



FINE GAEL

Simon

COVENNEY TD

Ambitious for Cork, delivering in Government

JUNE 2015

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SEAFEST, IRELAND'S MARITIME FESTIVAL IN CORK HARBOUR



Pictured at the launch of SeaFest in the Naval Base, Haulbowline are Chef's Martin Shanahan and Rory O'Connell with sisters Fiona and Aileen Evans and Minister Simon Covenney TD

Come and help us celebrate Ireland's incredible ocean wealth at SeaFest 2015, which takes place in Ringaskiddy on Friday & Sat, 10th and 11th July 2015. This maritime festival showcases Ireland's abundant maritime resources over two days in Cork Harbour. The programme of events is extensive and includes a seafood fair, carnival games and seafaring family fun, RNLI rescue demonstrations, Irish Naval Service manoeuvres, a sail-by of leisure craft and yachts, lectures and exhibits on marine life, and all manner of festival entertainment for every age group.

As part of SeaFest 2015, Saturday 11th July will be a marine open day for the public and I strongly recommend that everyone take the time to attend.

The conference, now in its second year, will attract several hundred stakeholders including marine researchers, investors, entrepreneurs, maritime-related startups, businesses and organisations, from all over Ireland and from around the world, to hear from marine industry experts. The event also provides an opportunity to network with industry peers and develop opportunities for collaboration. The ocean is this

country's greatest natural resource and it is important that we continue to focus on the potential of the marine economy with ambition and positive thinking. The event will show off Cork Harbour at its best with multiple new projects and plans to be announced by ministers in attendance and by An Taoiseach, Enda Kenny TD.

This event promises to be a must-attend for people and families across the region. For more information and a programme of events visit www.seafest.ie

€500 MILLION FOR CORK CITY DEVELOPMENTS

I recently held an information meeting for businesses on the major developments happening in Cork City. The meeting outlined the development timescale for Albert Quay, the Convention Centre and other strategic development projects underway, or in the pipeline, for the core city centre area.

Executives from John Cleary Developments, O'Callaghan Properties and BAM Construction gave details of city centre projects in development worth almost €500m.

- One Albert Quay
- Capitol Cinema regeneration
- Event and Conference Centre
- Former Revenue Commissioner's site on Sullivan's Quay -
- Anderson's Quay and Albert Quay
- Brooks Haughton site

Projects include the regeneration of the Capitol Cinema site, the city's first purpose built large-scale events centre, more office blocks on Albert Quay and Anderson's Quay, a hotel and office block on Sullivan's Quay, and another office block, retail units and apartments on the former Brooks Haughton site.

Cork is in a hurry and I am doing all that I can to drive much needed development and investment in the city centre. Our city can become an international city of stature. These projects have the potential to deliver thousands of construction jobs and will give the city centre a completely new lease of life. We can now start to look forward to a new period of growth and regeneration.

NEW PONTOON FOR PASSAGE WEST

The new pontoon at Railway Quay, Passage West was officially opened at the Maritime Heritage Festival by the Passage to Monkstown River Users Association. The project, which is co-funded by the Department of Agriculture and Cork County Council, has been in the works for a number of years and will provide a huge boost for the local tourism industry.



Minister Simon Coveney TD pictured at a dairy-filled breakfast, hosted by The Department of Agriculture, to mark the end of the milk quotas.

THE ABOLITION OF MILK QUOTAS COULD LEAD TO 15,000 NEW JOBS OVER THE NEXT 5 YEARS

The abolition of milk quotas is the biggest change to Irish Agriculture in a generation. For the first time in over 30 years Irish farmers will be free to produce milk in response to increasing global demand.

Quotas were first introduced in 1984 at a time when EU production far outstripped demand, but now the shackles are off and the sector can start to realise its full potential. Quota abolition means the potential for increased employment, with Teagasc estimating that it could create 15,000 new jobs over the next 5 years.

