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City and County Enterprise Boards Action Plan under Towards 2016

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| City and County Enterprise Boards Action Plan under Towards 2016 | <u>SLIGO COUNTY ENTERPRISE BOARD</u> | | |
| Commitment | Action(s) | Target Date(s) | Performance Indicators |
| Enhancing Ireland's Competitive Advantage in a Changing World Economy and Building Sustainable Social and Economic Development | | | |
| Promotion of Entrepreneurship | <p>Action: Provide financial support to micro-enterprises.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide statistical information on the number of enterprises in receipt of financial support i.e. Capital Grant, Employment Grant, Feasibility Grant (grants paid) <p>Action: Provide non-financial supports to micro-enterprise.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide commentary on the range of advisory/training supports available and target groups • Provide statistical information on the number of participants at CEB training and advisory courses (Measure 2) <p>Action: Assist micro-enterprises in job creation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide statistical information on the number of net jobs created for the reporting period in question (i.e. reporting periods under T16) <p>Action: Additional activities to promote entrepreneurship</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide commentary and back-up data as appropriate on ancillary activities undertaken to promote entrepreneurship (e.g. National Enterprise Awards, CEB involvement in Programmes such as EMERGE, PLATO, BRITE, Micro-Trade, Skillnets, Shell Livewire etc.) | Ongoing | Significant <i>ongoing</i> levels of support provided to existing and potential micro-enterprises. New businesses assisted in setting up. Existing businesses facilitated in expansion and growth of their business. |

