



**Action Plan under T2016
Report 1 – Sustaining Progress
1st January 2007-31st May 2007**

Enhancing Ireland's Competitive Advantage in a Changing World Economy and Building Sustainable Social and Economic Development

Provide financial support to micro-enterprises.

Assist micro-enterprises in job creation

- Carlow County Enterprise Board has approved €196,000 of direct financial assistance to 7 client companies. For the period 1st January 2007 to 31st May 2007 the Board made payments of €27,170.24 to 4 client companies with the potential of creating 6 full time jobs.

Provide non-financial supports to micro-enterprise.

- The Board offers the following non-financial supports on an ongoing basis:
 - Training & Development
 - Management Development
 - Student Enterprise Programme
 - Women in Business Activities
 - Advice & Information Service
 - Mentoring & Enterprise Clinics
 - Tech-Check Audit Programme
- The following are the results for the period 1st January – 30th May 2007

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Nos attending</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>
Mentoring	15	11	4
One to One Office and Site Visits	118	73	45
Trade/Retail Fairs	3	1	2
Student Entrepreneur Activity	366		
Training	205	65	139
Networking Events	206	58	146
Enterprise Clinics	21	7	14

The following are the Board targets in respect of the period 1st January 2007 – 31st December 2007

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Current YTD</u>	<u>End of Year</u>
Mentoring	15	50
One to One Office and Site Visits	118	200
Trade/Retail Fairs	3	5
Student Entrepreneur Activity	366	1500
Training	205	500
Networking Events	206	350
Enterprise Clinics	21	21

These figures represent a 5% increase in level of participation for the period 2006-2007

Additional activities to promote entrepreneurship

- Carlow County Enterprise Board is involved in a number of different initiatives to promote enterprise in County Carlow. The Board has worked in association with a number of agencies to deliver programmes most recently a SYOB for Single Parents for St. Catherine's Community Centre.
- The Board is involved in a KCLR (Local Radio) Programme in association with Kilkenny County Enterprise Board.
- Carlow County Enterprise Board in association with IT Carlow is sponsoring 8 final year students (Industrial Design Programme) to complete prototype designs for some of its client companies.

Development of a local Enterprise Culture and promotion of Regional Development through co-operation with other local groups/agencies

Co-operate with other local groups/agencies involved in enterprise development

The 2007 Business Plan was presented to the Board and the following are the agreed actions:

Objective	Actions required
1. To achieve a net increase in the number of viable jobs in the region through the provision of supports, including financial supports, that will assist the long-term sustainability of business and facilitate the formation of new enterprises.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One to One consultation • Grants • Business Skills Training • Mentoring
2. To encourage, develop and support an enterprise culture within the county.	Raise Awareness: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operate a student Enterprise programme. • Encourage client participation in Business competitions and Awards. • Newsletter • Provision of advice & information • Radio promotion • Use of media for PR • Advertising campaign • Special events • Presence at public events • Exhibitions
3. To support the growth and development of new and existing businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of advice & Information • Business skills training • One to One Consultations • On Site visits • Mentoring • Grant Aid
4. To provide co-ordinated information facilities for both new and established businesses in the County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dissemination of information • Articles in newspapers • Newsletter • Website • Office library with reference material • One to one advice
5. To have business services available which are readily accessible from any location in County Carlow.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Telephone & Email support • Website • On site visits • Outreach activities
6. To assist in a pro-active manner, new business start-ups and the growth of existing businesses, by filling gaps in existing enterprise support mechanisms.	Identify the gaps in enterprise support by constant monitoring and needs assessment. Work through the County Development Board with other agencies.

Objective	Actions required
7. To substantially upgrade the level of management expertise in existing and new enterprises.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of Business skills training, in particular Management Development. • Provision of information. • One to One consultation. • Provision of mentoring. • Facilitation of benchmarking.
8. To preserve and support existing jobs through support for marginal enterprises.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial Assistance
9. To increase the number of women participating in business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operate a Women in Business Initiative.
10. To encourage small and medium enterprises to make more use of Information & Communications Technology in their business, in line with the Government Action Plan for the Information Society.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide training in the use of IT in business. • Provide mentoring in the use of IT in business. • Work with IT Carlow to encourage and raise awareness. • Provide grant aid for E-Commerce projects.
11. To support the development of a Community Enterprise Centre in Carlow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Management of the Centre. • Manage the recruitment of suitable Enterprise Start Ups for available units in the Centre. • Representation on the Board of directors.
12. To encourage and demonstrate to business the importance of applying strategic management systems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enterprise Awareness Campaign.
13. To encourage graduates from the two third level Colleges in the County to utilise their skills and qualifications within the County.	Establish a presence in the IT Carlow and awareness to their students through engaging in complementary activities such as the Student Enterprise Awards, participation in public events and exhibitions.
14. To ensure that Value for Money is obtained in the expenditure of public funds by the Board.	Carry out evaluation of all programmes and activities on a formal basis once a year. Prepare an annual budget applying cost / benefit analysis to each budget area
15. To comply with EU and Government regulations governing the expenditure of public funds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that all staff are aware of the regulations. • Ensure that Board members and evaluation committee members are aware of the regulations. • Check all client files to ensure they are compliant.
16. To meet the reporting requirements of the EU and Irish Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that the B1 forms are completed accurately and on time. • Ensure that the Cash flow statements are completed quarterly, accurately and on time.
17. To meet the legal requirements governing functions as a limited company	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that staff and board are aware of their individual responsibilities. • Ensure that returns are made to the companies office within the time period

Objective	Actions required
18. To meet the accounting standards required by the C&AG.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of Quick Books accounting package • Adherence to Manual of Accounting Procedures.
19. To deliver a professional high quality service to the target clients of the Enterprise Board.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply Customer Charter and complaints procedure. • Develop a training plan for all staff to update their skills.

