

## **12 FUNDING AND IMPLEMENTATION**

### **12.1 Funding**

#### **12.1.1 Introduction**

The implementation of the Development Strategy and other zoning initiatives depends on the availability of finance and effective delivery mechanisms. Public expenditure will be under considerable pressure by all sectors of the community. For the funding of future development projects and infrastructure, alternative means will need to be investigated.

At present, funding is provided by Central government, by way of the National Development Plan, European Union (EU) funding, local government funding and private sector investment. The Council will have a limited direct role in funding major infrastructure projects. With the difficulty in predicting the allocation of such funding, the various policies put forward in the Plan will be reviewed regularly and new policies will be added when required. Innovative forms of finance will have to be explored and used, for example:

- extending the application of charges for public services;
- new methods of raising local finance;
- the involvement of the private sector through public and private sector partnership arrangements; and
- external sources of finances, both European and worldwide.

#### **12.1.2 Public Private Partnerships (PPP)**

Public Private Partnerships are partnerships between public sector organisations and private sector investors and businesses for the purposes of providing services or carrying out major construction projects. Such an approach can involve a number of different types of project, including:

- design and build;
- design, build and operate;
- design, build, operate and finance; and
- operating contracts.

There is a possibility of receiving funding from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and that requires forming a PPP. European funding is provided through the Council but would need to coincide with the criteria required by the European Union.

Under the National Development Plan 2000-2006 (NDP), there are specific targets for projects involving private finance (€2.34 billion). This includes a

total of €1.96 billion in three areas within the Department of the Environment and Local Government:

- Roads (target of €1.27 billion in private finance);
- Waste management (target of €572 million in private finance); and
- Water supply (target of €127 million in private finance).

The PPP Fund for Local Authorities provides start-up funding for projects outside the main investment programmes (roads, water, etc.) covered under the NDP e.g. feasibility studies, the preparation of business plans and preliminary design work. Projects that have already received funding include a feasibility study for developing an area for tourist and amenity purposes and a feasibility study to examine the future leisure and recreational needs of another area. Programmes that are particularly innovative and offer opportunities to create greater integration in the delivery of local services are desired. The Fund of €6.35 million will be in operation for 3 years from 2000.

**FI1**

***The Council will continue to explore and implement new initiatives for Public Private Partnership projects in the Plan area, and maximise the use of the available funding for PPP initiatives.***

**12.1.3 Private Sector Investment**

The private sector will make a significant contribution to the implementation of the plan by investing in new developments such as housing, shops, factories and offices. The Council can, by site assembly and by providing an attractive environment, assist, encourage and facilitate private sector investment. This is a means of implementing the objectives of the Development Plan in an indirect fashion. The Development Plan can also encourage private sector investment and partnership investment, which will involve both public and private sectors.

**FI2**

***The Council will seek to facilitate and encourage private sector investment in the Plan area in line with the policies and zoning regulations contained in this plan.***

**12.1.4 Public Sector Funding**

Public sector funding will fund a variety of initiatives ranging from small environmental improvement schemes to large infrastructure projects and will provide an important role in the implementation of various aspects of the Development Plan. Dundalk's geographical location is suitable for significant levels of EU funding especially with regards the development of cross border relations. The Council will need to utilise this position to capitalise on the available financial assistance.

#### 12.1.5 Irish Government Funding

Under the National Development Plan 2000-2006, finance has been allocated through Operational Programmes for the Regions – Southern and Eastern (S&E) Region and the Border, Midland and Western (BMW) Region. The BMW has retained its Objective 1 status for Structural Funds for the full period to 2006. Particular investment will be for non-national roads and also for urban and village renewal.

The Urban and Village Renewal Scheme Programme 2000-2006, which is co-funded by EU finance, has already identified 3 projects for financing in Dundalk, which will entail mainly environmental improvements. These schemes include the Navvy Bank Walk improvement scheme for 2002, the development of St. Helena's Park for 2004 and the development of a linear park located at Toberona in 2006.

