

Kilkenny Local Authorities Corporate Plan 2004-2009

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FOREWORDS

CATHAOIRLEACH:

I welcome the publication of this Corporate Plan, which has given us the opportunity to focus on how best we can serve the needs of the people of County Kilkenny in a time of rapid development and change. I see our challenge, as one of developing and delivering services of the highest quality that are responsive to the identified needs and expectations of the wide range of customers served by this Council.

I am proud that the Council is at the forefront of this process of change and review. Improved customer service in its broadest sense is what we are continually striving for and I believe that this Council is well placed to do this in the challenging years ahead. This Corporate Plan sets out the directions that we will be following in pursuit of the ambitious targets set out in the Plan.

This plan will facilitate the Elected Members, Management and Staff together with the County Development Board and the Strategic Policy Committees to work in partnership for the betterment of the people of County Kilkenny. I welcome the challenges outlined in the Corporate Plan and look forward to working with management to improve the services we provide and to continuing the process of making the Council a highly professional organisation committed to best practice.

I very much welcome this joint corporate plan for Kilkenny County Council and Kilkenny Borough Council.

Cllr M.H Cavanagh
Cathaoirleach

Mayor:

As Mayor of Kilkenny I welcome the publication of this Corporate Plan on behalf of Kilkenny Borough Council. The focus of the plan is to state clearly the shared objectives of the two Local Authorities. It also reflects the high level of co-operation and mutual respect that exists between Kilkenny Local Authorities. This approach enables the two authorities to benefit from the efficiencies of a shared approach while at the same time respecting the separate identities of Kilkenny County Council and Kilkenny Borough Council.

Kilkenny City is encountering major development at the present time and this trend is likely to continue over the next number of years. It is therefore essential that Kilkenny Borough Council lead and respond to such challenges and this Corporate Plan provides a framework in fulfilling this role.

I wish to commend all those involved in the preparation of this plan.

Cllr. Martin Brett
Mayor

COUNTY MANAGER

This Corporate Plan plots the overall direction and basis from which the Kilkenny Local Authorities will operate over the next five years 2005-2009. The preparation of the plan has involved a very high level of consultation across Kilkenny County Council and Kilkenny Borough Council. This plan is structured around a core principle of delivering services in an open, equitable, sustainable and efficient manner within available resources to the people of Kilkenny.

Our Corporate Plan will be the backdrop from which annual operational plans will be drawn during the lifetime of the plan and will also influence the determination of future policies. Consequently an annual review will be undertaken by both Council's to ensure that it remains up to date, relevant and focused in terms of influencing the allocation of resources to areas and services needing highest priority.

I have referred to the very high level of consultation and wish to express my appreciation to the elected members and staff for the significant time allocated by them to the process. In particular, I wish to thank all those involved in guiding the consultation process. An ongoing commitment to inclusive engagement by elected members, staff and the public is built into the plan in the review process.

Michael Malone
County Manager

Preamble:

We, the members and staff of Kilkenny Local Authorities, agree to implement this Corporate Plan in a spirit of partnership that values autonomous and consistent decision-making across both organisations.

Consultation Process

This corporate plan was prepared on a partnership basis involving all interests.

In early 2003 Kilkenny Local Authorities undertook a series of consultations with staff from both the County and Borough Councils. This process involved over 60 workshop sessions with a total of 481 staff participating. Staff were consulted under four headings:

- Communications
- Customer Services
- Working Conditions
- Work Practices

The reports from these sessions have informed the preparation of this corporate plan and were carried out by the Workplace Partnership Co-ordinator with the Community and Enterprise Development Officers.

Further consultation sessions were undertaken as part of the process of drawing together this plan. The Management Team and the Corporate Policy Group agreed that the elected members would participate in two consultation workshops. The workshops provided an opportunity for elected members to undertake some analysis of the internal and external environments. The workshops also aimed to get collective consensus in relation to the overall mission and core objectives for the organisation over the coming five years. The members also identified their role in the implementation and monitoring process.

A third series of workshops were also organised with the Management Team. The workshops identifying:

- The process for drawing the plan together
- Supporting strategies
- Capacities and resources
- Analysing the internal and external environments
- A process for developing operational plans

Further consultation will be on-going as part of the corporate planning process. A Customer Satisfaction Survey will be completed in February. Focus group sessions with specific groups including those that experience social exclusion will also take place early in 2005. These consultations will inform the annual operational plans. The Corporate Plan will also be considered by the County Development Board and the five Strategic Policy Committees for proofing against relevant plans and policies.

Mission Statement:

"Kilkenny Local Authorities aim to work in partnership with ALL the people of Kilkenny and relevant agencies to deliver quality services and to promote sustainable economic, social and cultural development for current and future generations."

