Sligo 2030 One Voice One Vision

Draft LECP Framework and Implementation Plan

KPMG

March 2023

This report contains 112 pages

Draft Sligo 2030 Plan 22.03.23

Contents

Introduction from the Cathaoirleach

Tá sé de phribhléid agam an dara Plean Eacnamaíoch agus Pobail Áitiúil do Shligeach dar teideal 'Sligo 2030 – One Voice One Vision' a chur i láthair. Is straitéis chorraitheach é atá ceaptha chun cur leis na bunchlocha láidre a leagadh síos faoin gcéad Phlean Eacnamaíoch agus Pobail Áitiúil ó Shligeach don tréimhse 2016-2021. Leis an straitéis seo, réiteofar an bealach le haghaidh céim nua i bhforbairt Shligigh, agus é ina chontae atá ar thairseach an bhunathraithe. A bhuí leis an bPlean Eacnamaíoch agus Pobail Áitiúil seo, cuirfear sinn i riocht straitéiseach chun glacadh lena bhfuil i ndán dúinn le muinín agus le treo suas go dtí an bhliain 2030.

I am privileged to introduce the second Local Economic & Community Plan for Sligo - '**Sligo 2030 One Voice One Vision'** - an exciting future strategy for Sligo to build on the strong foundations laid by Sligo's first Local Economic & Community Plan (LECP) 2016-2021. This strategy opens a new chapter in Sligo's development, a county on the cusp of transformation. As we progress towards 2030 this LECP places us in a strategic position to embrace the future with confidence and with a sense of direction.

Sligo 2030 One Voice One Vision' (Sligo 2030) is first and foremost an integrated community and economic framework to guide the county over the next 7 years. But it is also an ambitious smart and green plan with specific actions to target transformation and innovation in a forward-thinking smart and sustainable manner. The Plan represents the commitment of the Council and its key partners to provide leadership towards achieving the Sligo 2030 ambitious vision for the county:

'Our vision is for a smart, sustainable, and socially inclusive Sligo; one that cherishes its vibrant communities, protects and celebrates its unique environment and rich culture, and is a champion of innovative growth and development.

It's very important to have a clear vision statement on how our beautiful county should develop, capturing its unique selling points and directing resources towards economic and community development. This strategy positions Sligo as an economic driver for the Northwest and presents models to win and sustain investment and create jobs yet enshrines quality of life and an equitable and diverse society, while also safeguarding our natural and built environment.

The approval of this Plan by the Council represents the fulfilment of an important function bestowed on local government and I want to acknowledge the input of all those who made contributions to the making of this plan especially my councillor colleagues and the staff of Sligo Co Council.

Cllr Michael Clarke,

Cathaoirleach Sligo County Council

Message from the Chief Executive of Sligo County Council

The ambition to develop a transformative 2030 strategy for Sligo culminates with the completion of Sligo's second Local Economic & Community Plan '**Sligo 2030 One Voice One Vision'**. This milestone, with the community at the centre, and with collaboration at all levels, seeks to ensure that Sligo thrives as a vibrant, prosperous, sustainable and inclusive place.

This plan focused firstly on identifying Sligo's needs. With the consultation, the social economic analysis and extensive collaboration with relevant stakeholders, the key needs of the county across housing, economy, infrastructure, quality of life and climate change, were identified. The Sligo Socio Economic Statement incorporating the vision and high-level goals emanated from this and has been published separately since February 2022.

Having identified the needs and high-level goals the task continued to devise the objectives and actions to deliver the ambitious plan to transform Sligo as it moves towards 2030. With the 'smart living and a sustainable model' approach I feel this has been achieved in defining the 61 actions set out in the accompanying implementation plan to this strategy.

We will experience change and challenges as we embark on our Sligo 2030 journey and this strategy will guide us in embracing these changes and challenges. The SCOT analysis leaves us under no illusions that while we have huge strengths and opportunities there are constraints and threats, some outside of our control, that will impact on the success of our implementation plan. However, I am optimistic that the Council working, in collaboration with its stakeholders, will build on the amazing and growing confidence of the people of Sligo to make this a world-class place to live green, invest smart and visit sustainably.

I would like to acknowledge the work of the LCDC, the SPC for Planning, Community & Economic Development, Arts & Culture, the Sligo Economic Forum, the PPN and all the statutory and non-statutory bodies, community and voluntary organisations, who gave of their time and ideas to the preparation of the Plan.

Mr Martin Lydon,

Chief Executive, Sligo County Council

Joint Foreword from the Chair of Sligo Local Community Development Committee, and the Chair of the Strategic Policy Committee

It has been a great honour for us both as elected members of Sligo County Council to be in the key positions of Chair of the Sligo Local Community Development Committee (LCDC), and Chair of the Strategic Policy Committee for Planning, Community & Economic Development, Arts & Culture (SPC), during this important milestone era for Sligo.

This smart and green LECP '*Sligo 2030 One Voice One Vision'*, represents the culmination of over eighteen months' work involving extensive research, public consultation, workshops, surveys, analysis, and committee meetings. The members of both the LCDC and the SPC, have taken the responsibility bestowed on them by statute very seriously in developing this strategic and defining plan for Sligo. Under the initial lead of the Advisory Steering Group, they have reviewed and contributed to shaping the plans progression and ensuring that Consultants KPMG-FA delivered to the highest standard in meeting the needs and ambitions of our future Sligo.

The public input and the collaborative model have been key in the approach taken in setting our ambitious 2030 vision and the solutions to the future needs for Sligo. The two committees were heartened by the vibrant response from members of the public, business sector, public sector and community groups, to our invitation to participate in the process in workshops, surveys and webinars. This is a clear indication of the desire of the people of Sligo to seek the best for its community and influence the shaping of a smart and sustainable future for all.

It is our hope that this LECP will give focus to the tremendous enthusiasm and momentum in the county to deliver the implementation plan towards securing a better future for our community and our economy. While we have endured a world epidemic and supported Ukrainian refugees in the most difficult of circumstances, we also face a climate and energy crisis which will impact on all our lives. This plan with its smart and green lens will shine a light for us in setting a collaborative road map to deliver on the actions across the six identified high-level goals.

As Chairpersons of the LCDC and SPC we would like to sincerely thank all those who have participated in this process to date as we look forward to further working with all in achieving our vision of building our *smart, sustainable, and inclusive Sligo to champion innovation and development.*

Cllr. Dara Mulvey

Chair of Sligo Local Community Development Committee

Cllr. Rosaleen O'Grady

Chair of Sligo County Council's Strategic Policy Committee for Planning, Community and Economic Development, Arts and Culture

Executive Summary

Introduction

Sligo is on the cusp of major transformation. As the county progresses to 2030, it will experience great change and inevitably a number of challenges including recent issues related to inflation, cost of living pressures and the war in Ukraine. This plan, the Sligo 2030 One Voice One Vision Strategic Framework (the Sligo 2030 Plan), seeks to position Sligo to embrace change, face its challenges head on and transform the county over the next seven years. It also acts as the county's new Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) as required under Government guidelines, with Sligo taking the lead as one of **the first counties in Ireland** to develop and publish the latest iteration of LECPs. While Sligo County Council will oversee its overall implementation, the Sligo 2030 Plan will be a shared plan with vital roles to be played by the private sector, education providers and the wider community to ensure its success.

Sligo is **targeting the development of a cutting edge, innovative** and **forward-thinking** county that is **smart and sustainable**. Sligo Town's status as a Regional Growth Centre will be embraced to drive sustainable economic development across the county. All stakeholders, including the community and private sector, will work collaboratively at a local, regional, national and international level to share knowledge and identify best practice. Most importantly, everything that is pursued as part of the Sligo 2030 Plan will be for the benefit of the community and help to ensure that Sligo is a more vibrant, prosperous, sustainable and inclusive county for all its people. To demonstrate the level of ambition this plan is targeting, a list of nine transformational ideas has been developed. These ideas range from Sligo as a smart hub and place for learning which will include progression of the City Campus project related to the development of a cultural and learning hub in Sligo Town; to an idea around Surf & Work Sligo to attract young and mobile talent. However, while these projects represent ideas and concepts to help further frame the level of ambition, it is the actions in the Implementation Plan that detail the specific transformation that Sligo is looking to achieve.

The Sligo 2030 Plan is an integrated Economic, Social, Community and Spatial Plan that will guide the development of Sligo Town and County over the next seven years. This document includes the following:

- An introduction to the Local Economic and Community Plan process and overview of the development of this plan **(Chapter 1)**

- A vision and smart model for Sligo **(Chapter 2)**

- Information on the policy context to which the plan must align **(Chapter 3)**

- A summary of the socio-economic analysis of the county **(Chapter 4)**

- Information on the consultation process **(Chapter 5)**

- An overview of the SCOT analysis (Strengths, Challenges, Opportunities and Threats) and needs identified **(Chapter 6)**

- High-level goals, objectives and outcomes along with a suggestion for transformational projects **(Chapter 7)**

- The initial Implementation Plan **(Chapter 8)**

- A monitoring and evaluation approach for the Sligo 2030 Plan **(Chapter 9)**

Vision

The vision for Sligo in 2030:

> *The Vision is for a **smart**, **sustainable**, and **socially inclusive** Sligo; one that cherishes its **vibrant communities**, protects and celebrates its **unique environment and rich culture**, and is a champion of **innovative growth and development**.*

The approach to delivering the vision is outlined in the figure below, highlighting how the various elements of the plan come together from the smart conceptual models and analysis, through to the framework for delivery and the implementation of specific actions. Each element is further outlined and described in the sections that follow.
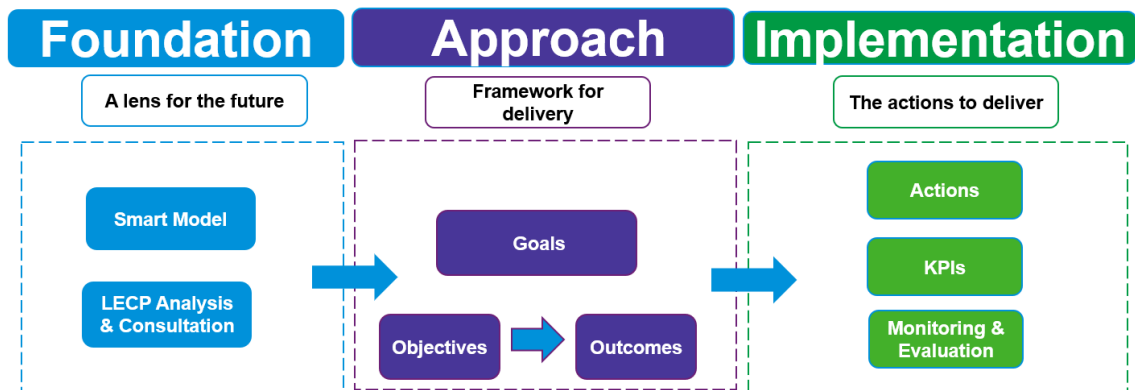
Smart Model Approach

To help achieve the vision, a Smart Sligo Model has also been developed to act as a lens for the future and to provide further guidance to help Sligo achieve transformation as it moves towards 2030. It will act as a proofing mechanism to ensure Sligo develops and embraces digital technology and innovation and is a front runner for future growth. It consists of six pillars that align with the plan's high-level goals, objectives, actions and key desired outcomes:

Smart Pillar	Key Areas of Focus
1. Sustainable Economy	Sustainable employment (jobs of the future), industry-academia linkages and data for enterprises (identification of needs)
2. Sustainable Environment	Community sustainability initiatives, renewables, circular economy and biodiversity protection
3. Smart Mobility	A data led approach to public transport enhancement, active mobility and electric vehicles
4. Smart Living	Connected communities (high speed mobile and broadband, open public WiFi) energy efficiency and a data led approach to service and amenity development.
5. Smart People	Skills development, and public participation in Sligo's development.
6. Smart Governance	Knowledge sharing, data collection for decision making (including IoT sensors and public data), e-services and community engagement.

As outlined above, while the Smart Sligo Model will champion a data led approach to decision making, it goes beyond focusing solely on the use of technology and aims to position Sligo as a forward looking, highly skilled, sustainable county with the community and collaboration at its centre. It is being adopted as an approach to frame and focus the development of this plan, to ensure that for each goal, objective and need, thought has gone in to how it can be addressed by a specific action in a smart and sustainable way to the benefit of Sligo and its people. Furthermore, it will assist in building upon the current Sligo Digital Strategy and contribute to future iterations of the Implementation Plan outlined in Chapter 8.

Analysis & Consultation - Identified Needs

Through analysis and consultation, a number of needs were identified for Sligo contributing to the understanding and foundation from which the above outlined vision can be achieved. While many of the needs are interconnected, the community and its wellbeing remain at their heart. Taken together, the different strands of analysis (policy review, socio-economic analysis, consultation and SCOT) identified seven key needs which are as follows:

- **Economy and Employment – sustaining, transforming and growing the employment base and creating more job opportunities.** To meet Sligo's growth and population targets, a significant increase in job creation and employment is required. This will include supporting key existing businesses (including hospitality and retail) as well as the creation of sustainable high-value employment, including jobs of the future such as the green economy (e.g. renewable energy and retrofitting) and industry 4.0 (e.g. smart and autonomous manufacturing).

- **Housing – addressing the provision of housing and the lack of available private residential developments in Sligo to meet current and future demands.** This a

vital issue that must be addressed to not only provide for the current community but also to grow the population and attract investment. However, the lack of housing supply is a national issue that will also require interventions at national level to help solve the issue in Sligo.

- **Community and Quality of Life – ensuring inclusion and adequate services.** As one of the county's key strengths Sligo needs to ensure that it provides adequate services for the community and builds a more inclusive county.

- **Infrastructure and Accessibility – increasing mobility and accessibility to and from Sligo.** This is a key area to address in relation to supporting Sligo's communities and the private sector and includes active mobility infrastructure and public transport.

- **Revitalising Sligo's Town Centres – the regeneration of town centres, improving the public realm and addressing the commercial vacancy rate**. The county's high commercial vacancy rate must be addressed to avoid economic decline and protect the vibrancy of its towns and villages.

- **Environment and Sustainability – focusing, preparing, and acting on the challenges of climate change.** Sligo needs to act now to protect the county's beautiful landscape and prepare the entire community for a more sustainable future including through innovative and smart approaches.

- **Smart Sligo – defining and measuring Sligo as a smart county**. To become a leading smart County Sligo needs to define exactly what it will mean, how the county will progress towards the ambition and how it will be measured. The foundation of a Smart Sligo can be found in the Smart Sligo Model outlined above.

While the seven needs identified above will be key areas to address, it is important to note that another general theme highlighted throughout the consultation process was the need for more collaboration, coordination, and communication between key stakeholders, including Sligo County Council, the private sector and the community in Sligo as well as cross-border collaboration with neighbouring counties. Furthermore, a number of the needs will require interventions not only from Sligo County Council but also from various stakeholders including at national level and from the private sector, reinforcing the need for greater collaboration and coordination.

High-Level Goals and Sustainable Objectives

The high-level goals and objectives of the Sligo 2030 Plan are set out below. They have been designed to be ambitious and to address the specific needs of the county that have been identified during the development of this plan. Taken together with the key desired outcomes (targets) outlined in Chapter 7 and the actions and KPIs of the Implementation Plan in Chapter 8, they represent an ambitious plan to transform Sligo as it moves towards 2030.

High-Level Goals	Sustainable Objectives
Goal 1: Sligo will be a Regional Growth Centre that drives sustainable economic activity and employment throughout the region and increases the population across the county.	● Increase employment (including indirect and induced) across the County and support existing businesses ●Increase the housing supply across Sligo ●Increase connectivity and public transport across Sligo ●Reduce the commercial vacancy rate in Sligo Town and County
Goal 2: Sligo will become a smart county and a leader in the utilisation of smart technology through partnership with educational and commercial third parties.	●Prepare Sligo for becoming a Smart County ●Successfully implement existing smart and digital initiatives ●Introduce additional smart technology and concepts to the benefit of Sligo's Community
Goal 3: Sligo will be a proactive county in addressing climate change and a model of best practice in climate action with sustainability central to all areas of life	●Reduce emissions by at least 51% by 2030 ●Increase awareness and participation in sustainability initiatives ●Address the biodiversity crisis
Goal 4: Sligo will be a healthy and equitable society that supports its vibrant communities and champions active inclusion	●Ensure Sligo is a county that supports active inclusion for all ●Improve the health of the community across Sligo ● Support and empower communities across Sligo to play an active role in the development of their county ●Improve the vibrancy and appeal of Sligo's towns, villages and targeted rural recreational areas
Goal 5: Sligo will celebrate its exceptional heritage, creative sector, and realise its tourism potential in a sustainable manner	●Strengthen and protect Sligo's vibrant culture, heritage and Creative & Innovative sector ●Build capability and increase coordination throughout the tourism sector ●Enhance Sligo as a destination, attract more visitors and increase the economic benefit from tourism with a focus on town centre place-making and outdoor activities
Goal 6: A collaborative and innovative Sligo	●Increase Collaboration and Innovation across Sligo

Nine Transformational Ideas for Sligo

To clearly set out the level of ambition for the county, nine smart transformational ideas have been developed. Rather than concrete proposals these are ideas that further frame the transformation that Sligo hopes to achieve through the Sligo 2030 plan.

No.	Idea	Description	Smart Model Alignment	Goal Alignment	Notes & Examples
1	**Smart Research & Learning Place**	Embracing technology led applied research and training, enabling, and building capability for the jobs of the future through the Atlantic Technological University and Advanced Innovation Centres	●Pillar 5 Smart People ●Pillar 6 Smart Governance	●Goal 1 (Economy and Employment) ●Goal 2 (Smart Sligo) ●Goal 4 (Vibrant Communities) ●Goal 6 (Collaboration & Innovation)	●Focus on skills, education and learning, bridging the gap between industry and academia. ●AIM (Advancing Innovation in Manufacturing & Supply Chain) centre ●Sligo Cultural & Learning Hub Connaughton Road/the Mall ●ATU innovation centre and programmes, education training & lifelong learning forum ●Existing and ongoing learning about climate resilience and energy efficiency e.g. Horizon SCORE Coastal City Living Labs project, and training for retrofitting homes (centre of excellence in Collooney)

2	**Remote Working & Digital Hubs**	Embracing remote working and enabling and accelerating the digital economy through innovation in digital connectivity and IoT	●Pillar 1 Sustainable Economy ●Pillar 4 Smart Living	●Goal 1 (Economy and Employment) ●Goal 2 (Smart Sligo) ●Goal 4 (Vibrant Communities)	● Partnering with the WDC and AEC and increasing digital infrastructure and connectivity ●Innovating smart communities, smart library programmes and rural regeneration, and supporting family friendly policies ●Reduction of GHG emissions supporting national targets
3	**Business going Green**	Growing green businesses and next generation business eco–systems & supporting local economy champions	●Pillar 1 Sustainable Economy ●Pillar 6 Smart Governance	●Goal 1 (Economy and Employment) ●Goal 3 (Climate Action)	●Business to be climate and bio-diversity aware ●Opportunities in the area of energy management, sustainable products, nature-based solutions, renewable energy ● Appropriate and targeted funding areas, LEO programmes such as "Green for Micro"
4	**Vibrant Town Centres**	Championing the town centre first policy and focusing on brownfield sites and repurposing empty buildings to bring life back into towns across Sligo	●Pillar 1 Sustainable Economy ●Pillar 4 Smart Living	●Goal 1 (Economy and Employment) ●Goal 4 (Vibrant Communities)	● Smart and active travel including the e-bikes programme ● Town centre first projects, URDF and RRDF funding opportunities, and town and village centre regeneration projects including Sligo Cultural Plaza ● Working to address vacant sites and dereliction including with the

					Sligo Business Improvement District
5	**Liveable Neighbourhoods**	Building social fabric and citizen engagement, from Cranmore to the Docklands, from Cloonloo to Cliffoney	●Pillar 3 Smart Mobility ●Pillar 4 Smart Living ●Pillar 5 Smart People ●Pillar 6 Smart Governance	●Goal 1 (Economy and Employment) ●Goal 2 (Smart Sligo) ●Goal 3 (Climate Action) ●Goal 4 (Vibrant Communities)	●Open data and citizen engagement, knowledge sharing and data collection creating insights across spheres of society ●Increased active travel infrastructure and innovative demand responsive public transport ●Citizen engagement, local library and participatory budgeting initiatives ●E-health, wellbeing & social inclusion projects
6	**Culture & Creativity Sligo**	Sligo: cultural capital of the North West, jewel on the Wild Atlantic Way	●Pillar 2 Sustainable Environment ●Pillar 4 Smart Living	●Goal 1 (Economy and Employment) ●Goal 4 (Vibrant Communities) ●Goal 5 (Heritage and Tourism)	●Creativity as an economic driver ●Creative Ireland and cultural programmes supporting creative communities, ●Design industry project leads, multi-genre music offer, festivals,

					space for artists and creative & innovative sectors
7	**Surf & Work in Sligo**	Cold California in Sligo - attracting a young & mobile crowd	●Pillar 1 Sustainable Economy ●Pillar 4 Smart Living ●Pillar 5 Smart People	●Goal 1 (Economy and Employment) ●Goal 4 (Vibrant Communities ●Goal 5 (Heritage and Tourism)	●National Surfing Centre of Excellence ●Strandhill, Mullaghmore & Easkey locations of amenity and recreational strengths, ●Strand Campus technology park/gaming hub, ●Health & wellbeing tourism Eden award
8	**Landscape, Nature, Heritage & Tourism**	Quality of life & leisure - from Yeats to the longest bike trail in Ireland	●Pillar 1 Sustainable Economy ●Pillar 2 Sustainable Environment	●Goal 3 (Climate Action) ●Goal 5 (Heritage and Tourism)	●Promote archaeological and mythological heritage ●UNESCO world heritage project ●Inspiration over the years and to present day as a magnet to renowned poets/artists/literary lovers, ●Outstanding walking, cycling and driving routes, underpinned by a vision to visit sustainably

| 9 | Champions of Change | Smart governance working with local heroes and influencers across business and community. Leaders in the voluntary sector and in entrepreneurship with prioritization of high-impact projects and project clusters. | ●Pillar 4 Smart Living
●Pillar 6 Smart Governance | ●Goal 4 (Vibrant Communities)
●Goal 6 (Collaboration & Innovation) | ●Private sector driving entrepreneurship

●Hazel Wood House, Strandhill tourism, An Chroí, ambitious festivals, Sligo Rovers

●Sligo brand initiative and maximising funding opportunities. |

Note on the Implementation Plan

The Implementation Plan is outlined in Chapter 8 and details specific actions to assist in achieving the high-level goals, objectives and outcomes of the LECP Framework. It includes 61 actions consisting of initiatives for both the community and economic elements covering the 6 high-level goals. This includes actions that directly translate to the transformational ambition outlined above such as those relating to attracting high-value jobs in specific sectors, actions related to fostering a smart, innovative and entrepreneurial Sligo, actions related to climate action and sustainability, actions relating to the creation of vibrant towns and villages, and actions related to ensuring an inclusive and healthy Sligo.

As the name suggests, the Sligo 2030 Plan will run to 2030 with the overall goals, objectives and outcomes to be achieved over that time period. However, the initial Implementation Plan, outlined in Chapter 8 below will last for 2 years, and will be closely monitored and evaluated before being reviewed and revised in 2024. This new more flexible approach to the implementation of the LECP will allow Sligo County Council and other key stakeholders to identify actions that may be underperforming or not resulting in the expected impact and replace them with actions that may be better aligned to achieving the overall vision and goals of the Sligo 2030 Plan.

1 Introduction

This document, the Sligo 2030 One Voice One Vision Strategic Framework (the Sligo 2030 Plan), will act as an integrated Economic, Social, and Community Plan for all of Sligo and will guide the development of town and county over the next seven years; however, it is not binding on Sligo County Council when undertaking its functions with respect to whether or not to grant development consent for a project. This plan also fulfils the requirements of the Local Economic and Community Plan as set out in the Local Government Reform Act 2014.

The plan includes a vision for Sligo as it moves towards 2030 along with high-level goals and specific objectives, outcomes and actions. It has been developed to be ambitious and as such seeks to establish Sligo as an exemplar in the region in a number of identified areas. Furthermore, the Sligo 2030 Plan has been designed to have shared ownership across the community and promote collective action to help realise Sligo's ambitions. This is reflected in the associated Implementation Plan that identifies owners and supporting bodies for implementation of key actions. While Sligo County Council will have ownership of a number of actions and oversee its overall implementation, the Sligo 2030 Plan will be a shared plan with vital roles to be played by the private sector, education providers and the wider community to ensure its success. This will include the private sector's contribution to job creation and innovation; education and training providers' role in developing a skilled talent base; the community's participation in developing an inclusive and sustainable county, and the various state and semi-state bodies that will contribute to the overall wellbeing of Sligo through the provision of adequate services and supports for the community and business.

This plan has been prepared by Sligo County Council in conjunction with the Sligo Strategic Policy Committee (SPC) for Planning, Community & Economic Development, Arts & Culture, the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC), and Sligo Economic Forum (SEF), and has included extensive and thorough consultation with the wider community, private sector, education providers, government agencies and other key stakeholders. Progress on the implementation of the Sligo 2030 Plan will be monitored and evaluated closely and regularly, with the initial Implementation Plan to be revised and updated after two years.

Implementing the Sligo 2030 Plan will involve Sligo County Council helping to facilitate, promote, support and coordinate stakeholders in their activities in a way that is consistent with existing and emerging plans setting out public policy for sustainable development, including that relating to the economy, communities, infrastructure, land use tourism and environmental protection and environmental management.

The Sligo 2030 Plan is situated alongside this hierarchy of statutory documents that has been subject to environmental assessment/screening for environmental assessment, as appropriate, and forms the decision-making and consent-granting framework. It does not provide consent, establish a framework for granting consent or contribute towards a framework for granting consent; the Plan is not binding on Sligo County Council when undertaking its functions with respect to whether or not to grant development consent for a project.

The Sligo 2030 Plan fully aligns with the provisions of the existing National Planning Framework, Ireland 2040, National Climate Action Plan 2023, Housing For All 2021, the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy 2020-2032 and the current County Development Plan, all of which have been subject to legislative requirements relating to

public consultation and environmental assessment/screening for environmental assessment. As such, the Sligo 2030 Plan is wholly subject to the requirements of the provisions set out in these documents (and any subsequent revisions to these documents), including provisions relating to sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management that have been integrated into these documents, including through SEA and AA processes, and does not introduce any alterations or additions to those provisions.

In order to be realised, projects included in the Sligo 2030 Plan (in a similar way to other projects from any other sectors) will have to comply, as relevant, with various legislation, policies, plans and programmes (including requirements for lower-tier Appropriate Assessment, Environmental Impact Assessment and other licensing requirements as appropriate) that form the statutory decision-making and consent-granting framework, of which the Sligo 2030 Plan is not part and does not contribute towards.

1.1 Overview

The development of the Sligo 2030 Plan has been overseen by the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC), Strategic Policy Committee (SPC) for Planning, Community & Economic Development, Arts & Culture, the Sligo Economic Forum (SEF) and Sligo County Council. This document includes:

- A vision for Sligo in 2030 along with a Smart Model approach to frame and focus the goals, objectives, outcomes and actions (Chapter 2)

- A summary of key policies, plans, and strategies at local, regional, and national level and associated themes that will influence the development of Sligo as it moves towards 2030 (Chapter 3).

- A summary of key findings from the socio-economic analysis of the county, including in relation to population, housing, education, economy, community wellbeing and the environment (Chapter 4).

- A summary of the Consultation process including an overview of methods used, levels of engagement achieved and key findings from the analysis of the outputs of the consultation (Chapter 5).

- An analysis of the strengths, challenges, opportunities and threats relevant to Sligo's development (SCOT analysis) and summary of key needs identified (Chapter 6).

- High-level goals, objectives and outcomes along with suggested transformational ideas that Sligo will aim to achieve over the lifetime of the Sligo 2030 Plan (Chapter 7).

- An Implementation Plan to achieve the high-level goals and sustainable objectives, with identified owners, timeframes and key performance indicators (Chapter 8).

- An outline of the approach in place to monitor progress and implementation (Chapter 9).

1.2 LECP Process

In line with the Local Economic and Community Plan Guidelines issued in 2021, the Sligo 2030 Plan is separated into two distinct elements. These are:

- The **LECP Framework** consisting of the high-level goals, the objectives and desired outcomes for the entire LECP period. The high-level goals set the general direction for Sligo to 2030, the objectives identify specific areas to address, and the desired outcomes represent the key targets of the overall Sligo 2030 Strategic Framework.

- The **Implementation Plan** consisting of the actions and KPIs to assist in achieving the overall goals, objectives and outcomes. Importantly Implementation Plans are now more flexible than in previous LECPs, with the initial Implementation Plan to be reviewed and updated after two years.

