not mean they will agree with how you intend to go about them. For example: “respond positively to the implications of a changing age profile. I would like to know how?”</i></p>	Noted
Objective A	Multiple Factors Interlinked	<p><i>“9aTransport, public realm, facilities and community spaces all feed into this. Also, appropriate support for community groups. In towns there tends to be the same handful of ppl volunteering in many areas. If they become stretched too thin it is v difficult to get involved to the degree required for 9a to be successful.”</i></p>	Noted
	Social Isolation	<p><i>With respect to (a), supports to combat the loneliness and isolation of some elderly people living alone in rural areas should be addressed</i></p>	Revised to reflect comments
Objective B	Public Services	<p><i>“B needs to have defined role with public services to engage with the community, voluntary and health agencies to support everyone’s involvement. the nature of peoples disability or mental health needs often reduces peoples ability to engage when the public services are ready- need to have flexible approach: alot of the population mapping in terms of aging population is</i></p>	Revised to reflect comments

		<i>underway at health service executive level- no need to reinvent the wheel- the public bodies should engage with head of health services locally in CHO5 if not already linked there are lots of groups and agencies providing much needed support on the frontline- having a forum for all to be heard, acknowledge would be good”</i>	
	Older People	<i>“Many older people still do not go out if they do its for essential trips only.We need to know what are the effects of the pandemic on our older population and put in place measures to help address the issues.I believe that Action 9 b should be expanded to reflect this”</i>	Revised to reflect comments
Objective C	Support for Community Needs	<i>“9C Not enough to report - there needs to be support coming behind this. Volunteers do their work after they have finished their jobs, after they have attended to their families and even after they have had some time for themselves. This needs acknowledgement, including through appropriate levels of support.”</i>	Revised to reflect comments
	More Data Needed	<i>“We need more data in terms of 9C. We need to ensure that our young people can live and work in KK, should they choose to do so.”</i>	Noted
Broader Comments	Wider Social Groupings	<i>“As previously mentioned, I feel this should include: the elderly, single parent households and households dealing with special needs and mental health disabilities. “</i>	Noted

## Revised Goals and Objectives

**Goal 9: To develop increased local capacity and improve targeting of social investment through increased engagement and participation with local community groups that will deliver improved community facilities, supports and services, *we will...***

**Objective 9a:** respond positively to the implications of a changing age profile and the associated risk of individuals in rural and urban areas becoming socially excluded

**Objective 9b:** learn from successes and broadening participation to assist the specific groups who remain discouraged or lacking in confidence to engage more pro-actively with their communities

**Objective 9c:** identify, define, and report on community needs and capacity, to target the delivery of future support and infrastructure

## GOAL 10 (Housing)

Original Goal and Objective:

**Goal 10: To improve our housing offer to ensure that our residents are accommodated in housing that meets their individual housing needs and that we have a housing offer capable of responding to changing levels of demand, *we will...***

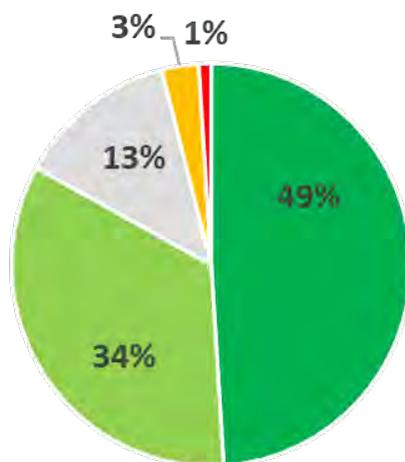
**Objective 10a:** work to address the consequences of supply falling short of demand including helping those in most acute need and ensuring that people can live near where they work and benefit from sustainable mobility options

**Objective 10b:** be proactive in the face of fluctuating and emerging demand pressures presenting themselves in Ireland and needing accommodation

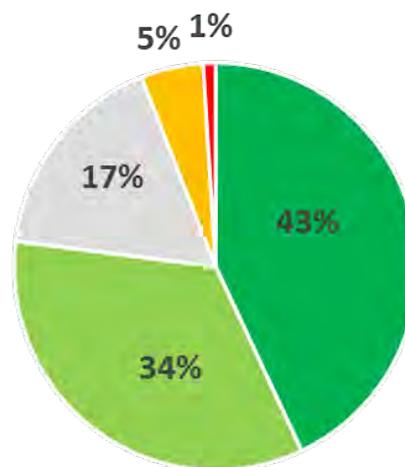
Quantitative Feedback:

- Objective 10a: An overwhelming majority 73% of 177 respondents to the question supported the objective. **49% Strongly Agreed, 34% Agreed, 13% Neutral, 3% disagreed and 1% strongly disagreed.**
- Objective 10b: An overwhelming majority 77% of 173 respondents to the question supported the objective. **43% Strongly Agreed, 34% Agreed, 17% Neutral, 5% disagreed and 1% strongly disagreed.**

### Objective A



### Objective B



Summarised Qualitative Survey Feedback relating to changes or additions to the goals and objectives:

Theme	Sub-theme	Comment	Response
Goal	Pace of Delivery	"I agree with the goals and objectives, but worry about speed of delivery, which is the most important aspect."	Noted
		"How are you going to be proactive? Speedy house building really doesn't happen in this country".	Noted
	Measurement	"Set measurable objectives, seek continuous progress, measure and publicise (regularly) the progress against the objectives. Compare	Noted

		performance against a selection of comparable locations	
	Vague	“Sounds too vague. I believe you are going to just cause more problems if you build more housing estates. Where does it end? Ever encroaching on already overstretched nature.”	Noted
	Expert led intervention	“Kilkenny needs people with vision, experts from various fields to plan long term sustainable housing/social/commercial demographic strategies for the towns here, like the galway 2060 or whatever it’s called.”	Noted
Objective A	Clear need for a more effective Planning System	“I would like to see a specific action / objective to improve the planning system in Kilkenny that creates many barriers to the creation of adequate housing supply both for individuals and for developers. Decisions are ad hoc and based on outdated principles. Until this is addressed, the above goals will never be achieved.”	Noted
	Mixed Tenure Delivery	“There needs to be sight of ensuring mixed tenancy type housing in all locations to ensure communities continue to thrive (communities need people who are willing to contribute and help with its development)”	
Objective B	How will this be measured?	The objectives are not worded well, they both sound like the same thing. Especially 10b is vague and unmeasurable. I presume they both just mean	Noted

		building more houses? But where and how are you going to ensure the houses are affordable to low-income people?	
	Need for accommodation?	"Fluctuating and emerging demand pressures " do not need accommodation. People do. B needs to be reworded somehow.	Noted
Broader Issues	ASB	"The anti social behaviour policy for social housing properties in town should be strengthened. Any interactions I've had with the council re anti social tenants has been negative with council staff being very unhelpful. Residents who live adjacent to Good Shepherd centre properties are also suffering with no recourse."	Noted

- Revised Goals and Objectives

**Goal 10: To support the provision of appropriate community supports and services for new housing developments, we will ...**

**Objective 10a:** embed support within communities for the most vulnerable households **Objective 10b:** be proactive in the face of fluctuating and emerging demand pressures across Ireland, and as those in need of accommodation present themselves within the county.

# Appendix 1 (Meeting Notes)

## ECONOMIC STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP (26<sup>th</sup> September 2022)

### **Cllr Maria Dollard**

- Climate action is most important for her. All the goals need to come together, not one over the other.
- Some concepts are not well explained, like circular economy. They don't know what that does.
- We should take advantage of remote working jobs which are available nationally.
- This is all predicated on housing, if people can't afford to live in Kilkenny.
- The plan needs to incorporate people disabilities.
- The goals should mutually benefit each other. Priority is to attract a third-level presence. Housing is essential, it's like Maslow's hierarchy of needs.
- Kilkenny is a 'World Crafts Region' and doesn't capitalise on this.

### **Declan Rice, KLP**

- Surprised by climate change's position in ranking.
- We must establish relevance in the goals, how will people prioritise issues that perhaps don't affect them directly. "They are not going to get the juices flowing" "It has to get people excited"
- Community development is a priority, such as lack of services (petrol stations for example) which are disappearing.
- For supporting businesses, what real support is there?
- Can't take for granted that SETU would actually be a benefit. The county doesn't necessarily get the control you expect. Perhaps attract a national centre for art and design.

### **Aidan Shine (South East Innovation Centre)**

- Struck with the breadth and variety in the plan, but drawn to goals 2 and 6.
- Need to acknowledge that different businesses need different support. Some want to grow and expand outside of Kilkenny. For some that is not the aim. Acknowledge the differing size of businesses.
- Bringing SETU won't completely solve 'brain drain' but it'll help keep graduates, which is needed for start-ups.

### **Fiona O'Neill (Rep of social inclusion PPN)**

- Every other goal needs to make reference to inclusion, not just goal 8.