Core Values and Principles:

In supporting the democratic process and the mandate of the Elected Representatives as well as recognising the need for a safe, healthy, and a supportive environment for staff, Kilkenny Local Authorities subscribe to the following core values:-

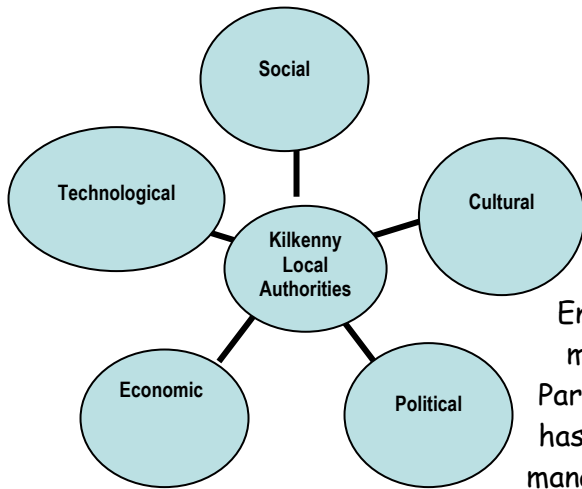
- Participation and Equality
- A high quality of service delivery.
- Ongoing service improvement (including value for money and use of indicators).
- High standards of conduct and probity.
- Openness and accountability
- Mutual respect and support for Members, Staff and the general public
- An effective and caring focus on people.
- Ongoing development of Staff

Cross Cutting Themes:

- **Improved Communication**
Kilkenny Local Authorities will strive to improve communications within each authority, across both authorities, with relevant agencies and with the general public to ensure better service delivery.
- **Customer Service**
The improvement in customer services is seen as a vital part of our role. A Customer Charter and Action Plan has been developed, which needs to be read in conjunction with this Corporate Plan. This Customer Action Plan sets out concrete proposals for improving customer service across both local authorities.
- **Focus on social inclusion**
There is a commitment to ensure that an improved quality of life impacts on all people living in Kilkenny, through the promotion of socially inclusive measures that will underpin the plans and actions of Kilkenny Local Authorities.
- **Policy proofing**
All plans will be proofed against poverty, exclusion, inequality and spatial planning issues.
- **Sustainable development**
All plans & actions will reflect the agenda for sustainable development with specific reference to Regional, National and E.U. objectives.
- **Equality**
There is a commitment to securing equality both as employers and service providers.
- **Partnership**
Kilkenny Local Authorities will work in partnership with, local communities and other service providers to ensure that our services are delivered in an effective and efficient manner to meet the ever changing needs of society.
- **Best Use of Resources**
Kilkenny Local Authorities will strive to deliver their services in the most efficient and cost effective manner, through regular and ongoing review.
- **County Development Board**
Kilkenny Local Authorities will contribute to the more co-ordinated delivery of services Countywide through on-going participation on the County Development Board and by ensuring that their plans and policies complement and are supportive of the overall thrust of the CDB strategy.

Our Operating Environment

In examining our organisational context we acknowledge that we operate in a multidimensional environment. There are both internal and external factors that dictate how we will implement this plan and realise our core objectives.



External Environment:

National and EU:

The legislative framework that underpins our role and functions is a highly regulated system. The Oireachtas and particularly the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government influence many of our policies and activities. Through Social Partnership and the whole notion of benchmarking there has been a push for the introduction of performance management and performance management systems in public service provision in Ireland.

We also have many targets and commitments to realise under EU directives and legislation. The National Development Plan and the National Anti-Poverty Strategy are two key policy frameworks that also impact on how our services are delivered.

Regional:

Regional policies and plans form much of our co-operative work with other local authorities in the region including the role of the Regional Authority. Important issues such as Regional Waste Management and Spatial Planning play a significant role in the determination of future policy and practice

Local:

Demographics, changing demands and a much more dynamic economy coupled with changing information technology also dictate how our business is done. The social, cultural, political and economic context in which we operate is an ever changing environment to which we must adapt if our people centred approach and our commitment to sustainable development is to be realised.

In our attempts to co-ordinate service delivery in line with the County Development Board Strategy much of our local work is undertaken in collaboration and partnership with other key agencies. There is a series of local plans and strategies that have also been considered in developing the Corporate Plan to create synergy at local level.

Internal Environment:

In line with the policies set out in Better Local Government Kilkenny Local Authorities have been seeking to implement the principles of enhanced local democracy, serving the customer better, developing efficiency and the sourcing of proper resources.

The Corporate Policy Group has proved to be a positive forum for overseeing the implementation of policy initiatives as adopted, and the business of Kilkenny County Council.

The Strategic Policy Committees have created huge potential to enhance the role of elected members and the wider community as well as creating opportunities for policy development.

The County Development Board has embraced the concept of working in partnership to progress the strategic planning and integrated delivery of services for the County.

Our people focused approach has also improved with the expanding role of the Local Area Offices, the new Customer Services Desk, the on-line delivery of services and development of clear guidelines for consultation with the public.

Staff re-structuring has been taking place over the last five years. An extensive staff consultation has resulted in the development of four sub-groups of the Workplace Partnership Committee. The sub-groups have developed interdepartmental plans that deal with the following four areas:

- Communications,
- Customer Services,
- Work Practices and
- Working Conditions.

A working group is in the process of being set up specifically for Kilkenny Borough Council.

