

# Public Consultation Findings

## Revised High Level Goals & Objectives

### July 2023

#### Clare Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) 2023 – 2029 Your County, Your Vision, Clare's Future



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# INTRODUCTION





## Introduction

The Local Economic and Community Plan 2023 – 2029 will shape the future development of Clare over the next six years. Coordinated by the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) we sought your input and vision as to what Clare should look like.

This document outlines the Consultation process. We want to make it an even better place in which to live, work and visit by creating new opportunities, improving connectivity between rural and urban areas, and by protecting and enhancing services in the community.

This document will provide you with an update on the following topics:

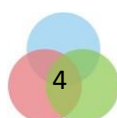
1. Public Consultation Findings
2. Revised Draft High-Level Goals & Objectives (following public consultation)
3. Next Steps.

## What is the LECP?

The LECP (Local Economic and Community Plan), is a crucial plan designed to enhance the well-being and quality of life for everyone in County Clare. This includes not only the residents but also those who work, invest, or visit the area. The plan outlines the goals and actions for economic and community development within the county over a six-year period, taking into account the needs and aspirations of its diverse population.

The significance of the LECP lies in its ability to provide a comprehensive framework for public services, businesses, and other stakeholders in Clare. This framework connects local plans with overarching national policies, such as the National Planning Framework 2040 and the National Development Plan 2021-2030, which are essential in setting out government regional policy and investment plans for the next decade and beyond. Furthermore, the LECP aligns with regional strategies developed by the Southern Regional Assembly, local policies including the Clare County Development Plan 2023-2029, Clare Digital Strategy 2023 and the Renewed Clare Rural Development Strategy 2030.

In addition to its economic and community focus, the LECP will consider environmental concerns. This is evident through its alignment with the County's Climate Action Plan, which is being prepared in response to the National Climate Action Plan 2023. The LECP will also



consider the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which aim to address global economic, social, and environmental issues. In terms of social justice, the plan will pay attention to the provisions of Ireland's National Action Plan against Racism and will work towards the implementation of related plans that address the needs of the County's Minority Ethnic Communities.

The LECP covers two main areas: community development and economic development. Within these broad categories, the plan will address various interconnected issues, such as social, cultural, and environmental matters that impact the lives of the people of Clare, as well as those who visit and invest in the County. Recognising the complexity and sometimes competing nature of these factors, the plan is being collaboratively prepared by the Clare Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) and the Economic Strategic Policy Committee (ESPC) of Clare County Council. This joint effort will ensure that the LECP is comprehensive, inclusive and effective in promoting the well-being and quality of life for all citizens and stakeholder in County Clare.

### High Level Goals, Objectives, and Actions:

The LECP, or Local Economic and Community Plan, includes plans for the economic and community development of Clare. These two parts are interconnected and overlap in the High-Level Goals, objectives, and actions.



## High-Level Goals:

The overall direction of the LECP is guided by High-Level Goals. These goals provide the core aim of the LECP and represent how Clare should grow over the lifetime of the plan.

## Objectives:

Each High-Level Goal will have several related objectives. Objectives are key priority areas within each High-Level Goal, and they start to narrow the plan down from aspirational to practical. Objectives provide an indication of how actions might be grouped in order to work towards achieving the High-Level Goals.

## Actions:

Actions are the specific projects or initiatives identified to fulfil the objectives and contribute to accomplishing the High-Level Goals. Actions are designed within the SMART framework, which means they are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-Bound. Actions make the LECP operational and are designed to respond to community input and need.