The change to the LECP process is an important and positive development that allows Sligo County Council and its partners to plan and react to upcoming and unforeseen developments to ensure they are addressed through specific actions in subsequent Implementation Plans. It also allows for the replacement of actions that may not be delivering the desired impact. Therefore, accurate and regular monitoring and evaluation is of critical importance to ensure that the county benefits from this change and also to the overall success of the plan.
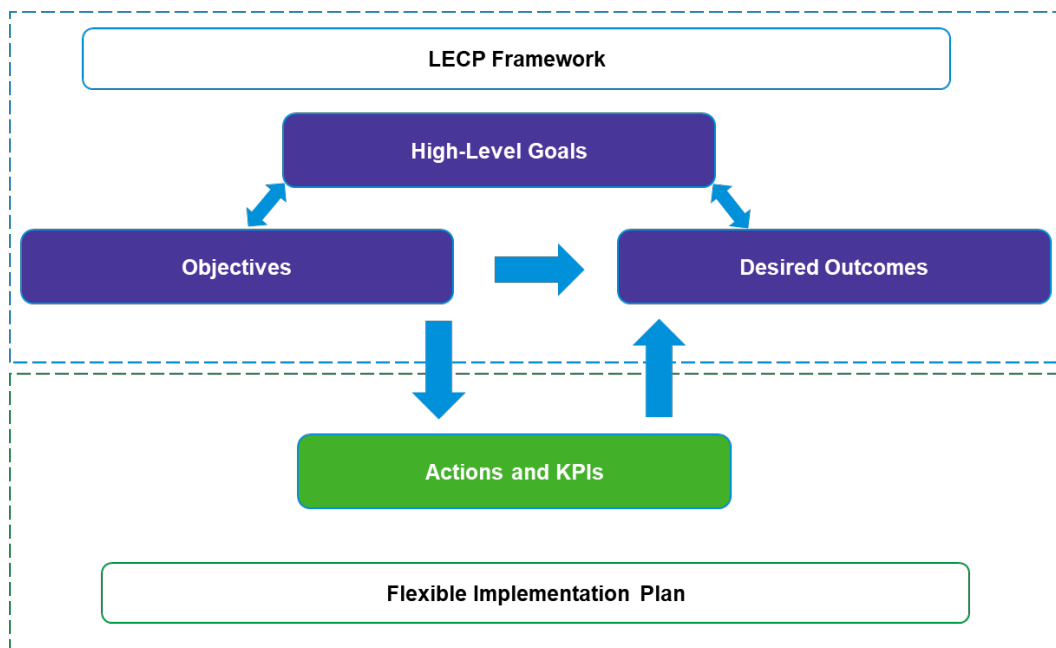

Figure 1.1: LECP Framework and Implementation Plan

1.3 Preparation of the Plan

The plan has been developed through the following stages:

1. **Baseline Analysis** – The first step in developing the Sligo 2030 Plan was the initial collation and analysis of socio-economic data from national databases and other

sources as well as an initial policy review to identify key themes that a draft vision and high-level goals could be built around.

2. **Socio-Economic Statement** – This stage consisted of the development of the draft Socio-Economic Statement which included an initial summary analysis of key socio-economic data identified in the first stage and the development of the vision and high-level goals. The draft socio-economic statement was then put forward for public consultation.

3. **Consultation** – During this stage an extensive range of public and stakeholder consultation was conducted. This included written submissions on the draft Socio-Economic Statement, a public webinar, focus groups and a number of key stakeholder interviews. Views, ideas and suggestions were received from the public, community representative groups, local government, state agencies, education providers and the private sector.

4. **Revised Socio-Economic Statement, Profile and Needs Analysis** – Following the consultation process, the draft Socio-Economic Statement was revised and expanded to include a full policy review, a complete socio-economic profile of Sligo, a needs analysis, a revised vision and revised high-level goals. The Revised Socio-Economic Statement, Profile and Needs Analysis was then adopted by the SPC for Planning, Community & Economic Development, Arts & Culture, LCDC and Municipal Districts.

5. **Development of the Objectives and Actions** – This stage saw the development of a Smart Model for Sligo and the sustainable objectives and actions of the Sligo 2030 Plan. The Smart Model was developed to provide added focus and guidance to help Sligo achieve transformation as it moves towards 2030. The objectives and actions were developed in collaboration with key stakeholders and included the identification of lead owners and supporting agencies/groups for each action. Specific Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) were also identified and an approach for monitoring and evaluation of progress on implementation was also developed.

6. **Draft Plan –** A draft plan was subsequently developed. This was put forward to the ASG, SPC for Planning, Community & Economic Development, LCDC, SEF, Municipal Districts and NWRA to ensure consistency with the relevant development plans and review the economic and community elements. A Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening report and Appropriate Assessment Screening report were also conducted following completion of the draft plan.

7. **Finalisation of Plan -** Following feedback on the draft plan and the completion of the SEA screening report and Appropriate Assessment screening report, the draft plan was amended and finalised. The plan was formally approved by Sligo County Council on ==**DATE DD/MM/YY**==. Sligo County Council holds the overall responsibility for the ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the plan.

Role of the various bodies in the preparation of the plan.

- Sligo County Council Advisory Steering Group (ASG): Responsible for the overall development of the LECP i.e. Sligo 2030 One Voice One Vision Strategic Framework (the Sligo 2030 Plan).

- Local Community Development Committee (LCDC): Responsible for the preparation of development of the community elements of the plan.

- Strategic Policy Committee (SPC) for Planning, Community & Economic Development, Arts & Culture: Responsible for the preparation of the economic elements of the plan.

- Regional Assembly: Consulted to ensure consistency and alignment with the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy.

- Municipal Districts: Consulted for input and consistency in relation to the economic and community elements of the plan and with the existing County Development Plan.

In addition, the Sligo Economic Forum (SEF), a network of public and private stakeholders that seek to drive economic development in the county, played a key role in the direction setting and preparation of the plan.

Community and Economic Elements – An Integrated Approach

As required by the LECP Guidelines this plan has formulated and developed specific high-level goals, sustainable objectives, outcomes and actions related to both economic and community development. However, given the cross-cutting nature of economic and community needs, this has been done in an integrated manner and is not specifically separated out into different sections of this document.

The **community elements** of the plan have been developed and approved by the Sligo LCDC and includes, but are not limited to, sustainable objectives and actions relating to the improvement of services including public transport, housing, data led approaches to identify community needs, social inclusion, poverty reduction, meaningful employment and improved health outcomes. The community elements have developed in close consultation with Sligo's Public Participation Network (PPN), numerous community groups and the public in general, through a thorough consultation process.

The **economic elements** have been developed and approved by the Sligo SPC for Planning, Community & Economic Development, Arts & Culture, and includes, but are not limited to, sustainable objectives and actions related to attracting investment to the county, supporting the needs of existing companies and encouraging entrepreneurship, developing and upskilling the workforce, the regeneration of urban centres, development of a sustainable and green economy[1] and the use of existing public assets for the deployment of smart technology. The economic elements have been developed in close consultation with key stakeholders from both the public and private sector through the Sligo Economic Forum including the NWRA and with other stakeholders and the community through the consultation process.

The Sligo 2030 Plan will assist in prioritising strategic investments in areas such as transport, housing, jobs, education, health, the environment, and community development. However, Sligo County Council acknowledges the climate emergency and

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[1] The green economy sector includes a number of subsectors such as renewable energy, energy efficiency, and waste management. For more information see: https://enterprise.gov.ie/en/publications/publication-files/developing-the-green-economy-in-ireland-01-12-09.pdf

the significant and immediate impact that climate change will have on the county. As such, sustainability and climate action are essential cross cutting priorities that underpin the Sligo 2030 Plan across the economic, social, and environmental spheres.

2   Vision and Smart Model

As noted, Sligo 2030 is a new integrated Economic, Social, and Community Plan for all of Sligo that will also act as Sligo's new Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP). The plan seeks to position Sligo as a cutting edge, and forward-thinking county that is smart and sustainable, embraces change and creates innovative solutions for its challenges. As such, it is envisaged that the county in 2030 will have enhanced levels of employment and be transformed through digital and green actions that have contributed to vibrant communities and a healthy and prosperous people.

To do this, it aims to see Sligo adopt a new approach to governance and development through working together, community led approaches, and enhanced communication that will allow the county to adapt to change in real time. It will see the county commit to innovation and excellence through sustainable initiatives, that embody value for money and embrace data for a more a competitive economy and enhanced policy decisions. The smart model outlined below will be built upon and frame actions in future iterations of the Implementation Plan outlined in Chapter 8, to ensure that smart and sustainable thinking is embedded in development of Sligo as it moves towards 2030.

Taking this into account, Sligo County Council has developed an integrated vision to cover town, county, community and economy. The vision for Sligo in 2030 is as follows:

> *The Vision is for a **smart**, **sustainable**, and **socially inclusive** Sligo; one that cherishes its **vibrant communities**, protects and celebrates its **unique environment and rich culture**, and is a champion of **innovative growth and development**.*

This vision has been developed in a collaborative manner and informed and refined through consultation with key stakeholders and the wider community. It is hoped that this vision can be a shared vision, one which brings together urban and rural communities, and generates a shared sense of ownership to drive Sligo forward to realise its potential and transform the county as it moves towards 2030.

The approach to delivering the vision is outlined in the diagram below, highlighting how the various elements of the plan come together from the analysis and conceptual models, through to the framework for delivery and the implementation of specific actions. Each element is further outlined and described in the sections that follow.
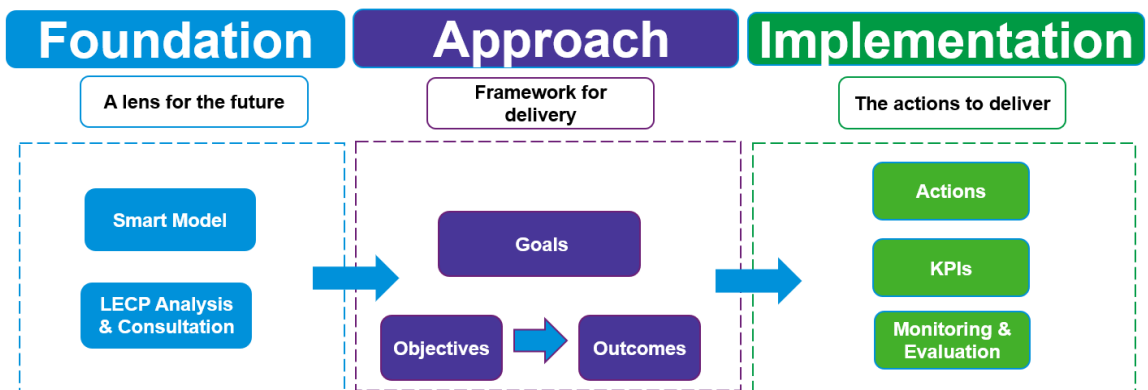
Figure 2.1 Delivering the Vision

2.1 Smart Sligo Model Approach

| Sustainable Economy | Sustainable Environment | Smart Mobility | Smart Living | Smart People | Smart Governance |
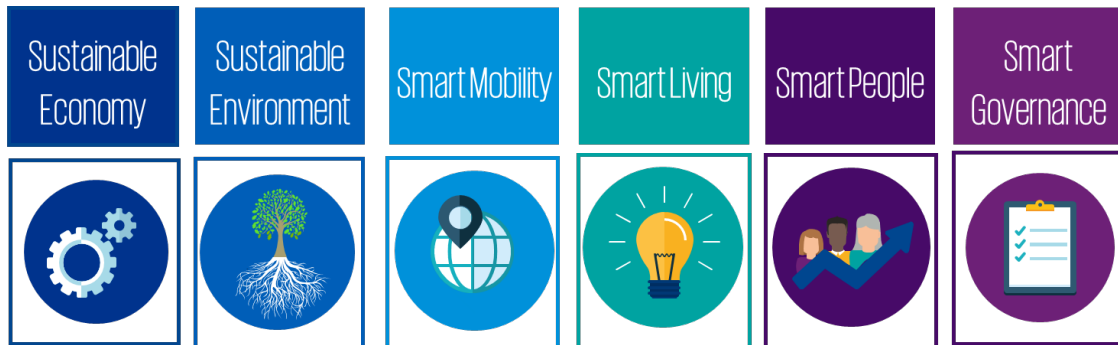
Figure 2.2 Smart Sligo Model

To help achieve this vision Sligo is adopting a "smart model" targeting key pillars that will assist in transforming the county over the next number of years. The smart model is based around the smart city concept. The UN defines a smart sustainable city as "one that uses information and communication technologies (ICTs) and other means to improve quality of life, efficiency of urban operation and services, and competitiveness, while ensuring that it meets the needs of present and future generations with respect to economic, social, environmental as well as cultural aspects".[2]

As such smart cities and smart models tend to encompass a range of policy spaces and interventions including focuses on governance, services, community, environment, and mobility while intersecting with the fields of politics, economics, healthcare, science, education, and technology. The purpose of these interventions is often to improve the level of data collected to ensure that robust decision making underpinned by good data can be accomplished while also increasing the transparency and accessibility of that data to allow for third parties to benefit from it as well.

However, for Sligo, while the Smart Sligo Model will champion a data led approach to decision making, it goes beyond focusing solely on the use of technology and aims to position Sligo as a forward looking, highly skilled, sustainable county with the community and collaboration at its centre. It is being adopted as an approach to frame and focus the development of this plan, to ensure that for each goal, objective and need, thought has gone into how it can be addressed by a specific action in a smart and sustainable way to the benefit of Sligo and its people. Similar to what was outlined in the vision section above, the Smart Model will contribute to the development of new and more efficient ways of working, enhanced policy making, and a more competitive economy while embracing innovation, excellence and sustainability including through demonstration and pilot projects.

The model will build upon Sligo's current Digital Strategy through providing enhanced areas of focus for smart initiatives. Furthermore, the model aligns with the objective of developing a smart region as outlined in the Northern and Western Regional Assembly's Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy. It will also contribute to future iterations of the Implementation Plan outlined in Chapter 8 and potentially other strategies contributing to Sligo's development in the future.

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[2] See: https://unece.org/housing/sustainable-smart-cities

Various models for implementing smart city principles have been developed by actors in the private sector, public sector, and academia. This includes established EU and OECD models and associated indicators as well as city specific models such as in Santander, Barcelona and Peterborough. Sligo's model broadly aligns with the smart cities model put forward by European Smart Cities Project developed by a combined team from Vienna University of Technology, Delft University of Technology and the University of Ljubljana.[3] However, many smart models have been developed for cities that have larger populations than the entirety of County Sligo. As such, the model outlined below is provided at a high-level, taking into account Sligo's comparatively small size and rural nature (at county level) and the need for flexibility as lessons are learnt on what works and what does not in relation to the smart model approach. In as far as is possible, the pillars and strands of focus have been tailored to Sligo's specific circumstances.

For Sligo, the most relevant pillars for a smart model have been identified as the following:

Pillar 1 Sustainable Economy: The key strands of focus for this pillar are sustainable employment (jobs of the future), industry-academia linkages and data for enterprises (identification of needs). For Sligo this will mean focusing on attracting investment in jobs of the future (e.g. industry 4.0, renewables, retrofitting, tech), developing meaningful employment for the county's people by building on existing highly skilled sectors such as MedTech and Pharmaceuticals, increasing industry-academia collaboration both to address skill gaps and increase R&D, and using an industry led approach to creating an innovative ecosystem where entrepreneurs and SMEs can flourish.

Pillar 2 Sustainable Environment: The key strands of focus for this pillar are community sustainability initiatives, renewables, circular economy and biodiversity protection. For Sligo this will mean positioning itself as an exemplar in relation to becoming a smart and green county through working with the private sector, education providers and the wider community to improve sustainability and reduce emissions. This will include community-based power projects, rewilding initiatives, green procurement, and the use of technology with assistance from the community to monitor the environment.

Pillar 3 Smart Mobility: The key strands of focus for this pillar are a data led approach to public transport enhancement, active mobility and electric vehicles. For Sligo this will mean encouraging, promoting and developing more sustainable and active modes of transport that in turn will seek to address rural isolation, strengthen connections between urban and rural settlements and communities, reduce traffic congestion and contribute to the enhancement of the economy through greater accessibility. This will include increased public transport, cycling and walking infrastructure and electric vehicle charging points and fleets.

Pillar 4 Smart Living: The key strands of focus for this pillar are connected communities (high speed mobile and broadband, open public WiFi) energy efficiency and a data led approach to service and amenity development. For Sligo this will mean using technology to engage hard to reach groups and supporting and encouraging the development of inclusive communities; connected communities that can work and learn remotely; the use of a data lead approach to enhance services and amenities in town centres, and energy efficiency through smart meters and retrofitting.

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[3] See: http://www.smart-cities.eu/

Pillar 5 Smart People: The key strands of focus for this pillar are skills development, and public participation in Sligo's development. For Sligo this will mean capitalising on the educational strengths of the county to prepare the community for the jobs of the future through increased training and education as well as co-designing training and services to address skill gaps where they exist. This will include bridging the digital divide[4], aligning with private sector needs, and encouraging participation in the development of both Sligo Town and County through the use of technology.

Pillar 6 Smart Governance: The key strands of focus for this pillar are knowledge sharing, data collection for decision making (including IoT sensors and public data), e-services and community engagement. For Sligo this means putting collaboration at the heart of the county's development, increasing communication and collaboration between key agencies, the private sector and the public; enhancing the use of technology to encourage engagement and improve service provision, and an increased use in data led decision making.

Taken together, these six pillars provided a lens for the development of the goals, objectives and actions and will act to provide further guidance for those that will be leading and supporting the delivery of key actions in relation to specific areas of attention. Furthermore, the model as a whole acts as a proofing mechanism to ensure Sligo develops and embraces digital technology and innovation and is a front runner for future growth along the Atlantic Economic Corridor (AEC).

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[4] This refers to the divide between those that can readily access and use technology (including laptops and smartphones) and the internet, and those that cannot.

3 Policy Framework

This section provides an overview of the policy framework that underpins the Sligo 2030 One Voice One Vision Strategic Framework. Over 40 strategies and policies were reviewed as part of the analysis. From this analysis a number of policy aims were identified for consideration in relation to the Sligo 2030 process and have influenced the development of the goals, objectives, outcomes, and actions. This included:

- Driving economic development and building Sligo as an innovative and successful Regional Growth Centre

- Embracing smart technology and digital transformation

- Incorporating sustainable development and climate action in all areas of life in Sligo

- Promoting social inclusion and equality in Sligo

- Strengthening and supporting vibrant communities

- Enhancing Sligo's vibrant culture, heritage, and creative sector

- Ensuring public participation so that Sligo's people and communities own and drive the vision for Sligo in 2030

These were used, in part, to help inform the development of the high-level goals at the beginning of the process. The goals were subsequently revised and developed further following the consultation process that is outlined in Chapter 5. A summary selection of some of the key policies are outlined below with a full list of policies and briefing documents that have influenced the development of this plan outlined in Appendix B of the document.[5] This has included a review and consideration of recent policy and briefing documents such as the North-West Regional Enterprise Plan to 2024, Circular Economy, Waste Management and Minerals Development Bill 2022, the NWRA LECP Briefing Note for Sligo County Council 2022 and reports from CARO (Climate Action Regional Offices) in relation to integrating Climate Action into the new LECP.

3.1 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

Sustainable development is the key principle internationally for meeting societal and economic goals while protecting the environment. The United Nations defines it as "*development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs*."[6] Sustainable development is also a call to action to promote social and environmental improvement across the world, encapsulated since 2015 in the UN's 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for 2030.

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[5] A more detailed policy review is available in the Revised Socio-Economic Statement
[6] www.un-documents.net/ocf-02.htm

Figure 3.1: United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

While all of the SDGs are interlinked, several are particularly relevant for Sligo 2030. For example, **Goal 11 Sustainable Cities and Communities** provides a strong framework for action for planning and development around the world.[7] Goal 11 targets for 2030 include ensuring access for all to adequate housing, transport, green and public spaces and services, and reducing the adverse environmental impact of cities and communities. This goal urges governments and cities across the world to consider how holistic development and improved services can improve lives and protect the environment. **Goal 4 Quality Education** sets out targets for 2030 for inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning, including ensuring equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education and substantially increasing the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship.

Similarly, **Goal 8 Decent Work and Economic Growth** sets out targets to promote sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth. This includes targets for 2030 such as achieving full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and those living with disability, and implementing policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products. **Goal 9 Industry Innovation and Infrastructure** sets targets to build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and foster innovation. By 2030, this includes upgrading infrastructure and retrofitting industries to make them sustainable, with increased resource-use efficiency and greater adoption of clean technologies. **Goal 13 relates to taking urgent action to combat Climate Change** through strengthening resilience and adaptive capacity in all countries and ensuring climate change measures are integrated into national polices, strategies and planning.

3.2   European Green Deal (2019)

The European Green Deal is the European Commission's plan to make the EU's economy sustainable through a just and inclusive transition to a low-carbon future. It

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[7] https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/cities/

provides an action plan to boost the efficient use of resources by moving to a clean, circular economy, to restore biodiversity and cut pollution. Its overall aim is for the **EU to be climate-neutral by 2050**. It proposes actions across all sectors, including:

- Investing in environmentally friendly technologies;
- Supporting industry to innovate;
- Rolling out cleaner, cheaper and healthier forms of private and public transport;
- Decarbonising the energy sector;
- Ensuring buildings are more energy efficient;
- Working with international partners to improve global environmental standards.

Its delivery will be supported by the European Green Deal Investment plan which aims to mobilise at least €1 trillion in sustainable investments over the next decade. This includes a Just Transition Mechanism to ensure the transition to a sustainable economy is fair to everybody by mobilising at least €100 billion to support workers and citizens most impacted by the transformation. However, achieving these goals also requires action by member state governments, local governments and communities.

3.3 Climate Action Plan 2021

The Climate Action Plan 2021 sets out a roadmap for taking decisive action to reduce Ireland's emissions by 51% by 2030 and reach net zero no later than 2050. It contains a suite of goals, objectives and actions spanning across all industries and sectors towards achieving these targets of halving national emissions by 2030 and net zero emissions by 2050. €5 billion of the total €9.5 billion in additional carbon tax receipts over the period of the newly adopted NDP have been allocated to increase capital investment levels in energy efficiency. In addition, Ireland's National Resilience and Recovery Plan commits €518 million to prioritising advancing the green transition to significantly reform and direct relevant funding towards decarbonising projects such as retrofitting, ecosystem resilience and regeneration, climate mitigation and adaptation, and green data systems.

Local Authorities play a key role in providing public sector leadership on climate action in their areas and in mobilising action at a local and community level. This includes a continued role by the Climate Action Regional Offices in supporting and coordinating climate action by local authorities including developing capacity through training; supporting behavioural change initiatives; identifying and sourcing funding opportunities; and measuring and recording performance. Each local authority will also prepare a Climate Action Plan at least once every five years, containing both mitigation and adaptation measures and develop a decarbonisation zone within its administrative area that will become the focus for a range of climate mitigation, adaptation and biodiversity measures.

3.4 Project Ireland 2040: National Planning Framework (2018)

The National Planning Framework (NPF) is the high-level strategy that will shape growth and development in Ireland to the year 2040. It aims to guide public and private investment nationally, to create and promote opportunities for Ireland's people, and to protect and enhance the environment.

A key element of the NPF is the identification of cities and towns that can serve as **regional drivers of growth and investment**. It identifies Sligo as having potential to serve this role in the North-West as an **accessible centre of employment and services**, which can be a **focal point for investment** and have the **widest possible regional influence**. Sligo Town serves a regional role across a large hinterland that extends into surrounding counties, with strong employment sectors such as pharma and engineering, Higher Education Institutes (HEIs), cultural institutions and health services. As such, one of the key priorities for the Northern and Western Region is enhancing the town-region like functions performed by Sligo, activating the potential for further rejuvenation and renewal of its core and further enhancing its connectivity nationally and regionally.

3.5 Project Ireland 2040: National Development Plan 2021 – 2030

The National Development Plan (NDP) 2021-2030 sets out the investment priorities that underpin the implementation of the National Planning Framework as part of Project Ireland 2040. Through a total investment of €165 billion, this level of capital spending aims to ensure ongoing cross-sectoral regional development and public investment. A large proportion of this investment is directed at major national infrastructure projects relating to sustainable mobility, international and regional connectivity, transitions to a low carbon and climate-resilient economy, compact growth, enhanced amenity and heritage among others.

Following from the NPF, it recognises Sligo's key regional role as a driver for investment and identifies several key infrastructure projects which can support and enhance Sligo's role. These include the Eastern Garavogue Bridge and approach roads in Sligo, the N17 Knock to Collooney road, a Sligo Cultural and Learning Hub, and the regeneration of Sligo University Hospital.

3.6 Housing for All – A New Housing Plan for Ireland 2021

As part of the Programme for Government – Our Shared Future, 'Housing for All - a New Housing Plan for Ireland' is the government's housing policy to 2030. It is a multi-annual, multi-billion-euro plan which aims to improve Ireland's housing system and deliver more homes of all types for people with different housing needs. The government's vision for the housing system over the longer term is to achieve a steady supply of housing in the right locations with economic, social and environmental sustainability built into the system, with a target to increase new housing supply to an average of at least 33,000 new units per year over the next decade.

To achieve these targets and objectives, the policy has **four pathways** to achieving housing for all:

- Supporting **home ownership** and increasing **affordability**
- Eradicating **homelessness**, increasing **social housing** delivery and supporting **social inclusion**
- Increasing new **housing supply**
- Addressing **vacancy** and efficient use of **existing stock**

The pathways contain actions to be taken by government departments, local authorities, State agencies and others. Housing for All contains **213 actions** which will deliver a

range of housing options for individuals, couples and families to enable a sustainable housing system.

3.7 Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Northern and Western Region 2020-2032

The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Northern and Western Region is a high-level plan that seeks to support the implementation of the NPF by providing a strategic planning and economic framework for the region's sustainable growth and development. It echoes the NPF in emphasising sustainable development patterns and seeks to focus growth within existing urban areas and in regional growth centres including Sligo Town.

The RSES provides a spatial planning framework for the region focussed on **compact growth and placemaking**, with more sustainable growth focussed on existing cities, towns and villages instead of uncoordinated sprawl or excessive one-off housing. More co-ordinated and concentrated development aims to deliver greater quality of life and more attractive centres for investment and economic growth.

It identifies Sligo Town as a **Regional Growth Centre**, with a population growth target of at least 40% between 2016 and 2040. It sets out a *Strategic Plan for Sligo* with the aim of creating "an enterprising, inclusive, resilient and environmentally sustainable place, which values and celebrates its unique landscape and rich culture and heritage, and where the wellbeing of future generations is central to everything we do." It sets goals for compact growth of the Town (including development of new housing and improved transport infrastructure); economic, heritage and cultural development (through supporting new enterprise zones, the new Technological University for the West and North-West, and investment in smart city infrastructure); and a liveable Sligo with public realm and active travel improvements as well as enhancements to key urban places.

3.8 Sligo County Development Plan 2017-2023

The Sligo County Development Plan is the statutory over-arching strategic framework for sustainable spatial, economic, and social development in County Sligo. It sets policies for Sligo that meet national and regional planning goals and guide the development of sustainable communities and economic growth.

The Plan identifies some key challenges for the development of Sligo. These include retaining and increasing the county's population; focusing on the role and development of Sligo Town; developing essential pieces of infrastructure; building Sligo's cultural offer to attract visitors and an internationally mobile workforce; improving the functions and performance of Ballymote, Enniscrone and Tubbercurry; and diversifying the rural economy while protecting the county's natural and cultural heritage.

The Plan also incorporates the extended *Sligo and Environs Development Plan 2010-2016* which sets out detailed policies for Sligo Town. Its strategic goals include developing Sligo as a compact and sustainable town, facilitating economic development, promoting Sligo Town's keystone role in the county Settlement Strategy, conserving and enhancing Sligo's natural and cultural heritage, and building up wider regional and national infrastructural linkages in Sligo.

3.9 Sligo Digital Strategy 2020-2023

The Sligo Digital Strategy's objective is to embrace digital innovation to showcase what is possible in a rural town on Europe's western seaboard. It builds on the vision of the Sligo LECP 2016-2021 to be a leading smart city and region by 2025. It acknowledges the severe challenges and changes brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, which has brought about increased digital reliance and rapidly expanded the digital landscape. The strategy's vision is to support the climate action agenda, promote increased economic activity in the region and town, and deliver improved social inclusion. It sets out four strategic pillars for delivering this including **increasing digital skills** across the county, **improving digital infrastructure**, **delivering digital services and community/culture initiatives,** and **fostering innovation, enterprise, digital economy and employment**. Each pillar covers a series of specific objectives, initiatives and projects, informed by the digital infrastructure needs of the county.

3.10 Climate Ready Sligo: Sligo County Council Climate Adaptation Strategy 2019-2024

Climate Ready Sligo sets out Sligo County Council's strategic priorities, measures and responses for adaptation in County Sligo over the years 2019-2024, in accordance with the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015. The strategy recognises the risks associated with increased frequency of climate change related events such as extreme weather events. The strategy is based on the two distinct but complementary objectives of **adaptation** (identifying risks and taking action to prevent or minimise damage) and **mitigation** (reducing greenhouse gas emissions to limit climate change). The strategy identifies the scale of the challenge posed by climate change and the existing and potential future climate risks for Sligo, such as flooding, coastal erosion, threats to biodiversity, risks to critical infrastructure and buildings, and threats to agriculture. It sets a series of objectives and actions, under the three strategic goals of **Engaging**, **Planning** for climate impacts, and **Adapting** the everyday operations of Sligo County Council to climate change and sustainability.

4 Key Points from Socio-Economic Profile

As part of the development of the Sligo 2030 Plan, detailed socio-economic analysis has been carried out.[8] This included analysis in areas such as the economy and employment, housing, community wellbeing and quality of life, and the environment and sustainability. This analysis, along with the consultation, has allowed for the identification of specific Strengths, Challenges, Opportunities and Threats (SCOT) and associated key needs which have influenced the development of the goals, objectives, outcomes and actions.

The analysis examined key data from a number of different sources including the 2016 Census, POBAL, the Labour Force Survey, Live Register, quarterly national household survey and other relevant and up-to-date statistics from other local government and state agencies including the IDA and Enterprise Ireland.