A staff training programme has also been developed to ensure that staff are skilled, motivated and effective in their roles.

Overall improvements in our Information Technology systems have resulted in better internal communications, more streamlined and efficient financial management systems and a shared system of information storage and retrieval.

Core Objectives and Supporting Strategies

Corporate:

Core Objectives:

To support the mandate of the elected representatives, maintain a people focus and ensure an enriched environment for all staff.

To deliver optimal quality services and ensure a socially inclusive agenda is core to the activities of Kilkenny Local Authorities.

Supporting Strategies

- To ensure that a clear recognition and understanding of the policy and representational roles of the elected representatives permeates both authorities.
- To support and facilitate the democratic structures and fora of both authorities - including all of its committees
- To provide the appropriate structures, people, strategies and systems, as resources permit, to deliver timely and quality services to the people of the County across the full range of services
- To ensure that staff are supported through appropriate leadership, motivation, appraisal and empowerment strategies.

Housing:

Core Objective

To facilitate and provide access to a continuum of quality, integrated social and affordable housing while promoting a sense of community and social inclusion.

Supporting Strategies

- To maximise the potential of all social and affordable housing options at our disposal for the benefit of all those seeking accommodation and shelter, having regard to assessment of need and adopted housing strategies.
- To maintain housing stock to the highest possible standards.
- To work in partnership with our tenants, to foster a spirit of community and to encourage their involvement in the management of their living environment.
- To review housing supports annually to ensure that they remain relevant and focused to meet the needs of those whom they are intended to assist.

Infrastructure Transportation:

Core objective

To plan for and facilitate the transportation needs of the people residing in and traveling through County Kilkenny by developing and improving infrastructure including the formulation of public transport policy for the City & County.

Supporting Strategies

- To engage pro-actively with the relevant authorities in the planning and execution of the transportation objectives of the National Development Plan.
- To improve the standards of the county's non-national road network to meet the current and anticipated needs.
- Through the Strategic Policy Committee to develop policies aimed at meeting the various transportation needs of the county.
- To promote community involvement in the repair and upgrading of local tertiary roads.
- To prepare traffic management plans for the principal towns in the County and make provision for the implementation of such plans.
- To engage with relevant agencies in the promotion of traffic safety, particularly by targeting the younger members of the community.

Water Services:

Core Objective

To plan for and provide a quality water supply for all our customers and to upgrade and improve, as appropriate, the sewerage systems in the County to enhance river and ground water quality.

Supporting Strategies

- To secure resources and implement plans under the Water Services Investment Programme, having regard to the assessment of need.
- To provide drinking water that meets EU and National Standards.
- To provide effluent treatment plants to comply with the Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive.
- To assist the Department of the Environment, Heritage & Local Government to develop its Rural Water Programme.
- To maximise the use of the Serviced Land Initiative Scheme to carry out works, particularly in the smaller population centres, that are not prioritised in the Water Services Investment Programme.

Broadband:

Core Objective

To co-operate with all Government initiatives to maximise the potential available from the Kilkenny City Fibre Optic Ring and to pursue the delivery of broadband in other centres throughout the County.

Supporting Strategies

- To work with the broadband focus group, in conjunction with Kilkenny businesses to develop a strategy for the delivery of broadband throughout the County.
- To ensure that our IT infrastructure and staff are sufficiently resourced to maximize the potential of broadband and other emerging technologies for the benefit of the Local Authorities and the County as a whole.

Planning and Development:

Core Objective

To plan for and manage in a sustainable manner the development and use of the relevant resources in the interests of long term economic, social and cultural progress for the benefit of all.

Supporting Strategies

- To provide for the strategic planning of
 - Kilkenny County
 - Kilkenny City & Environs
 - Waterford City Environs located in Co. Kilkenny¹in partnership with other key stakeholders and to implement any agreed plans and programmes.

- To provide effective and efficient planning assessment, decision making and enforcement processes.

- To work in partnership with key stakeholders in the implementation of the National and Regional Plans and Guidelines.

¹ With reference to Waterford City Environs located in Co. Kilkenny the partners include Waterford City Council & Waterford County Council.

Environment:

Core Objective

To promote and nurture the environment for the benefit of current and future generations.

Supporting Strategies

- To participate in the implementation of the Regional Joint Waste Management Plan
- To promote environmental education awareness and to enforce environmental standards.
- To support the implementation of the South East River Basin Management Plan.
- To provide an efficient emergency response in liaison with the relevant agencies.
- To develop sporting, recreational, play & amenity facilities for the enjoyable and constructive use of leisure time, in conjunction with the Kilkenny Recreation & Sports Partnership.
- To co-operate with the Food Safety Authority of Ireland in relation to consumer protection measures.

Community & Enterprise and Cultural Affairs (Arts, Culture, Heritage, Education and Tourism):

Core Objective

To participate actively in the achievement of the objectives of Kilkenny County Development Board and to promote and foster a vibrant cultural, sporting and recreational environment for all.