## Census 2022 Story for Clare

Census 2022 as it fully emerges over the coming weeks along with what has already been published gives us a clear sense of the demographic trends now confronting the County. People will not be surprised that much has changed since the 2016 Census. Some of those changes include:

<b>7.2% growth</b> in population since 2016 vs. state average of 7.6%	<b>Net migration</b> the main driver of growth since 2016	Relatively few <b>births</b> for a population of this size
Average resident now <b>40.1 years old</b> , up from 38.5 years in 2016	<b>Unemployment</b> rate down to <b>8.1%</b> , remaining lower than the state	More adults have a <b>third-level qualification</b> , rising from 32% to <b>36%</b>

## **Socio Economic conditions in Clare**

The Public Consultation Process we have undertaken noted that more detail on the socio-economic profile of the County and its variance across the geographic spread of the County is required. Preparing the Plan would be helped by looking at the County's future population projections, by examining areas that have declined in recent years and by addressing demographic pressure points. Consultation feedback notes that, from an economic perspective, the analysis of indigenous/foreign direct investment employment and Local Enterprise Office data in the County would better inform the preparation of the Plan. Other areas highlighted in the feedback provided through the public consultation would include the need to examine available data on Housing, Environmental profile, agricultural profile, green economy, etc.

As the data from the Census 2022 becomes available we will ensure that these are included in the Plan and the underpinning Socio-economic Statement of the Plan.

In addition, as preparation of the LECP is an on-going process, the LCDC will look to ensure that the published Local Economic & Community Plan is fully reflective of other emerging data applicable specifically to Clare. In that regard the LCDC has commissioned an up-dated Clare Survey. A Clare Survey was originally delivered by the LCDC in 2018. The new Clare Survey, soon to be published, will seek to build on the success of this original survey with Clare specific datasets that will be made available to local stakeholders and the people of Clare to inform policy and decision-making processes into the future. Importantly, feedback on the Socio-Economic Statement gleaned through the consultation process to date has been submitted to the Consultants for consideration as part of the coordination of the final LECP which together with the Census and Clare Survey data will inform the actions and implementation plan.

## Sustainable Development Goals:

Given the importance of the UN Sustainable Development Goals to the new plan, the SDGs are expanded on in slightly more detail below. These policies will help to inform and chart the direction of this LECP and its key elements of goals, objectives, desired outcomes, and actions.







# VISION STATEMENT

## LOCAL ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY PLAN 2023-2029

Our Vision for County Clare as set out in the Clare County Development Plan 2023 – 2029 is as follows:

That County Clare would develop as a place to be part of and proud of, where urban and rural communities enjoy a high quality of life, work practice choice, inclusivity and service access and so that the county is a dynamic, resilient, connected and internationally competitive location for innovation and investment and is a national leader in climate action, creativity, culture, heritage, tourism and environmental management.

**The County Spoke; We Listened**  
88% of those surveyed agree with the proposed vision.



# Clare SCOT Analysis

A SCOT analysis is a technique used to identify the Strengths, Constraints, Opportunities, and Threats that currently exist in the County. Below is the SCOT analysis for Clare.

## ↑ Strengths

- The Growing Population across the County including an increase in younger / working age residents
- The increased diversity and skills of the workforce
- The natural landscape, heritage and topography
- The Rural, Marine, Industry & Agriculture Sector
- The County's international profile and success in attracting international investment
- Shannon Airport and the Shannon Freezone
- Strong community spirit and capacity, facilitated by delivery of the Rural Development Strategy / Rural Development Officers and Community Volunteers

## ↓ Constraints (Weaknesses)

- Lack of a sufficiently integrated Countywide public transport
- Perception of spatial inequalities in quality of services / resources with West and North Clare identified as being comparatively poorer
- Insufficient affordable housing & accommodation
- Availability of staff/ labour arising from the failure to retain and attract younger / working age people in our Rural Areas
- Access to Third-Level education facilities
- Skills shortages curtailing business growth and investment
- Provision of childcare in parts of the rural areas and areas experiencing significant growth
- Lack of activities (recreation space / clubs / centres) for the youth in rural areas

