

Corporate Plan 2010 - 2014



**SOUTH TIPPERARY LOCAL AUTHORITIES
ÚDARÁIS ÁITIÚLA CHONTAE TIOBRAID
ARANN THEAS**

**Corporate Plan
Pleann Corparaideach
2010 - 2014**



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Foreword

Welcome to South Tipperary County Council Corporate Plan for the period 2010-14. This Plan sets out the contribution that we can make to improving the quality of life for people in South Tipperary, now and for the future.

The country is working its way through an economic recession. The new Corporate Plan takes account of the role that the County Council can play in supporting the local economy and local people. We have also given greater emphasis to such issues as social inclusion, safeguarding our environment and adapting to climate change to reflect the increased concern about these matters.

Background to the County

Geography

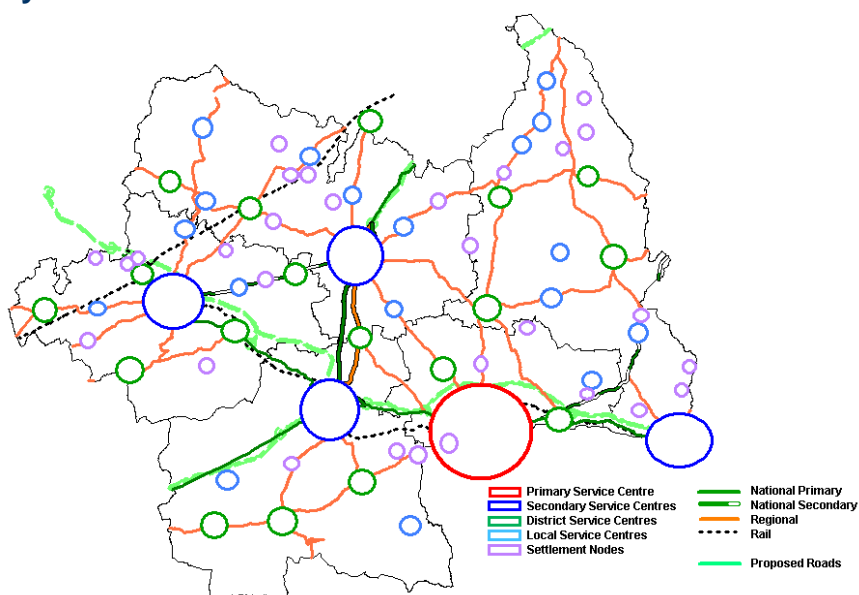


Figure 1: The Spatial Distribution of Urban and Village Centres across the County

South Tipperary is an inland county in the Southeast of Ireland and it is 2,258 km² in area. There are 5 significant urban areas in South Tipperary, Clonmel, Carrick on Suir, Tipperary Town, Cashel and Cahir.

The River Suir flows through the county in a south to south-easterly direction. The centre of the county comprises a plain formed by valleys of the Suir and its tributaries. This plain is fringed by the Comeragh and Knockmealdown mountains to the south, the Galtee Mountains to the west, the Hollyford and Slieveardagh hills to the north and Slievenamon to the east.

The National Primary Roads M8 (Dublin to Cork) and N24 (Limerick to Waterford) traverse South Tipperary, as do the National Secondary Routes N74 (Cashel to Tipperary) and N76 (Clonmel to Kilkenny). The single-line Waterford to Limerick railway

serves Carrick-on-Suir, Clonmel, Cahir and Tipperary carrying passengers and freight. This line intersects with the main Dublin to Cork twin-track line at Limerick Junction.

The National Primary Road, N24, and the Waterford-Limerick Rail line form the key east-west transport corridors for the region, linking the two 'Atlantic Gateway' cities of Waterford and Limerick via Carrick-on-Suir, Clonmel, Cahir, Tipperary and Limerick Junction. South Tipperary will continue to support the Atlantic Gateways Initiative.

Economy

Prior to the down turn in the economy, significant new job announcements were during the last Plan in the county in the areas of pharmaceutical production, healthcare industries and food production leading to strong economic confidence and performance county wide. Despite the downturn these companies continue to perform well and assist greatly in retaining and strengthening the retail and service functions of our towns. The value of small and medium employers to South Tipperary is also fully recognised as 82% of employment in South Tipperary is attributable to micro enterprises with less than ten employees, which is an area that can be built upon, particularly in support services for the pharmaceutical, healthcare and food production areas.