The RAPID Programme, which stands for "Revitalising Areas by Planning, Investment and Development", is a programme funded by the NDP for addressing all social inclusion needs and has already identified Muirhevenamor and Cox's Demesne as areas in need of special treatment. The aim will be to create partnerships within the community and to draw up a plan, after consultation, with various community groups to assess the immediate needs of the community. Monies will be provided by the NDP and is to be spent over the next 2 years.

LEADER II is an initiative, which seeks to promote rural development through schemes, organised by local and national groups. The funding provides the facilities for these initiatives also. During the period 1995-2000 Louth Leader provided rural computer training for over 1000 individuals along with over 520 local jobs. These achievements can only contribute to the enhancement of the area. For the period 2001-2006 County Louth will be allocated £3.2 million under the Louth LEADER initiative. The granting has not been announced yet but the Council is aware of its potential.

Central Government has also provided a sum of €2.54 million for the renovation of the Town Hall. This has represented the biggest single capital investment in the arts in County Louth.

#### **FI3**

***The Council will continue to explore and utilise sources of funding from the Government to implement projects which are consistent with the policies of this Development Plan.***

#### 12.1.6 European Union (EU) Funding

There has been a substantial amount of funding made available for the BMW region, which has been co-financed by the EU. Dundalk therefore has great potential to avail of this source of funding with its geographical location as a Border Town. Thus far, the Council has availed of Central Government

funding but further exploration of other available finance is required. The following are some examples of EU initiatives:

*INTERREG III and Peace II Programme 2000-2006*

Other possibilities of funding available are with the INTERREG III and Peace II Programme 2000 – 2004. These two schemes are still in the preparation stages so the potential is there for Dundalk to draw from both. The two schemes are based on promoting cross border relationships with counties in Northern Ireland. Dundalk has been recognised as a key border town by these schemes and so is eligible for funding. The schemes plan to help towns develop small firms, technological practices, develop its tourism potential and physical infrastructure.

Under Peace II, particular emphasis is placed on addressing specific socio-economic deficiencies in the Border Counties. To ensure maximum impact, the target groups selected for support will be those accepted as being most affected by the conflict and who are in danger of remaining excluded from normal socio-economic activity and full participation in the labour market and society as a whole. These target groups will include victims of violence in both communities, displaced people, ex-prisoners, and other vulnerable groups disadvantaged by the particular situation as it has evolved. In the on-going support of these categories the lessons learned from the Peace I Programme will be further developed.

*The Peace II Programme consists of 5 priorities, which have been agreed with Northern Ireland and form part of the common approach adopted in the joint submission of the Peace II OP.*

- Economic Renewal;
- Social Integration, Inclusion and Reconciliation;
- Locally Based Regeneration and Development Strategies;
- Outward and Forward Looking Regions; and
- Cross-border Co-operation.

While INTERREG III is still in preparation, there is a new Initiative to be introduced, which will include Cross-border Co-operation. This scheme is particularly concerned with promoting urban, rural and coastal development, developing local employment initiatives, promoting integration and social inclusion, protection of the environment and sharing human resources and facilities for research, technological development, education, culture, communications and health to increase productivity and help create sustainable jobs. The areas eligible for this scheme will be the six border counties including County Louth.

## **EQUAL**

Other initiatives such as EQUAL, which receives funding from the European Social Fund is another example of the funding available. EQUAL was set up to promote new ways of tackling all types of discrimination and inequality with regard to the labour market. Therefore, it would be in the interests of Dundalk to explore this potential to help create a socially inclusive society within the town and environs.

## **LIFE Environment III**

The emphasis is on innovative demonstration projects in the environmental field, which will not normally last longer than 3 years. The European Commission will provide financial assistance to co-fund up to 50% of local authority projects and up to 30% for industry projects. The thematic areas, which will be eligible for funding, include the integration of environmental considerations into land use development and planning, including urban and coastal areas along with other environmental projects.