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| | <p><u>Progress</u></p> <p>21 enterprises drew down grants/refundable aid and ten new jobs were created by the businesses that received grant aid in the reporting period (it goes without saying that this figure understates the jobs that will be created by these businesses in due course)</p> <p>Among the ancillary initiatives aimed at promoting entrepreneurship are the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - involvement with Skillnets through the 315 Foods network, established in conjunction with Leitrim, Donegal and Cavan County Enterprise Boards and providing practical subsidised training to food businesses throughout the region; - Active promotion of the National Enterprise Awards to micro-businesses throughout County Sligo, as evidenced by a client Company of the Board's, Technical Ideas.com, finishing as runner up in last years National Enterprise Awards (one of two runner-up companies in the awards in recent years). See: http://www.sligoenterprise.ie/latest_news ; - The Board promotes the Shell Livewire and the Intertrade All-Island Seedcorn Business Competition to its clients; - The Board works closely with Microtrade, as evidenced by the attendance of a number of Sligo businesses at the Microtrade All-island Business Networking event, held in Citywest last year. See http://www.sligoenterprise.ie/latest_news ; - The Board contributes to a monthly "Enterprise Page" in the main local paper; - Appropriate advertising is conducted, press releases issued, radio interviews given on occasion, some national press coverage is achieved on occasion and limited radio advertising has been | | |
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| | <p>conducted with cross-border funding but which, inter alia, promoted the activities of the Board and entrepreneurship;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Participation at various events including taking stands, distributing flyers, etc;- Direct promotion of entrepreneurship and the services of the Board by its staff when attending various events. <p>Further detail on promotion of entrepreneurship is set out in Appendix 1.</p> | | |
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| <p>Development of a <i>local</i> Enterprise Culture and promotion of Regional Development through co-operation with other local groups/agencies</p> | <p>Action: Co-operate with other local groups/agencies involved in enterprise development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outline the principal commitments and targets contained in the CEB Annual Plan and/or Local Area Action Plan and report on progress being made against these targets. • Provide details, as appropriate, on CEB participation on the local County Development Board and involvement in its activities • Outline, as appropriate, CEB input into the County Development Plan • Provide commentary and detail, where appropriate, on co-operation with LEADER • Provide commentary and detail, where appropriate, on co-operation on North-South activities <p><u>Progress</u></p> <p>Please see Appendix 2 regarding information sought under first bullet point. The CEO participates at meetings of the County Development Board. He has previously chaired one of its committees and prepared a paper on entrepreneurship (prior to this reporting period). He has agreed with the Director at the most recent CDB meeting held to assist in an exercise involving the CDB and an organisation in Portadown, Co. Armagh.</p> <p>The CEB has been asked for input into the most recent County Development Plan and into an Area Action Plan (prior to this reporting period) and has contributed to both.</p> <p>The CEB has a good working relationship with Leader. The CEO sits on two of its three Boards (in Sligo, there has for many years been a Joint Leader-Partnership Company) and the A/CEO sits on its Evaluation Committee. The fact that there is a “one-stop shop” in Sligo with Leader and</p> | <p>Ongoing</p> | <p>Co-operative approach to the delivery of enterprise supports achieved as much as possible. Enterprise culture embedded in the local area.</p> |
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| | <p>the CEB accommodated in the same building ensures regular contact. Both agencies have met to consider our respective roles going forward – as the Leader programme was not then finalised in Brussels, there was uncertainty on their part regarding their prospective role. It is the strong hope of the Board that clear lines of differentiation of roles for both organisations will be agreed at national level in advance of Leader’s next tranche of funding coming on stream.</p> <p>With regard to North/South issues, the Board plays a strong part. The CEO is an active participant on the Omagh-Sligo Partnership. The Board is involved with Tradelinks and Micro-Trade and has completed ICT programmes with Strabane (last one concluded prior to the reporting period). Currently, we are exploring opportunities with North Down and the Northern Ireland Science Park (have not previously worked directly with either of these agencies) as well as Omagh and Fermanagh.</p> | | |
| Implementation of the Small Business Forum Recommendations | <p>Action: Deliver the ICT Audits Programme “Teck-Check”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report on the progress made with information seminars • Report on the progress made in selecting mentors • Report on the number of applications received and accepted • Report on the number of “Tech-Check” visits completed <p>Progress Initial work has commenced within the reporting period on progressing this Initiative. The Board will adhere to the guidelines being developed by the ICT Committee, etc.</p> | December 2007 & December 2008 | Tech-Check Programme delivered |
| Promote enterprise within education system | <p>Action: Deliver an Enterprise Education Programme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report on number of students and schools engaged in CEB led enterprise education activities, in particular, the Student Enterprise Award scheme | Ongoing | Increased exposure of students to an enterprise culture |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide commentary and details on <i>all</i> enterprise education activities including promotional type activities • Provide information on actions being taken to increase level of activity in enterprise education by end of academic year 2007/2008 <p><u>Progress</u></p> <p>In the recent school year, Sligo County Enterprise Board worked with 5 Schools who participated fully in the Student Enterprise Awards Scheme. Progress included the involvement of 187 students in setting up 30 mini-companies. Further details: www.sligoenterprise.ie/latest_news The County was represented at all levels (Junior, Intermediate and Senior) at the recent National Final of the Student Enterprise Awards.</p> <p>The Board liaises closely with the Institute of Technology, Sligo on a number of issues.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A number of embryonic businesses which are clients of the Board have been placed as tenants of the Institute’s Business Innovation Centre (B.I.C.) where they can avail of technical and academic backup; - The Board is represented on the B.I.C.’s Management Committee; - The Board’s activities are promoted to students periodically including through the Institute’s annual ‘careers fair’ for its Students; - The Board contributes periodically to the Institute’s magazine for alumni. <p>The Board also has on-going contact with St. Angela’s College, Sligo on a number of issues and takes limited advertising in a number of schools publications (at all levels).</p> | April 2008 | |
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| | <p>- Increasing activities further</p> <p>A number of options are currently being explored including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - meeting teachers from schools with a weak participation record in the Student Enterprise Awards in order to ascertain what can be done to ensure future participation; - exploring the possibility of co-operating with a neighbouring Enterprise Board re: joint delivery of student enterprise to second level schools (it is likely that further correspondence will issue to the Department on this matter shortly); - organisation of an ‘Introduction to the Student Enterprise Programme’ meeting with teachers from all second level schools in the County at the beginning of the School year, 2007-2008; - offering increased incentives to participating students/teachers. | | |
| <p>Promotion of female entrepreneurship</p> | <p>Action: Facilitate increased female entrepreneurship</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report on all activities to promote female entrepreneurship (Women in Business networks, CEB involvement in Programmes such as EQUAL II etc.) • Report on female participation numbers on both generalised training and advisory courses and on initiatives targeted at females • Report on female participation numbers in the Student Enterprise Award scheme <p>Progress</p> <p>Sligo County Enterprise Board has an active ‘Women in Business’ Network, which was established in September 2004. The initiative aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - maintain a Business network within which women, already in business or considering starting up, will have an opportunity to share experiences; - create and foster a female entrepreneurial culture; | <p>Ongoing</p> | <p>Increased participation by females in CEB led initiatives</p> |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- create an enterprise environment for potential women entrepreneurs which will encourage more women to become involved in starting up their own businesses;- provide an ongoing programme of activities on business related topics and entrepreneurial skills. <p>The Network has approximately 90 members, and meets on the 3rd Tuesday of every month. A sample of activities undertaken in the period under review include:</p> <p>2x Training Sessions on Health & Safety (February 2007)</p> <p>A Management Development Programme was also offered to Network Members. 9 Business Topics were covered in 11 sessions. The programme ended in late April of this year. Topics covered included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Strategy & Planning (2 sessions)- Finance & taxation (2 sessions)- Negotiation Skills- Presentation Skills- Communicating Effectively- Systems & Procedures- Developing a Marketing Plan- Time Management- Managing Staff <p>Appendix 3 outlines the information required under the second and third bullet points.</p> | | |
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| Public Service Pay and Related Issues and Chapter IX on Public Service Modernisation | | | |
| Co-operation with modernisation, flexibility and change management initiatives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide confirmation of co-operation with the CSU • Provide commentary on the various work methods employed to ensure efficient delivery of services e.g. the overall business information type service offered by CEBs through telephone, email and face-to-face interactions <p><u>Progress</u> The Board looks forward to interacting with the CSU and to the supportive role that it will provide. Services are provided by the Board through client meetings, telephone, e-mail, website, brochures/flyers and in writing. We continue to add to our database of clients to whom all advertisements placed in newspapers for courses, etc. are circulated. In addition, interventions ranging from supports available through cross-border programmes in which the Board is involved through to issues that come to our attention from organisations such as Enterprise Ireland (e.g. Transform Programme), InterTradeIreland (e.g., seedcorn programme), Sustainable Energy Ireland (cost reductions through better environmental technologies) etc. are circulated through this medium.</p> | Ongoing | Modernisation initiatives progressed |
| Maintenance of stable Industrial Relations and a well-managed industrial relations environment to minimise disputes affecting the | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirm the absence of industrial action • Confirm that no cost increasing claims for improvements in pay or conditions of employment other than those provided in T16 have been made | Ongoing for reporting periods under T16 | Absence of industrial action |