Population

The population of South Tipperary exceeded 83,000 in 2006 for the first time since 1926. This increase has been largely influenced by inward net migration amounting to 7,236 persons and representing 8.7% of the county population. The population growth for the county over the period 2002-2006 was 5.2% and the population of South Tipperary now accounts for 18% of the total for the South East Region. The projected population increase up to 2020 is between 20,000 and 33,000. However, young people continue to leave the county to seek further education and employment, and this Plan provides policy support to try and retain our young people within the county.

The population density of the county, at approximately 37 persons per km², remains quite low, well below the national average of approximately 61 persons per km² and very low by western European comparisons, for example the average in the U.K. is 246 persons per km².

The principal town in South Tipperary is Clonmel with a population of 15,482 in 2006. The next largest town is Carrick – on - Suir with 5,856 followed by Tipperary Town with 4,415. 40% of South Tipperary's population reside in the five main settlements of South Tipperary; Clonmel, Carrick on Suir, Tipperary Town, Cahir and Cashel. This means that approximately 60% of people in South Tipperary reside in settlements of less than 1500 population or in the open countryside¹. Whilst in the past this proportionate split may have been attributable to the strong agricultural economy, this explanation is no longer sufficient given the decline in agriculture and the changing lifestyle choices of our population.

¹ Areas with a population of less than 1500 are defined as rural areas in the Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines for Planning Authorities, 2005 issued by the DEHLG.

Operational Structure

Civic Leadership

The 26 elected members of South Tipperary County Council are central to the leadership role of local government in the county. This leadership ensures the cohesive economic, social and sustainable development of the county.

Strategic Policy Committees

There are five Strategic Policy Committees (SPCs) which are aligned with the 5 different directorates as set out above. SPCs are intended to be a more structured and inclusive approach to policy formulation, and give councillors an enhanced role in the process.

Area Committees

Each of the 5 Electoral Areas has an Area Committee, comprised of the Councillors for the area. These meet quarterly and deal mainly with operational matters pertaining to the particular area.

Workforce

The Council's (including 4 town councils) workforce comprises in excess of 680 full and part-time employees and operates under the control of Ned O'Connor, County Manager.

Executive Structure - Management Team

The Management Team consists of the County Manager and six Directors of Service. The Directors of Services administer the following areas;

- Housing, Fire and Emergency Services
- Roads and Transportation
- Planning and Community and Enterprise
- Environment and Water Services
- Corporate Affairs and Cultural Development
- Finance and IT

South Tipperary County Development Board

South Tipperary County Development Board, which is administered by the Community & Enterprise Directorate of South Tipperary County Council is made up of representatives of South Tipperary County Council, the Clonmel, Carrick-on-Suir, Tipperary and Cashel Town Councils, the Development Agencies and the Representative Groups. The County Development Board is implementing a Social, Cultural and Economic Strategy for the County.

The Community Forum

South Tipperary County Community Forum is made up of representatives of 300 Community Groups. The Community Forum is represented on the Strategic Policy

Committees and the Area Committees along with a range of Development Agencies in the County.

Our Recent Achievements

The New N8 was the largest public infrastructure in the county and was delivered under budget and on time.

- To date, seven playgrounds have been provided and four new Multi-Use Games Areas. An additional two playgrounds have been upgraded. Over the period, a total of €1,600,000 has been expended on the development of playgrounds;

Waller's Lot Civic Amenity site opened in Cashel and approximately 10,000 people visit the recycling centre every year to dispose of unwanted items. Waller's Lot was awarded the REPAK "Recycling Centre of the Year" Award in 2009.

The Council was the first local authority in the country to achieve the prestigious Eco Management and Auditing Scheme (EMAS) accreditation in 2009 in relation to how we implemented an environmental management system.

On the Cultural side we have Achieved 'Best Educational & Outreach Initiative' in the 'Museum of the Year Awards' with the Heritage Council and Northern Ireland Museums, 2009.

The Council has also achieved its fourth Award from FAS in its Excellence Through People programme (2008), This Award, which was secured for a two year period, is Ireland's national standard for human resource management.