## + Opportunities

- The growing entrepreneurship of local business
- Deep water port – international trade linkages
- Investment in the Green Economy / Technology
- Potential for development of bio and circular economies
- Renewable energy generation – offshore wind and tide energy
- Build from strong base of social enterprises
- Recovery and growth in the diversity of tourism businesses / accommodation
- Potential to grow the local craft industry and build on an expanding creativity within our communities
- Expanded number and scale of festivals and food markets
- Digital connectivity & remote working
- Revitalisation of towns & villages

## ! Threats

- National economic context
- Continued depopulation of parts of our rural areas
- Community capacity lacking in some rural settlements to realise opportunities
- Social isolation / exclusion and accessibility to services
- Availability of local job opportunities
- Influence of national policy
- High retail and accommodation vacancy rates undermining vibrancy / availability of services
- Impact of technological advances on job sustainability
- Inadequate investment in towns and villages i.e. the development of wastewater services to allow for growth of towns and villages
- CAP 2023-2027 – implications of the burden of "just transition" on small farmers
- Infrastructure failing to keep pace with growth / change (including education at all levels)

## The County Spoke; We Listened Public Consultation

Our Local Economic Community Plan (LECP) 2023 – 2029 public consultation process commenced on the 15<sup>th</sup> of May 2023 until the 23<sup>rd</sup> of June 2023. The consultation was delivered across several separate but aligned processes including the following:

A “*Public Consultation Document*” containing High-Level Goals and an associated Socio-Economic Statement was published online on Clare County Council’s website under “*Have Your Say*”. The document provided details on what was involved in preparing the LECP, how it was planned and delivered, draft High-Level Goals and how they would impact on the people of Clare, regardless of background, through a series of draft objectives. Alongside the Public Consultation Document published online, engagement platforms and Surveys were published for both the community and business interests and hosted on the council’s webpage. The Surveys provided members of the public the opportunity to complete the surveys and provide feedback during the consultation period with further submissions made through the dedicated email address provided [lecp23@clarecoco.ie](mailto:lecp23@clarecoco.ie)

Over 70 submissions were received from the public through the public consultation platforms.

The LECP was also promoted on Clare County Council’s social media platforms including Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube accounts. A short video explaining the LECP, and the high-level goals was also produced. This short video was made with the assistance of Clare Youth Service and attracted over 3,000 hits.

A radio interview was conducted on Clare FM on the 22<sup>nd</sup> May supporting the consultation process and raising public awareness on the Local Economic and Community Plan process. The audio for the interview was published on the council’s social media and website from the 13<sup>th</sup> of June 2023.

Adverts were displayed on Clare FM’s homepage and the Clare Herald for the duration of the consultation process. Over the course of the campaign the ads generated over 145,000 impressions; 273 clicks.

A print ad campaign was launched on the 18<sup>th</sup> of May 2023 with a press release issued to the Clare Champion and Clare Echo. Adverts were displayed in the Clare Champion on the 18<sup>th</sup> of May and the 8<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> of June 2023. The Clare Champion has a newspaper circulation of circa 56,000 readers per week and the Clare Echo has a weekly readership of 16,500 people.



To complement the above process, face to face public consultations were facilitated throughout the county in each Municipal District facilitated by LCDC Support Staff, commencing the week of the 12<sup>th</sup> of June 2023. These in-person events, which were well attended, were hosted in the following locations: -

Monday 12 <sup>th</sup> June 2023 -	Shannon Municipal District
Tuesday 13 <sup>th</sup> June 2023 -	Ennis Municipal District
Wednesday 14 <sup>th</sup> June 2023 -	Killaloe Municipal District
Thursday 15 <sup>th</sup> June 2023 -	West Clare Municipal District

Targeted engagements also took place with business communities in Clare to hear their views on the economic aspects of the plan. Breakfast briefings took place on the 12<sup>th</sup> of June 2023 at the Inn in Dromoland and on the 16<sup>th</sup> of June 2023 at the Digihub in Ennistymon. A wide cross section of business interests attended these sessions and inputted into the economic aspects of the plan.