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| <p>level of service to the public.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Report on processes and practices being employed to ensure the promotion of stable industrial relations and effective communication channels exist to seek to resolve problems before they escalate into industrial disputes e.g. regular staff briefing sessions <p><u>Progress</u> No industrial action during the period. Cost increasing claims in pay or conditions of employment have not been made during the period (Dept. is involved in the ongoing progress that is being achieved regarding pension and sick leave schemes). Regular staff meetings are held within the Board during which all staff are encouraged to place items on the agenda for discussion (it is established practice that matters that staff wish to discuss are accommodated).</p> | | |
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| <p>Co-operation with Team Working and Cross Functional Working initiatives</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each CEB to report on their level of participation in the work of any of the Regional Committees and/or the various network Committees (e.g. PR Committee, IT Committee etc.) <p><u>Progress</u> Participation by staff on sub-committees of the CEO Association is as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEO participates on the Enterprise Support Committee and the Salaries Committee and served on the National Executive of the Association for part of the reporting period. • Asst. CEO is participating on the National Women in Enterprise Day Committee. | <p>Ongoing</p> | <p>Established system of cross-functional working across the CEB network which assists in the smooth operation of the CEB network as a whole and in the delivery of services</p> |
| <p>Co-operation with introduction and utilisation of New Technology & eGovernment</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report on any new developments in delivery of services through new technology • Provide commentary and details, as appropriate, of actions taken to promote ebusiness amongst the micro-enterprise sector • Provide commentary and details, as appropriate, of improvements to the CEB Network Website • Provide commentary and details, as appropriate, to individual CEB Website improvements • Report on adherence to PMS Reporting requirements i.e. confirm accurate completion of all monthly records <p><u>Progress</u> For several years we have been expanding our group-mail database of clients to whom ads placed in newspapers and other relevant information is circulated – this is continuing. We accept applications for several of our interventions electronically (manual signature required prior to formal</p> | <p>Ongoing</p> | <p>Improved delivery of services through ongoing utilisation of technology and promotion of ebusiness amongst the micro-enterprise sector</p> |