For Sligo, specific needs have been identified in relation to growing the economy and employment, increasing housing, improving infrastructure and accessibility, revitalising the county's town centres, protecting the environment and sustainability, and ensuring community wellbeing and quality of life through the development of an inclusive county with adequate provision of services. This is expanded on further in Chapter 6. Key points from the socio-economic analysis are outlined below providing a snapshot overview of the county and its people. The full socio-economic profile can be viewed in the Revised Socio-Economic Statement available on the Sligo County Council Website.

4.1 Spatial Overview

County Sligo is located in north-west Ireland, along the country's Atlantic coast. It's strategic location along Ireland's Atlantic Economic Corridor, Wild Atlantic Way and proximity to Northern Ireland provides Sligo with a wide breadth of opportunities for growth and development. It is bordered by 3 counties – Leitrim, Roscommon and Mayo. Sligo Town has been designated as a Regional Growth Centre within the Northern and Western Regional Assembly's Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy 2020-2032 and the National Planning Framework. As such the Town holds much potential to drive the social, economic and environmental development of the entire county.

Other settlements with designated roles in the County Development Plan 2017-2023 are the Support Towns of Ballymote, Enniscrone and Tobercurry, and the satellite villages of Ballysadare, Collooney, Coolaney, Grange and Strandhill. Throughout the county, other smaller villages are sustaining rural communities. Despite the county's perceived remote location, it is serviced and accessible via road, rail and air, and is regionally interconnected with neighbouring counties that act as a catchment area for both education and work. However, to fully realise its Regional Growth Centre status, the county needs to continue to upgrade its critical infrastructure and public transport, acknowledge its regional role and ensure that its towns, villages and communities remain connected and vibrant. Key findings from this part of the analysis include:

- In the 2016 census, Sligo Town and Tubbercurry were the two largest settlements in the county, with Ballymote and Enniscrone the next largest second tier towns.

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[8] A summary list of key data sources that informed this analysis is provided in Appendix A.

- As outlined in the County Development Plan 2017-2023, Strandhill, Rosses Point, Mullaghmore, Enniscrone, Easky and Coolaney have a special and regionally significant tourism function.

- In the 2016 Census, most of the people travelling to County Sligo for work and education came from the Counties immediately surrounding County Sligo, including Leitrim, Mayo, Roscommon, and Donegal. These counties contributed 67.7% of persons travelling for education and 91.3% of persons travelling for work to County Sligo.

- 48.5% of all persons leaving County Sligo for work went to the counties of Mayo, Leitrim, Roscommon, and Donegal (2016 Census). This corresponds with figures of persons travelling to County Sligo, indicating the interconnectedness of economic activity between County Sligo and its surrounding areas.

- The national road network serves the north (toward Derry and Northern Ireland), south (toward Galway and Dublin (via Longford) and west (toward Castlebar) of the county with primary roads, while regional and secondary road networks provide further connection and access throughout the county.

- The rail network in the county consists of three stations – Ballymote, Collooney, and Sligo Town, with services from Longford and Dublin. There is also a network of bus stops providing regional transport services to other main centres nationally, including Galway, Limerick, Dublin, Cork, Derry and Belfast.

- Air access is provided via the neighbouring Ireland West Airport (Knock) which is approximately 50 minutes' drive from Sligo Town.

4.2   Population

Sligo is growing albeit at a slower pace than in previous periods. Sligo City has a youthful base, yet a significant and growing population of older people across the county. As such Sligo County Council must prepare to support Sligo's aging population while continuing to attract investment to support existing and new communities. With unlimited potential and ambitious population targets, key stakeholders across the county must work collaboratively to encourage more people to live, visit and invest in Sligo and ensure that the necessary services and amenities are in place to support the community in the coming years. Key findings from this part of the analysis include:

- In the 2016 Census, Sligo had a population of 65,535 which accounts for 1.4% of the State's population making it the 6th smallest county in the state.

- Between 1981-2016, County Sligo grew 18.1% with the population increasing by over 10,000 people.

- However, the growth of 0.2% recorded between 2011-2016 was the slowest growth since the 1991 census. Similarly, Sligo Town experienced a slight decrease in population with a population of 19,199 being recorded.

- In 2016, births in the county equated to 1.18% of the population (774) which was lower than the 1.34% at state level in the same year. This is reflected in the relatively small increase in people aged 0-14 of 2% between 2011-2016. However, births have

remained quite stable in the county between 2016-2019, with an average of 760 a year.

- People aged 20-29 remain the largest cohort of Sligo Town (2016 Census). However, a decrease of 19.9% of people in that age group was recorded in the 2016 census, which indicates a potential brain drain in the town.

- According to the 2016 Census, 16% of County Sligo's population are over the age of 65 which is higher than the state average of 13%. Similarly, people aged 70-79 increased by 18% at county level between 2011-2016.

- Approximately 9% of the county's population were foreign nationals, with nationals from the United Kingdom and Poland accounting for the largest proportion of this group (2016 Census).

- With population projections from the NPF Implementation Roadmap indicating a population of 74,000-75,5000 for the county by 2031 and from the RSES targeting 25,800 for Sligo Town by the end of 2031, attracting people to live and work in Sligo will be a key issue to address in this plan.
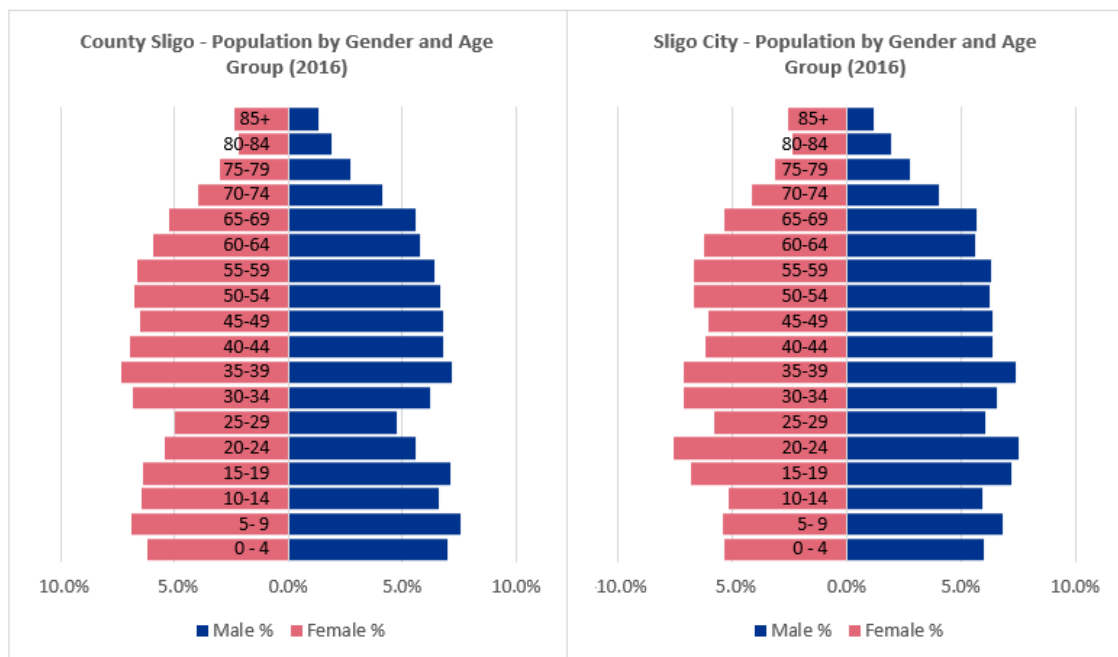
Figure 4.1: County Sligo and Sligo Town Population Pyramid Comparison

4.3   Housing and Household Characteristics

Sligo is a changing place with an increasing number of people living in urban environments, yet the majority of people still reside in rural settings. Despite having comparatively affordable housing for first time buyers, the county has major constraints in relation to housing supply and availability. This affects not only Sligo's current population, but also Sligo's ability to attract further investment and grow its population. Therefore, as a county, Sligo must work to minimise the risk of isolation for those living

alone and work collaboratively to address housing supply. Key findings from this part of the analysis include:

- In 2016, almost 40% of people reported living in urban areas across the county up from 37% in 2011. This increase represented the biggest change in the rate of urbanisation in Ireland at that time.

- Overall, 92.4% of households are categorised as houses or bungalows, with 6.2% categorised as flats or apartments, and an average household size of 2.56 persons (2016 Census).

- Over 6,000 people live in social housing, making up 10.3% of all households in the county (2016 Census).

- 28% of County Sligo's population live alone, which is higher than the state average of 23%. Approximately 12% of households at Sligo County and Town levels were made up of one parent supporting a child or multiple children (2016 Census).

- Internet connectivity is increasing with Sligo reporting a large decrease across the county in those that do not have internet access in the last census.

- In 2019, Sligo was ranked as the 3rd most affordable county in Ireland for first time buyers in a report[9] by the Northern & Western Regional Assembly.

- However, Sligo ranked second from bottom in the North Western Region from 2017 – 2019 for housing supply. Over the course of 2017 - 2019, the annual average number of new houses coming into supply in Sligo was 139, amounting to a total of 418 new houses in that 3-year period.

- To meet population and growth targets as set out in the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy, the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage has indicated that Sligo will need to significantly increase the annual supply of new housing.

New Housing Supplied (Annual Average)
2017 - 2019

County	Number of Households
Donegal	411
Mayo	338
Monaghan	185
Cavan	148
Roscommon	141
Sligo	139
Leitrim	61
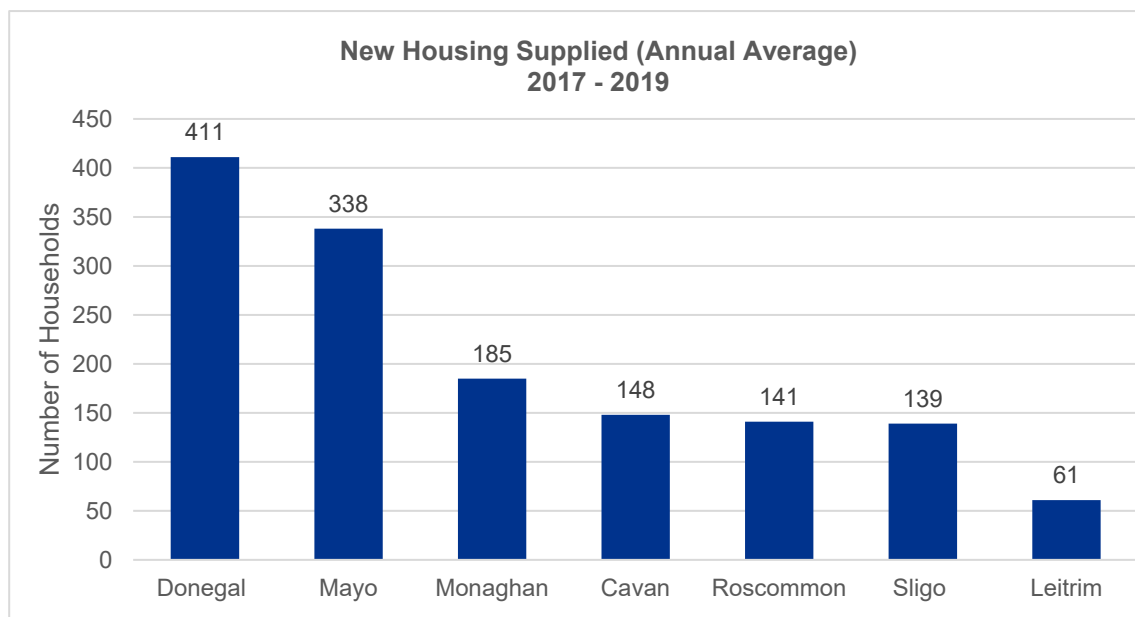
[9] NWRA, Region in Transition - The Way Forward, 2019

Figure 4.2: New Housing Supplied by County[10]

4.4 Education

Sligo is a county with excellent educational infrastructure and high levels of educational attainment. The newly established Atlantic Technological University (ATU) incorporating the former GMIT, LYIT and IT Sligo, is a key part of Sligo's strong educational offering. Sligo's St Angela's College is also in the process of joining the ATU. Additionally, a range of further education programmes and training courses are provided through the Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim Education and Training Board. A particular area of note is the new Retrofitting Centre of Excellence in Collooney that provides training in retrofitting skills.

Taken together, Sligo's education and training ecosystem, can prepare the community for the jobs of the future, enhance digital skills and life-long learning, and provide the private sector with the talent it requires. To achieve this plan's vision, close collaboration between the private sector, the community and training and education providers is required to ensure courses are co-designed to meet all parties' needs. Key findings from this part of the analysis include:

- Overall, education outcomes are improving across the county with those reporting having attained less than primary education declining by 14% and those with solely up to leaving certificate qualifications declining by 10% (2016 Census).

- 47.7% of residents in Sligo aged 15 years and older hold some form of Third Level qualification (i.e. NQF 6, Advanced Certificate or higher), which is higher than the national average of 42% (2016 Census).

- A further 18.5% of residents have achieved upper secondary school qualifications (2016 Census).

- The number of females with masters or higher degrees increased in the 2016 Census by 24% while the number of males with masters or higher degrees increased by 22%.

- The newly established Atlantic Technological University (ATU) is set to offer almost 600 programmes to a student population of over 20,000 across 9 proposed campuses supported by over 2,200 staff. This will enhance the existing under-graduate and post-graduate degree programmes already available in the county such as Nursing, Business, Science, Engineering and Home Economics.

- Sligo has a number of research centres based at ATU Sligo including the Precision Engineering Materials and Manufacturing Centre (PEM), the Centre for Research in Social Professions (CRiSP), the Centre for Environmental Research Innovation and Sustainability (CERIS), the Mathematical Modelling and Intelligent Systems for Health and Environment (MISHE), and the Health and Biomedical Research Centre (HEAL).

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[10] See: https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/6d48f-ministerial-letter-to-local-authorities-structural-housing-demand-in-ireland-and-housing-supply-targets/

- Future plans for education, innovation and centres of excellence will help enhance entrepreneurship and education outcomes including the Strandhill digital gaming hub and the recently established AIM Centre (Advancing Innovation in Manufacturing & Supply Chain) at the Market Yard in Sligo.
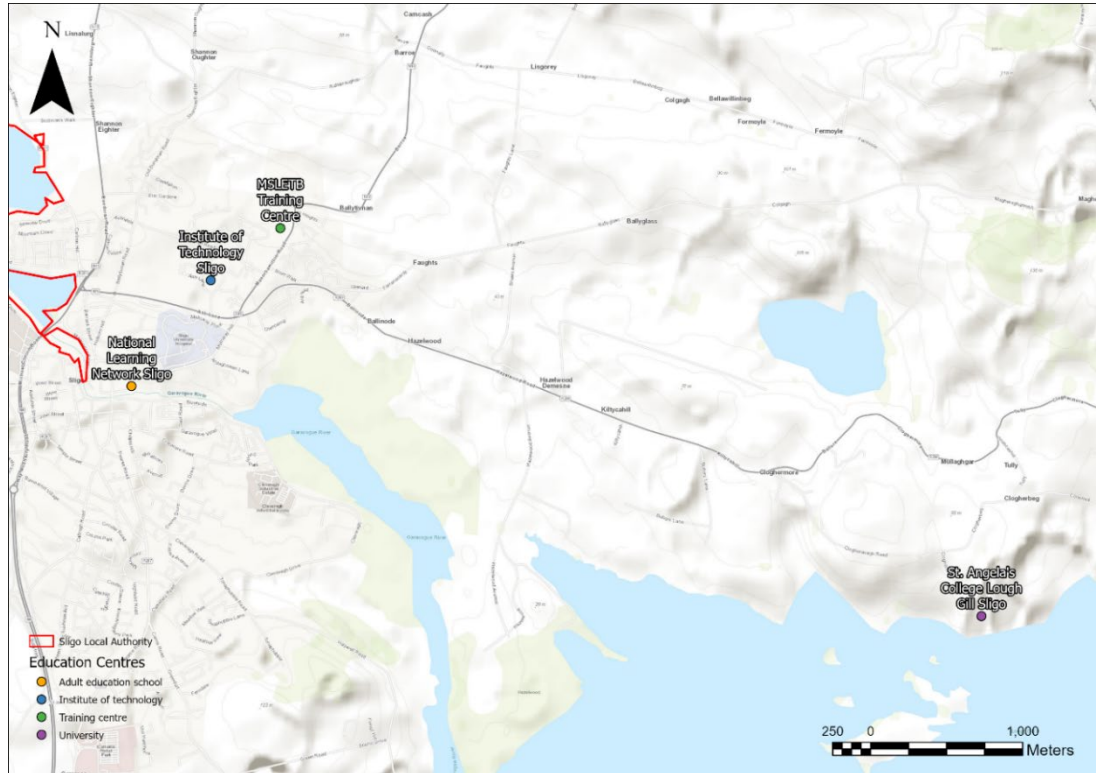
Figure 4.3: Education Centres in County Sligo

4.5 Economy and Employment

Sligo has tremendous potential to grow its economy and increase employment levels across the community. The county has a number of established sectors including in precision engineering and med-tech, an important retail and hospitality sector, and a significant level of employment in the creative sector as well as agriculture and tourism. There is also a growing and ambitious tech base that offers opportunity to further diversify the economy. The county, with its appealing work-life balance, can also capitalise on the accelerated trend towards remote and hybrid working brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic.

However, there is work to do. The county recorded low levels of employment growth in the last census, has a high commercial vacancy rate and can be seen to be underperforming in relation to home grown internationally exporting companies. The continued impact of COVID-19 and Brexit also need to be considered. Similarly, more recent developments in relation to the war in Ukraine, inflation and cost of living pressures are also affecting the county, its people and the economy. To achieve its potential, the whole county must work collaboratively to accelerate growth and develop an innovative, diversified and sustainable economy that provides the infrastructure and talent base for employers and meaningful and sustainable employment for Sligo's people. Key findings from this part of the analysis include:

- In 2016, across the county, the top three industries for employment were Professional Services (28%), Commerce and Trade (19%), and Manufacturing services (13%). Agriculture, forestry, and fishing accounted for 7% of employment across the county.

- The unemployment rate at county level was in line with state figures (7%), while unemployment in the Town was slightly above at 8% in the 2016 Census. The average commuting time to work is 22 minutes, with 72% of people travelling to work in under 30 minutes.

- From 2011-2016, employment in the county grew by just 2.2% which was significantly below the national growth of 11% and the lowest of any county in the state. The RSES has a target to increase jobs to 17,000 in Sligo Town by 2040.[11]

- A number of specialised sectors have been identified in Sligo including Hospitality and Tourism, Performing Arts, Environmental Services, Medical Device Production, Metalworking Technology and Heavy Machinery Technology.[12] The county is also part of two official clusters - the Border Region Manufacturing Cluster (BORMAC) and Tech Northwest. Cyber Ireland's North West Chapter is also present with two of the Chapter's leads based in Sligo.

- With its beautiful natural landscape, and reputation for culture, heritage and creative sectors, Sligo's tourism sector has huge potential for growth. Domestic and International visitor numbers increased between 2017-2019 and Sligo was ranked 2nd in the region for domestic tourist trips between 2010-2019.

- The county has a high-commercial vacancy rate with a rate of 19.9% being recorded by the GeoDirectory for the final quarter of 2020. Similarly, the Sligo Collaborative Town Centre Health Check (2020), assessed the commercial vacancy rate in Sligo's historic town centre as 18.4%.

- Following the initial lockdown in 2020, it was found that in the North West Region, approximately 30% of people[13] started working remotely. 14% of people in the region reported a loss of employment during the initial restrictions while 35% reported experiencing a temporary layoff.

- 74 companies were supported by Enterprise Ireland and employed 1,992 people across the county in 2020. The Innovation Centre at IT Sligo is home to over 35 businesses at different stages of development that employ more than 100 people. However, Sligo is underperforming in this area with substantially less jobs being supported by Enterprise Ireland clients than in similarly sized counties such as Cavan and Monaghan.

- In 2022, IDA supported 31 companies in the county that employed 2,955 people across sectors such as Engineering, Medical Technology, Biopharmaceuticals, Consumer Goods, and Business and Financial services.

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[11] See: Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Northern and Western Region 2020 – 2032
[12] European Traded Clusters Observatory Report, see: Methodology and Findings Report for a Cluster Mapping of Related Sectors
[13] Remote working of persons aged 15 years and over, as captured in the Q2 2020 Labour Force Survey

- In a study conducted in July 2021[14], Sligo was ranked the overall best place to work from home in Ireland, with particularly high ranking for affordable housing, access to a high number of GPs and several schools in the area.

Table 4-1: Employment in EI Client Companies, 2020[15]

	Population	EI Clients	Jobs
Cavan	76,176	81	6,045
Monaghan	61,386	107	5,548
Donegal	159,192	138	4,148
Sligo	65,535	74	1,992
Leitrim	32,044	23	585

Table 4-2: Best Place to Work from Home in Ireland (Source: Switcher.ie)

Rank	Town / Town	County	Total Score	Avg House Price	5G	Crime / 1000 People	Restaurants / 1000 People	GPs / 1000 People	Food Delivery Services	Top Schools / 1000 Population	Coffee Shops / 1000 People
1	**Sligo**	**Sligo**	**4.93**	**€ 162,793**	**2**	**68.545**	**5.209**	**5.157**	**2**	**0.208**	**1.875**
2	Galway	Galway	4.77	€ 287,494	3	41.484	4.729	1.739	3	0.075	1.339
3	Ballina	Mayo	4.64	€ 143,483	2	43.26	4.424	3.245	1	0.197	0.885

4.6   Community Wellbeing and Quality of Life

Sligo has a strong sense of community and strong tradition of volunteering with voluntary activity recorded above national averages in both Sligo and the Border Region in previous studies.[16] However, the county continues to experience areas of deprivation and poverty. The wellbeing of the community remains key to Sligo's ability to succeed in attracting people to live, visit and invest and ultimately to achieving this plan's Vision for 2030 in having socially inclusive vibrant communities. Therefore, it is vital that the community has access to the necessary services and amenities including healthcare and sustainable employment and that poverty is addressed where it exists. Key findings from this part of the analysis include:

- Sligo as a whole is rated as marginally below average by the Pobal HP Deprivation Index (2016 Census). However, the county has seen a large deterioration in its deprivation score since 2011, with the score now sitting at -1.57.

- Unemployment in County Sligo and Sligo Town decreased from 2011 to 2016 by 26.6% and 21.4% respectively.

- In relation to households with children in need of housing support, although County Sligo did not have the highest number of such households seeking support, it did

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[14] The Best Place to Work from Home in Ireland, Switcher.ie. Available at: https://switcher.ie/mortgages/best-locations-work-from-home/
[15] Figures provided by Enterprise Ireland.
[16] Latest available data is from 2013 at regional level.

have the highest percentage of single parent households who needed such support in the border region in the most recent statistics (2017).

- The number of households in County Sligo registered on the Housing Assistance Payment scheme has increased 300% from 2016 to 2019.

- In relation to minority groups, as of August 2020, approximately 2.5% (179) of asylum seekers and 3.1% (94) of refugees in Ireland are resident in County Sligo. This figure is likely to have increased due to the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

- In relation to the difficulties that COVID-19 restrictions placed on communities in Sligo, a CSO study from 2020 indicated that 18% of people in the Northern and Western region were worried about their personal finances, while 4% were unable to pay regular bills, and 2% were not able to pay their rent or mortgage.

- In relation to health, in 2016, 57.7% of the county's population were recorded as being in very good health. However, a general decline in health was noted as the number of people in good and fair health declined during the census period from 2011-2016.

- 2016 Census data also indicated that 15% of the population in County Sligo have at least one disability, of which 66% are aged 45 years and older. Notably, compared to 50% of the general population in Sligo, only 19% of disabled people were employed.

- The county has previously recorded high incidences of female malignant melanoma and male prostate cancer, but average or below average for most other cancers.[17]

- Between 2014-2018, Smoking related deaths in County Sligo were relatively in line with national figures, while alcohol related deaths were below national figures.

- County Sligo has seen a number of fluctuating cycles of increases and decreases in addiction treatment since 2008, with a comparatively high number (in comparison to recent years) recorded in 2019 (314 cases). However, this is significantly below the state average of 650 cases which has been steadily increasing since 2004.

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[17] HSE Sligo Health Profile 2015.
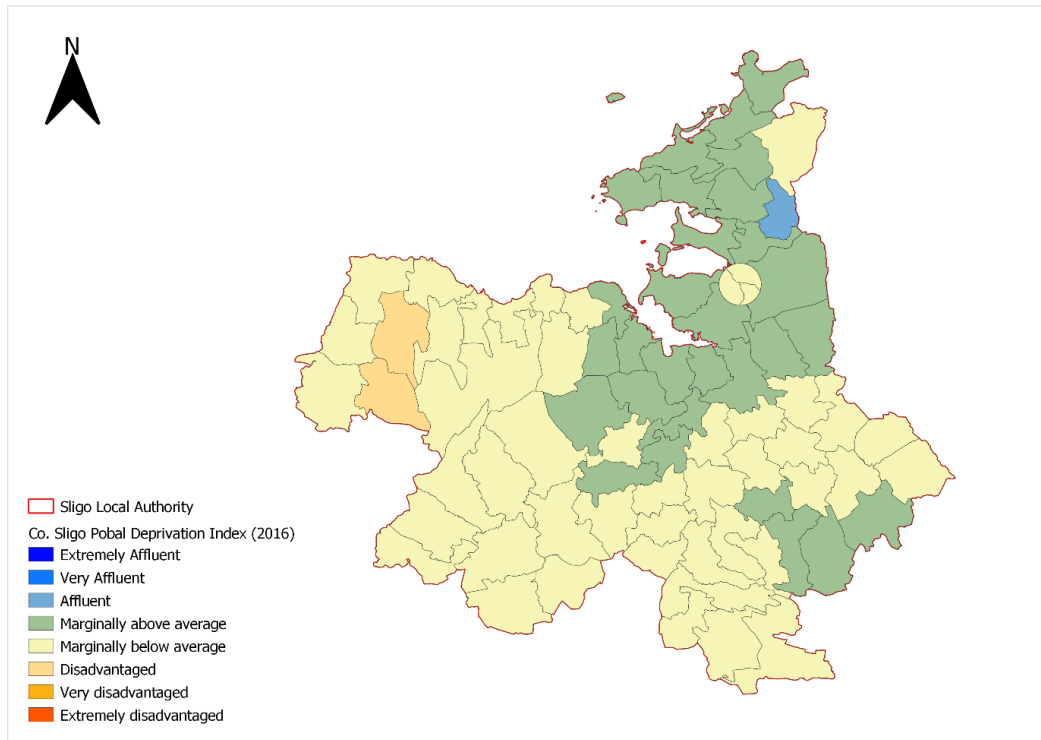
Figure 4.4: County Sligo Pobal HP Deprivation Index (2016)

4.7 The Environment and Sustainability

Sligo is a county with a beautiful natural environment that contributes to community wellbeing, quality of life and the appeal of the county to visitors, investors and future residents alike. It is both coastal and mountainous with lakes, wetlands, bogs, cliffs and woodlands across the county. However, this fantastic asset is threatened by climate change and Sligo must prepare and act now to protect these areas and the county's biodiversity for future generations. As such to help realise this plan's ambitions of becoming a more sustainable county, the entire community will need to work together to change behaviours, develop a circular economy, and embrace active and sustainable methods of travel, as well as increasing the use of more sustainable and renewable energy sources. Key findings from this part of the analysis include:

- County Sligo has 14 special protected areas, 27 special areas of conservation and 4 national heritage areas. It has a coastline of almost 200km.

- The county has a rich landscape which is home to over 5,000 recorded archaeological sites.

- Plans set out in national and EU policy related to more sustainable agriculture will impact over 2,000 households in Sligo who were recorded as belonging to an agricultural socio-economic group in the 2016 Census, which highlights the need for a Just Transition across the county.

- However, there is a high rate of car use in the county with 69% of those travelling to work and 58% of those travelling to education doing so by car (2016).

- There was a decline recorded in those using alternative transport (bicycle, on foot, bus/minibus, coach or train) as their primary means of transport in the 2016 census.

- In 2016, at county level, Cycling constituted just 1% of transport for those attending education or work and only 2% in Sligo Town. This trend is also replicated in regional travel with only 1% of the population using cycling as a form of transport.

- In 2021, the National Transport Authority announced €2.6 million in funding to enhance and increase cycling and walking infrastructure across the county as part of a 5-year programme.

- In relation to renewable energy, Sligo has a network of 48 wind turbines with a capacity to generate between 0.85 – 2.5MW of energy per turbine (2021 data).

- There is a total of 9 electric vehicle charging sites across the county. These points are operated and maintained by the ESB and are part of their 1,350-point national network (2021 data).

- In relation to building energy ratings, in 2021, the largest BER category in the county was Category C rated buildings making up 36.67%, with the fastest growing category identified as A3.