The following section highlights the findings of the public consultation process and reflects the public's observations on the LECP Draft High Level Goals and Objectives and consulting findings.

Look out for the text boxes located at the bottom right-hand corner of this document for results of the Community Survey responses and feedback on the goals/objectives:

**You Spoke; We  
Listened**  
% of those surveyed  
agree

LECP Community  
Public Consultation  
Feedback

"Very Strong Statement which will be worthless without buy-in from government, government agencies with necessary financial support."

"The key lies in the nature ambition and scope of the actions, who will implement them and how will this be monitored and evaluated."

"I think there should be more detail on the goals and how it is envisaged they will be achieved."

"Heartened to see the welcome in Clare for Ukrainians, refugees, even Dubs. Even this plan can help to show the real attitude of Clare residents".

"I would have expected the socio-economic statement to be much more detailed on both the socio-economic profile and SCOT analysis".

"The Plan needs to ensure no one is left behind. Inclusion needs to feature more".

While we are a rural county, we need to rise above this and be seen as a National leader, a progressive county with the best of both worlds – connected to national cities, high quality of life, excellent amenities".

"I used to live in a nice lively place. Now I live in a place with no shop, no post office, no pub, one bus that passes my door at 9.15am and back again at 1.15pm".



# REVISED HIGH-LEVEL GOALS



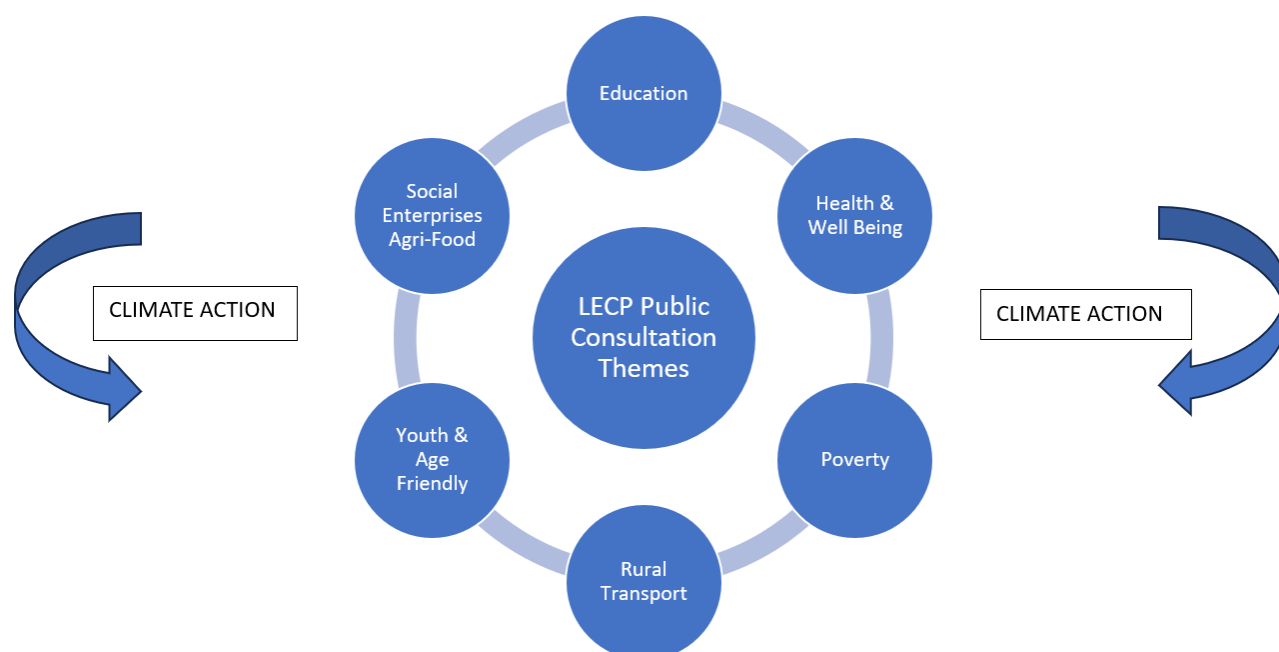


## The County Spoke, We Listened

A critical aspect of the LECP will be to set out a limited number of key goals to be achieved over the life of the new Plan. These will in turn set the overall direction of the plan in its objectives to be achieved and how these are to be achieved in the form of high-level goals and underpinning strategic actions.