The Purpose of this Document

This document will assist both Councillors and staff to understand the individual contribution they make to the overall aims of the Council. This corporate planning process is closely linked to our financial planning and operational plans. It takes account of the vision set out in the South Tipperary County Development Board Strategy for economic, social and cultural development 2002 – 2012 which states:

'South Tipperary will have an inclusive economy and an excellent quality of life. It will be a place where all families and individuals can prosper. South Tipperary will balance the demands of a vibrant economy with the demands of a healthy and sustainable environment'.

Monitoring Performance

Progress against the corporate plan will be monitored on a regular basis through reports to the County Management Team, Strategic Policy Committees, Audit Committee and County Council.

South Tipperary Local Authorities provide a range of services to residents and businesses throughout the County. South Tipperary County Council understands that meeting the needs of the customers is paramount. In 2009 a Mystery Shopper survey was undertaken. This involved an outside agency assessing our customer contact and services through mail, phone, email and at our customer counters. This outcome was

indicative of a positive public perception of the professionalism and responsiveness of the Local Authority.

South Tipperary County Council continues to operate a formal Customer Complaints Procedure on behalf of the County's Local Authorities. Procedures in place ensure that complaints are investigated and dealt with fairly and impartially. Customers are advised of the right to seek independent review by the Ombudsman if the outcome of a complaint is not satisfactory.

South Tipperary Local Authorities are committed to ensuring that the '12 Principles of Quality Customer Service for Customers and Clients of the Public Service' continue to be implemented. The Councils' Customer Charter will set out the service levels which customers can expect from the Local Authorities.

Operating Environment

At the time of publication of this Corporate Plan, Ireland has emerged from a prolonged period of unprecedented economic growth. This has enabled South Tipperary County Local Authorities to invest considerably in the infrastructure and improve the range and delivery of services in the County over the last ten years. However, Ireland is in the midst of a significant recession. This has been influenced by a global economic downturn. South Tipperary, in tandem with the rest of Ireland, has witnessed a reduction in activity in most sectors, but significantly in the retail and construction sectors. By September 2009 the national unemployment rate was 12.6%, an increase from 7.1% since September 2008.

The economic slowdown has significantly impacted on the income of South Tipperary County Council, with reductions in revenues from rates and development levies. The Local Government Fund has reduced by 10% in the period 2008-2009, with a 10% reduction in staff numbers over the same period. Allocations for such services as local road maintenance have reduced significantly and the indications are that funding and staff levels will continue to decline in the short to medium term and this will significantly impact on the Local Authorities' capacity to deliver services. The Council will continue to look at new and more efficient service delivery methods to achieve high quality services.

According to a number of sources, including the Economic and Social Research Institute, the Central Bank and the Department of Finance, Ireland's economy is expected to recover in late 2010 with growth anticipated for 2011.

In light of the operating context of fluctuating economic performance, it will be important for South Tipperary County Local Authorities continues to support a strong economy through the delivery of a range of services.

Key Goals

Our role in South Tipperary sets out four strategic aims, which provide a clear focus on the most important issues:

- **Support and Develop a Vibrant Economy in the County-** Supporting employment and economic activity e.g. The Science and Technology Park, Clonmel, future business units/sites in small towns and villages. Inter-agency cooperation on training, networking, supporting and sharing resources
- **Improve the Quality of Life for all the citizens of South Tipperary-** Improving local amenities, good transport links, promoting social inclusion, improving neighbourliness, maintaining and strengthening cultural identity,
- **Improve Quality of Environment in the County–** Safeguarding South Tipperary's unique environment as a healthy place to live, clean water, waste management and recycling, proper planning and sustainable development, safe roads, regeneration,
- **Be a dynamic, flexible and quality-driven organisation committed to achieving excellent customer service-** Enhanced democracy, setting high standards of responsiveness, efficiency and cost effectiveness. Be a dynamic, flexible and quality-driven organisation committed to achieving excellent customer service while operating a safe supported working environment.

Building on the past – looking to the future.

The Council itself is changing in order to meet these aims, achieve improved efficiency and bridge the gap between the funding we receive and the increasing levels of demand for our services. It is a priority to improve our performance in this service area. There is never any room for complacency and there is always more work to do to continue improving services and ensure they meet the needs and expectations of the people we serve. Following the elections in 2009 this document will provide the new framework for a Comprehensive framework over the life of the Council 2010-2014. We are determined to build on our strengths and continue to achieve progress in improving the quality of life for people in South Tipperary over the coming years.