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| | <p>approval) and various application forms are available on our website. Our most recent improvement to the Board's website involved enhancing its access for the disabled.</p> <p>Subject to human error in exceptional cases, PMS records are updated accurately.</p> | | |
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| Ongoing delivery of the Business Planning process | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirm completion of the Business Plan Confirm completion of the mid-term Business Plan Review <p><u>Progress</u> Business plan completed.</p> | 1 st qtr end 2 nd Qtr | Business plan completed and mid-term review completed |
| Ongoing delivery of PMDS : CEB Staff Performance Targets | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirm Role Profiles prepared and signed off Confirm Interim Reviews conducted Confirm Annual Reviews conducted <p><u>Progress</u> Role profiles pre-date T2016. These were reviewed in the first quarter and interim reviews have recently been conducted.</p> | 1 st qtr end 2 nd qtr end 4 th qtr | Ongoing delivery of PMDS |
| Ongoing delivery of PMDS : Staff Training and Development Plan | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide commentary and details of any relevant staff training and development provided <p><u>Progress</u> Staff received training on manual handling and training on use of defibrillation equipment (via Sligo County Council) has recently been made available to them. Training made available through the Human Resources Committee on finance and personal development has been availed of by the Asst. CEO (regrettably CEO was unable to participate on the training made available through that Committee aimed at CEOs). Training on efficient dealing with clients was offered to our clerical officer, accepted and subsequently declined.</p> <p>Generally speaking, staff may participate on training programmes geared towards clients of the Board.</p> | Ongoing | CEB staff provided with relevant training and development opportunities |
| Compliance with Departmental Guidelines in relation to HR practices | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirm that all posts filled during the reporting period have been filled in accordance with Departmental instructions Confirm that all staff are in receipt of a signed up-to-date contract the terms of which are in accordance with Departmental instructions and subject to Departmental approval | Ongoing | HR practices across the CEB network are in accordance with public sector best practice |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Report on the preparation and/or updating of a HR Manual which is available to all staff <p><u>Progress</u> One post only filled during the reporting period (in accordance with Departmental instructions). Written contracts for CEO, Asst. CEO and Business Adviser expired on 31 December, 2006. Draft contract for CEO approved by the Board at end May and subsequently submitted to the Department. A comprehensive HR manual is at planning stage.</p> | 2 nd qtr 2008 | |
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| <p>Co-operation with the implementation of the Sectoral Plan on Disability</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide information on actions taken to improve access to CEB services for people with disabilities where a need has been identified <p><u>Progress</u> We previously reported under Sustaining Progress that special signage to assist blind persons was installed in the building and that one of our staff is accommodated in the downstairs section of our building to facilitate persons with impaired mobility. Website has been upgraded in the period to facilitate persons with visual impairment. The CEO, the Director of Community and Enterprise and Leader met the landlord of our shared building earlier this year and advised him, inter alia, that if a lift is not installed, we will have to seek alternative accommodation given our responsibilities in the context of disability legislation. While there would be challenges in finding a suitable building capable of facilitating our current “one-stop shop” in Sligo, our landlord is clear regarding the priority we attach to obligations under current disability provisions.</p> | <p>Ongoing</p> | <p>Access to CEB facilities available to all prospective clients</p> |
| <p>Ongoing improvement in the delivery of services to the Public</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report against commitments in the Customer Service Charter and on any complaints handled under the formal Complaints Procedure • Confirm compliance with the Code of Business Conduct (as set out in Appendix 4 of the Procedures Manual) • Provide commentary, and details as appropriate, on the range of customer enquiries dealt with as part of the service to the Public • Report on any improvements to facilities and services for customers in general but also with reference to any specific group where particular targeted actions may be required • Report on adherence to the Official Languages Act (where necessary) <p><u>Progress</u> Commitments in the Customer Service Charter have been met. There were no complaints handled under the formal Complaints</p> | <p>Ongoing</p> | <p>Targeted delivery of services to the Public</p> |