The public consultation process provided those interested in Clare an opportunity to contribute to the process of setting the Goals for the County and their underpinning objectives to allow the drafting of the full Plan and the key actions which will need to be implemented over the coming years.

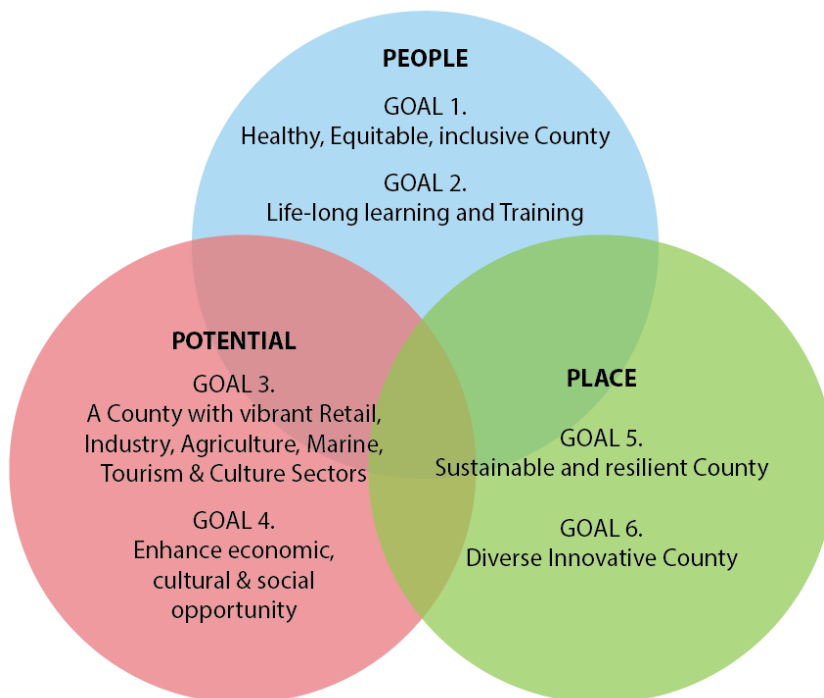
Several key themes emerged through the public consultation process identifying issues of concern to the people of Clare requiring focused consideration in the Local Economic & Community Plan (LECP).



In addition to the above several issues were raised through the public consultation process as being of local importance to County Clare and largely controlled by National Policy. It is hoped that by reflecting these issues in the LECP, the LCDC will bring these matters into consideration at the National Level and influence changes needed nationally to address local needs in these areas in County Clare.



Following extensive engagement from the public, the revised high-level goals and objectives are set out in this document.





## GOAL 1

# HEALTHY EQUITABLE INCLUSIVE COUNTY





# HEALTHY, EQUITABLE INCLUSIVE COUNTY

## High Level Goal 1: Healthy, equitable, inclusive County:

That Clare will be a County that prioritises the physical, mental and social well-being of all citizens, where socio-economic rights are realized, making it a healthy place to live, work, grow and learn.

### Goal 1 Objectives:

**Objective 1.1.** To support the delivery of the Age Friendly and Healthy Clare Programmes and improve health & well-being in the County.

**Objective 1.2.** To support County-wide active participation in employment for those unemployed, underemployed and those who wish to continue working.

**Objective 1.3.** To reduce persistent poverty across the County, by being proactive in the delivery of supports and services that address the challenges of poverty including access to services.

**Objective 1.4.** To identify and provide resources towards addressing gender inequality from communities in the County.