Implementation & Delivery

Implementation of the Corporate Plan will require clear strategic direction, political leadership and highly trained and motivated staff. A Partnership approach between Elected Members and staff is a vital element in delivery of the identified key goals. Equally important are the partnerships which exist and which will be fostered between the Local Authorities, outside agencies and the local communities.

The implementation of this ambitious plan is necessary to ensure that the County is poised to take advantage of growth, once the current economic downturn has bottomed out and more favourable conditions prevail.

Goal 1: Support and Develop a Vibrant Economy in the County



South Tipperary County Council is committed to supporting the economic development of the county. We will actively support and encourage initiatives to increase competitiveness of South Tipperary for investment and income generation by maximising the potential of a flexible dynamic skilled labour supply to meet the changing business environment.

We will maximise economic development by:

- Enhancing the culture of innovation, entrepreneurship, investment and enterprise which builds on the existing industrial, commercial, agricultural, cultural and tourism base.
- Making best use of existing physical resources
- to make it attractive to live work and invest
- Driving further infrastructure development to meet current and expected future needs (eg serviced land/transport network/ water services / communications network / waste infrastructure/ sustainable energy solutions)
- Supporting the development of well educated, dynamic, flexible and motivated work force

In achieving our objectives, we will:

- Support the implementation of the South Tipperary interagency innovation and enterprise
- Actively promote the development of Ballingarrane Science & technology park
- Maximize the economic impact from tourism and cultural sectors by implementation of structured programmes
- Proactively leverage the existing commercial / industrial base to promote further economic development with particular focus to be given to life science and engineering sector. (photo montage of company logo)
- Continue to proactively promote South Tipperary as an attractive location for inward investment opportunities; to take advantage of its strategic and central location
- Support new and innovative ways to maximise the potential of the natural beauty and unique heritage of South Tipperary

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- Support the implementation of the County Development Plan to ensure sufficient serviced land, transport network, water services, waste services, communication network to meet current and future needs
- Support the implementation of the economic actions plans for Carrick on Suir, Tipperary and Cahir.
- Promote innovative and integrated delivery of education programs to maximize the skill base within South Tipperary.
- Tourism Infrastructure Development
 - During 2009, South Tipperary County Council worked with the Southern Regional Fisheries Board, Cahir Anglers Association, Coillte and Fáilte Ireland to develop the **Cahir Brown Trout Centre of Excellence** adjacent to Swiss Cottage in Cahir. A walkway along the river with three angling bays was built. Fáilte Ireland is implementing an ongoing training and development programme with tourism product providers in the area to ensure the delivery of a quality angling product.

Goal 2: Improve the Quality of Life for all the citizens of South Tipperary



South Tipperary County Council is committed to improving the Quality of life of the citizens of the county. We will actively support and encourage the development of sustainable communities by investing in community infrastructure, supporting community structures and by ensuring strong community involvement in preparation of new plans and the development of their own areas. South Tipperary County Council is committed to Social inclusion of all its citizens and will promote equal opportunities and access for all.

We will improve Quality of Life By:

- Supporting the development of sustainable communities;
- Facilitating proper planning and sustainable development through the implementation of the County Development Plan, other town development and local area plans;
- Ensuring the provision of tailored accommodation and appropriate assistance for those in need and to ensure good quality public and private housing which promotes a sense of community;
- Increasing access and participation in Cultural activities;
- Supporting social Inclusion of target groups and areas;
- Provision of essential utility infrastructure eg roads, water and waste management.

In achieving our objectives we will:

- Ensure strong Community involvement in preparation and implementation of new Plans and Strategies e.g. Village Enhancement Schemes;
- Support the development of sustainable community facilities e.g. playgrounds, community houses, sporting facilities, libraries and heritage facilities;
- Implement South Tipperary County Council Climate Change Strategy;
- Promote and support the implementation of pioneering participative programmes of best practice in the areas of Arts, Heritage, Archives, Crafts, Sports, Recreation, Museum, Biodiversity;
- Support Social Inclusion Target groups such as Early School Leavers, Traveller Community, People With Disabilities, The Elderly, Vulnerable Families, Young People and support access to quality Childcare Services;

- Support social inclusion of target areas such as implementation of RAPID plans in Clonmel, Carrick on Suir, and Tipperary Towns, Clar Programme and support of County Social Inclusion Plan;
- Support community participation and engagement in development and delivery of services as key stakeholders for example tenants will be encouraged to participate in management of their estates, citizens will be encouraged to have a key role in waste management and conservation of water etc.