## **The Neighbourhood Scheme**

This scheme is co-funded by the EU and offers financial support to local authorities to work alongside the community, environmental groups and private woodland owners to develop appropriately designed woodland amenities on both publicly and privately owned sites in and around villages, towns and cities.

## **FI4**

***The Council will continue to explore and utilise sources of funding from the European Union to implement projects that are consistent with the policies of this Development Plan.***

### **12.1.7 Development Contributions**

Since the completion of the previous development plan, the Council has placed greater emphasis on the private sector providing the necessary infrastructure facilities to serve their developments. However, it is still considered reasonable to collect development contributions where individual developers benefit from public works, so contributing to their cost in the long run.

A significant level of investment will be secured through private sector investment and property development. Consequently, the Council will secure benefit to the community from the planning permissions given via contributions to the provision of public works. This is especially so in those cases where the provision of the particular development proposal does not fully meet the required standards for the provision of these facilities. Contributions to public infrastructure items include, but are not limited to:

- Car parking;
- Roads;
- Public open space and other amenities;
- Foul sewerage;
- Surface water drainage;
- Water; and
- Acquisition of land.

The powers to collect development contributions are outlined in Sections 48 and 49 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, (as amended). The basis for the determination of a contribution is to be set out in one or more *Development Contribution Scheme(s)* that makes provision for payment of different contributions in respect of different classes of development. In addition to the Development Contribution Scheme, the Council may also require the payment of a *Special Contribution* where specific exceptional costs not covered by the Scheme are incurred in respect of public infrastructure that benefits the proposed development.

The Development Contribution Scheme may allow for the payment of a reduced contribution, or no contribution in certain circumstances, in accordance with the provisions of the Scheme. The Council will ensure that the Development Contribution Scheme is published in one or more local newspapers, and that the members of the Council agree to the Scheme.

In accordance with Section 48 (14) of the Planning and Development Act 2000, (as amended) money accruing to the Council from the Scheme shall be accounted for in a separate account, and shall only be applied as capital for public infrastructure and facilities.

Under Section 49 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, (as amended) the Council can apply a *Supplementary Development Contribution Scheme* as a condition to a planning permission where the public infrastructure benefits the development to which the permission relates when carried out. This may be applied when the Development Contribution Scheme and the Special Contribution are not sufficient for the purposes.

**FI5**

***In accordance with Sections 48 and 49 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, (as amended) the Council will continue to secure benefit to the community from planning permissions via development contributions to the provision of public works. The contributions should be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure their affordability in the changing economic climate.***

The sum of money required from the Development Contribution Scheme is a matter for separate agreement within the Council. However, the relative affordability of the development contributions set out in the Scheme should be monitored on an ongoing basis. In a healthy economic climate, the

affordability of these development contributions will be greater than during a less healthy economic climate.

It is the policy of the Council to ensure that the development contributions are reviewed on a regular basis to ensure their affordability. In more difficult economic circumstances, the imposition of development contributions can be unduly onerous, and may actually put off private sector investment in the town. This situation should be avoided by setting reasonable development contributions that take account of the fact that the item being contributed towards will often be used by the general public, not just that particular development. If development contributions are not affordable the investment might be lost to another location.

## **12.2 Implementation**

The Plan will be implemented through the development control powers of the Council and the implementation of development briefs. At the same time there will be a requirement for other agencies and organisations to devise their own plans and programmes against the Plan background. The Plan will require to be constantly monitored to ensure that the policy objectives are being met. Therefore the implementation of the Plan will be through:

- The development control process;
- Developing partnerships with other organisations;
- Ongoing management of the Plan; and
- Monitoring and reviewing the Plan regularly.

### **12.2.1 Development Control**

#### ***Housing Estate Completion and Security Bonds***

Roads, open spaces and services shall be provided and finished at the same pace as the construction of dwellings.