**Objective 1.5.** To support integration and inclusivity for the County's new and existing Minority Ethnic Communities through education and integration and representation on decision making structures.

**Objective 1.6.** To work with local agencies and partners to support social inclusion, youth service provision and measures to tackle rural isolation.

**3** GOOD HEALTH  
AND WELL-BEING



**8** DECENT WORK AND  
ECONOMIC GROWTH



**1** NO  
POVERTY



**The County Spoke; We Listened**  
86% of those surveyed agree  
with this Goal

## GOAL 2

# LIFE-LONG LEARNING AND TRAINING





# LIFE-LONG LEARNING AND TRAINING

## High Level Goal 2: Life-Long Learning and Training

That Clare will be a County which supports and promotes education facilitated via primary, secondary, higher and further education that provides opportunities for life-long learning, upskilling and personal development.

### Goal 2 Objectives:

**Objective: 2.1.** To encourage and support access to training, education, skills development, and personal development for all wishing to partake of such opportunities.

**Objective 2.2:** To facilitate employees and local businesses access to targeted Government supports to upskill and reskill through mentorship and other county-based resources.

**Objective 2.3.** To develop the financial, managerial and leadership skills of micro/small business owners including those entering the social or circular economy.

**Objective: 2.4.** To support the people of Clare becoming a more digitally enabled population.

**Objective 2.5.** To provide the tools and supports to enable the development of robust sustainable skilled employment, increasing the number of businesses participating in apprenticeship programmes.

**Objective 2.6.** To provide access to integrated education and training opportunities for refugees in the County, especially the development of their language skills.

4 QUALITY  
EDUCATION



5 GENDER  
EQUALITY



**The County Spoke; We Listened**  
92% of those surveyed agree  
with this Goal.



## GOAL 3

**A COUNTY WITH VIBRANT SERVICE,  
RETAIL, INDUSTRY, AGRICULTURE, MARINE,  
TOURISM AND CULTURE SECTORS**





# A COUNTY WITH VIBRANT SERVICE, RETAIL, INDUSTRY, AGRICULTURE, MARINE, TOURISM AND CULTURE SECTORS

## High Level Goal 3:

That Clare will have a vibrant Service, Retail, Industry, Agriculture, Marine and Tourism and Culture sector that will offer employment and recreational opportunities for all.

### Goal 3 Objectives:

**Objective: 3.1.** To explore the County's potential for innovation and diversification in agriculture, marine and other sectors whilst protecting enhancing and restoring the natural environment and resources.

**Objective: 3.2.** To develop and improve the integration of local business, especially artisan and craft producers, with the County's Tourism offering.

**Objective: 3.3.** To support viable and busy town and village centres which function to serve their communities and rural hinterlands.

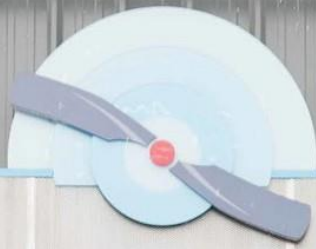
**Objective: 3.4.** To provide the training and mentorship to support the development of Social Enterprises in the County.

**Objective: 3.5.** To improve Countywide awareness and accessibility to the Public Transport System

**Objective: 3.6.** To support greater awareness and engagement on Climate Change and foster the development of the green economy across all economic sectors.



**The County Spoke; We Listened**  
86% of those surveyed agree with this Goal.



# SHANNON AVIATION MUSEUM



## GOAL 4

**ENHANCE ECONOMIC, CULTURAL  
AND SOCIAL OPPORTUNITY**



# ENHANCE ECONOMIC, CULTURAL AND SOCIAL OPPORTUNITY

## High Level Goal 4: Enhance economic, cultural, and social opportunity.

That Clare will be an economically, culturally, and socially vibrant place to live, work, invest and learn.

### Goal 4 Objectives

**Objective: 4.1.** To support the arts and culture sector across the county with the cooperation of and collaboration with voluntary, and private arts/culture providers.