Provide details, as appropriate, on CEB participation on the local County Development Board and involvement in its activities

- County Development Board: The CEO of the Board and a Director represent the Board on the County Development Board and a number of different sub-groups of same.
- Carlow Leader: An agreement is in place in respect of operational protocols between the two agencies. The CEO of the Board is on the Board of Carlow Leader Rural Development Company and the Assistant CEO is on the Evaluation Committee of Carlow Leader. The Manger of the Carlow Leader Company is a member of the Carlow County Enterprise Boards Evaluation Committee.

Implementation of the Small Business Forum Recommendations

Deliver the ICT Audits Programme “Teck-Check”

- County Enterprise Board has made 2 presentations to local business groups with respect to the Tech-Check Programme (Approx 40 businesses). Carlow County Enterprise Board currently has expressions of interest from 10 companies. Further presentations are planned over the coming months to approx 200 enterprises.
- No audits have been carried out to date as we await a budget allocation from the Department. A number of individuals have been recognised as possible tech check auditors but to date none have been appointed .

Promote enterprise within education system

Action: Deliver an Enterprise Education Programme

- County Carlow has 11 second level schools and all schools participate in the Student Enterprise Programmes delivered by Carlow CEB. To date in 2007 , 366 students have participated in the programme. Carlow County Enterprise Board run a number of different student programmes for 4th-6th year students. The Board also has a partnership with IT Carlow which involves final year industrial design students.

Promotion of female entrepreneurship

Action: Facilitate increased female entrepreneurship

- Carlow County Enterprise Board operates a women in business network. The network has approx 200 active members on its Database and between 20-30 women attend each meeting. The aim of the WIB network is as follows:
 - Create a Business Network whereby women in business have an opportunity to share experiences;
 - Provide an ongoing programme of activities on business related topics and entrepreneurial skills;
 - Create and foster an entrepreneurial culture amongst women in County Carlow

The following are the female participation statistics for CEB Activities for the period 1st January 2007 to 31st May 2007:

Activity	Nos attending	Female
Mentoring	15	4
One to One Office and Site Visits	118	45
Trade/Retail Fairs	3	2
Student Entrepreneur Activity	366	
Training	205	139
Networking Events	206	146
Enterprise Clinics	21	14

Carlow County Enterprise Board has put procedures in place to record female participation in the Student Enterprise Scheme.

Public Service Pay and Related Issues and Chapter IX on Public Service Modernisation

Co-operation with modernisation, flexibility and change management initiatives

- Carlow County Enterprise Board is in full co-operation with the establishment of the Central Support Unit.
- Carlow County Enterprise Board delivers its services via e-mail, phone, fax and in person. Where possible the Board is using technology to enhance the services offered to our clients.

Maintenance of stable Industrial Relations and a well-managed industrial relations environment to minimise disputes affecting the level of service to the public.

- No industrial action or cost increase claims have occurred as a result of the implementation of the T2016.
- Carlow County Enterprise Board engage all staff in the day to day operational issues of running the Board, staff are encouraged to develop themselves and regular staff meetings occur which provide staff with an opportunity to air issues and also to brief staff on ongoing strategic and operational objectives.

Co-operation with Team Working and Cross Functional Working initiatives

- The following staff are members of the following committees:
 - Michael P. Kelly Enterprise Promotion Committee (Chairman)
 - Michael P. Kelly SECCA
 - Kieran Comerford Female Enterprise Committee

Co-operation with introduction and utilisation of New Technology & eGovernment

- Carlow County Enterprise Board runs a number of e-business programme. At present the Board is running a Helpyourself.ie programme which helps small businesses understand technology. This is run over a ten week period and attendance is approx 10-20 participants.
- Carlow County Enterprise Board is currently in the process of updating its website and this action will be completed by end Qtr 2 2007
- Carlow County Enterprise Board adhere's to all reporting requirements of the PMS and has control systems in place to ensure same.

Ongoing delivery of the Business Planning process

A business plan was presented and approved by the Board. The plan is constantly reviewed and statistical information in respect of its progress is reported at each Board Meeting.

Ongoing delivery of PMDS : CEB Staff Performance Targets

Ongoing delivery of PMDS : Staff Training

- Carlow County Enterprise Board is currently in the process of preparing and reviewing role profiles and the development of a PMDS system for staff. This will be completed by the end of September 2007.

Compliance with Departmental Guidelines in relation to HR practices

- No posts have been filled within the period 1st January 2007-30th May 2007.
- Employment contracts are or will be signed , in accordance with Departmental Guidelines.
- The Board is in the process of preparing a HR Manual which will be available to all staff.

Co-operation with the implementation of the Sectoral Plan on Disability

- No needs has been identified with respect to people with disabilities. The Board is currently investigating making its website more reader friendly for people with visual disabilities.

Ongoing improvement in the delivery of services to the Public

- No formal complaints have been handled under the formal complaints procedure.
- Carlow CEB comply with the Code of Business Conduct
- Carlow CEB adhere with the Official Languages Act. The Board is currently in the process of compiling its 2007 annual report in English and Irish.

Compliance with Departmental guidelines on financial reporting practices

- Carlow County Enterprise Board comply with financial reporting requirements to the Department. The Board employes the services of a chartered accountant as an internal auditor , who reports periodically to the Board. The Board also has an audit sub committee which is made up of 4 directors , 2 staff members and the internal auditor.
- The Board complies with EU regulations set out in Section 3 of the procedures manual.

Compliance with Corporate Governance Best Practice

- Carlow County Enterprise Board complies with the Code of Best Practice for Corporate Governance.
- Carlow County Enterprise Board complies with the FOI Act requirements