Supporting Strategies

Community & Enterprise:

- To facilitate the development of an Anti-Poverty Strategy for Kilkenny Local Authorities in line with the National Anti-Poverty Strategy.
- To support the County Development Board to review and implement its 10 year strategy and to review the sub-structures that serve the board.
- To support a better geographical spread throughout the county of local development activity.
- To support the Community & Voluntary Sector in County Kilkenny to fulfill its role as a Social Partner at local level.
- To ensure that the voice of identifiable groups such as children & young people, ethnic groups, older people etc are heard.

Arts:

- To prepare and implement an Arts Strategy for the county.

Sport & Recreation:

- To guide the process in the planning and development of sporting, recreational, play and amenity facilities for the enjoyable and constructive use of leisure time, in conjunction with the Kilkenny Recreation & Sports Partnership.
- To develop and implement a Play Plan in line with National Policy.

Heritage:

- To establish a County Heritage Forum and to complete and implement a five year Heritage Plan.

Library Service:

- To pursue the objectives set out in the Government policy of 'Branching Out', through the enhancement of the branch network, along with the objective of providing a new central library for Kilkenny City.

Tourism:

- To prepare and implement a five year strategy in conjunction with Kilkenny Tourism and representatives of the various interests.

Kilkenny Borough Council

Background

Kilkenny city manages to combine a unique historic character with being one of the most vibrant and dynamic urban centres in the country. The challenge for Kilkenny Borough Council will be to build on the strengths of the city and provide an inclusive, pro-active service for the people of Kilkenny in partnership with the County Council over the term of this plan.

Vision

The principles of democracy, focus on people, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability, social inclusion and value for money will be central to all activities of Kilkenny Borough Council. The following strategies are central to Kilkenny Borough Council's vision for the period of this Corporate Plan.

- The fostering of improved communications between the Borough and County Councils.
- The recognition of the strong democratic link between the two authorities whilst maintaining the unique identity of each organisation.
- The Promotion and development of the city in all of its aspects including the commercial and retail core, social/community, tourism, amenities and culture.
- The completion and implementation of the local area plan.
- The successful integration of new areas for development e.g. Integrated Area Plan, Western Environs etc.
- The focus on optimal use of resources in the provision of core services i.e. housing, road and street infrastructure and environmental services.
- The protection and promotion of the City's unique heritage.

Internal Capacity and Resources

In order to realise the objectives and strategies outlined in this plan, Kilkenny Local Authorities must identify the human, financial and Communication resources required to facilitate the delivery of high quality, effective and efficient services to the people of Kilkenny County and City.

This will be achieved by ensuring optimal use of council resources by:

- Development of a needs based training plan for members and staff.
- Appropriate delegation and empowerment of staff
- Engagement in value for money analysis through the continual assessment of service delivery methods
- Effective and efficient cost management while maintaining and improving service delivery.
- Effective and efficient income collection.

Promotion of improved Organisational Financial Management responsibility by emphasising the need for

- Responsible budget planning
- Adherence to budgets
- Adherence to financial controls and procedures
- Increased financial education for service areas

Provision of relevant information in a timely manner that supports effective service delivery and informed decision making by members, management and staff by:

- Development and implementation of a communications strategy that will improve the information flow between, elected members management, staff and the community, consistent with the commitments contained in our Customer Action Plan.
- Development and maintenance of an IT infrastructure upon which all external and internal information systems can be reliably accessed and utilised as appropriate, by the general public, elected members and local authority staff.
- Utilisation, where possible of any new technological developments that may arise, whilst also ensuring continuity and enhancement of our existing infrastructure and services.

Implementation and Monitoring

Kilkenny Local Authorities are committed to an ongoing process of Strategic Planning and Management. Part of that commitment involves the implementation of this plan. This implementation will involve many factors at the core of which is the organisations' commitment to the management of an ever changing environment, our internal capacity and our ability to maximize available resources.

The consultations undertaken with elected members, management and staff have outlined many levels of implementation, review and evaluation.

The implementation and monitoring process will involve:

- The development of annual operational plans with key targets and priorities
- Preparation of budgets relating to annual plans
- National and local performance indicators
- An annual review process

The initial operational planning process will be developed utilising three key elements:

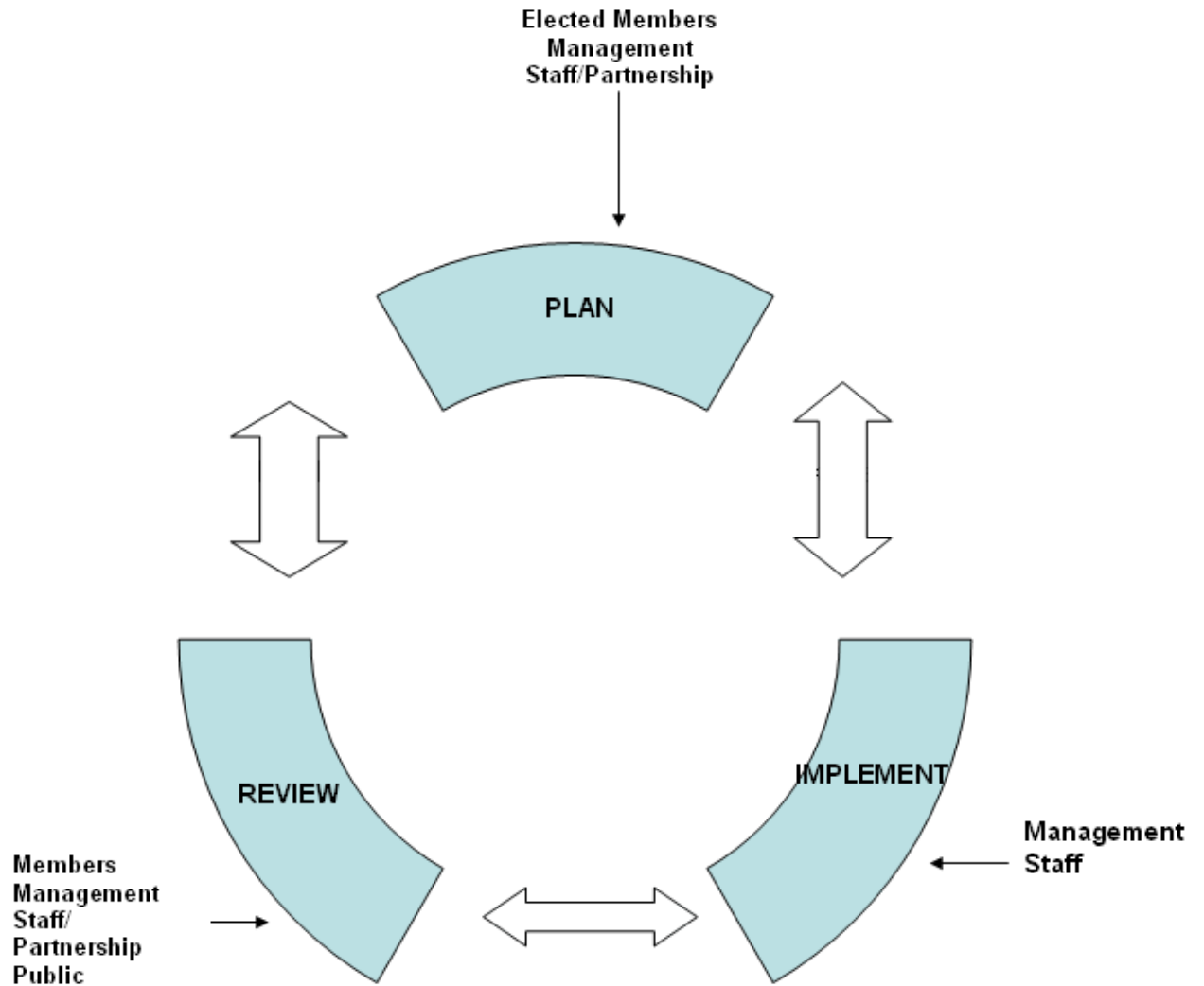
- staff within the specific sections and reports from the four workplace partnership sub-groups
- issues and concerns raised by our customers through a Customer Satisfaction Survey early in 2005.
- focus group discussions with targeted groups in our community for example those who experience social exclusion and high levels of disadvantage.

Standardised guidelines will be developed to assist the various sections in developing their respective plans. This first round of plans will be developed in early 2005.

The elected members, Corporate Policy Group, management and staff will be involved in assessing, monitoring and reviewing progress and implementation of the plan on an annual basis. This will take place in October and the findings will be used to inform the following year's Operational Plan. This will be published in the Local Authorities Annual Report. Our elected members will participate in an annual review workshop as part of this process.

For future years the Annual Budget will drive the preparation of Annual Operational Plan when both will be prepared concurrently during November and December.

The Corporate Policy Group will determine a method to undertake an independent mid-term review of the Corporate Plan. Corrective action measures will be adopted in response to the review and assessment process.



I



**Kilkenny Local Authorities
Kilkenny County Council
Kilkenny Borough Council**



Customer Charter

Our Commitment To You

To deliver high quality services to you in an effective and caring manner.

Courtesy & Consideration

You are at all times entitled to be served:

- Promptly and in a courteous manner
- With due regard to privacy and confidentiality
- By helpful staff

Openness & Impartiality

We undertake to:

- Deal with you in a fair and open manner
- Discuss any aspect of your dealings with us.
- Explain how a decision was reached

Access

We endeavour to:

- Provide clean, accessible public offices
- Facilitate customers who wish to conduct their business through the medium of the Irish language.
- Facilitate access for people with disabilities and special needs.

Review

Our services will be continually reviewed and improved upon where necessary.

You Can Help Us To Help You

- By providing full and accurate information
- By letting us know when we do something well.
- By making comments, complaints or suggestions about the services you receive.