**Objective: 4.2.** To facilitate and support investment and employment creation which enhances the economic opportunities for all those living in Clare.

**Objective: 4.3.** To leverage the economic, employment, cultural, and social benefits of emerging technologies whilst sustaining employment and creating new opportunities through social enterprise.

**Objective: 4.4.** To sustainably manage economic, social and recreational potential of the Wild Atlantic Coastline and Shannon Estuary while protecting the coastal zone and its resources and adapting to and managing the challenges and opportunities of climate change.

**Objective: 4.5.** To provide appropriate recreational and community spaces for all

**Objective: 4.6.** To support Clare Libraries in the delivery of a County wide universal service.

**8** DECENT WORK AND  
ECONOMIC GROWTH



**3** GOOD HEALTH  
AND WELL-BEING



**The County Spoke; We Listened**  
89% of those surveyed agree  
with this Goal.

## GOAL 5

# SUSTAINABLE AND RESILIENT COUNTY





# SUSTAINABLE AND RESILIENT COUNTY

## High Level Goal 5: Sustainable and Resilient County

That will be a County with strong and balanced urban and rural areas, where people can reach their potential, leading and supporting climate change transition to create empowered resilient and sustainable communities and business.

### Goal 5 Objectives:

**Objective: 5.1.** To sustain the population in our urban and rural communities by ensuring that our youth and working population can remain and can contribute to the social, cultural and economic growth of their communities while supporting our ageing population to also contribute to their communities.

**Objective: 5.2.** To support the implementation of the Climate Action Plan through innovative initiatives and collaboration while accessing appropriate funding supports.

**Objective: 5.3.** To work with all our communities, businesses, statutory and voluntary organisations to understand and harness the opportunities of climate action.

**Objective: 5.4.** To encourage and support the sustainable development of our natural resources while enhancing economic benefits through protection of our natural habitats and built environment and heritage, and ecosystems.

**Objective 5.5** Support farmers to diversify to meet Climate and CAP targets, and as a means of sustaining the argi sector.

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES  
AND COMMUNITIES



13 CLIMATE  
ACTION



**The County Spoke; We Listened**  
89% of those surveyed agree  
with this Goal.



## GOAL 6

# COLLABORATIVE DIVERSE INNOVATIVE





# COLLABORATIVE, DIVERSE AND INNOVATIVE COUNTY

## High Level Goal 6: Collaborative, Diverse and innovative County

That Clare will be a collaborative, sustainable and innovative County to further enhance local economic and community development opportunities.

### Goal 6 Objectives:

**Objective: 6.1.** To develop social enterprises and other job creation initiatives for areas of high unemployment in the County.

**Objective: 6.2.** To roll out enhanced digitalisation across public services to support the development of Smart Places across the County.

**Objective: 6.3.** To put in place a Local Living Lab to provide an independent forum for discussing the long-term future of Clare in setting direction for the County at regional and national level as well as the resource requirements to underpin efficient local service delivery and community wealth-building.

**Objective: 6.4.** To develop a strategy for integration and anti-racism having regard to the commitment of the LCDC to the Public Sector Duty and the implementation of the National Action Plan Against Racism.

**Objective: 6.5.** To support a collaborative, collective and coordinated approach to local economic and community development in the County, eliminating duplication and promoting partnership in the delivery of projects/initiatives to deliver economies of scale