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| | <p>Procedure. The Board is in compliance with the Code of Business Conduct and adheres to the Official Languages Act as appropriate.</p> <p>The Board deals with a broad range of customer enquiries, ranging simply from persons trying to determine how precisely the Board may be able to assist them, content and other matters relating to courses, etc. to more complex areas such as advice on employment legislation, financial issues, cross-border trading, etc. Board staff may provide advice directly, point customers to suitable training courses, mentoring, re-direct them to more appropriate organisations, advise generally where appropriate on the types of assistance available from other organisations that might be more suitable to their needs, etc.</p> <p>Advice is imparted over the telephone, by meetings, through our website, through our group-mail system to clients, by affording access to our business reference material for research, by providing (through cross-border funding) access to a researcher to source material sought and identified by clients as being important to their individual needs, etc. Customer enquiries are usually dealt with by the Business Executive. Where appropriate, they can also be dealt with by the C.E.O./Asst. C.E.O. Queries which can be dealt with promptly are handled within a very short time frame. Where a face-to-face meeting is deemed the most appropriate course of action, an appointment is arranged at a time and date of the customer's convenience (the business adviser had 56 such meetings over the period of which 14 were eligible for grant aid, 5 applications were made and approved; 4 are pending and 6 mentoring assignments were made). Advice and assistance is given to all customers as appropriate. Customers whose business does not comply with grant criteria are made aware of the wide range of other sources of support which the Board offers to all micro-businesses within Co. Sligo and,</p> | | |
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| | <p>where appropriate, more appropriate forms of assistance that may be available from other agencies.</p> <p>Our office, which is not modern, was re-decorated last December for the first time in many years and looks much better than had been the case.</p> <p>With regard to sectoral initiatives, please see previous section on disability. Also, we are providing targeted delivery of services through our:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">women's network (supported with cross-border funding and involving, inter alia, liaison with networks in the North);ethnic groups through a Start Your Own Business Course delivered in English and Russian; and(3) persons from disadvantaged backgrounds hoping to start a business through a cross-border programme. | | |
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| <p>Compliance with Departmental guidelines on financial reporting practices</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirm compliance with principal financial reporting requirements of the Department • Confirm compliance with financial control procedures set out in Section 4 of the Procedures Manual and in the Operating Agreement and provide relevant details in relation to the areas covered • Confirm compliance with the procedures set out in Section 3 of the Procedures Manual concerning EU Regulations <p><u>Progress</u> Compliance with financial reporting requirements of the Department and financial control procedures confirmed. The C&AG audit has recently been finalised – no issues raised by way of management letter. The Board is of the view that it is compliant with requirements under EU regulations (an irregularity report was filed to correct a practice by the Board of including certain superannuation payments on B1s after a conference by the BMW Assembly highlighted difficulties with the practice – nothing else emerged at that conference or in other fora that suggests there are any other issues that should be of concern to us in an EU regulatory context).</p> | <p>Ongoing</p> | <p>Efficient and consistent financial controls and procedures in operation across the CEB network</p> |
| <p>Compliance with Corporate Governance Best Practice</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirm compliance with the Code of Best Practice for Corporate Governance in a CEB (as set out in the Procedures Manual) and provide relevant details in relation to the areas covered by the Code of Best Practice • Report on the timely submission of Annual Reports and Annual Accounts in accordance with Departmental guidelines (provide information on any external factors which impinge on this) • Report on any follow-up undertaken on foot of C&AG Management Letters • Confirm compliance with the Ethics Act where relevant • Confirm that reporting obligations under FOI Act have been met <p><u>Progress</u></p> | <p>Ongoing</p> <p>3rd qtr</p> <p>4th qtr</p> <p>end Jan 2008</p> | <p>Consistent compliance with Corporate Governance best practice</p> |

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| | <p>The Board is in compliance with the Code of Best Practice for Corporate Governance. In particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• there were no significant acquisitions, disposals or retirement of assets during the period;• joint ventures were not entered into and shares were not acquired;• directors/evaluation committee members were not remunerated;• a register of interests was maintained;• directors absent themselves from decisions where there may be a conflict of interest – this is minuted and note circulated to fellow directors advising of any instances where a director will absent himself/herself. | Ongoing | |
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Action: Provide non-financial supports to micro-enterprise.