Kilkenny Local Authorities have in place a Complaints Procedure for Customers dissatisfied with the quality of service received. A Copy of same can be obtained at our Customer Services Desk or by e-mailing us at info@kilkennycoco.ie

Customer Action Plan

In their dealings with the public Kilkenny Local Authorities are committed to taking a number of significant steps over the next number of years to improve our services. Some of these will yield immediate improvements at certain points of contact such as improvements in information technology, improvements to public offices and improved quality of the telephone service.

Kilkenny Local Authorities are committed to the following:-

Quality Service Standards:

Publish a Customer Charter that outlines the nature and quality of service which customers can expect, and display it prominently at the point of service delivery.

Equality/Diversity:

Ensure the rights to equal treatment established by equality legislation, and accommodate diversity, so as to contribute to equality for the groups covered by the equality legislation (under the grounds of gender, marital status, family status, sexual orientation, religious belief, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller Community).

Identify and work to eliminate barriers to access to services for people experiencing poverty and social exclusion, and for those facing geographic barriers to services.

Physical Access:

Provide clean, accessible public offices that ensure privacy, comply with occupational and safety standards and, as part of this, facilitate access for people with disabilities and others with special needs.

Information:

Take a proactive approach in providing information that is clear, timely and accurate, is available at all points of contact, and meets the requirements of people with specific needs. Ensure that the potential offered by Information Technology is fully availed of and that the information available on public service websites follows the guidelines on web publication.

Continue the drive for simplification of rules, regulations, forms, information leaflets and procedures.

Timeliness & Courtesy:

Deliver quality services with courtesy, sensitivity and the minimum delay, fostering a climate of mutual respect between provider and customer. Give contact names in all communications to ensure ease of ongoing transactions.

Complaints:

Maintain a well-publicised, accessible, transparent and simple-to-use system of dealing with complaints about the quality of service provided.

Appeals:

Similarly, maintain a formalised, well-publicised, accessible, transparent and simple-to-use system of appeal/review for customers who are dissatisfied with decisions in relation to services.

Consultation & Evaluation:

Provide a structured approach to meaningful consultation with, and participation by, the customer in relation to the development, delivery and review of services. Ensure meaningful evaluation of service delivery.

Choice:

Provide a range of choices, where feasible, in service delivery. Use available and emerging technologies to ensure maximum access and choice, and quality of delivery.

Official Languages Equality:

Provide quality services through Irish and/or bilingually and inform customers of their right to choose to be dealt with through one or other of the official languages.

Better Co-Ordination:

Foster a more coordinated and integrated approach to delivery of public services.

Internal Customer:

Ensure staff are recognised as internal customers and that they are properly supported and consulted with regard to service delivery issues.

Kilkenny Local Authorities are committed to the principles of Quality Customer Service approved by the government and has introduced this Action Plan which sets out how we will implement these principles and achieve our service targets over the next four years. In addition we will integrate training on customer service issues into general training courses and council procedures and practices. Improvements in service delivery are expected to arise from increased utilisation of information and electronic technologies. These include the new financial management system. A

customer service ethos will be promoted throughout the organisation and customers and staff will be encouraged to comment and improve upon existing practices.

Customer Action Plan:

What you can expect from us?

Kilkenny Local Authorities are committed to delivering an efficient courteous and quality service to its customers. We will treat all our customers equally ensuring that there is no discrimination on any grounds. We will be sensitive to our customers needs and take into account their age, their capacity to understand often complex rules and procedures and any disabilities they may have.

When providing service by telephone we will aim to:

- Staff will be available to take your call from 9.00 p.m. to 5.00 p.m. Monday to Friday.
- Be helpful and provide you with clear and accurate information.
- Always give you a contact name and telephone number.
- Respond properly and courteously.
- Take details and call you back if we cannot answer your query immediately.

Indicate when you can expect to hear from us if we have to call you back.

- Provide an improved telephone system for our customers.
- Keep internal telephone directories up-to-date.

If you visit our offices we will aim to:

- Meet with you punctually if you have an appointment
- Respect your privacy.
- Deal with you in a polite, courteous and fair manner.
- Deal with your enquiry and provide any relevant information that we have as quickly as possible.
- Keep our offices clean and safe.
- Continue to improve accessibility for all our customers including people with a disability and special needs.

Note: Due to work commitments it may be necessary to make an appointment in advance to meet with some members of staff.

In corresponding with you we will aim to:

- Use clear and simple language and keep the technical terms to a minimum.
- Include a contact name, telephone and extension number, e-mail address and reference number on all correspondence that we issue.
- Make arrangements to ensure that letters do not go unanswered when individual staff members are absent.

- Some correspondence requires considerable research before a full reply can issue and when this happens we will send you an interim reply explaining the position.
- Ensure that service departments are allocated an e-mail address.
- Ensure that all payments are made in accordance with provisions of the Prompt Payments Act, 1997.

In producing forms and leaflets we will aim to:

- Ensure that leaflets and forms are freely available, including in electronic format.
- Use clear and simple language.
- Explain exactly what information is required on application forms.
- Request only relevant information on application forms.
- Ensure that data supplied on forms will only be used for the purpose for which it is given.
- Produce all documentation in a range of accessible formats suitable to the needs of people with disabilities.