### **Pat Crotty, Kilkenny City Centre Task Force**

- “motherhood and apple pie”, “you could copy and paste this for every county in Ireland”, it needs to be Kilkenny orientated.
- Worries about highly supportive surveys, as higher-level goals may give KCC a carte blanche to do as they please. This consultation could supersede consultation further down the line.
- Couple of things Kilkenny has already, such as tourism and agri-business, so let’s build around that.
- If we’re going to maintain our second place in domestic tourism, we need to train hospitality staff in the winters. Worried that he can’t staff his businesses mid-week during the winter.
- Not keen for us to start on new stuff, let’s focus on what we have.

**Siobhan O’Brein, ETB**

- Employment and tourism are probably the same thing in Kilkenny.
- On goal 5, not everyone is ready to go to graduate level, perhaps target training for levels 4/5 in training. We should fulfil those needs for service sector, which doesn’t come through goal 6.

**Claire Jackman**

- Wants to run a level 4 tourism training course, because that plays to Kilkenny’s strengths in tourism.

**Richard Hickey, Ireland South East Development Office**

- Goal 2 and 6 cross over.
- Goal 6 is very high level, what does ‘capitalising’ mean?
- Capitalising on the SETU should mean using research there to support the county’s economic strengths, like tourism and arts, such as technology’s increasing role within tourism, ie virtual reality. SETU should replicate other colleges.

**Martin Rochford, Environment PPN**

- If climate change and sustainability isn’t made explicit in other goals, it won’t be actioned upon. Needs mention in goals 2 & 3 specifically.
- 7% reduction isn’t good enough, needs to be 8% or 9%. We’re already 2 years into the 10 year period to cut by 7%.

**Edmond Connolly, South East Regional Skills Forum**

- Goal 6 should be ‘third-level’, not graduate as this is exclusionary. Training centre in Waterford is something to emulate, Kilkenny doesn’t have one and KCC should set this as an objective.
- In Goal 2, recruitment is held back by housing.
- Agriculture is absent and should be included.
- Tourism is changing to a focus on active/outdoors tourism which doesn’t have mention.

**Rosemary Steen, Design and Crafts Council**

- Craft and design should be better exploited. Need to expand the multi-use community facility in Abbey Quarter to do this.
- Already started doing Level 8 qualifications in Thomastown and thinks this should be a model.
- Need to build international links to support businesses, something that she felt was missing.
- Manufacturing hub, which businesses can take advantage of economies of scale through shared use.

**John Hurley, Chamber of Commerce**

- Businesses under great strain already and will be at a loss of capacity to take on anything the LECP comes out with.

**Martina Comerford, KCC Tourism Officer**

- Name the share of the economy that is associated with tourism, would help base the second goal.
- Tourism numbers may become less important as an indicator. Measuring success could be better determined by how sustainable tourism is or how much is spent from tourism.

## COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP (19<sup>th</sup> September 2022)

### **Ronan Ryan, KCC Estate Management**

- Overhaul of the planning system probably needed to deliver outcomes required.

### **Sheila Donnelly, Newpark Family Resource Centre**

- Housing outcomes need to be actioned quickly.
- Outcome from Goal 6, we should have a higher retention of people who up-skill in Kilkenny to stay in Kilkenny.

### **Martin Rochford, Environmental PPN**

- Please to see it is goal 1 and overarching, but feels its omission from the other goals, it will be overlooked. Particularly Economy Development and Tourism should contain a mention of 'sustainable development', on the latter tourism shouldn't bring more cars to the county.
- Transport is omitted from the goals. Should transport be included, this should be seen through a sustainability lens.
- Goal 6 should also be about apprenticeships.

### **Martin Butler**

- Climate change has a greater effect on different sectors, such as poorer people in society.
- Social inclusion should be an overarching theme like climate change.

### **Nicola**

- Sport mentioned just once under sports and wellbeing. Sport events also has effects on other goals, such as tourism, supporting businesses and community development.
- Support to prepare funding bids which increasingly need to demonstrate sustainability. In some sectors this is harder than others.
- As an outcome from housing, the infrastructure for sport should be considered as part of the planning process.

### **Josephine Coyne, KCC Library**

- Outcomes need to be achievable and measurable.

### **Janette Boran, Healthy Ireland coordinator**

- Worried that 10a will raise expectations beyond what is deliverable.



**Kilkenny County Council**  
Comhairle Chontae Chill Chainnigh