What our staff say:

“The four member culture team comprises the Arts Officer, Archivist, Museum Curator and Heritage Officer and together we seek to promote Arts, Heritage and Culture within South Tipperary. The 2009-2014 programme seeks to enhance the quality of life within the county and our programme will be provided to individuals, schools, community groups, public events and as part of week long festivals. The approach taken recognises ‘culture’ as one mechanism for pump-priming the economy, while enhancing the quality of life for all residents and visitors in a cost effective manner. This approach is particularly relevant during the current economic climate, and will focus on collaborating with other sections of the council, other state agencies and a wide network of local expertise and cultural providers to act as a catalyst for the delivery a wide programme of culture and heritage projects across the county.”

Goal 3: Improve Quality of Environment in the County



South Tipperary is recognised as having outstanding built, cultural and natural landscapes which gives us a strong sense of place. We are committed to working in partnership with local communities in protecting and enhancing our environment for the benefit of all who live in and visit our county. We will ensure access to good quality clean air, water and countryside through the sustainable development of our county.

We intend to improve Quality of Life by:

- Protecting the environment for present and future generations
- Increasing access, participation and ownership in the care of the environment
- Ensuring access to clean water and air
- Conserving and increasing access to our natural heritage and built environment e.g. urban landscape, rivers, waterways, forests, walled towns and 'countryside'

In achieving our objectives we will:

- Encourage high-quality development which is consistent with county and local development plans underpinned by the principle of sustainable development i.e. through Strategic Environmental Assessment, Appropriate Assessment, protection of 'landscape' and greenspaces.
- Continue to raise awareness and further develop innovative education / community participation and ownership of environmental issues e.g. Greenschools, RAPID, Pride of Place and Tidy Towns, Tidy Burial Grounds, Farm Management, Green Business, Heritage in Schools, National Spring Clean, The Environment Campaign, Biodiversity Week, Heritage Week, National Tree Week, Earth Hour, National Recycling Week, Food and Farming Day and a Green Christmas Campaign.
- Implement the South Tipperary Climate Change Strategy with particular emphasis on flood relief, sustainable energy and water conservation e.g. Working with TEA on a sustainable energy project which aims to reduce energy consumption in the county and sustainable energy programme of local authority housing stock.
- Implement integrated sustainable waste management services - waste collection, disposal services, bottle banks, recycling, landfill and waste transfer, civic amenity sites consistent with the South Eastern Region Waste Management Plan
- Implement our water services programme and support the River Basin Management Plan (water way quality monitoring)

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- To ensure enforcement of environmental and associated legislation –e.g. planning, derelict sites, pollution control, waste management, water & air quality, litter prevention, Building control and fire prevention etc.
- Conserve our built, natural and urban landscapes through continuing to promote Cashel's place as part of a serial nomination for World Heritage Site status, supporting our Walled Town Network and delivering our Heritage and Biodiversity Action Plan
- To promote our natural and built environment as a tourism product

Goal 4: Be a dynamic, flexible and quality-driven organisation committed to achieving excellent customer service.



South Tipperary County Council intends to maintain and enhance the broad range of services it provides to its residents, businesses industry and visitors to the county. We will strive for excellence in the delivery of a broad range of integrated accessible services. The Elected Members and council staff will continue to work for the community by:

- Increasing access to services and information
- Continuing to strive for excellence in all our services
- Focusing on a partnership approach to the delivery of services
- Continuous professional development of our workforce
- Enhancing democracy with increasing community participation and input to the way we do our business.

