

2. Briefing by Ms. Fiona Monaghan and Ms. Siobhan King, Fáilte Ireland on the Shannon Estuary Drive.

Ms. Fiona Monaghan and Ms. Siobhan King, Fáilte Ireland gave a presentation on the Shannon Estuary Drive. In the presentation F. Monaghan outlined the following:-

- Rationale for Drives off the Wild Atlantic Way
- Criteria for Consideration
- Benefit to the Destination
- Map on the Shannon Estuary Drive
- Work to Date
- Next Steps

F. Monaghan outlined that a working group has been established with the Local Authorities, LEADER companies and Fáilte Ireland. She stated that the draft route has been plotted for consideration. Reference was made to the two facilitated community workshops that were held in Foynes and Kildysart.

F. Monaghan outlined the next stage is to finalise the route with visitor attractions, visitor activities, towns and villages. The map for the summer 2017 season for local tourist offices and accommodation providers will be printed. Community workshops will be held. An audit for the routes for viewing points and navigational aids will be done. Works will be commencing shortly with the Local Authority with regard to the remedial works. She stated that the next stage is to prepare a capital application for Fáilte Ireland for interpretation and navigation.

S. King referred to the workshop which took place in Kildysart recently. Approximately 31 people attended in which there was huge enthusiasm and interest. She stated that submissions were requested from the business people/sector in relation to accommodation. It was noted that a lot of businesses closed from Ennis to Labasheeda in particular to Ballynacally.

F. Monaghan outlined that the purpose of the presentation is to take on board the members comments/views and same would be discussed with the working group. She also stated that cognisance needs to be taken off if the public cannot access an attraction/visitor site, then the route cannot be promoted.

The following were comments/observations raised by the members:-

- A significant amount of marketing has been done in relation to marketing in particular one day events in West Clare – a package needs to be put together promoting an overnight stay in West Clare.
- Reference was made to walks and cycles and to the increasingly large cycling community and the members hoped walks and cycles would be promoted within the route.
- Branding should also be included along the Shannon Estuary Drive.
- It was suggested that a presentation be made to Fáilte Ireland on the cruise industry. A visit of the Shannon Estuary Drive was proposed.
- Cllr. C. C. Molloy and P. Morris referred to Quin Abbey and Quin, Newmarket on Fergus and Mooghaun and requested that each of these heritage locations be included in the Shannon Estuary Drive. P. Morris suggested that if the map could be extended through Ennis, out to Quin, it would add greatly as this is a huge catchment area.
- The question was also raised as to what level of signage and promotion will Fáilte Ireland undertake on these routes?

B. McCarthy requested that Kilrush also be included which he felt would give it a boost. He stated that the National Park and Wildlife Service are doing a Traffic and Visitor Management plan for the National Park and advised that Fáilte Ireland have a consultation with them before the route is finalised, in particular having regard to a coordinated approach and the cumulative effects of both plans and issues around sustainable traffic and visitor management.

3. Visitor Management and Sustainable Tourism Development Plan for Inis Cealtra – update by Mr. Brian McCarthy, Senior Planner.

B. McCarthy informed the meeting that a third public consultation event took place on the proposed draft plan for Holy Island at Mountshannon Community Hall. He outlined that the purpose of the public consultation was to outline details of the Draft Plan, the purpose of which is to both maintain and protect the cultural heritage and natural assets of the island and also develop opportunities for local economic development. He stated that approximately 80 people attended the public consultation event and stated that concern was expressed by the public of bus/coach drop off for one day.

B. McCarthy stated that their preference was for an overnight stay in the area to help promote economic development and further tourism attraction.

B. McCarthy outlined that in June 2015, Clare County Council acquired 41 acres of land which, together with the 2 acre already in the ownership of the Office of Public Works (OPW), resulted in the entire island being brought into public ownership for the first time. B. McCarthy outlined the potential of the Island from an economic development point of view.

T. O'Donohoe referred to the environmental impact assessment in relation to tourism related issues.

B. McCarthy also referred to both the Environmental Impact Assessment and the Strategic Environmental Assessment which also has taken place in relation to Holy Island. Also he noted that a visitor capacity assessment was undertaken for the Island.

G. Dollard stated that rejuvenation will take place in East Clare and the entire area. He said by combining initiatives across the county that cover the whole area and various tourism packages could be developed. G. Dollard also referred to West Clare, Scattery Island the new ferry operator that is proposed for the Island. He outlined that works are currently being progressed on a number of new initiatives in relation to new visitor attractions.

4. Overview of key activities – (report attached).

G. Dollard circulated a report on the overview of key activities since mid 2014. He asked the members if there was a key activity they wished to focus on between now and 2019 for them to inform him. The following were the items requested by the members for future discussion:-

- Focus on tourism and working with Fáilte Ireland.
- Follow up meeting with the IDA – it was noted that two meetings have taken place with them; a subsequent meeting in the future was discussed.
- National Framework Ireland 2014 – AEC - Mr. Kevin Thompson and Michael Devane to be invited to an SPC meeting.
- A presentation from Shannon Commercial Properties and an update from Shannon Group on Shannon Airport.

5. Date of next meeting – 8th May 2017

It was agreed that the next meeting would take place on the 8th May 2017.

6. AOB.

D O'Callaghan referred to the high esteem that Mr. S. Ward (RIP) was held in. This was agreed by the members.

With no other business the meeting concluded.

Signed:

Cathaoirleach

**Director, Economic Development
& Enterprise**