Figure 4.5 Protected Sites in County Sligo

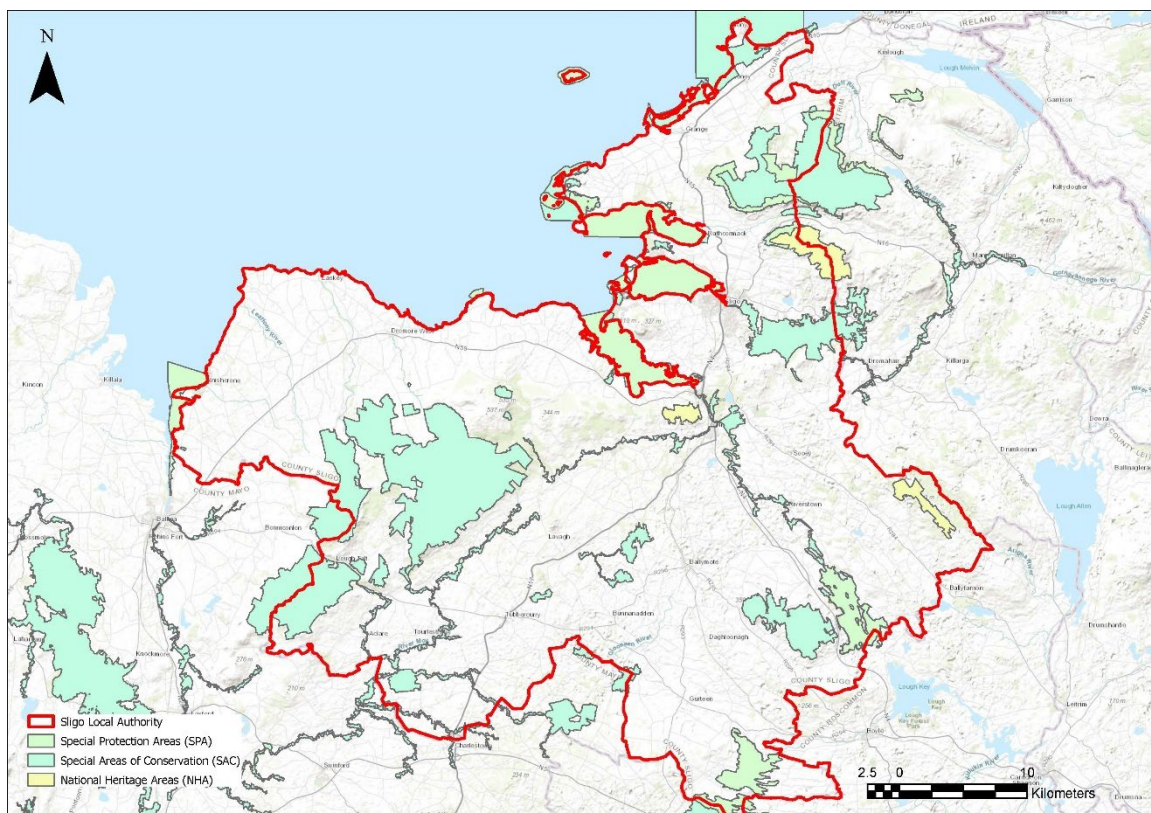# 5 Consultation

This Chapter summarises the consultation undertaken as part of the analysis to inform the development of the Sligo 2030 One Voice One Vision Strategic Framework. Sligo 2030 has been developed in a collaborative and cooperative manner through engagement with a wide range of key stakeholders including the public, Public Participation Network (PPN), community representative groups, local government, state agencies, education providers and the private sector. The aim of this engagement, in conjunction with the socio-economic analysis, was to identify key priorities and needs that could be addressed through the high-level goals, objectives and actions of the plan and reflected in the desired outcomes. This includes community elements related to areas such as service provision and social inclusion and economic elements related to areas such as developing the green economy (e.g. renewable energy and retrofitting) and attracting new investment.

In addition, the extensive consultation exercise was designed to increase public participation in the development of the county, generate a sense of shared ownership for the Sligo 2030 vision and high-level goals, and secure the buy-in of key stakeholders, including the public, that will be vital to ensuring Sligo's success as it moves towards 2030.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, in-person engagement was severely restricted. However, to ensure the widest possible engagement, an innovative consultation approach was adopted which included an online public webinar, virtual focus groups including breakout rooms, workshops (virtual and in-person), stakeholder interviews, online surveys, and written submissions. The below provides a summary of the engagement achieved.

5.1 Community and Public Engagement

Community wide consultation was conducted through a number of avenues that were open to the general public to engage with. This included written submissions, surveys and a public webinar which were advertised via the PPN, Sligo County Council's website, social media and through traditional media outlets. The aim of this engagement was to gather ideas and needs from the community and encourage greater participation in the development of the county. This element of the consultation included:

- **Public Webinar (June 2021)** – 75 individuals attended an online public webinar that introduced the Sligo 2030 project, outlined initial draft high-level goals and highlighted a number of ways the public could engage and provide inputs to the process. The webinar also facilitated a Q&A session where members of the public were able to ask questions to the presentation panel.

- **Written Submissions (June – July 2021)** – 63 written submissions were received including from the general public, community representative groups, and a wide range of other stakeholders including the diaspora. The submissions covered a large array of topics including cycling infrastructure, tourism, public transport, family resources, education, heritage, and alternative energy sources.

- **Community Survey (June – July 2021)** – 171 responses were received. The survey sought community views in relation to areas such as Sligo's greatest assets, barriers to living and working in Sligo, service provision, remote working, climate change and

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the use of smart technology amongst other areas. For a full list of questions and aggregated results of the Community Survey please see Appendix A of the Socio-Economic Statement on the Sligo County Council website.[18]

- **Business Survey (June – July 2021)** – 47 responses were received in relation to the survey which targeted the private sector in Sligo. The survey sought views in relation to Sligo's main strengths and barriers as a place to do business, solutions to the county's high commercial vacancy rate, the private sector and climate action, Brexit and COVID-19. For a full list of questions and aggregated results of the Business Survey please see Appendix A of the Socio-Economic Statement on the Sligo County Council website.[19]

5.2 Targeted Stakeholder Engagement

The targeted stakeholder engagement brought together key stakeholders from government agencies, the private sector, community groups, the environment, education, creative sector, heritage, and tourism. It included representatives from the Public Participation Network, IDA, Fáilte Ireland, HSE, ATU Sligo, Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim Education and Training Board (MSLETB), St Angela's, the Family Resource Centres, Sligo Volunteer Centre and many more. The aim of this engagement was both to identify opportunities and needs as well as secure buy-in from key stakeholder who would be the drivers and champions of specific actions of the Implementation Plan. This element of the consultation included:

- **Stakeholder Interviews (June – July 2021)** – 22 one-one interviews were completed with representatives from key state and semi-state agencies (e.g. IDA, Enterprise Ireland) and community and private sector groups (e.g. PPN, Sligo Chamber of Commerce) with the expertise, insights, and ideas critical to help inform and further develop the Sligo 2030 Plan.

- **Focus Groups (July 2021)** – 5 Focus Groups were held in July 2021 with 82 people engaged over the course of the 5 sessions. Those who attended included representatives from state and semi-state agencies, community groups, and private sector groups as well as elected representatives. The Focus Groups discussed opportunities and ideas for Sligo over the next seven years.

- **Workshops (December 2021)** – 6 workshops were held in December 2021 to discuss specific objectives and actions for the Sligo 2030 Implementation Plan. The average attendance per workshop was 37 people. The workshops were designed through a thematic approach based around the high-level goals with representatives attending workshops relevant to their areas of expertise.

- **Stakeholder Engagement Event (March 2022)** – In-person workshop with members of relevant key committees (LCDC, SPC), the SEF and agency staff, including JASPERS, held in March 2022 to review Smart Model, targets, objectives, and actions.

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[18] Available from: https://www.sligococo.ie/2030/Socio%20Economic%20Statement.pdf
[19] Available from: https://www.sligococo.ie/2030/Socio%20Economic%20Statement.pdf

- **Implementation Plan refinement (June – July 2022)** – Targeted Agency engagement over June/July 2022 with lead agencies and stakeholders responsible for the delivery of the actions to refine wording, KPIs and timelines.

Furthermore, finalised actions and targets were agreed through the SPC for Planning, Community & Economic Development, Arts & Culture, the LCDC, the Municipal Districts, Sligo Economic Forum and with other key stakeholders and supporting agencies to ensure buy-in and agree ownership of the specific actions of the plan.

5.3 Key Themes from the Consultation

All written submissions and survey responses were reviewed as part of the consultation analysis. Similarly, key points raised during one-to-one interviews, focus groups and workshops were collated and reviewed. The combined analysis of the different strands of the consultation identified a number of key themes aligned to economic and community needs. A summary of points under these themes are outlined below. The findings of the consultation have been used to assist in the identification of what the county needs and its key strengths, challenges, opportunities and threats. Similarly, ideas and suggestions put forward by the community and other key stakeholders have been incorporated, both directly and indirectly, into the goals, objectives, key desired outcomes, and actions. For more detail and aggregated results of both the Community and Business Survey please see the Socio-Economic Statement on the Sligo County Council website.[20]

5.3.1 Economy, Employment, and Housing

- One of the main recurring messages, was the need for more affordable housing both in terms of properties to purchase and rent. This key issue was identified as having a negative impact on Sligo's ability to attract more investment, grow its population and indeed serve its existing community adequately.

- Similarly, along with availability of affordable housing, employment opportunities were highlighted as one of the main barriers to attracting people to live and work in Sligo. Increasing employment opportunities was seen to be key to growing Sligo with a need to ensure that the employment is both meaningful and sustainable. Particular areas of interest were industry 4.0 (e.g. smart and autonomous manufacturing) and the green economy (e.g. renewable energy and retrofitting).

- The important role of the likes of ATU, St Angela's and the ETB (including the Retrofitting Centre of Excellence) in creating the talent base to meet employer needs and upskilling the community for jobs of the future was highlighted.

- In relation to improving the business environment, the lack of a connection to a gas line was highlighted as a constraint that could be potentially solved through the

[20] Available from: https://www.sligococo.ie/2030/Socio%20Economic%20Statement.pdf

planned development of a sustainable local gas network that could be future proofed for eventual use of green hydrogen.

- A number of key strengths were identified in in relation to existing sectors of employment that could be built upon such as engineering, pharmaceuticals, agri-food and MedTech; the cost of doing business in Sligo, and the welcoming community. The importance of the retail and hospitality sector, agriculture and the significant creative sector was also highlighted.

Business Constraints - Top 3 Frequencies

Constraint	%
Availability of housing	24%
Accessibility (road, rail, air)	21%
Business Supports	13%
Workforce availability	11%
Growth potential and access to markets and customers	10%
Availability of services (public transport, education, healthcare)	7%
Availability of office space (including serviced industrial/enterprise space)	5%
Other (please state below in Question 15)	4%
Cost of doing business	3%
Cost of living	2%

Figure 5.1: Business Constraints

5.3.2 Infrastructure and Accessibility

- As a county that is perceived to be in a peripheral location in the North West, improving accessibility was seen to be key to attracting visitors, investment and growing the population. This included further improvements to the road network, suggestions for enhancement of the rail network and enhanced promotion and linkages with Ireland West Airport.

- Public transport was highlighted as an area that needs vast improvement throughout the county particularly in relation to rural areas.

- The consultation also identified a key desire and need for clean, sustainable and active transport and associated infrastructure throughout the Sligo community. A number of submissions as well as points from the focus groups related directly to the development of more cycleways and cycle paths, greenways, and walkways across the county.

- Specific emphasis was given to the need to segregate cycleways and cycle paths from other traffic (both vehicular and pedestrian) and to ensure maintenance of the infrastructure on an ongoing basis.

5.3.3   COVID-19 and Brexit

- The Private Sector in particular highlighted the long-term consequences of COVID-19 and Brexit as key challenges that businesses in Sligo will face over the next number of years. started.

- In relation to Brexit, the key concerns mentioned focused on supply chain disruptions (41%), Sligo's proximity to the border and potential trade barriers (26%) and export and import charges (22%).

- Indicating the changing preference for work environments, 55% of respondents to the community survey indicated that they would like a hybrid working model split between their homes and offices, while another 16% indicated that they would like to work from home full-time.

- The opportunity for Sligo to capitalise on the accelerated trend in relation to remote and hybrid working was also highlighted.

Business Challenges - Top 3 Frequencies

Challenge	%
Long-term consequences of Covid-19	24%
Brexit	21%
A future recession	14%
Accessibility (road, rail, air)	10%
Workforce availability	8%
Business Supports	7%
Other (please state below in Question 19)	6%
Cost of doing business	5%
Availability of office space (including serviced industrial/enterprise space)	4%
Climate Change	2%
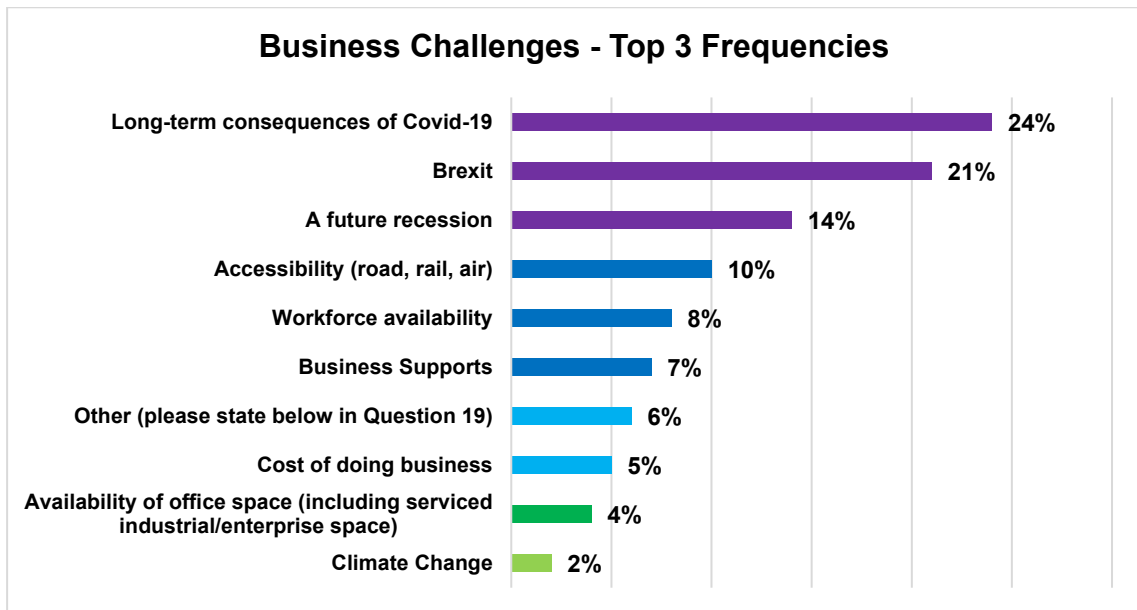
Figure 5.2: Business Challenges

5.3.4   Environment and Sustainability

- The importance of protecting the natural environment and the threat posed from Climate Change was highlighted frequently during the various strands of the consultation process.

- 58% of respondents to the community survey indicated they were concerned about the impact Climate Change would have on Sligo, with another 27% indicating that they were very concerned.

- The importance of protecting the county's biodiversity was also stressed with suggestions ranging from rewilding and restoration of ecosystems to community and technological enabled monitoring of habitats.

- As mentioned in the transport section, increased sustainable and active mobility were some of the key measures identified which can contribute to a more sustainable Sligo.

- Other areas highlighted included better recycling facilities, further development of the decarbonisation zone and ensuring a just transition for the entire community.

- Opportunities to develop the green economy in Sligo were also suggested including in relation to biomethane production, offshore wind energy, and sustainable tourism.

- There is a need to raise awareness of sustainability initiatives and supports with only 50% of businesses that responded to the survey indicating that they were aware of such supports.

- In relation to smart technology, the top 3 technologies identified as being beneficial to Sligo in the surveys by both the private sector and the wider community all have a role in addressing the effects of climate change. These were smart traffic lights to help reduce congestion, energy efficient buildings and smart waste management.
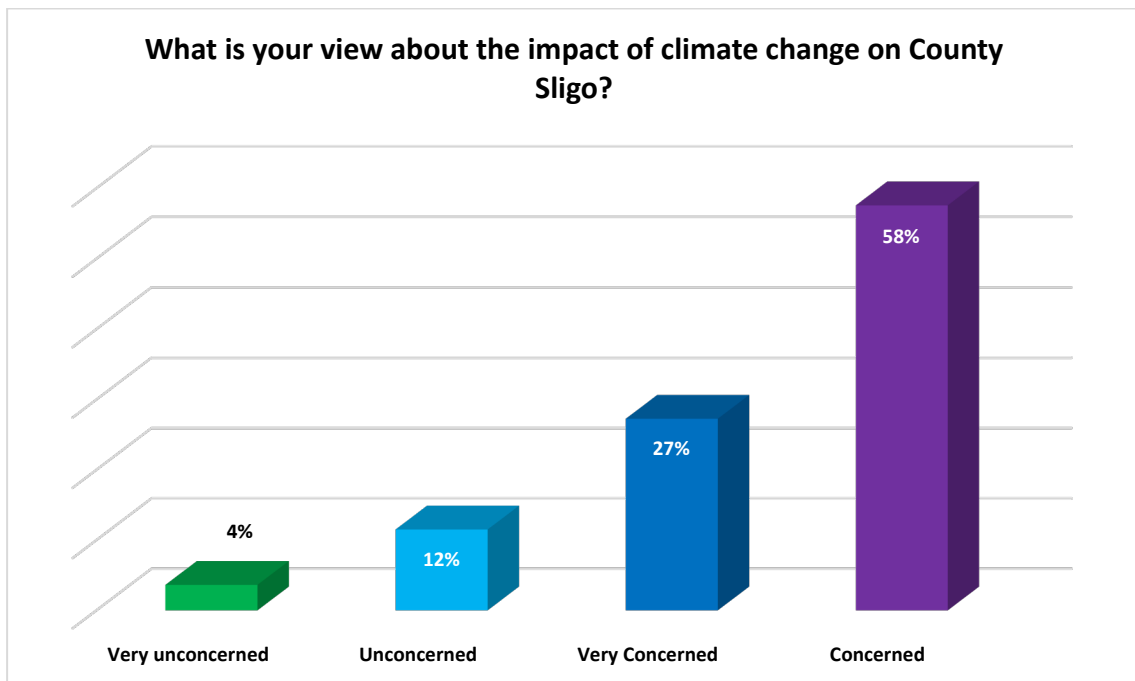
Figure 5.3: Views on the impact of climate change on County Sligo

What can be done to reduce car use and encourage more sustainable and green methods of transport?
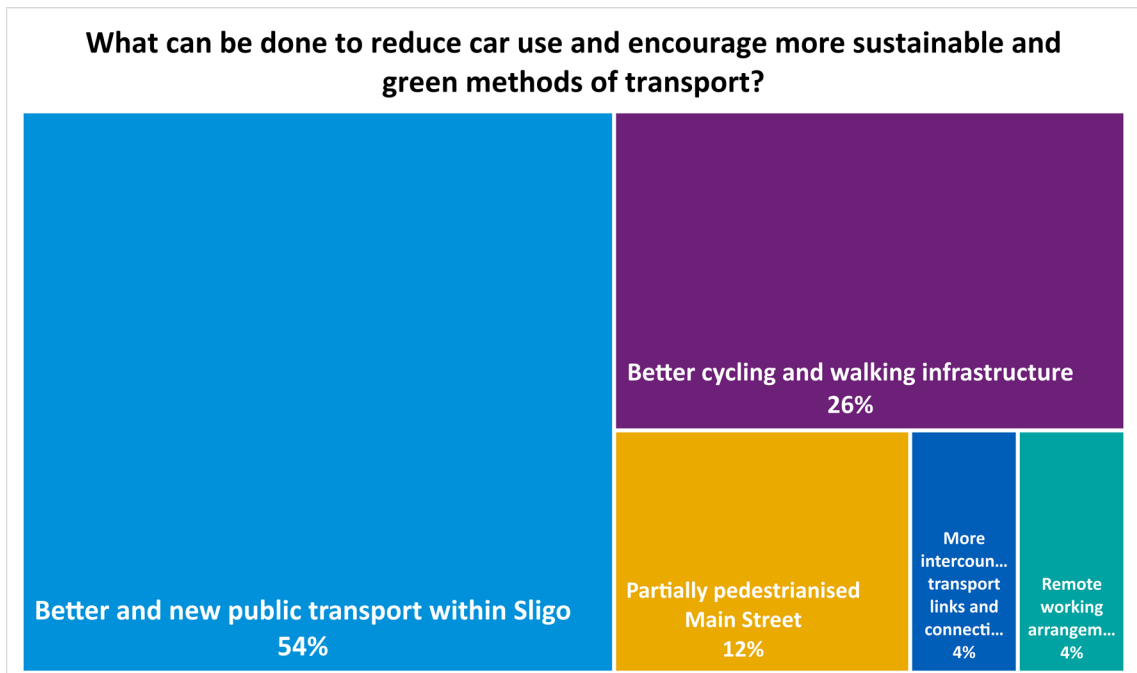
Figure 5.4: Initiatives to reduce car use and encourage more sustainable and green methods of transport

5.3.5 Community and Quality of Life

- Sligo's people and its strong community were highlighted as some of Sligo's key assets and strengths along with the natural environment.

- Ensuring an inclusive and healthy community that caters for all groups including older people, people living with disability, minority groups, families and young people, regardless of whether they are in an urban or rural setting, was identified as being central to the ambition for Sligo in 2030.

- In relation to asylum seekers there was a specific need raised for the development of an integration plan, similar to those developed in other counties.

- It was felt that there was a strong culture of volunteerism which was to the benefit of the entire community and should be more strongly supported in the coming years.

- It was also acknowledged that areas of deprivation continue to be present across the county and that work should continue to address and reduce poverty and improve outcomes in disadvantaged areas.

- The importance of heritage, culture and the creative sector and the role they play in community well-being and inclusion was also stressed.

- On services, the need for more quality childcare at affordable prices was highlighted as a key issue that needs addressing. Other key supports suggested for the community included supports to enable greater opportunities in employment for

women, an increase in recreational areas for children and young people, and appropriate and adequate provision of healthcare for all.

What are Sligo's greatest assets? Top 3 Frequencies

Category	Percentage
Natural environment and landscape	29%
Our People and Community	26%
Attractive public spaces and recreation & leisure facilities (parks, markets, cultural attractions etc)	16%
Culture, heritage and the arts	10%
Cost of living	8%
Cost of housing	5%
Accessibility (road, rail, air)	3%
Availability of services (public transport, education, healthcare)	2%
Employment opportunities	1%
Other (please state below in Question 10)	1%

Figure 5.5: Sligo's Greatest Assets

6   SCOT Analysis & Summary of Needs

6.1   SCOT Analysis

This section identifies key Strengths, Challenges, Opportunities and Threats relevant to the development of Sligo over the next 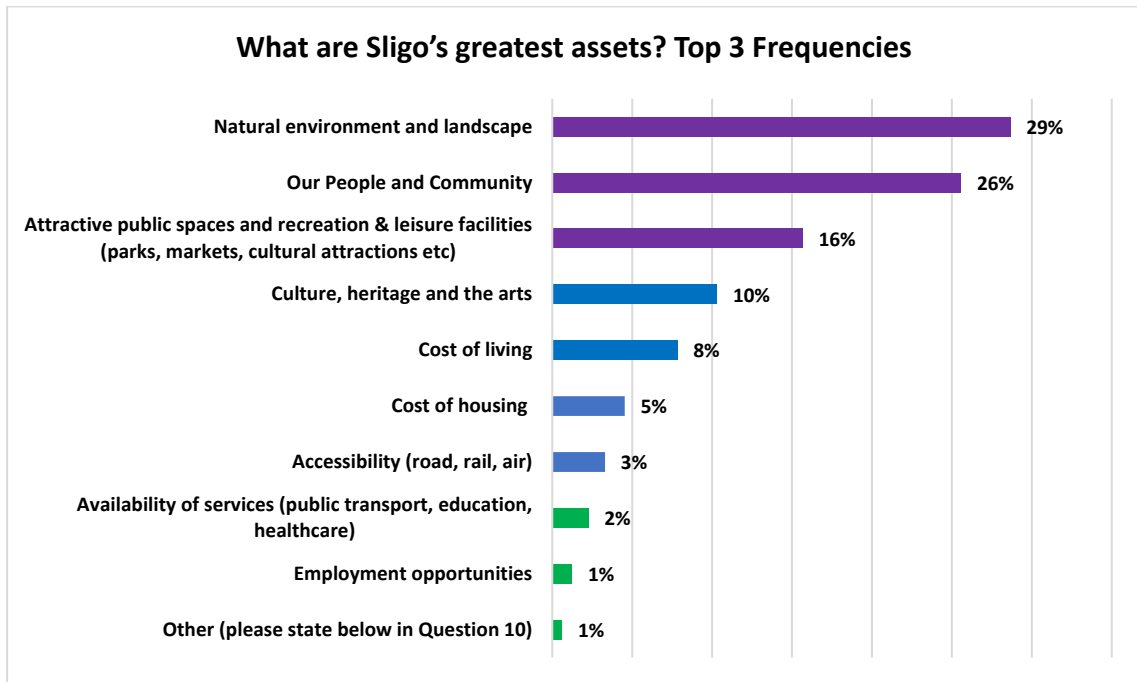seven years. It has been supplemented through feedback and comments received from the stakeholder and public consultation process conducted as part of the development of this plan.

Table 6-1: SCOT Analysis

Strengths	Challenges	Opportunities	Threats
Economy and Employment	**Economy and Employment**	**Economy and Employment**	**Economy and Employment**
• Designated Regional Growth Centre with access via road, rail, and air	• Employment /Career opportunities	• New integrated whole county approach to promote and develop Sligo under the Sligo.ie campaign	• Automation of work and skills could lead to job losses
• Strong indigenous business community and good business collaboration	• Brain-drain with large numbers of young people leaving Sligo due to lack of employment opportunities	• Further develop the tourism sector and promote Sligo as a premier destination by capitalising on unique strengths such as Yeats, and the natural environment	• Brexit and COVID-19 continue to pose a threat to trade and tourism
• Solid manufacturing and professional services sector with a growing tech presence	• Low employment growth in comparison to neighbouring counties		• A lack of a coordinated approach on tourism, culture, heritage and the creative sector
• Strong Pharma and Med tech sectors with existing clusters	•In general Sligo's Tourism potential is not being fully realised and more work is necessary to identify underperforming areas and measure performance	• Potential to become a leading example for the use of smart technology, and developing partnerships	• The Northern and Western Region is now a Region in Transition as per the European Commission designation
• Good agribusiness/agri-tech sector		• Opportunity to build on a new project utilising smart technology on the Eurovelo Route 1 cycle	•Rural depopulation and decline and the increasing challenge that this poses to rural towns, villages and communities.
• Attractive FDI location with 31 IDA supported companies in 2022	• Moderate scoring on the European Innovation scorecard[21]		
• Strong tourism offering	• Sligo does not have a strong pipeline for High Potential Start-Ups	• Capitalise on Sligo's lower cost base for doing business	• Lack of gas network infrastructure might be a deterrent to FDI
• Relatively low unemployment rate		• Attract further FDI and nurture start-ups and spin-offs from current operations to increase employment opportunities	• Failure to address commercial vacant property rate could lead to further economic decline
• Relatively low cost of doing business	• Insufficient numbers of local SMEs and micro businesses exporting or looking to internationalise		
• Strong Team in Sligo's Business Improvement District and good public realm strategy	• Lack of acknowledgement of the value of small indigenous businesses and SMEs	• Develop and promote coach and conference tourism	• Failure to adequately embrace technological change could lead to a decrease in competitiveness and losing out on FDI
•Good business supports			
Community and Quality of life			

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[21] "The European innovation scoreboard provides a comparative analysis of innovation performance in EU countries, other European countries, and regional neighbours. It assesses the relative strengths and weaknesses of national innovation systems and helps countries identify areas they need to address" See: European innovation scoreboard | Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs (europa.eu)

Strengths	Challenges	Opportunities	Threats
• The community and its people	• Sligo is seen as a short stay destination instead of a holiday destination	• Tap into potential 1,400 jobs proposed by the Ireland West Airport SDZ	• Failure to address brain-drain resulting in a skills gap between industry and the workforce
• Good network around older people and good community collaboration	• Lack of awareness of supports available to businesses	• The Gaming proposition for Strandhill	• Shift to hybrid retail and changing consumer behaviour may leave more retail units vacant
• House prices 40% less than national average and Childcare costs 30% less than Dublin	• Lack of understanding of the value of a vibrant retail and hospitality sector	• The Advancing Innovation in Manufacturing & Supply Chain (AIM) Centre in Market Yard in Sligo Town	• There is a low participation in lifelong learning that could impact job creation
• Average commute times one of the lowest in Ireland	•Availability of workforce in certain sectors	• Develop start-up programmes with multinational companies to enhance the development of indigenous companies	• Failure to map ICT infrastructure such as ducting could lead to loss of revenue for Sligo County Council
• Relatively low cost of living	**Community and Quality of life**	• To organise more business-related events to build interrelationships between companies	**Community and Quality of Life**
• Good quality of life in Sligo with the ability to have a good work /life balance	• Although County Sligo remains marginally below average nationally in relation to deprivation, the levels of deprivation have increased in recent years	• To invest in R&D, and provide associated facilities to attract more industry	• Failure to address rising levels of deprivation and poverty could lead to disadvantage in areas of health, education and employment
• Sligo is a compact county meaning you can get things done quickly	• Childcare facilities are nearing capacity	**Community and Quality of life**	• Failure to integrate Sligo's diverse population could lead to increased discrimination and isolation
• Sligo has a strong volunteering community with fantastic work done by community groups, sports, cultural and social clubs	• Rural isolation in Sligo is an issue for older people	• Capitalise on Sligo's rich cultural and natural heritage, lower house prices, education, and employment opportunities to attract and retain qualified professionals and families	• Failure to explore options for the development of childcare facilities could leave Sligo with a shortage of childcare services
• Strong sporting culture including Sligo Rovers FC	• Lack of children's play areas in comparison to other places	• Celebrate Sligo's diversity across age, ethnicity, and backgrounds	• Failure to promote healthy lifestyles and positive mental wellbeing could lead to higher levels of addiction and Illness
• In relation to public safety, Sligo Town has a good CCTV network and low crime rate	• Lack of free recreational areas where people young and old can meet up	• To expand health services in relation to mental health, acute health facilities and cancer services	• High radon areas in Sligo could pose a threat to health if appropriate measures aren't taken by households
• Sligo has a great commitment to becoming healthy	• Lack of public toilets	**Culture and Heritage**	**Culture and Heritage**
Culture and Heritage	• Access around towns for people living with disability could still be improved	• Develop a museum	• Failure to protect Sligo's special areas of conservation and natural heritage could lead to
• Natural environment – Sligo has outstanding natural beauty	**Culture and Heritage**	**Infrastructure and Accessibility**	
• Sligo's Neolithic Landscape that is seeking UNESCO World Heritage Status	• Lack of indoor activities for adults and children	• Develop Sligo port/docklands for recreation and office use	
• Over 5,000 recorded archaeological sites	•Could be more lectures and public talks on big societal issues	• Repurpose vacant or derelict buildings as	
• Significant public realm and cultural projects funded in Sligo Town	• No Museum		
• Rich natural and cultural heritage sitting	**Infrastructure and Accessibility**		
	• Peripheral location in the Northwest with lack of regional connectivity		

Strengths	Challenges	Opportunities	Threats
on the Wild Atlantic Way, 300km of walking trails, a vibrant creative sector, Yeats country and archaeological sites and monuments of national and international importance	• Limited rail connectivity	innovation centres, venues for the creative sector and recreational spaces	further decline e.g. Knocknarea and Queen Maeve's cairn

Strengths (continued):

• Strandhill has an Eden Award recognising it for excellence in sustainable tourism

• Sligo Town holds a purple flag award for excellence in the night time economy

• Sligo food trail

Infrastructure and Accessibility

• Major infrastructure projects such as Western Distributor Road completed in Sligo Town, N4, N15/16, and the new Garvogue Bridge

• Growing internet connectivity across the county with large decreases in households without internet access

• Accessible via road, rail and air

• Sligo has large amounts of land banks suitable for development

• Strong wastewater treatment facilities – can service a population of 80,000

• Local authorities are stakeholders in Ireland West Airport and as such there is good collaboration

Education

• Excellent educational infrastructure with opportunities for life-long learning, employee education and upskilling of the workforce, and well-developed innovation & research

Challenges (continued):

• Absence of motorway to Dublin and road network to Belfast and Galway mostly sub-standard

• Traffic congestion in Sligo Town

• Lack of public transport especially in rural areas

• Need for more serviced enterprise parks near Sligo Town

• Fibre broadband blackspots and rural areas with poor mobile coverage

• Absence of local gas network infrastructure

• Lack of identification and measurement of ICT infrastructure across the county

Housing

• Lack of housing availability and supply

• Quality of housing available

• Planning permission viewed as difficult to obtain

Town Centres

• High commercial vacancy rate which is also having a negative impact on town centre

• Majority of vacant units are not fit for purpose

• Lack of data on property ownership inhibits ability to bring vacant units back into use

Environment and Sustainability

• Environmental impact of high rate of car use for travelling to work and education

• The roads connecting Sligo, particularly the

Opportunities (continued):

• Promote Ireland West Airport as the best connection to Sligo County and the wider region

• Remote working / digital hubs, particularly in rural areas

• Fit for purpose town centre

Education and Training

• New Technological University status for IT Sligo and St Angela's College.