Prior to the commencement of development, developers will be required to submit a bond from an insurance company or other financial institution acceptable to the Council. This bond shall be coupled with an agreement empowering the Council to apply such security, or part thereof for the satisfactory completion and or maintenance of any part of the development, and an agreement empowering the Council to recalculate the amount specified after a 5-year period.

#### ***General Development Control***

The development control function of the Council is the main vehicle through which the Plan is implemented. The quality of the information provided with planning applications needs to be maintained at a high level, so allowing the Council to make well-informed decisions. Where the Council considers that additional information in the form of Impact Statements are required, the

planning applicant shall provide them. These shall include, but not be limited to, environmental impact statements and traffic impact statements.

National planning guidelines are an important guide to making development control decisions. These guidelines should be taken account of in making development control decisions, in addition to the policies set out in this Plan. In particular, regard must be had for the provisions of the Major Accidents Directive and any regulations, under any enactment, giving effect to this Directive for the siting of new establishments, modification of existing establishments and development in the vicinity of such establishments. This is for the purposes of reducing the risk, or limiting the consequences, of a major accident.

**F16**

***The Council will take full account of relevant European, national and regional planning guidance in development control decisions.***

**12.2.2 Related Plans and Partnerships**

It is important that the Council's economic development, housing, environment, transportation, town centre and other initiatives are consistent and co-ordinated. There needs to be a mutual recognition between the approach and policies set out in the development plan and other strategies developed by the Council. The Council's capital allocation plans also need to be set in the context of this Development Plan.

There will also be plans prepared by other local organisations and agencies such as the Dundalk Chamber of Commerce and the Dundalk Employment Partnership. There is a need for these various plans to take complementary views of the long-term development of Dundalk and its Environs as that set out within this Development Plan. To achieve this, it is essential that a process of partnership be developed between the Council and these various organisations and agencies involved in Dundalk.

**F17**

***The Council will seek to work with other local organisations in the implementation of the Development Plan***

Partnerships are a powerful means of co-ordinating action and focusing resources to tackle problems and grasp opportunities.

**12.2.3 Managing the Plan**

The ongoing management process is critical to the implementation of this plan. This includes management through development control and forward planning, managing the quality of the public realm and managing the quality of the urban design and landscape proposals.

Managing the delivery of development through identifying priority areas is a central theme of this plan. The Council will pro-actively manage the implementation of this plan. Managing a quality environment will be undertaken through greater use of masterplanning and action area planning. This approach will be guided by the use of design guidelines and the implementation of the neighbourhood concept that is set out in detail in Section 7.7 of this Plan.

The pro-active management and implementation of this plan will require a greater degree of contact and discussion with developers and landowners prior to planning applications being made. Partnership arrangements with developers and landowners therefore need to be established, both formal PPP arrangements and less formal partnership working arrangements. These partnership arrangements need to maximise the use of the development levies system in order to receive contributions to the provision of the social and community facilities required in the neighbourhoods.

These partnerships should also involve other local community organisations, particularly with regard to the provision of the essential social and community facilities within the neighbourhood areas identified in this plan.

***F18 The Council will work closely with the private sector and other local organisations in order to implement the development of comprehensive neighbourhoods.***

#### 12.2.4 Monitoring and Review of the Plan

There is a legal duty for the Council to monitor and review the Development Plan. The Council must keep all matters that affect development and its planning under regular review. Monitoring is an essential part of this process.

It will therefore be necessary to identify the extent to which the Plan is being implemented and the effectiveness of its policies and proposals, particularly in relation to sustainability. In addition, the assumptions and forecasts that underpin the Plan will require continued assessment to detect any fundamental changes that impact upon the policies of the Plan. Therefore, the Council should aim to prepare a monitoring report every two years.

***F19 The Council will prepare a development plan monitoring report every two years.***

The Plan may require to be updated as a result of changing assumptions, forecasts or policy objectives. This will be informed by the monitoring process described above, and will be made when the Council considers it appropriate. However, the Council will undertake a full review of the Plan within six years, in line with national guidance.