Complaints:

- If you are not happy with the quality of service we provide you are entitled to make a complaint to the section head of that service.
- If you are not satisfied with the response received, you should contact the Complaints Officer, Corporate Affairs, in writing, who will respond to your complaint in writing within twenty eight days of receipt of complaint.
- You may also have a statutory right to complain to the Ombudsman whose role is to investigate complaints about administrative actions, delays or inaction adversely affecting persons or bodies that are dealing with the County or Borough Council.
- All complaints will be dealt with properly, fairly and impartially.

Information and Communications Technology:

- New technology will be availed of to the greatest possible extent to make services more accessible and improve service delivery.
- Over the period of the plan the information technology systems within Kilkenny Local Authorities including the telephone system will continue to be upgraded.

Staff:

- Kilkenny Local Authorities will ensure that staff are recognised as internal customers and that they are properly supported and consulted with regard to service delivery issues.
- A comprehensive customer service-training programme for our staff will be implemented throughout the plan period.

Co-Ordination of Services:

- Kilkenny Local Authorities will foster a more co-ordinated and integrated approach to delivery of services.
- Kilkenny Local Authorities will provide during the plan period one-stop shop facilities for the public.

Official Language Equality:

- Kilkenny Local Authorities will provide in so far as possible quality services through Irish and/or bilingually and inform customers of their right to choose to be dealt with through one or other of the official languages.

Choice:

- Kilkenny Local Authorities will provide a range of choices, where feasible, in service delivery.
- Kilkenny Local Authorities will use available emerging technologies to ensure maximum access and choice, and quality of delivery.

Consultation and Evaluation:

- Kilkenny Local Authorities will provide a structured approach to meaningful consultation with, and participation by, the customer in relation to development, delivery and review of services.
- Kilkenny County Council will use the Strategic Policy Committees as one of the approaches to evaluating our service delivery.
- Kilkenny Local Authorities will provide a comment sheet on our website [www.kilkennycoco.ie] to facilitate customers who may wish to make suggestions or comments on the services which we provide.

Review of Customer Action Plan:

- Kilkenny Local Authorities will review the customer action plan on a yearly basis and will take into account feedback from its customers and the strategic policy committees.
- Kilkenny County Council's Customer Service Working Group will meet on a quarterly basis. Monitoring the Customer Action Plan will be one of the key tasks within this group;s remit.

Appendices

Local Authority Structures and Management Structures

KILKENNY COUNTY COUNCIL

HOUSING

Social Housing
Affordable Housing
Voluntary Housing
Traveller Accommodation
Homeless Accommodation
Housing Loans
Disabled & Essential Repairs Grants
Private Rental Control
Estate Management

PLANNING

County Development Plan/Area Plans
Planning Applications
Development Control & Enforcement
Conservation & Amenity Grants
Town & Village Renewal
Derelict Sites [Delegated to Areas]

ROADS

Road Design/Construction/Improvement/Maintenance
Public Lighting
Road Safety
Community Involvement in Road Works Scheme

COMMUNITY

Serving the County Development Board & Sub Committees
Library Service
Recreational Facilities
Heritage
Arts Department
RAPID Programme
Supporting the Community & Voluntary Sector

FINANCE

Financial & Management Accounting
Payroll
Internal Audit
Payment & Receipting of all monies
Value for Money
Debt Collection
Rates
Motor Tax
Higher Education Grants

CORPORATE

Human Resources
Staff Training and Development
Register of Electors
Information Systems
Workplace Partnership
Freedom of Information
Meetings Administration
Support of Elected Members
Co-ordination of Council Publications

ENVIRONMENT

Waste Management
Environmental/Education & Awareness
Pollution Monitoring & Control [Air, Water & Noise]
Litter Management
Street Cleaning [Delegated to Areas]
Burial Grounds
Food Safety
Control of Animals
Parks
Woodstock Project

SANITARY SERVICES

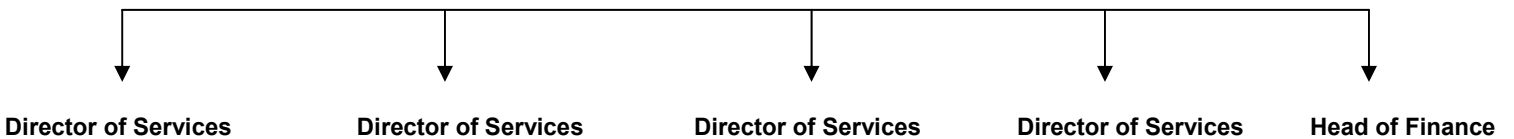
Rural Water Programme
Small Schemes Programme
Water & Sewerage Schemes
Capital Schemes
Water Conservation
Serviced Land Initiative
Monitoring of Drinking Water
Emergency Services including Fire Service

ENTERPRISE

Link to County Enterprise Board
Links to Kilkenny Tourism
Land & Property Acquisition & Control

- MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE -

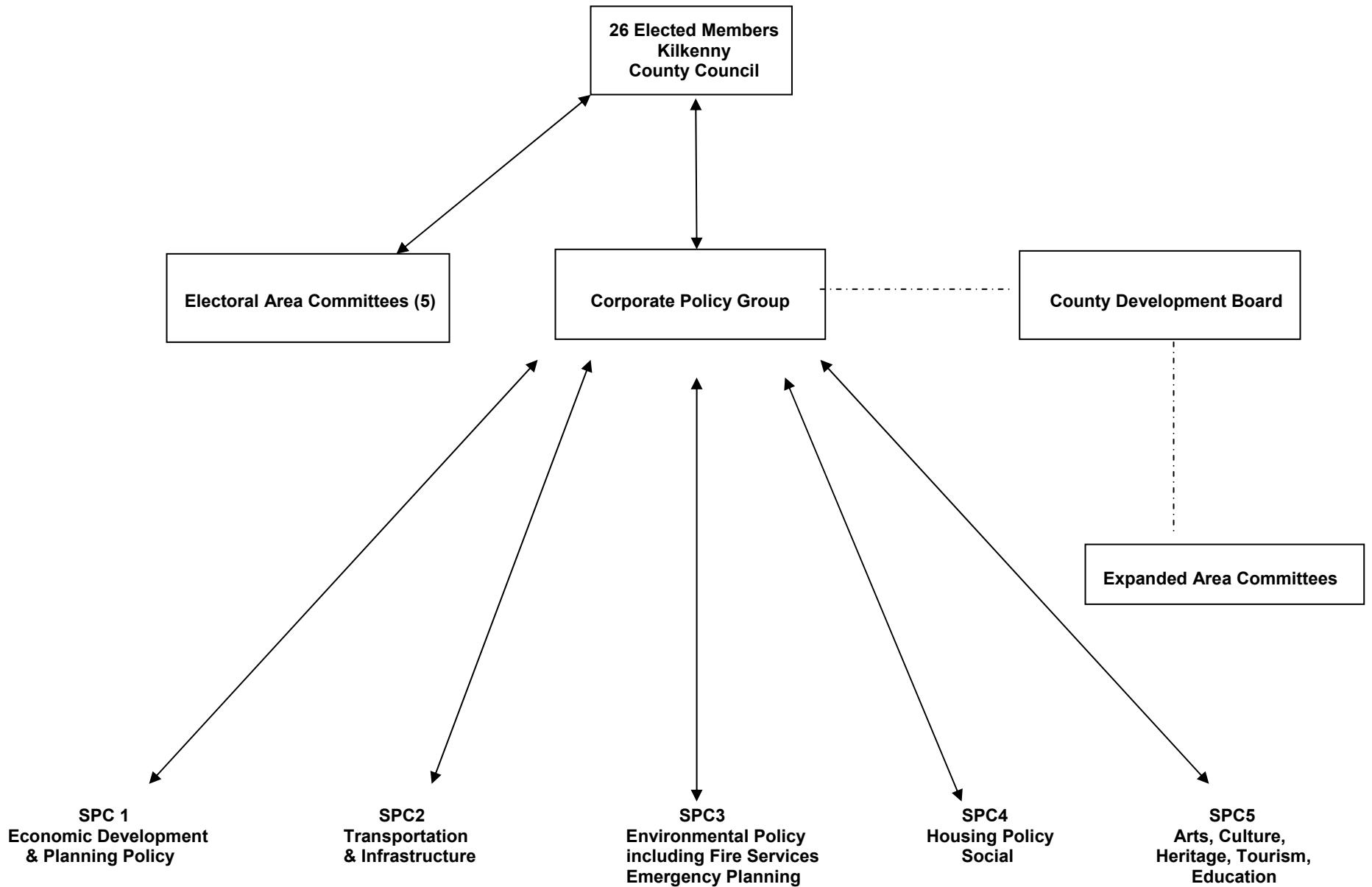
COUNTY MANAGER



EACH OF THE DIRECTORS HAS RESPONSIBILITY FOR AN ELECTORAL AREA

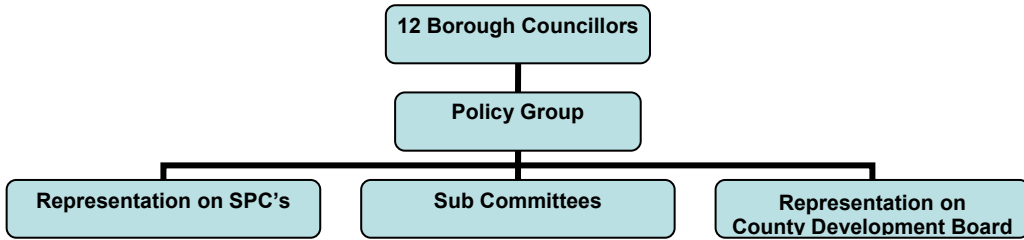
KILKENNY COUNTY COUNCIL

- STRUCTURE -



KILKENNY BOROUGH COUNCIL

- STRUCTURE -



Kilkenny Borough Council Management Structure