In achieving our objectives, we will:

- Promote and deliver council services through web development and innovative ICT (Information Communication Technology) initiatives;
- Extend opening hours for customer convenience and further develop our out of hours service;
- Respond to diverse requirements such as implementing the South Tipperary Access Audit and provision of multilingual information;
- Aim for highest standard of excellence and innovation building on recent successes:
 - Wallers Lot Civic Amentiy was awarded the REPAK “Recycling Centre of the Year” Award,
 - first local authority in the country to achieve the prestigious Eco Management and Auditing Scheme (EMAS) accreditation implementing an environmental management system;
 - ‘Best Educational & Outreach Initiative’ in the ‘Museum of the Year Awards’;
 - FAS Excellence Through People Award;
- Continue to co-ordinate service delivery across council departments and our five constituent local authorities;

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- Facilitate an integrated delivery of services in conjunction with other national, regional and local bodies such as the South Tipperary County Development Board and South East Regional Authority;
- Encourage and support flexibility and expertise of our staff through implementation of the Performance Management System (PMDS) and Partnership Model;
- Facilitate local Elected Members in providing a leadership role as the recognised democratic voice of the people of South Tipperary;
- Provide on-going support, training, advice and information for Elected Members;
- Facilitate public and community participation in decision making and civic engagement through the Strategic Policy Committees (SPC), community participation in the development plan process, tenant participation in estate management, volunteering, Tidy Towns and civil defence for example.

“We were very happy to support the Council in the preparation of an Access Audit and Implementation Plan, which we believe will improve access across for everyone the county in the coming years. This plan was prepared in conjunction with the Disability Forum and we look forward to working with the council to ensure that access issues remain a priority during these challenging times.”

Donal O’Halloran, Chairman of Disability Forum

“We provide help, advice and information to Elected Members, customers and staff in relation to what we do and how we do it”

Helen Houlihan, Staff Officer, Corporate Affairs

Appendix 1: South Tipperary County Council Members June 2009

Name and Address	Tel. No.	Political Party
Cahir Electoral Area		
Liam Ahearne, Ballindoney, Grange, Clonmel	052-6138142	Fine Gael
Michael Anglim, Ballylaffin, Ardfinnan	052-7466170	Fianna Fail
Seanie Lonergan, Garryroan, Cahir	052-7442094	Labour
Marie Murphy, Kilballyboy, Clogheen	086-8261387	Fine Gael
Cashel Electoral Area		
Jack Crowe, Convent Cross, Dundrum	062-71145	Fine Gael
Sean McCarthy, John Street, Cashel	062-61129	Fianna Fail
Catherine McLoughlin Garraun, Ballinure, Thurles	052-9156422 (h)	Fine Gael
Tom Wood, 27 Main Street, Cashel	062-63142	Non-Party
Clonmel Electoral Area		
Tom Acheson Ha'penny Well, Orchardstown, Clonmel	052-6124361 086-1616322	Fine Gael
Siobhan Ambrose, Dun Mhuire, 7 Melview, Clonmel	086-8357870	Fianna Fail
Pat English, Churchview, Rathronan, Clonmel	052-6124014	Non-Party
Seamus Healy, Scrouthea, Old Bridge, Clonmel	052-6123184	Non- Party
Richie Molloy, 6 Heywood Drive, Ardgaoithe, Clonmel	052-6129362	Fianna Fail
Michael Murphy, Orpen, 30 The Paddocks, Fethard Road, Clonmel	087-3226699	Fine Gael
Darren Ryan, 3 Glencarra Close, Crann Ard, Clonmel	052-6176992	Labour
Fethard Electoral Area		
Joe Brennan The Miller's Rest, Grangemockler, Carrick-on-Suir	087-4170412	Fine Gael
Sylvia Cooney Sheehan Abbey Square, Carrick Beg, Carrick-on-Suir	086-6072978	Fianna Fail
John Fahey, Graystown, Killenaule	052-9156349	Fine Gael
Denis Landy, Mainstown, Carrick-on-Suir	051-641641	Labour
Jimmy O'Brien, Rathkenny, Drangan, Thurles	052-9152011	Fine Gael
Eddie O'Meara, Ballydonnell, Mullinahone	052-9153229	Non-Party

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Tipperary Electoral Area		
John Crosse, Donohill Cross, Tipperary	062-76105	Fine Gael
Joe Donovan, Moneynaboola, Aherlow	062-56232	Fianna Fail
Michael Fitzgerald, Rathclogheen House, Golden	062-72136	Fine Gael
Mary Hanna Hourigan Parkview House, Cappawhite	062-75164 (h) 062-80503(w)	Fine Gael
Denis Leahy, 4 Davis Street, Tipperary	062-51668	Non-Party

Appendix 2: South Tipperary – Operating Structure