• Creation of an educational quarter / centre in Sligo Town

• Promotion of MSLETB training for further education and upskilling of SME's and businesses

• Open up St Angela's Campus to community events

Environment and Sustainability

• Potential to become a leading Green county in Ireland as well as a leader in sustainable tourism and other areas

• Greening Sligo Town through implementation of the new public realm plan, creating more climate friendly environment

• Increasing the local production, supply and use of green sources of energy

• Develop offshore renewable energy infrastructure to meet future demand

• Potential to become a services centre for

Threats (continued):

• Lack of Conservation Plans in place by relevant responsible agencies for the protection and management of Heritage Sites in Sligo

Housing

• Failure to address housing issues will result in barriers to investment and meeting population targets and inadequate provision for the existing community

• Shortage of developers in Sligo could impact housing supply

Environment and Sustainability

• Climate change will have a significant impact on the people of Sligo, its natural landscape and environment, agriculture and businesses including those in the SME sector

• Failure to address the biodiversity crisis could see further decline in native species and ecosystems such as forests and peatland which could threaten future generations livelihoods and health

• Not enough electric vehicle charging points currently to meet 2030 Climate Action target

• Failure to provide sufficient public transport could result in further isolation and impact the ability to meet emission reduction targets

• Failure to provide necessary infrastructure for cycling could impact safety and up-take

Strengths	Challenges	Opportunities	Threats
resources •ATU and wide range of primary and post primary schools including a Gael Scoil • Strong educational attainment • New Sligo Town Campus and Cultural and Learning Hub • The county has a large education catchment area **Strategy and Planning** • Good Collaboration between certain stakeholders but more collaboration needed	road going to St Angela's College, does not facilitate safe walking or cycling • Lack of awareness of supports available to businesses go green and how businesses can join green initiatives • Lack of public recycling bins •Poor cycling infrastructure **Strategy and Planning** • Resourcing constraints in Local Authority •Lack of coordination in selling Sligo and measuring outcomes of various promotions to attract both visitors and businesses	offshore wind projects • Provide electrified public transport • Build on circular economy initiatives already underway • To develop cutting edge pilots: for instance, in hydrogen, smart neighbourhoods (decarbonization zones), sustainable transport management, data management • Potential for the development of the bioenergy sector in Sligo	

6.2   Summary of Identified Needs

A summary of key needs identified for Sligo is provided below. For more detail, please see the Socio-Economic Statement available on the Sligo County Council website[22]. The needs have been identified from the culmination of the policy review, the socio-economic analysis, the consultation and the SCOT analysis outlined above. The areas Sligo needs to address as it moves to 2030 are as follows:

- **Economy and Employment – sustaining, transforming and growing the employment base and creating more job opportunities.** If Sligo is to meet its growth and population targets, then a significant increase in job creation and employment needs to be planned for and delivered. This includes attracting new investment and supporting existing businesses including those in the retail, hospitality and tourism sectors as well as creating high-value jobs, fostering entrepreneurship an ensuring the community has the necessary skills to meet current and future employers' needs. It also includes ensuring the necessary infrastructure including office space is in place and the adequate provision of high-speed broadband across the county. This will also need to include specific support for rural towns and villages across Sligo to address rural decline. The private sector will have a vital role to play in addressing this need, as will education and training providers as well as state and semi-state agencies such as Enterprise Ireland, IDA and the Local Enterprise Office.

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[22] Available from https://www.sligococo.ie/2030/Socio%20Economic%20Statement.pdf

- **Housing – addressing the provision of housing and the lack of available private residential developments in Sligo to meet current and future demands.** This is a vital issue not only in relation to providing adequate provision for Sligo's current community but also in relation to contributing to achieving Sligo's population targets and the ability of the county to attract investment and increase employment. This will also need to include specialist housing provision for older people, people living with disability, homeless individuals, members of the travelling community, international protection applicants and students. To meet population and growth targets as set out in the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy, Sligo will need to significantly increase the annual supply of new housing. However, the lack of housing supply is a national issue that will also require interventions at national level to help solve the issue in Sligo as well as engagement with the private sector to stimulate development.

- **Community and Quality of Life – ensuring an inclusive society and adequate services for all**. The community in Sligo is one of the county's key strengths. The needs of the community are broad and wide-ranging and interconnected with many of the other topics identified above. This includes, but is not limited to, the need for access to housing, employment, education and training, supports for families, and healthcare. It is important that in the provision of these services, equality of opportunity and access is provided regardless of background, ethnicity, age, gender or disability. Furthermore, it is important to acknowledge the role that community and volunteer groups fulfil and to continue to support them to provide vital services across the community. Addressing community needs will require inputs from a number of different stakeholders that can action interventions in key areas including the HSE, Sligo LEADER partnership CLG, Túsla, Sligo County Council and an array of local community and voluntary groups.

- **Infrastructure and Accessibility – increasing mobility and accessibility to and from Sligo**. Increasing mobility and accessibility to and from Sligo is a key area to address in relation to supporting Sligo's communities. This is necessary in order to address isolation, support the private sector, and enhance the county's ability to attract visitors that will support the tourism sector. This will include continued improvements and upgrades to road networks, examining potential enhancements to the rail network, and increasing and upgrading infrastructure around active and sustainable mobility such as segregated cycle paths, cycleways and greenways. This cannot be solely achieved by Sligo County Council and will require action from other stakeholders and state agencies including the National Transport Authority and Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII).

- **Revitalising Sligo's Town Centres – regeneration of town centres, improving the public realm and addressing the commercial vacancy rate.** The commercial vacancy rate across Sligo has been identified as having the potential to contribute to the economic decline of the county. As such identifying solutions to issues of vacancy and dereliction is key to regenerating Sligo's town centres as well as helping to address the issue of rural decline. Connected to this are initiatives related to improving the public realm to ensure Sligo's towns and villages are accessible, functional, and vibrant places that cater for all the community, foster a strong sense of place and increase their populations. Revitalising Sligo's town centres will require a collaborative approach including between Sligo County Council, the private sector, Sligo Business Improvement District and the wider community.

- **Environment and Sustainability – focusing, preparing, and acting on the challenges of climate change.** Climate Change will have a significant impact in Sligo and will affect the county's communities, the natural environment and the private sector including SMEs. With ambitious targets being set at national and EU level in relation to emissions and climate change, Sligo has work to do if it is to become an exemplar county in relation to climate action. This includes encouraging and shifting to more sustainable modes of transport, increasing the use of alternative and renewable sources of energy, increased recycling, and the protection and rewilding of Sligo's native ecosystems and habitats. To achieve this, a whole county approach will be required with the community and community groups, education and training providers, the private sector, Sligo County Council and other key stakeholders all having a role to play in relation to addressing climate change and climate action.

- **Smart Sligo – defining and measuring Sligo as a smart county.** Sligo is seeking to position itself as a smart county and as a leader in the North West region in the utilisation of smart technology. However, for this to be a success, Sligo needs to define and agree exactly what being smart is going to mean for the county, how success will be measured and how the county will progress towards the transformation. The Smart Sligo Model provides the pillars and foundation for this success. The pillars are based around a Sustainable Economy, Sustainable Environment, Smart Mobility, Smart Living, Smart People and Smart Governance and previously outlined in Chapter 2. This requires action from the SEF, the Private Sector, the community where appropriate and education and training providers. It should build upon the good work implemented as part of the Sligo Digital Strategy and existing living lab projects and other smart initiatives.

While these seven topics were identified as key needs from the analysis and consultation, a consistent and highly important theme highlighted throughout the consultation was the need for more joined-up thinking, coordination, collaboration and communication across Sligo County Council, government agencies, education providers, the private sector, and the wider community, to ensure that Sligo achieves its goals and objectives over the next seven years.

7 High-Level Goals, Objectives and Outcomes

7.1 Overview

Sligo County Council and its partners have developed a number of high-level goals and objectives with associated outcomes to help realise the Sligo 2030 vision. They have been framed by the pillars of the Smart Model outlined earlier in the plan and developed from insights gained from the policy review, socio-economic analysis, the public consultation and the wide-ranging stakeholder engagement process completed as part of this project. Taking this into account, the high-level goals and objectives look to position Sligo to capitalise on its known strengths and opportunities while working to address the key challenges of the county and the needs of the community. The six high-level goals are outlined in the table below.

Table 7-1: High-Level Goals

Goal	Goal Description
Goal 1	Sligo will be a Regional Growth Centre that drives sustainable economic activity and employment throughout the region and increases the population across the county.
Goal 2	Sligo will become a smart county and a leader in the utilisation of smart technology through partnership with educational and commercial third parties.
Goal 3	Sligo will be a proactive county in addressing climate change and a model of best practice in climate action with sustainability central to all areas of life
Goal 4	Sligo will be a healthy and equitable society that supports its vibrant communities and champions active inclusion
Goal 5	Sligo will celebrate its exceptional heritage, creative sector, and realise its tourism potential in a sustainable manner
Goal 6	A collaborative and innovative Sligo

Furthermore, the following table outlines how the goals address and align with the identified needs and smart pillars. As can be seen, the 3 elements (goals, needs and pillars) reinforce each other, portraying the broad alignment across the Sligo 2030 Plan that is based on the consultation and analysis, and framed by the Smart Model. The high-level goals, seek to address identified needs from the analysis, while the smart pillars add an additional level of focus on how these needs may be addressed through specific actions. For example, Goal 1 relates broadly to economy and employment and seeks to address the need to increase job opportunities and employment in the county. Framing this within the smart model pillar of a sustainable economy, this need should be addressed through actions related to areas such as preparing the community for the jobs of the future, attracting investment from highly skilled sectors, and creating innovative ecosystems (including clusters). It is this way of thinking that the Smart Model has contributed to the plan. For each goal, objective and need, thought has gone into how it can be addressed by a specific action in a smart and sustainable way to the benefit of Sligo and its people.

Table 7-2: High-Level Goals Alignment with Needs and Smart Pillars

Goals	Needs Addressed	Relevant Smart Pillars
Goal 1 (Economy and Employment)	Economy and employment, housing, community and quality of life, infrastructure and accessibility, revitalising town centres, environment and sustainability	●Sustainable Economy ●Smart Mobility ●Smart Living

Goal 2 (Smart Sligo)	Economy and employment, community and quality of life, environment and sustainability, infrastructure and accessibility, defining and measuring Sligo as a smart county	All smart pillars are relevant
Goal 3 (Climate Action)	Environment and sustainability, infrastructure and accessibility, community and quality of life, economy and employment	●Sustainable Environment ●Smart Mobility ●Smart Living
Goal 4 (Vibrant Communities)	Economy and employment, community and quality of life, revitalising town centres	●Smart People ●Smart Living ●Smart Governance
Goal 5 (Heritage and Tourism)	Economy and employment, community and quality of life, revitalising town centres, environment and sustainability	●Sustainable Economy ●Sustainable Environment
Goal 6 (Collaboration & Innovation)	Seeks to address and contribute to all identified needs	●Smart Governance ●Smart People

As such, the high-level goals and objectives have been designed to be transformative, ambitious, and importantly to align with existing policies including the RSES, NPF and relevant economic, community, digital and climate policies for County Sligo in a socially inclusive manner. They also fulfil the requirements of Sustainable Economic Development Objectives (SEDOs) and Sustainable Community Objectives (SCOs) as outlined in the LECP guidelines. The below outlines and defines each high-level goal and associated objectives and outcomes in more detail.

7.2   Goal 1, Objectives and Desired Outcomes

Goal 1 – Sligo will be a Regional Growth Centre that drives sustainable economic activity and employment throughout the region and increases the population across the county.

Embracing Sligo's status as a Regional Growth Centre in the North West, sustainable economic development in the region must be driven through an innovative and collaborative approach that ensures Sligo meets the skill and infrastructure requirements of existing and new businesses. This is aligned to the goal for an Enterprising Sligo, identified in the Northern and Western Regional Assembly's Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES), which aims to support local businesses and national or global firms located in Sligo by fostering innovation and entrepreneurship, expanding education opportunities, and providing a skilled workforce to the industry. As highlighted by the objectives below it is also aligned with the National Planning Framework in relation to a number of National Strategic Outcomes (NSO) including NSO 5 A Strong Economy supported by Enterprise, Innovation and Skills, NSO 2 Enhanced Regional Accessibility and NSO 1 Compact Growth. As such, Sligo must continue to attract new people and increase its population to provide this workforce and to ensure that it meets its population targets as set out in the RSES. The objectives for this goal are as follows:

- *Objective 1.1 Increase employment across the county (including indirect and induced) and support existing businesses.*

This objective seeks to address a number of key areas in relation to sustainable economic development. It looks to attract significant investment to the county to drive meaningful and sustainable employment with a particular focus around high-value jobs (e.g. Medtech, pharmaceuticals, technology) and the jobs of the future such as the green economy (e.g. renewable energy and retrofitting) and industry 4.0 (e.g. smart and autonomous manufacturing). At the same time, it will look to support existing businesses and cluster specialisations, increase the uptake for supports for women in business and drive a new level of entrepreneurship where companies in Sligo are encouraged to export internationally – addressing a specific gap that has been identified in the socio-economic profile. Finally, in support of the overall objective it looks to ensure a workforce with the skills necessary to support a vibrant economy and the infrastructure and business environment to support both employers and employees alike including enterprise space and remote working facilities. This will include working closely and realising the full benefit of existing centres of sectoral expertise and research such as the AIM centre (Advancing Innovation in Manufacturing & Supply Chain), the Gaming Hub at Strand Campus, and the Centre for Research in Social Professions (CRisP).

- *Objective 1.2 Increase the housing supply across Sligo.*

  A critical need identified from the socio-economic analysis and consultation, addressing the housing supply issue in Sligo is a key community and economic development objective. It will contribute to Sligo's ability to attract investment, grow its population and provide for its existing community. The objective seeks to find innovative solutions to stimulate housing supply through collaborative working with key stakeholders and the community, and ensure existing mechanisms to address vacancy and dereliction are properly utilised. This will include exploring options to stimulate the private sector to develop zoned lands.

- *Objective 1.3 Increase connectivity and public transport across Sligo.*

  Increasing connectivity and public transport will benefit the community, visitors and the private sector as accessibility to town and county is increased. This objective requires key stakeholders to come together to enact change and foresees targeted investment utilising a smart data led approach. A particular focus of the objective will be increasing public transport to rural areas to help ensure that rural communities remain vibrant and connected. It also looks to continue the implementation of improvements to existing critical transport infrastructure (road networks) as well as increasing more active and sustainable mobility infrastructure.

- *Objective 1.4 Reduce the commercial vacancy rate in Sligo Town and County.*

  Reducing the commercial vacancy will address a key issue that has been affecting the vibrancy of Sligo Town and County for a number of years. Left unchecked the high commercial vacancy rate could result in further economic decline. To achieve this objective, owners of vacant properties will be identified and engaged, buildings will be repurposed, and best practice will be used to identify and implement initiatives that assist in reducing commercial vacancy. In relation to Sligo town such initiatives include the Pathfinder Programme and the Night-Time Economy Pilot project both of which Sligo is participating in. In doing so, the objective will seek to enhance the vibrancy of Sligo's towns and villages, assist economic activity to flourish and potentially provide residential and recreation space to the community.

Goal 1 Key Desired Outcomes

- Increase employment by 2% per annum to 2030.

- Increase population of the county to 74,000 and Sligo town to 25,400 by 2030.

- Improve innovation infrastructure throughout the county[23].

- Increase the number of academia, private sector, and public sector linkages[24].

- Increase housing supply, including through stimulating the private sector to develop zoned lands, so that it meets current and future demand.

- Increase number of and use of public transport routes by 2030.

- Reduce commercial vacancy at county level to the prevailing national average.

7.3 Goal 2, Objectives and Desired Outcomes

Goal 2 – Sligo will become a smart county and a leader in the utilisation of smart technology through partnership with educational and commercial third parties.

Building on the initiatives already underway, embracing smart technology and accelerating the digital transformation can ensure that Sligo becomes a smart county through the use of technology and other smart initiatives. Living with Covid-19 has highlighted the importance of being connected, and of the benefits of online communication and business. The utilisation of smart technology is envisaged to be a cross-cutting benefit for all those who live and work in Sligo, but benefits need to be harnessed. Furthermore, a smart Sligo will not solely focus on technology but will explore other smart initiatives and concepts around areas such as mobility and transport, community wellbeing and inclusion, and education and upskilling. It will include working with education provides including the ATU, St Angela's and the ETB as well as the private sector to pilot smart initiatives. This goal aligns with Sligo's Digital Strategy, the NPF's NSO 6 on A Strong Economy, supported by Enterprise, Innovation and Skills, and NWRA's RSES aim of developing a smart region. The objectives for this goal are as follows:

- ***Objective 2.1 Prepare Sligo for becoming a smart county.***

    This objective aims to provide Sligo with a strong foundation to become a smart county and ensure that the Sligo's smart transformation is inclusive of all the community. Actions under the objective look to achieve this through the establishment of a smart Sligo working group to drive forward Sligo's progress in

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[23] For example, enterprise space and innovation hubs.
[24] Linkages to include partnerships, knowledge sharing, cooperation on and implementation of projects,

relation to its smart ambitions, and the mapping of existing ICT infrastructure to know exactly what the county has, what it can build upon and what it needs to become a smart county.

- *Objective 2.2 Successfully implement existing smart and digital initiatives.*

  This objective seeks to build upon recent success and existing initiatives that are already in place such as the Sligo Digital Strategy and Tubbercurry's achievement of becoming Ireland's first Smart Community in 2019. In doing so the objective seeks to position the Sligo 2030 Plan to align with and complement existing initiatives and avoid unnecessary duplication.

- *Objective 2.3 Introduce additional smart technology and concepts to the benefit of Sligo's Community.*

  Building on Objective 2.2 above, this objective seeks to accelerate Sligo's journey to becoming an established smart county. It seeks to introduce new smart technology and concepts that will look to address local issues related to rural isolation, transport and health amongst other areas. In doing so, it also seeks to encourage a more efficient county including in relation to energy use and the county's important farming sector.

Goal 2 – Key Desired Outcomes

- Map all ICT infrastructure in the county including ducting and sensors.

- Become recognised as a leader in implementation of smart initiatives in small towns by an international organisation or publication.

- Increase the number of innovative smart technology pilot projects in Sligo by 2030.

- Make all applicable Sligo County Council Services available online by 2030.

7.4   Goal 3, Objectives and Desired Outcomes

Goal 3 – Sligo will be a proactive county in addressing climate change and a model of best practice in climate action with sustainability central to all areas of life

Recognising Sligo's location as a coastal county with a unique and diverse environmental landscape, Sligo must be protected for future generations from the threat of climate change. To achieve this, sustainable development and climate action must be incorporated into all areas of life in the county and as such, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) underpin the Sligo 2030 Plan. Therefore, Sligo must encourage behavioural shifts to more sustainable ways of life, raise awareness of supports and ongoing initiatives, and engage with the entire community to ensure a just transition across the county. Similarly, to the other goals outlined above, this goal aligns with a number of policies including NPF's NSO 4 on Sustainability and NSO 8 on a Climate

Neutral and Climate Resilient Society; the National Climate Action Plan 2023, Sligo's existing Climate Adaption Strategy and a number of objectives in Chapter 5 (Natural Region) of the NWRA RSES. The objectives for this goal are as follows:

- *Objective 3.1 Reduce emissions by at least 51% by 2030*

  In line with Ireland's Climate Action Plan 2023, this objective looks to reduce Sligo's emissions by a minimum of 51% by 2030. Achieving this objective will require a multifaceted approach with Sligo County Council leading in implementing initiatives that will ensure that the county is climate resilient and biodiversity friendly. It will need to address areas such as the circular economy, energy efficiency and retrofitting, smart and active mobility, and the increased use of more sustainable and renewable sources of energy.

- *Objective 3.2 Increase awareness and participation in sustainability initiatives*

  This objective aims to increase awareness of and participation in sustainability initiatives across the entire community, including the private sector. This will include raising awareness of existing supports, grants and training as well as exploring new programmes that encourage participation from the community and private sector. In doing so, the objective will also aim to contribute to an accelerated, and just transition, to a more sustainable county and in-turn contribute to the reduction of emissions as set out in objective 3.1.

- *Objective 3.3 Address the biodiversity crisis*

  Identified as one of the county's key strengths, Sligo's beautiful natural landscape is home to a diverse range of natural habitats and ecosystems. The county's landscape includes woodlands, wetlands, bogland and a fantastic coastline. Protecting these natural assets and addressing the biodiversity crisis is a key objective under Goal 3 of the Sligo 2030 Plan. It will include working across and with the community to protect Sligo's biodiversity, implementing further initiatives around rewilding and working with the agricultural sector to ensure that its future is built around environmental sustainability.

Goal 3 - Key Desired Outcomes

- County Sligo recognised as a leader in climate action.

- Move Sligo County Council to 100% electric fleet where applicable.

- Increase active transport infrastructure including developing 2 Greenways by 2030.

- Record a reduction in those using private vehicles to get to education or work.

- Support an increase in the number of rewilding and restoration initiatives.

- Increase awareness of climate action initiatives among communities and businesses.

- Seek to position County Sligo as a leader in retrofitting and alternative energy development.

> • Sustainable community pilot initiatives supported.

7.5   Goal 4, Objectives and Desired Outcomes

Goal 4 – Sligo will be a healthy and equitable society that supports its vibrant communities and champions active inclusion

As a county, Sligo will continue to work to ensure an inclusive society that meets the needs of all its people including in areas such as health, education, employment, childcare, services for older people, housing, and transport. Sligo's vibrant communities must be strengthened, connected and enhanced making them more liveable and attractive places that can regenerate civic engagement, attract tourists and support businesses. Work is also needed to ensure that poverty is addressed wherever it exists and that communities are empowered to participate in the development of the county and enact the change that they wish to see. In doing so it will also look to implement the concept of a Just Transition so that the most vulnerable in society are assisted in every way possible to cope with the challenges and changes required as a result of climate change. The progression of the City Campus project including the development of the Sligo Cultural and Learning Hub, will also contribute to this goal. The goal also aligns with a number of policy objectives and goals including NPF's NSO 3 on Strengthened Rural Economies and Communities and NSO 10 on Access to Quality Childcare, Education and Health Services; NWRA's objectives for an inclusive region outlined in Chapter 7 of the RSES, Sligo's Age Friendly Strategy and a number of the UN SDGs. The objectives for this goal are as follows:

- *Objective 4.1 Ensure Sligo is a county that supports active inclusion for all*

  Everyone living in Sligo should be able to share in the benefits of its transformation. As such ensuring that Sligo is an inclusive and supportive place for all its community is an important objective to achieve over the coming years. This objective will look to address a number of issues that were identified from the socio-economic analysis and consultation. This will include ensuring that adequate supports are available for new communities that come to the county such as those fleeing the Ukrainian crisis, increasing access to employment for all, and continuing to build upon programmes and initiatives that can address deprivation and poverty including supports for the long-term unemployed. Finally, it will look to ensure that the necessary supports and facilities are available for families and young people regardless of location or background.

- *Objective 4.2 Improve the health of the community across Sligo*

  This objective seeks to improve the general health of the community across the county. To achieve this objective a holistic approach to health will be needed. It will require collaborative working with key partners to identify community needs and address gaps and issues that may exist within the current service provision including in relation to women's health, mental health (including suicide prevention) and addiction services. As highlighted during the consultation process this will need to examine how access to healthcare can be improved for all the community including for those that are homeless. It will also look to build upon existing initiatives around

community wellbeing and healthy life choices and continue to promote outdoor activities and sports to improve general health, mental wellbeing and social inclusion.

- ***Objective 4.3 Support and empower communities across Sligo to play an active role in the development of their county***

  Objective 4.3 seeks to encourage and increase the community's active participation in the development of Sligo. As already mentioned, it is envisaged that Sligo 2030 will have a shared sense of ownership and responsibility and as such encouraging and supporting this active participation will be key to its success including through the PPN. To assist in achieving this objective, the plan will look to empower the community through capitalising on Sligo's educational strengths and encouraging co-designed programmes and life-long learning, progress the development of the Sligo Cultural and Learning Hub as part of the City Campus project, build upon existing initiatives related to participatory democracy including enhancing the use of technology, engage with the PPN and increase the support and capacity building available to local community and voluntary groups that provide vital services across the county.

- ***Objective 4.4 Improve the vibrancy and appeal of Sligo's towns, villages, and targeted rural recreational areas.***

  Sligo's beautiful natural landscape is complemented by a range of towns and villages each supporting and fulfilling important roles for their respective communities. To address the threat of rural decline and related issues of commercial vacancy, it will be important to improve the vibrancy and appeal of Sligo's towns and villages to ensure that they continue to be places where people are attracted to live, work, and invest. This will include working closely with the communities who live there to implement improvements to the public realm and increase amenities where the need has been identified.

Goal 4 – Key Desired Outcomes

- Improve Sligo's Pobal HP Deprivation Index score to pre-2011 levels i.e., a score above -1, through the targeting of key areas of deprivation.

- Complete public realm enhancements as proposed in prioritised settlements across Sligo by 2030.

- Record a percentage increase in the number of people stating they are in good or very good health.

- Record increases in those attaining further and higher-level education and a reduction in those attaining solely primary education.

- Reduce unemployment across the county by 2030 and bring unemployment in Sligo Town in line with national averages.

7.6 Goal 5, Objectives and Desired Outcomes

Goal 5 – Sligo will celebrate its exceptional heritage, creative sector, and realise its tourism potential in a sustainable manner

Sligo is known for its famous culture from Yeats to its thriving music and creative sectors. The county also has beautiful natural heritage from the Atlantic coast to the slopes of Benbulben and a rich archaeological landscape. As such, this goal looks to celebrate the county's exceptional heritage and creative sector and support the many groups working in this area. Similarly, acknowledging Sligo's position on the Wild Atlantic Way and the appeal Sligo has for visitors, this goal will work to fully realise Sligo's tourism potential, further develop the tourism offering and promote Sligo through a coordinated and sustainable whole county approach. It is fully aligned with a number of policies including the NPF's NSO 7 on Enhanced Amenity and Heritage, and the NWRA RSES Regional Policy Objectives 4.3-4.6 related to enhanced visitor experiences and tourism offerings. The objectives for this goal are as follows:

- *Objective 5.1 Strengthen and protect Sligo's vibrant culture, heritage and creative & Innovative sector*

  Sligo's culture, heritage and creative & innovative sector contribute to the county's sense of place, community well-being (including social inclusion), the vibrancy of towns and villages as well as Sligo's tourism appeal. As such, this objective aims to support, strengthen and protect Sligo's culture, heritage and creative & innovative sector to ensure that it can continue to contribute positively to Sligo's development to 2030. It will include updating and implementing existing initiatives that will strengthen the sector, increasing participation in these areas, progressing Sligo's Cultural and Learning Hub as part of the City Campus project, supporting specific initiatives such as the Neolithic Passage Tombs in achieving UNESCO World Heritage Status and ensuring that policy and plans are in place to protect Sligo's natural heritage and cultural sites for future generations.