- Provide commentary on the range of advisory/training supports available and target groups

SCEB provides an on-going advisory service to both existing and potential clients.

During the period, SCEB organised the following types of training Programmes:

| Programme Title | Programme Description | No. of Participants |
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| Start your own Business | Provides an introduction to the key knowledge and skills necessary to effectively plan and start-up a small business (6 x 3 hour sessions, I.L.M. accredited) | 14 |
| Start your own Business (through Russian & English, aimed at Eastern Europeans) | Provides an introduction to the key knowledge and skills necessary to effectively plan and start-up a small business. Delivered in Russian, which can be understood by most Eastern Europeans (10 x 2.5 hour sessions) | 15 |
| Basic Book-Keeping & Taxation | Designed to introduce those who have recently | 8 |

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| | established a Business to Book-keeping. Course content includes: Overview of Basic Accounts, VAT calculation Prime Books, VAT Returns, Month end Summary, etc. (4 x 3 hour sessions) | |
| Operations Management 'Follow Up' programme | Geared towards those businesses seeking to maximize the efficiency and productivity levels of their operations & optimize business performance. This Prog. monitored the progress of those who had completed the initial I.L.M. accredited 'Operations Management' Programme in 2006.A combination of on-site mentoring and group training sessions. | 7 |
| HR, Recruitment & Employment Practices Prog. | Covers the practical implementation of all aspects of employment legislation for business owner/managers & will ensure that their HR, Recruitment & Employment | 9 |

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| | Practices are fully compliant with existing Employment legislation.(8 x 3 hour sessions) | |
| SAGE Line 50 Improvers Prog. | Designed to assist SAGE Line 50 Computerised Accounts users to improve their skills. Prog. content includes Skeleton Invoices, Recurring Entries, Prepayments & Accruals, Fixed Assets, Comprehensive backup Routine & Advanced Error Correction.(2 x 1 day sessions, 1 x 0.5 days individual training) | 10 |
| Financial Management Information Systems Programme | An onsite Computerised Accounts Programme aimed at businesses that are currently under-utilising their accounting software. The Prog. content includes: financial reporting on business performance, management accounts, annual accounts for auditors, customer/suppliers and stock reports & bank | 8 |

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| | accounts. | |
| Trade Fairs & Exhibitions Programme | The programme is designed to train and mentor businesses on the most effective ways to participate in trade fairs and exhibitions.(2 x 1 day sessions) | 8 |
| Sligo County Enterprise Board's Mentor Programme | The Board, under its mentor Programme assigns business mentors to clients who are in need of specialist 1 to 1 assistance | 15 |

Total

94

Extracts from Sligo County Enterprise Board plan, 2007

The plan includes 20 key objectives with identified actions under each one and a number of others. Those most relevant to this exercise are set out below:

“ Objective 1: To assist to the maximum extent possible in the start-up of small businesses, or the expansion of existing small businesses, through the provision of financial assistance in the areas of manufacturing, internationally traded services, tourism projects geared predominantly towards the overseas visitors and services provided by the unemployed, those recently made redundant and women returning to the workforce. In attaining this objective, due regard must be had towards displacement and deadweight issues.

- Action:

- Provision of grant assistance/refundable aid provided in particular that the Board is satisfied that deadweight and displacement issues do not arise;
- Offering, subject to adequate funding, a package of measures (not just grant assistance) where appropriate;
- Insisting, where considered appropriate, that the promoter undertakes mentoring and, if appropriate, training made available through the Board in order to avail of grant assistance;
- Identification of, and provision of appropriate services to businesses that require assistance with a view to expansion;

Objective 3: To play a role in assisting in the economic development of County Sligo outside of that contained within the Board’s normal brief.