9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION  
AND INFRASTRUCTURE

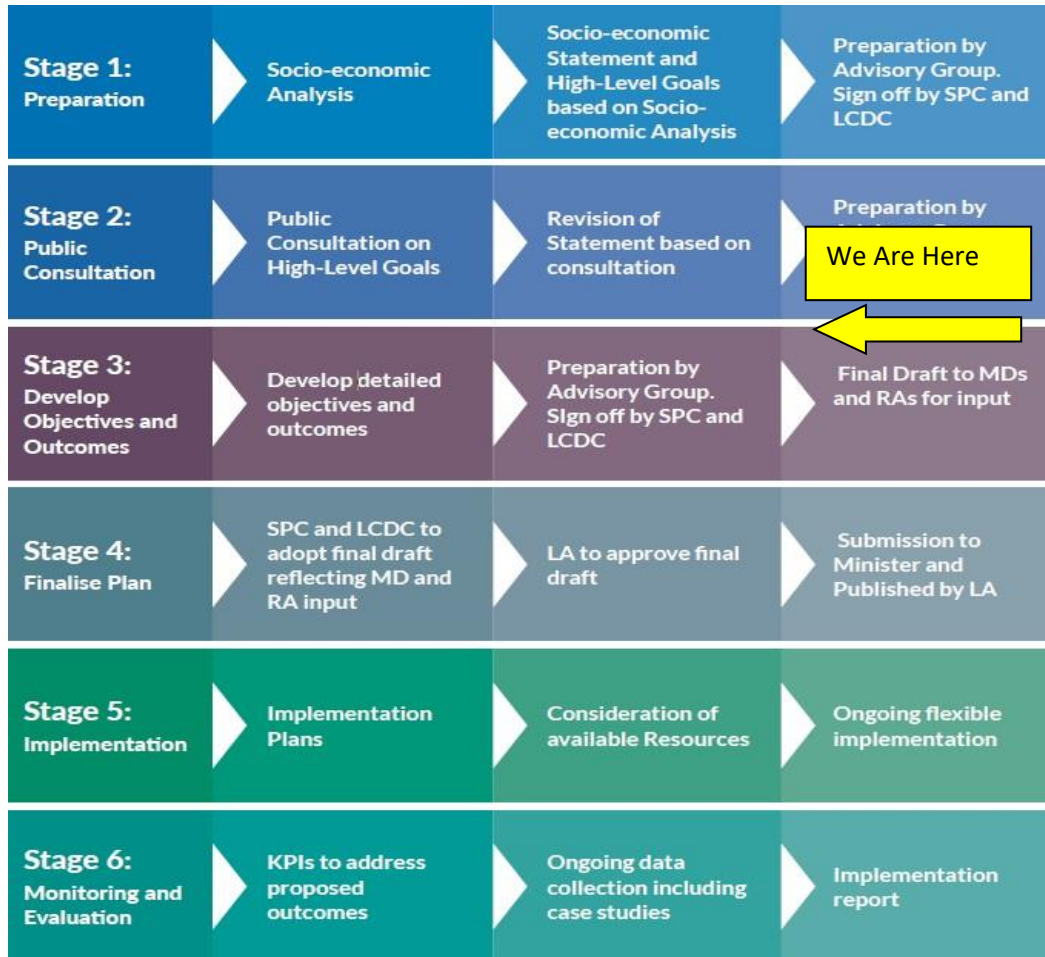


**The County Spoke; We Listened**  
92% of those surveyed agree  
with this Goal.

## Your County, Your Vision, Clare's Future

### Next Steps:

The process for preparing the LECP is prescribed in the LECP Guidelines 2021, as set out across 6 stages outlined above.



The LCDC & Economic SPC will be working on the development of actions and outcomes over the Autumn period to further inform the LECP Framework document and the first of three two-year implementation plans that will accompany the Plan.

The final draft LECP and Implementation Plan will be presented to the four Municipal District and Regional Assembly for their consideration and amendment. The final draft reflecting the Municipal District and Regional Assembly input will be presented to the Economic SPC and LCDC for sign off before final approval by the Full Council.

It is anticipated that the Local Economic & Community Plan will be submitted to the Minister and published by the LCDC before the year end 2023.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all our stakeholders and the public in County Clare for their active participation and engagement on the Public Consultation in preparation of the Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) for County Clare.



**Presented by**

**Clare Local Community Development Committee and the Economic Strategic Policy Committee of  
Clare County Council**