- *Objective 5.2 Build capability and increase coordination throughout the tourism sector*

  This objective seeks to develop a more collaborative and coordinated approach to tourism in Sligo, which was a recurring topic identified during the consultation in relation to the development of Sligo's tourism sector. It aims to increase collaboration across the sector to develop a more coordinated approach to promoting Sligo on a whole county basis and to develop capacity and skills to further enhance Sligo's tourism offering. At its core the objective will look to develop a coordinated approach to evidence-based decision making which should contribute to improved outcomes from tourism initiatives and in turn lead to sustainable growth in tourism and enhanced economic benefit for local communities.

- *Objective 5.3 Enhance Sligo as a destination, attract more visitors and increase the economic benefit from tourism with a focus on town centre place-making and outdoor activities*

  Capitalising on Sligo's tourism potential, this objective looks to enhance Sligo as a tourism destination, boost the economic benefit from the sector, and increase revenue from visitors, both domestic and overseas, that visit the county each year. This will include the development of further quality attractions, supporting the night-

time economy and increasing the variety of events and festivals as well as looking to encourage the strengthening of the services offered in relation to areas such as accommodation and transport. All of this will need to be achieved in a sustainable manner that protects the natural landscape and environment that forms the base of Sligo's compelling tourism proposition.

Goal 5 – Key Desired Outcomes

• Increase the revenue from and number of overseas and domestic visitors by 2030 with a focus on increased overnight stays.

• Enhance existing and develop new compelling visitor attractions including securing UNESCO World Heritage status for the Sligo Neolithic Passage Tombs.

• Increase collaboration and coordination amongst the tourism sector.

• Increase enrolment in tourism and heritage related courses and training.

• County Sligo positioned as a business and adventure tourism destination.

• Increase the number of people participating in heritage initiatives.

• Increase the number of cultural heritage collections that are digitised.

7.7 Goal 6, Objectives and Desired Outcomes

Goal 6 – A collaborative and innovative Sligo

Together everyone can achieve more and as such this goal seeks to ensure that Sligo will be a collaborative and innovative place. The county will build on work and initiatives that are already in place, such as the award-winning partnership between Sligo BID and Sligo County Council and ensure that collaboration is at the heart of the development and transformation of the county. It will include working together at a local level with the entire community and at a regional, national and international level to ensure that the Sligo 2030 Plan is a success. This will include addressing climate change and sustainability through innovative initiatives and partnerships such as the SCORE project, the development of more Sustainable Energy Communities and deepening collaboration with the likes of the ATU, SEAI and community groups in relation to climate and emission targets. This goal aligns with a number of policies including NPF NSO 5 on A Strong Economy supported by Enterprise, Innovation and NWRA RSES objectives outlined in relation to developing a smart region. There is one objective for this goal:

• ***Objective 6.1 - Increase Collaboration and Innovation across Sligo***

This objective seeks to increase collaboration and innovation in Sligo across a number of spheres. This includes increasing collaboration and communication between Sligo County Council, other government agencies, the community, education providers and the private sector. It also looks to enhance Sligo's

relationships and networks at a regional, national and international level including through increasing cross-border collaboration. The overall aim is for a more efficient and innovative Sligo, where duplication has been reduced, communication and coordination has been increased, and innovative solutions have been developed through collaborative thinking, working and knowledge sharing including with the community and private sector.

Goal 6 – Key Desired Outcomes

- Increase awareness of and support community events and private sector engagement held in the county.

- Be recognised at a national level for participation and collaboration (e.g. Excellence in Local Government Awards).

- Develop a shared database for socio-economic data and an online directory of agencies in Sligo to induce smart collaboration.

- Increase and leverage interagency working and the number of regional, national and international collaborations, and minimise duplication.

7.8 Nine Transformational Ideas for Sligo

To clearly set out the level of ambition for the county, Sligo County Council has developed a list of nine smart transformational ideas. Rather than concrete proposals these are ideas that further frame the transformation that Sligo hopes to achieve through the cumulative implementation of actions to realise the stated goals, objectives and outcomes, underpinned and framed by the Smart Model. As outlined below the projects are fully aligned with the Smart Sligo Model and high-level goals as well as the objectives and outcomes, and the actions that follow in the Implementation Plan. The ideas touch on many priority areas for the county including education and skills, sustainability, vibrant communities, culture and creativity, the economy and tourism. A description of each idea and examples of what it could entail are included in the table below.

No.	Idea	Description	Smart Model Alignment	Goal Alignment	Notes & Examples
1	**Smart Research & Learning Place**	Embracing technology led applied research and training, enabling, and building capability for the jobs of the future through the Atlantic Technological University and Advanced Innovation Centres	●Pillar 5 Smart People ●Pillar 6 Smart Governance	●Goal 1 (Economy and Employment) ●Goal 2 (Smart Sligo) ●Goal 4 (Vibrant Communities) ●Goal 6 (Collaboration & Innovation)	●Focus on skills, education and learning, bridging the gap between industry and academia. ●AIM (Advancing Innovation in Manufacturing & Supply Chain) centre ●Sligo Cultural & Learning Hub Connaughton Road/the Mall ●ATU innovation centre and programmes, education training & lifelong learning forum

					●Existing and ongoing learning about climate resilience and energy efficiency e.g. Horizon SCORE Coastal City Living Labs project, and training for retrofitting homes (centre of excellence in Collooney)
2	**Remote Working & Digital Hubs**	Embracing remote working and enabling and accelerating the digital economy through innovation in digital connectivity and IoT	●Pillar 1 Sustainable Economy ●Pillar 4 Smart Living	●Goal 1 (Economy and Employment) ●Goal 2 (Smart Sligo) ●Goal 4 (Vibrant Communities)	● Partnering with the WDC and AEC and increasing digital infrastructure and connectivity ●Innovating smart communities, smart library programmes and rural regeneration, and supporting family friendly policies ●Reduction of GHG emissions supporting national targets
3	**Business going Green**	Growing green businesses and next generation business eco–systems & supporting local economy champions	●Pillar 1 Sustainable Economy ●Pillar 6 Smart Governance	●Goal 1 (Economy and Employment) ●Goal 3 (Climate Action)	●Business to be climate and bio-diversity aware ●Opportunities in the area of energy management, sustainable products, nature-based solutions, renewable energy ● Appropriate and targeted funding areas, LEO programmes such as "Green for Micro"

4	**Vibrant Town Centres**	Championing the town centre first policy and focusing on brownfield sites and repurposing empty buildings to bring life back into towns across Sligo	●Pillar 1 Sustainable Economy ●Pillar 4 Smart Living	●Goal 1 (Economy and Employment) ●Goal 4 (Vibrant Communities)	● Smart and active travel including the e-bikes programme ● Town centre first projects, URDF and RRDF funding opportunities, and town and village centre regeneration projects including Sligo Cultural Plaza ● Working to address vacant sites and dereliction including with the Sligo Business Improvement District
5	**Liveable Neighbourhoods**	Building social fabric and citizen engagement, from Cranmore to the Docklands, from Cloonloo to Cliffoney	●Pillar 3 Smart Mobility ●Pillar 4 Smart Living ●Pillar 5 Smart People ●Pillar 6 Smart Governance	●Goal 1 (Economy and Employment) ●Goal 2 (Smart Sligo) ●Goal 3 (Climate Action) ●Goal 4 (Vibrant Communities)	●Open data and citizen engagement, knowledge sharing and data collection creating insights across spheres of society ●Increased active travel infrastructure and innovative demand responsive public transport ●Citizen engagement, local library and participatory budgeting initiatives ●E-health, wellbeing & social inclusion projects
6	**Culture & Creativity Sligo**	Sligo: cultural capital of the North West, jewel on the Wild Atlantic Way	●Pillar 2 Sustainable Environment ●Pillar 4 Smart Living	●Goal 1 (Economy and Employment) ●Goal 4 (Vibrant Communities	●Creativity as an economic driver

#					
				●Goal 5 (Heritage and Tourism)	●Creative Ireland and cultural programmes supporting creative communities,
					●Design industry project leads, multi-genre music offer, festivals, space for artists and creative & innovative sectors
7	Surf & Work in Sligo	Cold California in Sligo - attracting a young & mobile crowd	●Pillar 1 Sustainable Economy ●Pillar 4 Smart Living ●Pillar 5 Smart People	●Goal 1 (Economy and Employment) ●Goal 4 (Vibrant Communities ●Goal 5 (Heritage and Tourism)	●National Surfing Centre of Excellence
					●Strandhill, Mullaghmore & Easkey locations of amenity and recreational strengths,
					●Strand Campus technology park/gaming hub,
					●Health & wellbeing tourism Eden award
8	Landscape, Nature, Heritage & Tourism	Quality of life & leisure - from Yeats to the longest bike trail in Ireland	●Pillar 1 Sustainable Economy ●Pillar 2 Sustainable Environment	●Goal 3 (Climate Action) ●Goal 5 (Heritage and Tourism)	●Promote archaeological and mythological heritage
					●UNESCO world heritage project
					●Inspiration over the years and to present day as a magnet to renowned poets/artists/literary lovers,
					●Outstanding walking, cycling and driving routes, underpinned by a vision to visit sustainably

| 9 | Champions of Change | Smart governance working with local heroes and influencers across business and community. Leaders in the voluntary sector and in entrepreneurship with prioritization of high-impact projects and project clusters. | ●Pillar 4 Smart Living ●Pillar 6 Smart Governance | ●Goal 4 (Vibrant Communities) ●Goal 6 (Collaboration & Innovation) | ●Private sector driving entrepreneurship ●Hazel Wood House, Strandhill tourism, An Chroí, ambitious festivals, Sligo Rovers ●Sligo brand initiative and maximising funding opportunities. |

8 Implementation Plan

The Implementation Plan below identifies specific actions to assist in achieving the high-level goals, objectives and outcomes outlined in the previous Chapter. As the name suggests, the Sligo 2030 Plan will run to 2030 with the overall goals, objectives and outcomes to be achieved over that time period. However, the initial Implementation Plan, outlined below **will last for 2 years,** and will be closely monitored and evaluated before being reviewed and revised in 2025. This new more flexible approach to the implementation of the LECP will allow Sligo County Council and its partners to identify actions that may be underperforming or not resulting in the expected impact and replace them with actions that may be better aligned to achieving the overall vision and goals of the Sligo 2030 Plan. The review will also allow new actions to be added where policies or circumstances dictate.

The Implementation Plan covers both community and economic elements across the six outlined high-level goals. Together they will assist in achieving the transformation of the county as articulated in the Sligo 2030 vision. Lead and supporting agencies have been identified for each action, and KPIs and timeframes indicated. The timeframes are as follows:

— Short term (ST) – to be completed within 2 years.

— Medium term (MT) – to be completed within 5 years.

— Long term (LT) – to be completed by 2030 or ongoing.

As noted in Chapter 1, Sligo County Council acknowledges the climate emergency and the significant and immediate impact that climate change will have on the county. As such, sustainability and climate action are essential cross cutting priorities that underpin the Sligo 2030 Plan. To expand on this point, alignment with UN SDGs is highlighted beside each objective in the Implementation Plan taking into consideration the actions outlined to achieve the objective.

Figure 8.1 UN SDGs

8.1 Goal 1

	Actions	Rationale	KPIs	Lead Agency	Supporting Agency	Timeframe
**Goal 1: Sligo will be a Key Regional Growth Centre that drives sustainable economic activity and employment throughout the region and increases the population across the county.**						
Objective 1.1 Increase employment (including indirect and induced) across the county and support existing businesses. *SDG Alignment: SDG 9, SDG 8, SDG 13, SDG 11*						
1	Retain, grow and transform existing investment and attract new investment to Sligo that will further consolidate the areas of pharmaceuticals, MedTech, technology, businesses services, the green economy and industry 4.0 (including through the development of centres of sectoral expertise) and consolidate and grow existing clusters, while identifying opportunities for new or complimentary clusters.	●Aims to attract investment and talent, increase employment and in turn increase the population while reducing poverty ●Build on strengths of existing industries and position Sligo as a location for jobs of the future and the green economy (renewables, sustainability etc)	●Number of companies and jobs attracted at county level ●Number of centres of sectoral expertise supporting R&D and innovation ●Industries identified and value proposition for the Green Economy in Sligo developed ●Number of clusters in Sligo	IDA	EI, ATU, SCC, Sligo Chamber of Commerce, LEO, SEF, WDC	LT
2	Support and actively promote local businesses by: **(A)** Adopting a data driven approach to identify best practice for solutions to business needs and provide effective supports for growth **(ST)** **(B)** Establishing a Sligo Local Suppliers Network/Cluster to allow Sligo companies to sell to multinationals based locally and other large firms in the area **(ST-MT)** **(C)** Developing a programme to enhance upskilling in businesses across the county including in rural areas **(ST)** **(D)** Promote awareness and availability of supports to Women in Business, digitalisation, Brexit and Covid supports **(MT)**	●Aims to provide support to existing businesses and SMEs and supporting employment in the county ●Provides linkages for selling to Multinational companies and access to international supply chains	●Local Suppliers Network established ●Rural upskilling programme established ●Increase in uptake in business supports ●Data-led approach and initiatives to business needs adopted	LEO	SCC, ATU, CSLPclg, Sligo BID, Sligo Chamber of Commerce, SEF, WDC	ST - MT
3	In line with the North-West Regional Enterprise plan, encourage and support entrepreneurship throughout Sligo and increase the number of Enterprise Ireland supported companies through: **(A)** Conducting a promotional campaign with case studies that highlight the success of indigenous industries and businesses **(ST)** **(B)** Developing a mentorship programme with multinationals in Sligo that can support the development of spin-off companies and start-ups **(MT)** **(C)** Reviewing the requirements of the New Frontiers programme in the ATU to allow employed individuals to take part in the programme **(ST)** **(D)** Encourage the development of companies in areas related to digitalization, sustainability, the green economy and related technology **(LT)**	●Aims to encourage and increase entrepreneurship and innovation throughout Sligo ●Key part of EI Strategy is to increase the number of scaling SMEs	●Promotional campaign with case studies that highlight the success of indigenous industries and businesses implemented ●Mentorship programmes established with multinationals ●Work with ATU and LEO to increase the number of start-ups ●Increase in the number of internationally exporting companies ●Number of SMEs identified that can participate on EI scaling agenda	EI	LEO, IDA, SCC, ATU, WDC, North West Regional Enterprise Office, DETE	ST - MT - LT

	Actions	Rationale	KPIs	Lead Agency	Supporting Agency	Timeframe
4	Working collaboratively expand partnerships and linkages between the public sector, private sector and education providers to ensure employees skills align with employers' needs. This will include: **(A)** Continue the provision of programmes, research and apprenticeships (including new generation apprenticeships) that create employment through trades and crafts as well as in areas related to the just transition including sustainable construction and retrofitting **(B)** Continue and expand the provision of programmes and research related to jobs of the future in areas such as robotics and automation **(C)** Increase the number and range of SkillsNet programmes to provide direct support to businesses and their employees	●Aims to ensure the required talent is provided for the private and public sectors and assists in preparing the community for the jobs of the future	●Number of industry-academia linkages ●Number of students/apprentices graduating each year ●Numbers completing SkillsNet and other such short-targeted employee training programmes	ATU	MSLETB, Regional Skills Forum, SCC, EI, LEO, Sligo Chamber of Commerce	LT
5	Improve the business environment across the county through: **(A)** Developing a masterplan for the regeneration of the Sligo town docklands into a net zero area for potentially recreational, commercial and residential purposes with NZEB buildings **(MT) - (SCC as lead)** **(B)** Developing a masterplan for provision of enterprise space, including hubs and cluster centres across the county **(MT) - (EI as lead)**	● Aims to improve the business environment to make Sligo a more attractive investment destination and support local businesses ●Docklands currently underutilised with significant Local Authority owned land and could be repurposed/regenerated for other uses	●Masterplan for the regeneration of Sligo docklands adopted ●Masterplan provision of enterprise space developed	SCC	IDA, EI, SEAI, ATU	MT
6	Complete a biomethane feasibility study to support the development of a local gas network in Sligo from renewable energy sources	●To ensure Sligo has an efficient and cost-effective distribution of energy based on renewable energy sources	●Feasibility study developed	Sligo Leitrim Energy Agency, Sligo Sustainable Energy Community	IDA, SCC, WDC, NWRA, SEAI, ATU, Gas Networks Ireland	ST
7	Highlight the opportunities and role that Social Enterprises can play in providing employment and services across the community including through: **(A)** Developing a joint pilot initiative between ATU and CSLPclg **(B)** Creating awareness of what Social Enterprises are and the role they can play in the Sligo Community **(ST)** **(C)** Assist existing Social Enterprises in becoming self-sustainable and scalable	●Opens up the opportunity for Social Enterprises to play a role in communities and an alternative to establishing "for profit" companies	●Joint initiative between ATU and CSLPclg established ●Delivery of awareness campaign by SCC ●Number of Social Enterprises supported	CSLPclg	SCC, ATU, PPN	ST - LT
	Actions	**Rationale**	**KPIs**	**Lead Agency**	**Supporting Agency**	**Timeframe**
	Objective 1.2 Increase the housing supply across Sligo. *SDG Alignment: SDG 9, SDG 11, SDG 10*					

8	Address current and future housing needs and requirements in Sligo through: **(A)** Supporting the annual development of a Housing Delivery Action Plan to include social and affordable housing delivery that assist in bridging the digital divide in line with the Housing for All Strategy **(LT)** **(B)** Developing a collaborative working group of key stakeholders to discuss innovative solutions to address housing supply and increase affordable and sustainable/green housing **(ST)** **(C)** Preparing a Housing Needs Demand Assessment (HNDA) as part of the County Development Plan process **(ST)**	●Aims to address the housing requirements and needs in Sligo through a collaborative approach ●This action will also assist in increasing the population and attracting investment through the adequate provision of housing	●Collaborative working group established ●Annual housing supply increased 10% year-on-year ●HNDA completed in full ●Social & Affordable Housing targets as set out in SCC Housing Action Delivery Plan 2022-26	SCC, SEF	ATU, DHLGH, Construction Industry Federation, Sligo Chamber of Commerce	ST - LT
9	Explore existing and future funding mechanisms to address derelict and vacant properties that could be brought back into supply through: **(A)** Analysing the use of the derelict site and vacant site levies in Sligo to date and where improvements could be made **(B)** Ensuring that the derelict site and vacant site registers are an up-to-date and accurate reflection of the current situation in Sligo **(C)** Prepare the necessary maps for the introduction of the new tax to activate vacant land for residential purposes - Residential Zoned Land Tax (RZLT) **(D)** Establishing a team focused on dereliction and vacancy in SCC	●Aims to address housing supply issues through bringing vacant sites, derelict sites and vacant property back into supply ●Aims to improve the look, feel and aesthetics of towns as outlined in the Town Centre First Policy	●Up-to-date vacant and derelict site register ●Dereliction and vacancy team established ●Preparation of maps for the RZLT complete	SCC	Sligo BID, Sligo Chamber of Commerce, Revenue Commissioners	ST

Actions	**Rationale**	**KPIs**	**Lead Agency**	**Supporting Agency**	**Timeframe**
Objective 1.3 Increase connectivity and public transport across Sligo. *SDG Alignment: SDG 9, SDG 11, SDG 13, SDG 17*					

10	Invest in critical transport infrastructure to maximise the opportunities and build future transport needs of the county across road, rail and smart travel including: **(A)** Continuing to support upgrades and improvements to Sligo's road networks including the N15 to Letterkenny, N17 to Galway, as well as the N4 to Dublin and the N16 to Enniskillen and Belfast **(B)** Exploring further options to reduce traffic congestion in Sligo Town including construction of the Garavogue Bridge **(C)** Explore how Sligo's rail service could be enhanced to support growth (e.g. journey times, frequency, Wi-Fi) and feed ideas into the All-Island Railway Strategy	●Aims to increase connectivity throughout the county to support the economy and community while making provision for active and more sustainable mobility to decrease emissions ●Aims to reduce traffic congestion in Sligo Town	●Number of improvements and upgrades to critical infrastructure including safety upgrades with smart elements ●Work programmes being progressed for N15, N16 and N17 ●Detailed design for Garavogue Bridge completed in 2023, construction commenced in 2024 and completion 2026	SCC	NTA, TII, Iarnród Éireann	LT
11	Increase the number of EV charging points across the county and develop an Electric Vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure map for County Sligo to identify new areas where specific infrastructure should be supported.	●Aims to increase EV charging points to assist with transition to more sustainable modes of transport and aligns with national policy and the ongoing FASTER Project	● Increase the number of electric vehicle charging points and install 2 rapid EV charging facilities within 1 year ● EV infrastructure map created and areas identified for infrastructure	SCC	ESB, SEAI, NWRA, WDC, ATU	LT

	Actions	Rationale	KPIs	Lead Agency	Supporting Agency	Timeframe
12	Develop a working group on transport to include key stakeholders and decision makers that can drive change including representatives from National Transport Authority (NTA), Transport for Ireland (TFI) and Local Link.	●Establishment of a strategic group with key stakeholders who can enact change in relation to the provision of transport and associated infrastructure in Sligo	●Working group established	SCC	NTA, TFI, TII, Local Link, LCDC, PPN, WDC, SEF	ST
13	Develop a relevant model to achieve sustainable transport in Sligo's rural-urban setting and use data analytics to assess need and demand and drive targeted investment to expand Public Transport services to rural and urban areas both in relation to areas served and frequency.	●Increase public transport throughout Sligo using a data driven approach ●Assist in reducing car usage and in turn may assist in reducing emissions ●Assist in reducing rural isolation	●Sustainable transport model developed ●Network and frequency of public transport increased ●Number of rural areas serviced by public transport increased ●Uptake in public transport use and reduction in private vehicle use	SCC	NTA, TFI, Local Link, LCDC, PPN	LT

	Actions	Rationale	KPIs	Lead Agency	Supporting Agency	Timeframe
	Objective 1.4 Reduce the commercial vacancy rate in Sligo Town and County. *SDG Alignment: SDG 8, SDG 11*					
14	Explore and implement initiatives, including the Town Centre First policy, to reduce the high vacancy rate in Sligo and other urban centres. This will include: **(A)** Conducting a study to identify ownership of vacant and derelict properties throughout Sligo and initiate dialogue with identified owners **(ST)** **(B)** Repurposing vacant property for residential and recreational purposes where commercial use is not viable including digital and creative hubs **(LT)** **(C)** In relation to Town Centre First, achieve pathfinder status for Sligo Town and become a pilot town for the night-time economy task force **(ST)** **(D)** Support and implement the SARURE Interreg Europe Project on Rural Retail	●Aims to reduce the commercial vacancy rate throughout Sligo which unchecked could lead to economic decline ●Provides the opportunity to address the housing issue as well as to support the Creative and Innovative sectors through repurposing vacant properties ●The action is also in line with the Town Centre First Policy and seeks to build on the Re-Imagining Our Town conference	●Reduction in commercial vacancy rate across Sligo by 2% year-on-year ●3 initiatives implemented to address vacancy year-on-year ●Secure pathfinder status for Sligo Town and be selected as a pilot town for the night-time economy task force ● Town Centre First office and team established by end of Q2/2023 ●Town Centre First plan and policies in place by end of 2024	SCC	Sligo BID, Sligo Chamber of Commerce, SEF, IDA, LEO, MSLETB, CSLPclg, Private Sector, the Heritage Council, Sligo CTCHC Programme (ATU), DHLGH	ST - LT

8.2 Goal 2

	Actions	Rationale	KPIs	Lead Agency	Supporting Agency	Timeframe
**Goal 2: Sligo will become a smart county and a leader in the utilisation of smart technology through partnership with educational and commercial third parties**					
Objective 2.1 Prepare Sligo for becoming a smart county. *SDG Alignment: SDG 9, SDG 11, SDG 8*					
15	Identify a correct governance model and establish an integrated multi-agency Smart Sligo Working Group with a dedicated team and workplan to oversee the development of Sligo as a smart county. This will include: **(A)** Defining a data strategy and the end user of smart initiatives **(B)** Agreeing how Sligo's progress towards being a smart county is measured and define KPIs **(C)** Mapping existing smart initiatives already underway throughout the county	●Establishes a working group to oversee, drive and monitor Sligo's progress to becoming a smart county and define exactly what it will mean for Sligo ●Through the mapping exercise, establish a baseline of current smart initiatives	●Governance model identified and implemented ●Data strategy in place and end users identified ●Measurements and KPIs to assess Sligo as a smart county agreed and in place ●Mapping completed and repository of Smart Initiatives developed	SEF, SCC	ATU	MT
16	Raise awareness of the Smart Sligo programmes and existing range of smart and digital innovative and transformation projects and ensure that it is inclusive of all the community including the young, older people, people living with disability and those from minority backgrounds. This will include: **(A)** Developing and launching a Smart Sligo webpage, using Sligo.ie as the platform, to inform the public of the initiatives being rolled out, updates on progress and information on training, grants and other events in relation to a Smart Sligo **(ST)** **(B)** Holding Smart Sligo competitions, including hackathons, where individuals are invited to put forward innovative ideas for the use of Smart technology in Sligo **(ST)**	●Raise awareness of Sligo's transition to a smart county to foster community involvement and the development of innovative ideas	●Smart Sligo Webpage launched ●Number of visitors to Smart Sligo webpage ●Smart Sligo Competition established	SCC, SEF	LCDC, PPN	ST

No.	Actions	Rationale	KPIs	Lead Agency	Supporting Agency	Timeframe
17	Continue to build, optimise future connectivity **(LT)** and map digital infrastructure and services throughout Sligo **(ST)** and ensure all ducting is managed as a shared resource and generating revenue from users where applicable **(MT)**.	●Aims to obtain full picture of ICT infrastructure and ensure revenue is being generated/collected for Sligo County Council where applicable	●Percentage of ICT infrastructure and availability of services mapped ●Amount of ducting built ●Level of revenue generation from ducting	SCC	DRCD	ST - MT - LT

Actions	**Rationale**	**KPIs**	**Lead Agency**	**Supporting Agency**	**Timeframe**
Objective 2.2 Successfully implement existing smart and digital initiatives. *SDG Alignment: SDG 9, SDG 17*					

No.	Actions	Rationale	KPIs	Lead Agency	Supporting Agency	Timeframe
18	Continue to implement and build upon the four key pillars of Sligo's digital strategy to (1) increase digital skills across the county, (2) improve the digital infrastructure, (3) deliver digital services and community initiatives, and (4) foster innovation, enterprise, the digital economy and employment across the county. This will include: **(A)** Further developing partnerships in line with the quadruple helix approach with industry, academia, local government and the community to advance Sligo's position as a living lab	●Aims to ensure implementation and looks to build upon existing digital strategy	●Percentage of actions implemented from Sligo Digital Strategy ●Number of partnerships developed in relation to living labs	SCC	LEO, MSLETB, Sligo Chamber of Commerce (Skillsnet), ATU, WDC	ST
19	Support and advance the existing smart initiatives in Tubbercurry and replicate in other areas where appropriate throughout the county.	●Continued support for Tubbercurry which was identified as Ireland's first smart community	●Number of smart initiatives implemented in Tubbercurry	SCC, WDC	An Chroí and Tubbercurry Chamber of Commerce	ST

Actions	**Rationale**	**KPIs**	**Lead Agency**	**Supporting Agency**	**Timeframe**
Objective 2.3 Introduce additional smart technology and concepts to the benefit of Sligo's Community. *SDG Alignment: SDG 9, SDG 11, SDG 8, SDG 12, SDG 13*					

20	Explore and implement smart initiatives that could provide solutions to local issues in Sligo. This will include the identification of areas for pilot projects that are co-designed with the public, using a participatory budgeting approach where appropriate, and the publication of thought-leadership articles on successful projects. Specific projects will include: **(A)** Continuing to partner with the HSE and the private sector on community eHealth initiatives and explore how technology can address rural isolation **(B)** Exploring the use of technology to address climate change and environmental challenges **(C)** Exploring how smart initiatives can enhance public transport and road safety **(D)** Exploring the use of digital tools to enhance Sligo's tourism and cultural sectors **(E)** Continue participation in the SCORE project with ATU and other partners and identify related opportunities for further funding	●Aims to explore the development and application of innovative solutions for local issues in Sligo using smart technology and concepts ●Can build on existing living lab initiatives through identification of new technologies to pilot	●Number of smart pilot projects providing data to the community ●Percentage of pilot projects co-designed with and for the community ●Complete SCORE project and establish Coastal City Living Laboratory model ●A report evaluating the effectiveness of smart projects developed from 2023-2030	SCC, ATU	LCDC, PPN, Sligo Chamber of Commerce, Fáilte Ireland, HSE, NPWS, Coastal Communities, SCORE Consortium, OPW, DAFM	LT
21	Encourage and identify pilot areas for the roll-out of smart meters in homes and businesses across the county.	●Contributes to energy efficiency and ambition of becoming an exemplar county in climate action	●Pilot areas identified ●Percentage of homes and businesses with smart meters	ESB	CSLPclg, SEAI, SCC, PPN, ATU	MT
22	Raise awareness of the Smart Farming programme and how it can assist farmers throughout Sligo.	●Farming specific action that could contribute to more efficient farming in Sligo and in turn reduce emissions	●Awareness campaign launched ●Number of farmers/farms from Sligo joining the programme	Teagasc	IFA, LCDC, SPC, ICMSA, Macra Na Feirme	ST