- Action:

- Take any opportunity, including in conjunction with other agencies if appropriate, to encourage prospective entrepreneurs to consider locating in Sligo;
- Input into the County Development Board, its relevant sub-groups, the formal structures between Enterprise Ireland and the CEBs, Sligo Leader Partnership, various “think-thanks”, the Association of CEOs and its sub-groups, etc;
- Work with other agencies and bodies that might be pursuing a topic under this objective in which the Board wishes to be involved.

Objective 4: To continue to provide training and mentoring which meet the requirements of small businesses, the overall objectives being enhanced efficiency, productivity, effectiveness and the competitive position of business, thus helping employment consolidation and expansion among client businesses.

- Action:

- Identify suitable programmes which respond to identified needs (special cognisance to be taken of management development, productivity and ICT);
- Consider new programmes, modus operandi, approaches, etc;
- Keep in touch with clients who are participating on the Board's training, mentoring and other programmes and seek feedback;
- Continue with the normal yardsticks for assessing progress (questionnaires, invited feedback on programmes, etc.);
- Endeavour to increase participant numbers over and above 2006 levels on programmes (subject to resources and, in particular, not sacrificing quality for quantity).

Objective 5: To use all facilities at the Board's disposal in a context of increasing innovation.

Objective 6: To play a pro-active role in getting small businesses to export.

Objective 7: To explore with established large industry any opportunities that may exist for the Board's client group to meet their supply needs.

- Action:

The Board has and will continue to make progress through initiatives such as the Business Transition Programme "Meet the Buyer" events, the Tradelinks annual sales event and through the Microtrade Programme.

Objective 8: To harness insofar as possible the potential which business persons from or having an affinity with Sligo residing outside of the County/Country present in terms of locating businesses in the County or in trading with businesses in the County.

Objective 9: To continue to work towards greater cross-border co-operation.

- Action:

- CEO to continue to play an active role in the context of the Omagh-Sligo Partnership, meetings of border CEOs, meetings between border CEOs and Enterprise Northern Ireland and any other appropriate fora where this goal might be advanced;
- Participate fully on negotiations on a Tradelinks 2 Programme;
- Relationships with various Bodies including IntertradeIreland, the IFI, Peace 2, Co-operation Ireland, etc. to be continued and enhanced where possible;
- Active pursuit of funding for cross-border projects to be continued;
- Advertisements and certain other literature from the Board to make reference, where possible, to the Omagh-Sligo Partnership.

Objective 10: To play a full part in greater co-ordination of approach between the agencies at County level.

Objective 11: To provide a top-quality service to the Board.

Objective 12: To maximise the level of funding available to the Board and ensure it is spent to maximum effect.

Objective 13: To input into policy developments regarding CEBs at the national level.

Objective 14: To satisfy the requirements of the Department in a timely fashion.

Objective 15: To encourage the use of IT by Board staff and customers, having regard, inter alia, to the Government's objective of promoting e-Government.

Objective 16: Promote an enterprise culture

- Action:

- Participate in awards schemes such as the National City and County Enterprise Awards and Sligo Young Entrepreneurs Awards;
- Aim to continually improve and enhance the level of information and services provided on the Sligo County Enterprise Board web site;
- Continue to liaise with enterprise agencies, local authorities and community enterprise groups to encourage enterprise development;
- Give presentations to local interest groups on the services of the Enterprise Board and entrepreneurship;
- Provide business planning guides, information packs and literature to local entrepreneurs and business;

- Participate in local trade fairs;
- Advertise and promote the services of the Board through media promotions and advertisements;
- Liaise with Sligo Institute of Technology, aim to develop joint programmes, participate on their careers exhibition, etc.
- Distribute the small business “Starting Your Own Business Guide” to appropriate businesses.

Objective 17: Promote enterprise awareness among students (second and third level).

- Action:

- Avail of all opportunities to foster entrepreneurialism in young persons (these include, in addition to the specific actions below, addressing career events in schools, working with groups of young persons in mock start-up situations, taking limited advertising in certain student publications, etc);
- Continue the facilitation of young entrepreneurs schemes and events by promoting them to second level schools throughout the County, adjudicating the County Final at junior (first year) and senior (transition year, leaving certificate applied) level and subsidising the expenses of winning students participating in regional and national finals;
- Promote, subject to being satisfied that a better alternative is not to be found, the “Enterprise Encounter” Programme;
- Examine critically our current provision in student enterprise promotion and having regard to the emphasis placed on it by Government with a view to enhancing existing provision if possible;
- Support the Institute of Technology Sligo’s careers seminars;
- In broad terms, and as already referred to under (5) above, co-operate and work with the Institute of Technology, Sligo, in particular, and also with St. Angela’s College.