8.3 Goal 3

	Actions	Rationale	KPIs	Lead Agency	Supporting Agency	Timeframe
Goal 3: Sligo will be a proactive county in addressing climate change and a model of best practice in climate action with sustainability central to all areas of life						
Objective 3.1 Reduce emissions by at least 51% by 2030. *SDG Alignment: SDG 13, SDG 11, SDG 7, SDG 12*						
23	Implement initiatives to ensure that Sligo County Council provides effective leadership on Climate Action through: **(A)** Doubling the Electrical Vehicle fleet every year for the next 3 years and moving Sligo County Council to an electric fleet by 2030 **(LT)** **(B)** Ensure enforcement of fines and penalties in relation to littering and illegal dumping **(LT)** **(C)** Ensuring that Green Procurement Guidelines are fully implemented across procurement processes and funding appraisals **(LT)** **(D)** Exploring options to implement a system to understand carbon budgeting by Sligo County Council **(ST)** **(E)** Introducing sustainability criteria including details on GHG emissions, resource & energy efficiency for funding appraisals conducted by Sligo County Council **(ST)**	●Sligo County Council to take the lead on sustainability initiatives with aim of becoming leading Climate Resilient and Biodiversity Friendly Council	●Percentage of Sligo County Council's fleet electric ●Sustainability criteria included for funding appraisals ●Green Procurement Guidelines fully implemented ●Establish carbon budgeting system ●Number of fines/penalties issued for illegal dumping and littering	SCC	CARO	ST - LT
24	Develop a Sligo County Council Climate Action Plan as required by the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021 and explore relevant initiatives that could be implemented as part of the plan such as: **(A)** Developing a baseline of emissions as a priority upon which to base KPIs to measure and deliver on the 51% reduction in emissions **(B)** Reviewing and updating the climate adaptation strategy **(C)** Further developing and expanding the Decarbonisation Zone with a range of climate mitigation, adaptation and biodiversity measures to reduce emissions including the development of renewable energy facilities **(D)** Supporting the development of the Regional Energy Bureau **(E)** Supporting the development of the Sligo Leitrim Energy Agency	●Aims to reduce emissions and become a more climate resilient county ●In line with the requirements of the Climate Action & Low Carbon Development Bill	●Climate Action Plan developed ●Baseline of emissions developed ●Climate adaption strategy updated ●Number of new sustainability initiatives implemented ●Regional Energy Bureau established ●Sligo Leitrim Energy Agency established	SCC, Sligo Sustainable Energy Community	LCDC, Sligo Chamber of Commerce, Sligo Economic Forum, Private Sector, PPN, CARO, SEAI, ATU, Sligo Leitrim Energy Agency	ST

25	Encourage the development of a circular economy throughout the county through the full implementation of the Connacht Ulster Regional Waste Management Plan.	●Aims to develop a sustainable circular economy in Sligo that will assist in reducing emissions ●Ensure that best use is made of all resources available within the county	●Full implementation of Connaught Ulster Regional Waste Management Plan achieved ●Comply with the objectives of the Circular Economy Act if & when enacted	SCC	PPN, ATU, EPA, Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications, Sligo Tidy Towns, CURWMO, WERLA	ST - LT
26	Encourage energy efficiency use by supporting energy efficiency improvements including the retrofitting of homes, businesses and public buildings including through: **(A)** Supporting the proliferation and development of sustainable energy communities (SEC) **(LT)** **(B)** Working with the Retrofitting Centre for Excellence in Collooney to encourage uptake of NZEB training in the county **(LT)** **(C)** Supporting the establishment of a Local Energy Agency which will conduct research, provide information and assist businesses and communities access funding and support for energy efficiency **(ST)**	●Aims to increase the number of energy efficient homes and businesses in Sligo leading to cost savings and reduced emissions ●Aligns with the ongoing Sustainable Energy Communities project	●Number of sustainable energy communities developed ●Number of enrolments at Retrofitting Centre for Excellence in Collooney ●Number of buildings retrofitted ●Local Energy Agency established	SCC, MSLETB	SEAI, Sligo Chamber of Commerce, CSLPclg, WDC, South Sligo Energy Partnership, Strandhill SEC	ST - LT
27	Encourage smarter travel and increase and upgrade active travel infrastructure including cycleways, greenways and cycle paths across the county **(LT)**. This will include: **(A)** Developing a segregated cycling network through committing to all new cycle paths being segregated from other traffic (pedestrian and vehicular) where feasible and upgrade existing cycle paths to segregate from traffic where possible **(ST)** **(B)** Exploring options for the development of new greenways in the county **(ST)** **(C)** Putting in place a plan for regular maintenance and upkeep of existing cycleways, greenways and cycle paths **(ST)** **(D)** Support the roll-out of the Bolt e-bikes scheme **(ST)**	●Aims to reduce emissions and encourage uptake of active mobility that may contribute to improved health across the community and reduce traffic congestion	●Number of greenways developed ●Number of new cycle paths, cycleways and walkways built ●Number of segregated cycle paths developed ●Reduction in private car use observed ●Successful delivery of Bolt e-bike pilot scheme ●No. of km's travelled on Bolt ebikes per quarter ●Number of Electric Vehicles within SCC Fleet	SCC	NTA, LCDC, PPN, Sligo Cycling Campaign, Walking Matters, Sligo Greenway Co-op, BOLT	ST - LT

	Actions	Rationale	KPIs	Lead Agency	Supporting Agency	Timeframe
28	Increase the use of renewable / alternative energy sources across Sligo: **(A)** Developing a renewable energy strategy for Sligo and ensuring that policy frameworks are in place to assist the attraction of investment in this area **(ST)** **(B)** Conducting a feasibility study and identify the location for a community power project in Sligo based around sustainable/renewable sources of energy **(ST)** **(C)** Explore the potential development of household and farm alternative energy micro electricity generation projects with the relevant agencies **(ST)** **(D)** Explore the potential for developing district heating systems in Sligo **(ST)** **(E)** Continue to explore the potential for other sustainable energy sources in Sligo including, biogas, geothermal, solar, hydro and green hydrogen **(LT)** **(F)** Continue to support local sustainable energy communities in Co. Sligo **(LT)**	●Aims to increase use of renewable/alternative energy sources leading to reduced emissions and further transition from fossil fuels ●Aligns with potential projects at application stage such as the project on "Building the evidence-base for local authority and community sustainable energy futures" and the Geothermal Heating project	●Renewable Energy Strategy for Sligo developed and associated policy frameworks in place ●Feasibility study on community power project complete ●Number of micro electricity generation projects in the county ●Number of alternative energy sources explored and piloted	SCC, Sligo Sustainable Energy Community	CSLPclg, ATU, Teagasc, SEAI, Irish BioEnergy Association, Regional Energy Bureau, Local Energy Agency & Leitrim County Council, GSI	ST - LT

	Actions	Rationale	KPIs	Lead Agency	Supporting Agency	Timeframe
Objective 3.2 Increase awareness and participation in sustainability initiatives						
29	Develop a communication plan and one stop shop webpage, using Sligo.ie as the platform, to increase awareness of green initiatives and projects (such as the SCORE project), grants and training available for both the community and businesses that can aid the county's just transition.	●Raise awareness of supports to go green and current sustainability initiatives to encourage uptake by the community and private sector	●One Stop Shop webpage developed for information on sustainability initiatives, grants and training ●Increase in uptake of grants and training ●Communication plan to promote existing and upcoming initiatives developed	SCC	CSLPclg, Sligo Chamber of Commerce, LEO, MSLETB, WDC	ST
30	Explore the development and piloting of programmes to increase participation such as: **(A)** Young Leaders Development Programme where young people can engage to become the Climate Change leaders of the future **(ST)** **(B)** Climate Champions Programme for Businesses and Community groups **(ST)**	●Aims to increase community and business involvement in sustainability initiatives and to develop innovative ideas for Sligo in this area	●Climate Champions Programme and Young leaders Programme established	PPN, SCC	An Taisce (green schools), LCDC, Local schools, CARO, Business Community	ST

	Actions	Rationale	KPIs	Lead Agency	Supporting Agency	Timeframe
Objective 3.3 Address the biodiversity crisis. SDG Alignment: *SDG 13, SDG 14, SDG 15, SDG 12*						

31	Implement initiatives to protect Sligo's natural habitats, landscape and ecosystems including: **(A)** Developing a standalone Biodiversity Plan for Sligo and applying to the Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD) for the appointment of a Biodiversity Officer within Sligo County Council **(ST)** **(B)** Implementing initiatives around rewilding, creation of new native woodlands, urban food growing, allotments and protection and restoration of bogland **(LT)** **(C)** Identifying areas that may be at risk from development and working with the community to monitor and protect them **(LT)**	●Aims to address the biodiversity crisis facing Sligo	●Biodiversity plan developed ● Application submitted to the DRCD for a Biodiversity officer in Sligo County Council ●Number of biodiversity initiatives implemented and hectares restored ●Uptake of community monitoring of biodiversity	SCC	ATU, EPA, DRCD, NPWS, Coillte, SUH, Sligo Tidy Towns, PPN	ST - LT
32	Develop a roadmap/programme to ensure that the future development of the agriculture and land-use sector will be built on environmental sustainability, focused on a just transition that contributes fairly to Ireland's climate, air and energy targets.	●The Signpost Programme is a multi-annual campaign to lead climate action by all Irish farmers. The programme aims to achieve early progress in reducing gaseous emissions from Irish agriculture, improve water quality, and maintain and improve biodiversity. It also looks to reduce costs and create more profitable and sustainable farming enterprises. It is a collaborative programme, led by Teagasc, and includes all relevant industry partners and state bodies such as Bord Bia.	●Number of Signpost Farmers in Sligo ●Number of Signpost Farm events ●Number of Sustainability training courses ●Number of farmers participating in ACRES ●Number of sustainability focussed farm visits	Teagasc	IFA, LCDC, DAFM, INHFA, PPN, SCC, NWRA	ST

8.4 Goal 4

	Actions	Rationale	KPIs	Lead Agency	Supporting Agency	Timeframe
Goal 4 – Sligo will be a healthy and equitable society that supports its vibrant communities and champions active inclusion						
Objective 4.1 Ensure Sligo is a county that supports active inclusion for all. *SDG Alignment: SDG 11, SDG 10, SDG 4, SDG 1, SDG 8, SDG 5*						
33	Develop and implement initiatives that support and strive for inclusive, connected, and vibrant communities including: **(A)** Developing an integration plan for new communities, including Asylum Seekers and Refugees, that addresses their specific needs **(ST)** **(B)** Develop training and education programmes around diversity and inclusion **(ST)** **(C)** Support programmes and policies that increase accessibility to employment for all (including those living with disability) and meet obligations under public sector duty requirements **(MT)** **(D)** Continue to raise awareness and seek interventions around important Social and integration measures: e.g. isolation, autism awareness, literacy awareness, equality awareness, and LGBTQ+ awareness **(MT)**	●Aims to support the inclusion of minority groups, new communities, those livig with disability and the significant population of older people across Sligo to create a more socially inclusive society	●Integration plan developed and implemented ●Number of inclusion programmes developed, and awareness sessions held	LCDC	SCC, CSLPclg, PPN, MSLETB, ATU, HSE, Diversity Sligo, SVC, FRCs, DEASP, CYPSC, JPC, Cranmore Regeneration Team	MT
34	Continue to develop a coordinated response to the Ukrainian refugee crisis including the establishment of a community and inter-agency forum to co-ordinate service delivery, minimise duplication of service, address gaps in service provision and to address the provision of emergency accommodation.	●Aims to identify and address specific needs of Ukrainian refugees and ensure adequate provision of services	●Forum established and number of meetings held ●Number of refugees accommodated	SCC	HSE, DEASP, Tusla, CSLPclg, PPN, Local Link, SVC, Gardai, MSLETB	ST
35	Deliver the PEACE Plus programme 2021-2027 for County Sligo.	●To enable and empower local community partnerships, led by the LA to select and deliver priority projects on a cross-community basis which will result in shared and inclusive local services, facilities and spaces, and make a significant and lasting contribution to peace and reconciliation	●PEACE partnership committee established ●Development and delivery of PEACE Plus Action plan	SCC	LCDC, DRCD, SEUPB, Peace Plus Partnership	ST - MT
36	Address rising poverty and deprivation levels across all groups and areas where it exists in Sligo including through: **(A)** Improving educational outcomes across the county via collaborations and coordination of services across the training and educational agencies **(B)** Implementing programmes for those that are long-term unemployed in developing sectors and industries which provide a sustainable future along with working with local businesses to set a target for employing those currently unemployed	●Aims to contribute to the reduction of poverty and deprivation which was identified as an issue from the socio-economic analysis	●Decrease in Pobal deprivation rate recorded ●Decrease in the long-term unemployed observed ●Number of programmes for long-term unemployed increased ●Targets for employing unemployed agreed with businesses	CSLPclg	MSLETB, ATU SCC, LCDC, HSE, Sligo Chamber of Commerce, LEO, DEASP	ST - LT

#	Actions	Rationale	KPIs	Lead Agency	Supporting Agency	Timeframe
37	Ensure the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme and other programmes reach appropriate groups and individuals that are most vulnerable to poverty and exclusion by: **(A)** Building the capacity of local community groups to respond to the needs of the disadvantaged communities they represent and work effectively to promote social inclusion and equality	●Aims to support communities to develop needs-based responses to issues affecting them and assist them leverage funding from agencies, departments and other funding organisations to build stronger communities and a better quality of life	●Number of local community groups supported under SICAP and other programmes ●Number of individuals (aged 15 years) supported under SICAP and percentage of individuals supported in disadvantaged areas ●Number of capacity building and training measures delivered	LCDC, LAG	SCC, CSLPclg	ST - LT
38	Ensure adequate supports for families and young people through: **(A)** Using a data led approach explore the demand for and feasibility of developing community spaces (including the use of GAA clubs) in Sligo Town and rural areas to provide vital support services and usable space to community groups and families **(MT)** **(B)** Utilising the Comhairle na nOg as a vehicle to facilitate the co-development of Youth Services in the county, including youth facilities **(ST)**	●Aims to ensure supports and services for families and the community in urban and rural areas ●Specifically addresses supports and services for young people across the community	●Review of youth services, spaces, and needs complete ●Data led review of feasibility and demand for community spaces in rural and urban areas completed ●Youth Mental Health Services Centre developed	CSLPclg	Tusla, SCC, FRCs, CYPSC, LCDC, PPN, MABS, GAA, Youth Council, HSE	ST - MT
39	To continue to develop Sligo as an Age Friendly county by: **(A)** Developing an integrated Age Friendly Strategy for the county **(ST)** **(B)** Avoiding duplication and addressing gaps in service delivery for older people through the continued strengthening of the Sligo Age Friendly Alliance **(C)** Developing appropriate Age Friendly Initiatives and seeking funding opportunities for projects that can increase the participation of older people in the social, economic and cultural life of Sligo **(D)** Rolling out an Age Friendly Business Programme	●Aims to ensure that older people are respected, included and utilised in decision making and acknowledged for their contribution to community life	●Age Friendly Strategy developed ●Older Peoples Council established ●Number of age friendly initiatives and projects delivered ●Age Friendly Business programme	SCC	CSLPclg, HSE, MSLETB, Age Friendly Ireland, Local Link, An Garda Síochána, Muintir na Tire, Citizens Information, ATU, PPN	ST - LT
	Actions	**Rationale**	**KPIs**	**Lead Agency**	**Supporting Agency**	**Timeframe**
	Objective 4.2 Improve the health of the community across Sligo. *SDG Alignment: SDG 3, SDG 11*					

40	In line with the Healthy Ireland Strategic Action Plan, promote healthy life choices (including food and diet), positive mental health and build on community well-being initiatives including: **(A)** Developing a Healthy Sligo Strategy **(ST)** for the county which will be a local interagency framework to develop collaborative local programmes that align with the Healthy Ireland Fund including programmes to address health inequalities in areas with the highest deprivation across the lifecycle **(B)** Developing necessary supports and programmes for new and existing campaigns to encourage healthy mobility and social inclusion, such as building on the existing investment in walking, cycling, and outdoor products and promoting the use of outdoor open spaces through creative community engagement initiatives	●Aims to support and improve health outcomes across the county	●Number of programmes and initiatives supported in the areas of health and social inclusion ●Healthy Sligo strategy developed	SCC, HSE	LCDC, Sligo Youth Council, CSLPclg, SSRP, Family Resource Centre, GAA, Sligo Cycling Campaign, Walking Matters, Sligo Greenway Co-op	ST - LT
41	Work collaboratively to identify community needs and gather feedback on services to influence the development of Sligo's healthcare services including acute, primary care, disability, older person and health & wellbeing	●Aims to ensure the adequate provision of health services across the community	●Improve access to community service so as enabling people to access increased care and supports in their own communities ●Increase in the percentage of adult and children referrals/ re-referrals to Mental Health Service offered first appointment and seen within 12 weeks ●Improve and enhance access to healthcare services for refugees, international protection applicants, migrants, members of the Travelling & Roma community, addiction, homeless, and migrants, including services to women	HSE	CYPSC, PPN GPs, NWRDATF, NWJHCF, NGO sector e.g. youth Service/ Older Person Services/Disability/Addiction/Women services/Travellers & Roma service/Intercultural/Homeless Service	LT
42	Continue to increase participation in sport, recreation and physical activity in Sligo through: **(A)** Lead in the development of a County Sligo Sports Plan in collaboration with Sligo Sport and Recreation Partnership and stakeholders **(B)** Explore, in collaboration with the ATU, the potential for the development of a world class sports venue along with necessary car parking and active transport facilities and infrastructure to support accessibility **(MT)** **(C)** Implementation of actions from the National Sports Policy 2018-2027 with a focus on providing information, capacity building and programming. **(MT)** **(D)** Building capacity of sports clubs and community organisations to facilitate sport for all with a focus on minority sports when developing further community sports hubs in disadvantaged areas **(E)** Developing opportunities for physical activity in the outdoors utilising our rich natural landscape and urban settings	●Supports the existing Sports policy and the Sligo Sports and Recreation Partnership ●Assists in improving health outcomes and healthy life choices	●Percentage of relevant actions of National Sports Policy implemented ●Local sports plan developed ●Feasibility study on the development of sports venue completed ●Level of female participation and leadership in sports increased ●Number of Inclusion & Diversity Officers appointed	Sligo Sports and Recreation Partnership	SCC, CSLPclg, HSE, GAA, Sligo Rovers, MSLETB, ATU, Sport Clubs, Community Organisations, NGBs	MT - LT

	Actions	Rationale	KPIs	Lead Agency	Supporting Agency	Timeframe
Objective 4.3 Support and empower communities across Sligo to play an active role in the development of their county. *SDG Alignment: SDG 17, SDG 11, SDG 4, SDG 8*					
43	Capitalise on Sligo's educational strengths to improve educational outcomes throughout the county and enhance collaboration between the community and further and higher education providers. This will include: **(A)** Encouraging lifelong learning and upskilling throughout Sligo to support in preparing the community for jobs of the future with replication of the successful Cranmore Community Education Model and SIPTU's learning mentor programme **(B)** Encouraging the development of basic digital skills across the community with online safety training to be delivered across communities and age groups **(C)** Developing a collaborative bottom-up approach to programme design and examine approaches to increase engagement and access to programmes noting the importance of broadband access in ensuring inclusion	●Aims to increase educational attainment and outcomes throughout Sligo ●Ensure talent required by the private sector is available and prepares the community for jobs of the future ●Increase digital literacy and online safety throughout Sligo	●Increase in the level of lifelong learning and upskilling ●Improved educational outcomes recorded across all groups ●Level of enrolment in digital skills courses and number of online safety sessions/training completed ●Evidence that enhanced education and talent development has led to increased employment in the region	ATU, MSLETB	CSLPclg, Sligo Education and Training and Life-long Learning Forum, SIPTU Diversity Sligo, Regional Skills Forum	LT

44	Maximise the opportunities for rural communities in Sligo under the Rural Development Programme (LEADER element) by: **(A)** Continuing to support the LCDC as the Local Action Group for the delivery of the rural development programme (LEADER) **(B)** Revising and implementing a new Local Development Strategy (LDS) in consultation with the community and key stakeholders, utilising bottom-up LEADER methodology **(C)** Equipping rural dwellers and communities with the appropriate range of skills, facilities, and training to derive maximum social and economic benefit from the initiatives available **(D)** Supporting the development of social, economic and cultural infrastructure and services in hard-to-reach and geographically disadvantaged communities	●Aims to support rural communities across Sligo to increase employment, community development and social inclusion	●Implementation of the LDS ●Number of LEADER programme projects in accordance with budget provided under each theme including LEADER cooperation projects ●Number of evaluation and LAG meetings held	LCDC, LAG	SCC, CSLPclg	MT
45	Encourage and increase the community's participation in the development of the county through the PPN and explore how technology (such as Loomio, Polis and the innovating communities project) could assist in increasing community participation in the development of the county.	●Encourage increased public participation in the development of Sligo and the sense of joint ownership of strategies and plans	●PPN and SCC to jointly deliver 3 projects by 2025, that use technology designed to facilitate greater political participation in the development of the county ●Increase in community participation observed (submissions, attendance) ●Number of groups enrolled with the PPN ●Number of PPN projects delivered	PPN	SCC, SVC, LCDC	LT
46	Support local community and voluntary groups annually through: **(A)** Developing training and capacity building courses around the vital services they provide **(B)** Provide grant funding to community groups via local and national funding schemes **(C)** Developing inclusive and accessible training for PPN representatives **(D)** Supporting volunteer centre initiatives to increase public volunteering in local events, festivals and other local needs such as engaging with older people, isolated people, and friendship groups	●Builds capacity and recognises the important work of community groups and volunteers in Sligo	●Number of training and capacity building courses provided to local community and voluntary groups ●Number of grants awarded ●Inclusive and accessible training developed for PPN ●Increase in the number of volunteers recorded	LCDC	SVC, SCC, CSLPclg, PPN, Community Groups	LT
47	Continue to develop relationships with the global Sligo diaspora through implementation of actions within the Diaspora Strategy and building on the relationships with the twin towns, Kempton, Crozon, and Tallahassee.	●Build long term links and assist the diaspora to visit and engage with Sligo	●Number of diaspora initiatives developed	SCC	LCDC, IDA, EI, Fáilte Ireland, ATU, PPN, County Sligo Heritage and Genealogy Centre	LT

	Actions	Rationale	KPIs	Lead Agency	Supporting Agency	Timeframe
Objective 4.4 Improve the vibrancy and appeal of Sligo's towns, villages and targeted rural recreational areas. SDG Alignment: *SDG 11, SDG 17*
48	Using a co-design approach with the community, upgrade and enhance amenities across the county and in Sligo town through targeted public realm interventions that create attractive, vibrant, and multi-functional public spaces that are friendly and safe for the young and old **(LT).** This should include an asset audit of the town and village cores to know exactly what amenities are available. **(ST)**	●Looks to provide improvements to the public realm and increase amenities across the county through consultation with the public	●Asset audit of town and village cores completed and utilised to inform decision making ●Number of public realm enhancements completed ●Number of community consultations held including with young people. ●Number of initiatives implemented through the annual Town and Village Scheme	SCC	DRCD, Fáilte Ireland, Sligo BID, Sligo Chamber of Commerce, ATU, Sligo Cycling Campaign	ST - LT
49	Delivery of projects funded through the Urban Regeneration Development Fund (URDF), Rural Regeneration Development Fund (RRDF) and the Outdoor Recreational Infrastructural Schemes (ORIS) including the CLÁR Programme. LT	●Improving urban and rural infrastructure for the benefit of the community, businesses and visitors to the county	●Number of projects completed under URDF, RRDF and ORIS programmes	SCC	Sligo BID, Sligo Chamber of Commerce, Fáilte Ireland, DRCD	LT

8.5 Goal 5

	Actions	Rationale	KPIs	Lead Agency	Supporting Agency	Timeframe
Goal 5: Sligo will celebrate its exceptional heritage, creative sector, and realise its tourism potential in a sustainable manner						
Objective 5.1 Strengthen and protect Sligo's vibrant culture, heritage and Creative & Innovative sector. *SDG Alignment: SDG 11, SDG 4, SDG 15*						
50	The Sligo Landscape reflects and embodies creative values and shared natural heritage. It contributes richly to the wellbeing of society, environment and economy and provides inspiration and opportunity for multiple uses. It is to be supported in association with its culture, heritage, and the creative & innovative sectors. This will include: **(A)** Updating and continuing to implement current plans and programmes such as the Sligo Arts Plan, Sligo Heritage Plan and the Creative Ireland Programme **(MT)** **(B)** Work in partnership with the DHLGH's Unique World Heritage Site Unit (WHU) to advance Sligo's Neolithic landscape as a UNESCO World Heritage site **(LT)** **(C)** Ensure archiving supports are available for the arts, culture and heritage sector, including digitised collections to make collections more accessible **(D)** Supporting initiatives that promote the use of the Irish language	●Aims to enhance Sligo's culture, heritage and creative and innovative sector to the benefit of the community as well as the tourism sector	●Sligo Heritage Plan and Sligo Creative Ireland Strategy updated ●World Heritage Status secured for the Sligo Neolithic Passage Tombs Landscape ●Number of digitisations of collections made available to the public ●Number of projects assisted through the Creative Ireland programme	SCC, WHU (DHLGH)	Neolithic Landscape Group, ATU, Sligo Heritage Forum, The Heritage Council, Failte Ireland, NUIG, OPW	MT - LT
51	Increase awareness of the value, significance and accessibility of Sligo's heritage, culture and creative and innovative sectors through supporting and promoting inclusive events, workshops, programmes, activities etc and working with education providers to raise awareness amongst the Sligo population. This will include the fantastic legacy of Yeats in the county	●Increase participation in culture, heritage and creative and innovative sectors across all age groups and backgrounds in Sligo	●Number of cultural events held or supported ●Number of promotional or information sessions held with young people and schools	SCC	Yeats Society, Arts Council, The Model, Hawk's Well, Blue Raincoat Theatre, Neolithic Landscape Group, Sligo Heritage Forum, The Heritage Council, PPN	LT
	Actions	**Rationale**	**KPIs**	**Lead Agency**	**Supporting Agency**	**Timeframe**
Objective 5.2 Build capability and increase coordination throughout the tourism sector: *SDG Alignment: SDG 9, SDG 8, SDG 4*						

#	Actions	Rationale	KPIs	Lead Agency	Supporting Agency	Timeframe
52	In line with the forthcoming Sligo Destination Experience Development Plan (DEDP) work with relevant partners to increase collaboration across the tourism sector and promote Sligo on a whole county basis including through: **(A)** Designating a lead coordinator within the relevant tourism forum to develop a coordinated and targeted marketing approach to attracting visitors including through digital promotion **(ST)** **(B)** Collaborating with neighbouring counties in Ireland's North-West to implement the 'International marketing of Donegal, Sligo and Mayo Plan **(MT)**	●Assist in increasing collaboration across the sector and a more coordinated approach to the promotion of Sligo as a tourism destination with the aim to increase overall visitor numbers	●Lead Coordinator designated in tourism forum ●Number of collaborative meetings held ●Coordinated approach to the promotion of Sligo as a tourism destination implemented ●Targets in DEDP achieved	Fáilte Ireland, SCC	ATU, Tourism Ireland, WDC, Ireland West Airport, CSLPclg	ST - MT
53	Undertake an audit of skills in the tourism sector and work with education and training providers as well as Fáilte Ireland to develop relevant skills programmes and supports to increase capability across the sector.	●Increase skills and capacity throughout the sector	●Skills audit completed ●Level of uptake/enrolment in upskilling and training courses increased	Fáilte Ireland	SCC, Sligo BID, ATU, MSLETB	MT
54	Implement initiatives to encourage and develop evidence-based decision making through: **(A)** Reviewing the impact of and updating the Sligo Tourism Strategy to be action focused and aligned with Wild Atlantic Way plan and Sligo Destination Experience Development Plan **(ST)** **(B)** Developing a data led programme to measure tourist and visitor activity to assist in understanding performance and impact **(ST)**	●Assist in supporting evidence-based decision making in the tourism sector and more efficient resource allocation	●Impact of outgoing Tourism Strategy reviewed ●Tourism Strategy revised and updated ●Data led programme to understand performance, impact and tourist activity developed	SCC	MSLETB, ATU, Sligo BID, Fáilte Ireland	ST
	Actions	**Rationale**	**KPIs**	**Lead Agency**	**Supporting Agency**	**Timeframe**
	Objective 5.3 Enhance Sligo as a destination, attract more visitors and increase the economic benefit from tourism with a focus on town centre place-making and outdoor activities. *SDG Alignment: SDG 8, SDG 9, SDG 15, SDG 1*					

55	Develop Sligo's leisure tourism offering to deliver world class visitor experiences including through: **(A)** Implementing the Sligo Destination Experience Development Plan through collaboration with tourism agencies, visitors, industry, communities and environment **(B)** Developing further quality attractions (including outdoor activities) and the variety of events and festivals across the county **(C)** Develop a Festival and Events Strategy and establish the position of Festival and Events Coordinator **(MT)** **(D)** Supporting specific community projects such as the implementation of the Sligo Rovers Masterplan **(E)** Supporting the night-time economy e.g. retention of Sligo's Purple Flag **(F)** Encouraging the development of an increased tourism offering where the choice and variety of tourism accommodation includes boutique hotels, hostels, glamping, 5 star hotels etc	●Aims to increase visitor revenue and volume through enhanced offering across a range of areas and support the local economy and tourism sector ●Job creation and economic development opportunities in the sector	●Number of national and international visitors ●Number of new attractions developed ●Number of festivals and events supported ●'Festival & Events Coordinator recruited and Festival & Events Strategy developed ●Increase in the level, type and amount of tourism services available including accommodation and transport ●Average occupancy and bed nights	Fáilte Ireland, SCC	Sligo BID, Sligo Rovers, WDC, Ireland West Airport, Sligo Chamber of Commerce, Local Hospitality Trade	MT
56	Explore the potential for business tourism in Sligo through: **(A)** Exploring the feasibility of developing a Gala Dinner/Conference Venue of international standards for hosting events by 2030 **(B)** Exploring the feasibility of developing a Sligo Convention Bureau by 2030 that offers advice and expertise to those wishing to hold an event in Sligo	●Aims to increase visitor numbers and support the local economy	●Feasibility studies complete and depending on outcome development of a Conference Venue and/or a Sligo Convention Bureau	Sligo BID	Fáilte Ireland, SCC, WDC, SEF, Sligo Chamber of Commerce	MT
57	Develop a sustainable tourism policy reflecting and acknowledging the importance of Sligo's biodiversity and ensure a protection/conservation plan is in place for Sligo's cultural sites including the numerous Neolithic sites throughout the county.	●Ensure adequate protection for Sligo's heritage and cultural sites (including the natural landscape)	●Sustainable Tourism policy developed ●Protection/conservation plan for Sligo's cultural sites developed ●Clear evidence of tourism projects that encompass biodiversity ●List of archaeological sites protected	SCC	Fáilte Ireland, Neolithic Landscape Group, Sligo Heritage Forum, The Heritage Council, IFA	MT

8.6 Goal 6

	Actions	Rationale	KPIs	Lead Agency	Supporting Agency	Timeframe
Goal 6: A collaborative and innovative Sligo						
Objective 6.1 Increase Collaboration and Innovation across Sligo. *SDG Alignment: SG 17, SDG 16, SDG 9, SDG 8*						
58	Develop specific initiatives to enhance collaboration between Sligo County Council and other government agencies and partners including: **(A)** Establish a collaboration Charter to increase collaboration across Sligo and explore synergies **(ST)** **(B)** Developing an online directory of all agencies in Sligo with details on their role and responsibilities as well as key points of contact **(ST)** **(C)** Advancing the development of a centrally held database for up-to-date socio-economic data for town and county which can also be used to track progress in relation to implementation of local plans e.g., jobs created, number of smart pilot projects progressed **(MT)**	●Increase collaboration within Sligo County Council and amongst agencies ●Reduce duplication, realise synergies, and create the opportunity for innovative thinking	●Collaboration Charter developed ●Centrally held database for up-to-date socio-economic data completed ●Online directory of all agencies created	SEF	SCC, HSE, NTA, IDA, EI, DRCD, WDC, LCDC	ST-MT
59	In line with quadruple helix approach, encourage greater collaboration between Sligo County Council, the local Community, education & training providers and the Private Sector through: **(A)** Exploring mechanisms to increase communication between Sligo County Council and the community through the development of a repository of information for projects in the community, more regular updates including on social media, and more frequent quality events such as a My Council Day/Your County Day and a networking day to facilitate brainstorming for solutions to local problems **(ST)** **(B)** Continuing, enhancing and enabling cooperation and participation through the Sligo Economic Forum, The LCDC and the Sligo Public Participation Network and other community and voluntary organisations **(LT)**	●Aims to increase collaboration between Sligo County Council, the community and the private sector to assist in the development of innovative solutions, increased community and private sector engagement, and improved communication on progress of specific initiatives	●Number of online and traditional media updates ●Number of meetings with the private sector and private sector representatives recorded ●Number of community engagement events held (e.g. My Council Day) ●Number of Sligo County Council Committee and fora meetings held ●Information dashboard created	SCC	SEF, PPN, LCDC, Sligo BID, Sligo Chamber of Commerce, ATU, EI, IDA	ST - LT

| 60 | Build on and increase Sligo's collaboration at regional, national and international level through:
(A) Working with neighbouring counties such as Leitrim, Mayo, Donegal, Roscommon and Fermanagh to approach and address issues in a regional manner and share examples of successful projects
(B) Establishing a mechanism to support the sharing of knowledge and experience (including in the areas of social innovation and social entrepreneurship) between Sligo and European towns and regions facing similar challenges, including other regions in transition, for mutual inspiration and support **(ST)**
(C) Work with the Atlantic Technical University to increase collaboration in education, R&D and innovation at a regional, national and international level (including cross-border) with the aim of increasing skills, attracting talent and securing further investment **(LT)** | ●Aims to increase collaboration and information sharing with the potential to lead to more successful bids for funding, increased investment and improved quality of life | ●Number of regional, national and international collaborations
●Number of meetings with neighbouring and cross-border counties
●Mechanism to support sharing and knowledge with European towns and regions established | SCC | NWRA, ATU, JASPERS, InterTradeIreland, LEO, EI, IDA, WDC, Elected Representatives, SEUPB, ICBAN | ST- LT |
| 61 | Continue to promote the Sligo Brand in line with the Marketing and Communications Strategy and explore the potential for a network of Sligo Brand Ambassadors **(ST)** to sell Sligo's story at a regional, national and international level. | ●Aims to promote Sligo to be a world class place to live green, invest smart and visit sustainably | ●Number of Sligo branded initiatives, articles and events
●Network of Sligo Brand Ambassadors established | SCC | SEF, LCDC, the Media | ST - LT |

9 Monitoring and Evaluation

This chapter sets out the Sligo County Council's approach to accurate high-quality monitoring and evaluation of the Sligo 2030 Strategic Framework. It will provide Sligo County Council and its partners with a strong evidence base to assist decision making and ensure accountability in relation to action owners and supporting agencies.

The monitoring and evaluation of the Sligo 2030 Plan will be key to understanding its success and impact. It will allow Sligo County Council and key partners to learn from past and current actions and identify and understand what works well and why, as well as those actions that have not been as successful as expected. In doing so it will also assist in ensuring efficient allocation of resources and value for money over the life span of the Strategic Framework.
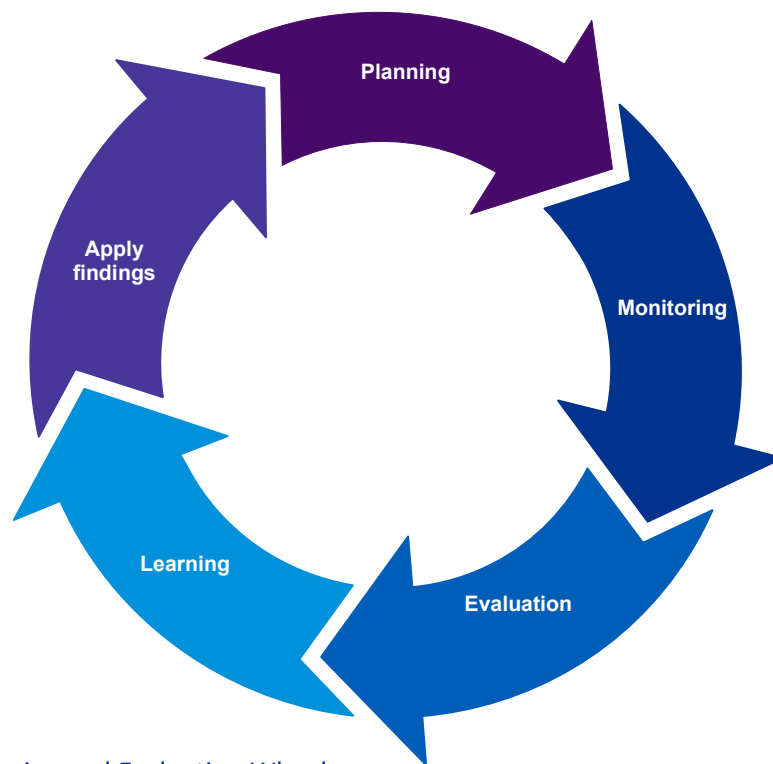
Figure 9.1: Monitoring and Evaluation Wheel

In the context of the revised LECP process there is added impetus to conduct regular and accurate monitoring and evaluation with the adoption of a more flexible Implementation Plan that will be reviewed every two years. This more flexible approach to implementation provides an excellent opportunity to improve the overall impact and success of the Sligo 2030 Plan. Therefore, it is critical that Sligo County Council can identify underperforming actions and learn from mistakes to ensure that good practice is built into subsequent Implementation Plans and future actions.

The following represents the critical foundation to the approach:

• Adopting a needs-driven approach to monitoring and evaluation priorities.

- Having a transparent and open approach to communication and delivering results through successful collaboration with other agencies, education providers, community groups and the private sector where applicable.

- Embedding a culture of ownership within Sligo County Council which incentivises the delivery of high-quality monitoring and evaluation.

9.1 Sligo 2030 Monitoring and Evaluation Approach

The Monitoring and Evaluation framework has been developed in consultation with key partners and the identified owners of actions in the Implementation Plan. In developing the framework Sligo County Council and its partners have:

- Identified the goals, objectives, key desired outcomes and actions.

- Defined KPIs in relation to the actions of the Implementation Plan.

- Agreed methods for gathering the data, identified the sources and the frequency at which the data will be recorded (e.g. monthly, quarterly, annually)

- Identified who will be responsible for tracking indicators (i.e. the data managers)

- Agreed to an approach to gather, distribute and communicate findings with key partners and explore how progress can be communicated to the wider community where applicable.

The overall progress on the goals, objectives and desired outcomes will be monitored by Sligo County Council. To do this, Sligo County Council will liaise on a regular basis with partners that will be responsible for the delivery of the economic and community elements of the plan. As outlined in the Implementation Plan owners and supporting agencies have been identified for each action. It is the owners who will be responsible for reporting on each action and, where relevant and/or necessary, supporting agencies should also input to the reporting.

It is suggested that reporting on progress by action owners be provided twice a year to Sligo County Council. This will occur in advance of the end of Quarter 2 (i.e. before June 30th) and in advance of the end of Quarter 4 (i.e. before 31st December, with a suggestion that early December would be most appropriate). Sligo County Council will ensure that reporting updates are provided by all partners by dates to be agreed in advance. Similarly, it is suggested that the assessment of the overall goals, objectives and desired outcomes be conducted by Sligo County Council annually after receipt of the second update from action owners in Quarter 4. Using the above approach, Sligo County Council will monitor and evaluate progress on the Sligo 2030 Plan and disseminate information on progress and lessons learned as appropriate.

Sligo County Council is also exploring a concept, outlined further below, to develop a dashboard to act as a tool to monitor the progress of the plan which can be inputted to directly by those who are responsible for tracking indicators and progress. The online dashboard would visually display data on the progress of the implementation plan.

9.2 What is being Monitored

In relation to the actions outlined in the Implementation Plan, the monitoring will focus on both the overall action and the related KPIs with adherence given to the specific timeframe outlined in the Implementation Plan. The timeframes are as follows:

— Short term (ST) – to be completed within 2 years.

— Medium term (MT) – to be completed within 5 years.

— Long term (LT) – to be completed by 2030.

The KPIs for each action vary in nature. It includes KPIs that are linked to statistical data provided by the CSO and other agencies that are updated at various intervals (e.g. monthly, quarterly, annually), Census data updated approximately every 5 years, and GeoDirectory data updated quarterly. A number of KPIs are also linked to stakeholder specific data from education and training providers (e.g. information on enrolments, linkages with the private sector and centres of expertise) as well as information related to supported companies and investment by the likes of Enterprise Ireland and IDA. Furthermore, a number of KPIs are action implementation dependent, for example KPIs related to the development of masterplans, feasibility studies, pilot initiatives, cycleways and more. As such, these actions should result in clear reporting on what has or has not been achieved within the specified timeframe. In certain cases, action owners may be required to specifically start recording information in support of the KPIs. This information should then be shared for reporting purposes.

The reporting provided by the action owners will contribute to an overall assessment of progress towards the goals, objectives and desired outcomes for the entire LECP period.

9.3 What will be Reported

Owners of actions will provide a succinct update on progress related to the overall action (and sub-actions) and for each of the related KPIs. Where statistics or data related to the KPIs have yet to be released or updated this should be noted along with the envisaged date that it will be released. Any issues related to the actions should be highlighted in the update. This can include issues with reporting on KPIs or issues in relation to progressing the action. Where such issues arise, the KPI and/or action will be reviewed by Sligo County Council, solutions identified as appropriate and implemented.

The actions and where applicable sub-actions have been coded for ease of reference and reporting. For reporting the following format will be used to refer to the actions: Objective Number, Action Number, Sub-Action Letter (if applicable). For example, the action related to establishing a local supplier network would be 1.1.2.B. For each action, a record must be kept on whether it has been started, in progress, or complete. Where actions have not been started a reason should be provided in the update from the action owner including the envisaged start date if appropriate. Similarly, where actions have been cancelled or not advanced, this should be recorded with a reason outlined as to why this has happened.

As such, at the end of the initial two-year implementation period all actions should have had 4 updates provided by the action owners outlining its status (started/not started, in progress, complete, cancelled), general progress update, KPI reporting information, and any issues encountered.

Similarly, at the end of the initial two-year period, this information can then be used to review and evaluate the Implementation Plan, identify actions that could potentially be replaced and report overall progress through comparison of reporting updates on action status, progress and KPI information provided by the action owners.

9.4   Communicating Progress

As outlined above reporting on progress is broken into two interlinked streams:

— Reporting on the actions by action owners which will occur twice a year in advance of the end of Quarter 2 (i.e. before June 30th) and in advance of the end of Quarter 4 (i.e. before 31st December, with a suggestion that early December would be most appropriate).

— Reporting on overall progress towards the goals, objectives and desired outcomes by Sligo County Council through, information from and comparison of, reporting updates on the actions by the action owners. This will be conducted annually after receipt of the second update by action owners in Quarter 4.

Information from both interlinked streams will be shared with owners and key stakeholders, such as the SEF, LCDC, and the SPC for Planning, Community & Economic Development, Arts & Culture as appropriate. However, Sligo County Council are also exploring the concept of developing an interactive dashboard that could communicate general progress to a wider audience including the public.

While the concept is still in development this dashboard could collate selected data from action owners using form submission to generate data visualisations for general public use. At a high-level the dashboard could allow for an overview of progress highlighting the percentage of actions started (in-progress) and percentage of actions completed as well as quantitative information related to selected KPIs and desired outcomes for both economic and community elements of the plan e.g. the commercial vacancy rate, number of cycle paths built, number of investments attracted, number of social enterprises supported, number of rural areas serviced by public transport.

The dashboard could also allow for easy access to linked Goals, Objectives and Actions, highlighting their alignment with and linking to the UN SDGs, as well as allowing users to view associated updates on action activity directly inputted by action owners. Furthermore, the dashboard could highlight to Sligo County Council underperforming actions through an early warning system that identifies actions that have repeatedly not progressed, further adding to Sligo County Council's ability to monitor and evaluate the Implementation Plan in an efficient manner.

9.5 Data Sources to Support Monitoring

The below is a small selection of data sources that will be used to support the monitoring and evaluation of the LECP framework and Implementation Plan:

Census Information

Information provided from Census 2022 and future censuses will contribute greatly to monitoring quantitative progress in relation to a number of elements, particularly in relation to overarching goals and desired outcomes. This includes population information, level of employment, principal economic status, means of travel, general health assessment, educational attainment, household access to internet and more.

Business Demography

The business demography, updated annually, provides information on enterprises, enterprise births and deaths and survival rates and related employment figures. It can be used to update information on employment growth by enterprise sector/category.

CSO New dwelling Completion

The CSO's New Dwelling Completions data is based on the number of domestic dwellings connected by the ESB Network to the electricity supply. Updated quarterly, it can be used to assess increases in housing supply in Sligo over the entire duration of the LECP.

Pobal HP Deprivation Index

The Pobal HP Deprivation Index shows the level of overall affluence and deprivation at the level of electoral division along with associated deprivation scores. The latest version of the index is based on the 2016 Census. However, it is expected that it will be updated following the publication of the 2022 Census with further iterations of the Deprivation Index to follow future Censuses.

GeoDirectory

The GeoDirectory provides information on a quarterly basis on commercial vacancy at county and town level and can be used to track changes in the commercial vacancy in Sligo. This can be supplemented with data from town centre health checks should they be undertaken in Sligo during the lifetime of the new LECP.

HEA Enrolments by HEI Region/Home County

The Higher Education Authority provides information, updated annually, on enrolments by county. This includes data on institution, course level and mode of study amongst other areas.

Live Register

The Live Register provides information on a monthly basis in relation to those seeking jobseekers benefit and jobseekers allowance and includes county level information. Notably it is not designed to measure unemployment as it includes part-time, seasonal and casual workers that maybe entitled to jobseekers benefit and allowance.

Labour Force Survey (LFS)

The Labour Force Survey replaced the Quarterly Household Survey and provides labour force estimates in relation to measure of employment and unemployment in the country including by region. It is updated quarterly.

Social Inclusion Analysis Reports (SICAP)

SICAP release annual Social Inclusion Analysis Reports by county including indicators and identified trends around specific target groups including those from minority groups, the unemployed and older people. This information can be used in relation the monitoring, evaluation and planning of the Implementation Plans and overarching LECP.

10   Appendices

10.1   Appendix A – Summary of Key Data Sources

Below is a summary list of key data sources used in the development of the socio-economic profile and associated revised socio-economic statement.

Name	Use Case	Data source	Website (if appropriate)
2016 and 2011 Census	Demographic Profile, Population Density, Population Change, Employment Profile, Households Profile etc.	Central Statistics Office	https://www.cso.ie/en/census/census2016reports/census2016smallarea populationstatistics/
Residential Indicators	Characteristics of Residential Property Purchasers 2010-2019	Central Statistics Office	https://www.cso.ie/en/csolatestnews/presspages/2021/characteristicsofr esidentialpropertypurchasers2010-2019/
	House Prices - Residential Property Price Index Breakdown	Central Statistics Office	https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/ep/p-rppi/residentialpropertypriceindexseptember2021/
POWSCAR	Census 2016 Place of Work, School or College - Census of Anonymised Records (POWSCAR)	Central Statistics Office	n/a
Employment and unemployment	Labour Force Survey - Q2 2020	Central Statistics Office	https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/er/lfs/labourforcesurveyl fsquarter22020/
	Live Register	Central Statistics Office	https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/er/mue
Transport	Transport infrastructure	Ordnance Survey Ireland	www.osi.ie
	Car registrations	Central Statistics Office	https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/er/vlftm/vehicleslicensed forthefirsttimejune2021/
Geodirectory	Resource identification	Client	n/a
	Housing Facilities, commercial properties	Client	n/a
	Vacant properties	Client	n/a
	Enterprises by category and traded cluster	Client	n/a
IDA	Distribution of registered IDA locations, Employment in IDA companies	IDA	n/a
Enterprise Ireland	Employment in EI Client Companies 2020	Enterprise Ireland	n/a
Pobal	Deprivation indices	Pobal	https://maps.pobal.ie/

Fáilte Ireland	Identify the main tourist locations	Fáilte Ireland	https://www.failteireland.ie/Research-Insights/Open-data.aspx
Heritage	Extract the main Heritage and Cultural sites	Heritage Council of Ireland	https://www.heritagemaps.ie/WebApps/HeritageMaps/index.html
	Architectural Conservation Area and assets of the Register of Protected Structures	Client	n/a
Social infrastructure	Medical Centres, Community Parks/Gardens	Open Street Maps	https://www.openstreetmap.ie/resources/data/
	Educational establishments	Open Street Maps	https://www.openstreetmap.ie/resources/data/
	Amenity and leisure assets	Open Street Maps	https://www.openstreetmap.ie/resources/data/
NPWS	Biodiversity boundaries for designated sites	National Parks and Wildlife Service	https://www.npws.ie/maps-and-data/designated-site-data
Sligo County Council	Completed and Proposed Developments for infrastructure and amenity	Client	n/a
	Listing of planned projects to enhance existing infrastructure	Client	n/a
	Commercial and residential planning pipeline	Client	n/a
	Digital services and infrastructure	Client	n/a
Sligo LEO	Identify Spaces which could be provided as working hubs	Client	n/a

10.2   Appendix B – Policy Review List

Below is a list of policies, strategies, and briefing notes that have been reviewed and influenced the development of this plan. The list is provided in alphabetical order.

1   A Region in Transition: The Way Forward (Northern and Western Regional Assembly, 2020)

2   Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures: The National Policy Framework for Children and Young People, 2014-2020

3   Building a Culture of Sports and Physical Activity in Sligo – 2018-2023.

4   Circular Economy, Waste Management and Minerals Development Bill 2022,

5   Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Bill 2021

6   Climate Action Plan 2019

7   Climate Action Plan 2021

8   Climate Ready Sligo: Sligo County Council Climate Adaptation Strategy 2019-2024

9   Sligo County Council Tourism Strategy 2018-2023

10 County Sligo Diaspora Strategy 2019-2024

11 County Sligo Heritage Plan 2016-2020

12 Delivering Effective Climate Action 2030

13 Draft Sligo Local Enterprise Office Development Plan Framework 2021-2024

14 Europe 2020 and post-2020 Cohesion Policy for Europe

15 European Green Deal (2019)

16 Handbook of Sustainable Urban Development Strategies (2020)

17 Healthy Ireland Framework 2013-2025 / Healthy Ireland Strategic Action Plan 2021-2025

18 Housing for All – A New Housing Plan for Ireland 2021

19 Investing in Our Transport Future: A Strategic Investment Framework for Land Transport (2014)

20 Ireland's National Recovery and Resilience Plan 2021

21 Local Link Rural Transport Programme Strategic Plan 2018 – 2022

22 Migrant Integration Strategy – A Blueprint for the Future (2017)

23 National Social Enterprise Policy for Ireland 2019-2022

24 National Sports Policy 2018 – 2027

25 National Transport Authority Statement of Strategy 2018-2022

26 North-West Regional Enterprise Plan to 2024

27 NWRA LECP Briefing Note for Sligo County Council 2022

28 NWRA Regional and Spatial Economic Strategy 2020 – 2032 (Transport Priorities)

29 Our Rural Future - Rural Development Policy 2021-2025

30 PEACE PLUS Programme 2021-2027

31 Project Ireland 2040: National Development Plan 2021 – 2030

32 Project Ireland 2040: National Planning Framework (2018)

33 Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Northern and Western Region 2020-2032

34 Roadmap for Social Inclusion 2020-2025: Ambition, Goals, Commitments

35 Sligo Age Friendly Strategy 2016-2020

36 Sligo and Leitrim Children and Young People's Services Committee: Children and Young People's Plan 2017-2019

37 Sligo Arts Plan 2020-2025: Sustain, Renew, Collaborate

38 Sligo Brand Marketing and Communications Strategy 2020-2025

39 Sligo City Centre Public Realm Action Plan (2018)

40 Sligo Corporate Plan 2020-2024

41 Sligo County Council – Disability, Inclusion and Access Strategy 2019-2022

42 Sligo County Development Plan 2017-2023

43 Sligo Culture and Creativity Strategy 2018 – 2022

44 Sligo Digital Strategy 2020-2023

45 Sligo Smart City Roadmap (2019, unpublished)

46 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

10.3 Appendix C – Note on Screening for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Appropriate Assessment

This Plan has been subject to Screening for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Appropriate Assessment (AA) and is accompanied by the following related documents:

- Screening for SEA Report;
- Screening for SEA Determination;
- Screening for AA Report; and
- Screening for AA Determination.

Screening for SEA is the process for deciding whether a particular plan or programme, other than those for which SEA is mandatory, would be likely to have significant environmental effects, and would thus warrant SEA. Screening determines whether the Plan would, or would not, be likely to have significant environmental effects, taking into account relevant criteria set out under the SEA Directive [Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of Ministers, of 27th June 2001, on the Assessment of the Effects of Certain Plans and Programmes on the Environment] and transposing Regulations [European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004 (SI No. 435 of 2004) amended by the European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) (Amendment) Regulations 2011 (SI No. 200 of 2011)]; and therefore would, or would not, necessitate the undertaking of SEA.

Screening for AA is the process for process that identifies any likely impacts upon a European site of a project or plan, either alone or in combination with other projects or plans, and considers whether these impacts, if any, are likely to be significant. The identification of such impacts would necessitate further, Stage 2 AA (including the preparation of a Natura Impact Statement). Screening or AA for this Plan is required under Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora (as amended) and the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (as amended).

10.4   Appendix D – List of Acronyms

AA - Appropriate Assessment

AEC - Atlantic Economic Corridor

AIM - Advancing Innovation in Manufacturing & Supply Chain

ASG - Advisory Steering Group

ATU - Atlantic Technological University

BER - Building Energy Rating

BORMAC - the Border Region Manufacturing Cluster

CARO - Climate Action Regional Office

CDP - City/County Development Plan

CERIS - the Centre for Environmental Research Innovation and Sustainability

CLÁR programme - Ceantair Laga Árd-Riachtanais

CRiSP - the Centre for Research in Social Professions

CSLPclg - County Sligo LEADER Partnership CLG

CSO - Central Statistics Office

CTCHC - Collaborative Town Centre Health Check

CURWMO - Connacht Ulster Regional Waste Management Office

CYPSC - Children and Young People's Services Committee

DAFM - Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine

DEASP - Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection

DECC - Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications

DETE - Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment

DHLGH - Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage

DOE - Department of Education

DOJ - Department of Justice

DRCD - Department of Rural and Community Development

DSP - Department of Social Protection

EC - European Commission

ED - Electoral Division

EI - Enterprise Ireland

EIA - Environmental Impact Assessment

EIB - European Investment Bank

EIS - Environmental Impact Statement

EPA - Environmental Protection Agency

ERDF - European Regional Development Fund

ESB - Electricity Supply Board

ESRI - Economic and Social Research Institute

ETB - Education and Training Board

EU - European Union

FDI - Foreign Direct Investment

FRC - Family Resource Centre

GAA - Gaelic Athletic Association

GDPR - General Data Protection Regulation

GHG - Greenhouse Gas

GMIT - Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology

Green economy - e.g. renewable energy and retrofitting.

GSI - Geological Survey of Ireland

HEA - Higher Education Authority

HEAL - the Health and Biomedical Research Centre

HI - Healthy Ireland

HNDA - Housing Needs Demand Assessment

HSE - Health Service Executive

IBEC - Irish Business and Employers Confederation

ICBAN - Irish Central Border Area Network

ICMSA - Irish Creamery Milk Suppliers Association

ICT - Information and communications technology

IDA - Industrial Development Agency

IFA - Irish Farmers' Association

Industry 4.0 - e.g. smart and autonomous manufacturing.

INHFA - Irish Natura & Hill Farmers Association

INTERREG - European Territorial Co-operation European Territorial Cooperation

IoT - Internet of Things

JASPERS - Joint Assistance to Support Projects in European Regions

JPC - Joint Policing Committee

KPI - Key Performance Indicator

LA - Local Authority

LAG - Local Action Group

NGBs - National Governing Bodies of Sport

LAP - Local Area Plan

LCDC - Local Community Development Committee

LDC - Local Development Company

LDS - Local Development Strategy

LEADER - Liaison Entre Actions de Développement de l'Économie Rurale – meaning Links between actions for the development of the rural economy

LECP - Local Economic and Community Plan

LEO - Local Enterprise Office

LFS - Labour Force Survey

LT - Long term actions to be completed by 2030 or ongoing.

LYIT - Letterkenny Institute of Technology

MABS - The Money Advice and Budgeting Service

MD - Municipal District

MISHE - the Mathematical Modelling and Intelligent Systems for Health and Environment

MSLETB - Sligo, Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim Education and Training Board

MT - Medium term actions to be completed within 5 years.

NDP - National Development Plan

NECP - National Energy and Climate Plan

NERP - National Economic Recovery Plan

NGO - Non-Governmental Organisation

NHA - Natural Heritage Area

NPF - National Planning Framework

NPWS - National Parks and Wildlife Service

NQF - National Framework of Qualifications

NRRP - National Recovery and Resilience Plan

NSO - National Strategic Outcomes

NTA - National Transport Authority

NUIG - National University of Ireland, Galway

NUTS - Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics

NWJHCF - North West Joint Homelessness Consultative Forum

NWRA - Northern and Western Regional Assembly

NWRDATF - Northwest Regional Drug & Alcohol Task Force

NYCI - National Youth Council of Ireland

OECD - Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development

OPW - Office of Public Works

ORIS - Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme

PEM - Precision Engineering Materials and Manufacturing Centre

POWSCAR - Place of Work, School or College - Census of Anonymised Records.

PPN - Public Participation Network

R&D - Research and Development

RA - Regional Assembly

REP - Regional Enterprise Plan

RRDF - Rural Regeneration and Development Fund

RSES - Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy

SAC - Special Area of Conservation

SCC - Sligo County Council

SCO - Sustainable Community Objective

SCORE - Smart Control of Climate Resilience in European Coastal Cities

SCOT - Strengths, Challenges, Opportunities, and Threats

SDG - Sustainable Development Goal

SDZ - Strategic Development Zone

SEA - Strategic Environmental Assessment

SEAI - Sustainable Energy Authority Of Ireland

SEC - Sustainable Energy Community

SEDO - Sustainable Economic Development Objective

SEF - Sligo Economic Forum

SEUPB - Special EU Programmes Body

SFI - Science Foundation Ireland

SICAP - Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme

SIPTU - Services Industrial Professional and Technical Union

Sligo BID - Sligo Business Improvement District

SMART - Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Timely

SME - Small-to-Medium Enterprise

SPA - Special Protection Area

SPC - Strategic Policy Committee

SSRP - Sligo Sport and Recreation Partnership

ST - Short term actions to be completed within 2 years.

SVC - Sligo Volunteer Centre

TII - Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII).

UN - United Nations

UNESCO - United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

URDF - Urban Regeneration and Development Fund

WDC - Western Development Commission

WERLA - Waste Enforcement Regional Lead Authority

WHU - World Heritage Site Unit