Objective 18: To commission appropriate research as necessary, in conjunction with other agencies if possible.

Objective 19: To maintain adequate staff numbers and to ensure that they are positioned to provide optimal service to customers. With regard to the latter, training and enhancement of their ability to advise customers on the full range of services available by the CEB and other agencies with a brief in the area of business/personnel development should be provided insofar as possible. While a constraining factor is the limited budgets available for training, all options should be explored to circumvent this to the maximum degree possible.

Objective 20: To promote administrative simplification to the maximum extent possible.

Other objectives:

- To use the limited resources available to the Board for promotional activities in a manner which ensures maximum value for money;
- CEO to continue to serve on the Board of the County Enterprise Fund and to promote its activities through the Board as appropriate;
- To continue to promote the Business Expansion Scheme and the Seed Capital Scheme (assuming that they are cleared by the EU);
- Staff to become familiar with any evolving regulations relating to EU aid;
- Assist businesses to develop new markets in Northern Ireland and overseas;
- Avoid duplication in State supports when assisting clients.

Review of Plan

This plan will be reviewed on a six-monthly basis and updated/amended as appropriate.

At each Board meeting the Board will, in line with well-established practice, be presented with specific proposals relating to training, mentoring and other substantive activities and a review of progress and performance targets since the Board last met. The aforementioned proposals will be carried out subject to any amendments that may be decided by the Board and reviewed at the subsequent Board meeting. With regard to Measure 1 funding, again the Board will continue to be apprised of the funding position at each Board meeting, in line with established practice. It will be advised periodically of overall progress with regard to Measure 1 funding. In addition, the number of jobs created will be reviewed at least annually. In summary, the Board will continue to set, monitor and review plans/targets at each meeting. ”

APPENDIX 3

Female participation numbers on both generalised training and advisory courses and on initiatives targeted at females

The female participation numbers on the generalised Training Programmes offered by Sligo County Enterprise during the period in question are as follows:

| Prog. name | Total Participants | No. of Female * Participants | % Female * |
|--|---------------------------|---|-------------------|
| Start your own Business | 14 | 6 | 43% |
| Basic Book-Keeping & Taxation | 8 | 2 | 25% |
| Start your own Business (through Russian & English) | 15 | 8 | 54% |
| Operations Management 'Follow Up' programme | 7 | 1 | 15% |
| HR, Recruitment & Employment Practices Prog. | 9 | 7 | 78% |
| SAGE Line 50 Improvers Prog. | 10 | 10 | 100% |
| Financial Management Information Systems | 8 | 2 | 25% |

| | | | |
|---|----|---|-----|
| Programme | | | |
| Trade Fairs & Exhibitions Programme | 8 | 4 | 50% |
| Sligo County Enterprise Board's Mentor Programme | 15 | 3 | 20% |

Average % of female participants per generalised Training Programme: 46%

** Above figures exclude programmes targeted specifically at females under the Women's Network (described in the body of the report). The Sligo Women in Business Network programmes are well-subscribed. Each network meeting is attended by over 30 women on average, while the Training sessions offered under the network's management Development Programme had an average attendance of 10-12 female participants.*

Female participation numbers in the Student Enterprise Award scheme

| School Name | No. of Mini-Companies | Total no. of Students | Total Female | % Female |
|--------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| Sligo Grammar | 4 | 22 | 11 | 50% |
| Ursuline College | 8 | 88 | 88 | 100% |
| Colaiste Mhuire | 2 | 25 | 8 | 32% |
| Jesus & Mary | 6 | 23 | 13 | 57% |
| Coola Post-Primary | 10 | 29 | 17 | 59% |
| Total | 30 | 187 | 137 | |

Average Gender breakdown of participating Students: Male: 27% Female: 73%