Today, Ireland's dairy production, at approximately 5.4bn litres in 2013, is roughly the same as that in 1984. In that same period, production in New Zealand, with a grass-based system similar to Ireland's, has increased from 7.6bn litres to about 19bn litres. Quota abolition means the opportunity for increased production and export volumes, particularly to third country markets.

I believe that quota abolition will work for Ireland because we produce milk in a way that is competitive on global markets and built on a natural, environmentally sustainable production model based on grass. Increasing dairy production will dramatically increase the value of exports, and is already resulting in increased employment creation and investment in rural areas. The direct and indirect economic benefits of milk quota abolition will be felt all over the country.

€2 billion has been invested on Irish farms since 2007, €200 million of dairy investment in Cork alone. Dairygold has invested €117m investment in two new plants in Mallow and Mitchelstown resulting in the creation of 115 new jobs. That is the kind of future for rural Ireland that we need to be talking about, employment, investment, expansion, growth. This is a once in a generation opportunity and it is vital that Ireland makes the most of it.

CORK ALLOCATED MORE THAN €200 MILLION TO TACKLE SOCIAL HOUSING TARGETS

Government recently announced €1.5 billion worth of social housing targets for local authorities to 2017.

Cork City & County Councils will receive funding in excess of €200 million which will be invested in a combination of building, buying and leasing schemes designed to accommodate 25% of those currently on the housing waiting lists in social housing.

More than €22 million has al-

ready been invested in 116 new housing projects across Cork City & County as part of the first phase of the Government's Social Housing Strategy.

The Government's €4billion social housing strategy is set to deliver 35,000 housing units by 2020. This is the first major investment in local authority housing for many years and it shows the Government's commitment in addressing the need for more social housing.

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE DIPS BELOW 10% FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE JANUARY 2009

The latest official employment figures from the Central Statistics Office (CSO) show that Government has reached its target of creating 100,000 additional jobs. The CSO figures show that 104,600 extra jobs have been created since the start of 2012, bringing the national unemployment rate to 9.8%, the lowest since January 2009. The continued drop in live register figures emphasises that the economy is in recovery and that more people are entering the jobs market.

US security company, Malwarebytes, has chosen Cork as the site for its EMEA HQ, creating 50 new jobs. The Canadian cybersecurity company eSentire Inc. also announced that it is to establish its European HQ and Security Operations Centre in Cork, creating close to 100 jobs in Ballincollig. Companies like Malwarebytes and eSentire are attracted to Cork because it has a reputation as a leading location for technology companies, with a talented workforce and established tech ecosystem.

SIGNIFICANT INCREASE IN FUNDING FOR HAULBOWLINE

The Government sanctioned a very significant €61m in funding to take a “whole of island” approach to the remediation of Haulbowline Island. We have already seen An Bord Pleanála and the EPA give approval for the remediation project and the completion of crucial work to repair the Haulbowline Island access Bridges – which I officially re-opened in May.

The bridges have undergone extensive repairs and upgrades as part of the early preparatory phase of the Haulbowline Island Remediation Project. The upgrade was financed as part of the initial €40 million package signed off by government in 2012 to fund the clean-up. The approval of the additional funds will now go towards the development of the next

phase of the project, which is the most complex phase to date and is expected to take approximately six months to complete.

There will be significant construction activity on the island during this phase and it will bring substantial benefits to the local economy and transform the Island into a genuine national infrastructural asset.



AER LINGUS SALE PROVIDES BOOST FOR CORK AIRPORT

I welcomed the decision by Government to sell the State’s 25.1% stake in Aer Lingus to International Consolidated Airlines Group (IAG). The €335 million deal for the Government’s stake in the airline is a very positive one for Cork with new guarantees about

the Heathrow landing slots, and the future of routes from the airport.

Regional connectivity is crucial to Cork – and this deal will mean new routes to and from Cork Airport with seamless connecting services to a host of new destinations.

PÁIRC UÍ CHAOIMH

The Government sanctioned a grant of €30 million to help fund the GAA’s regeneration of Páirc Uí Chaoimh stadium. This project is absolutely essential and will ensure that Cork has an international stadium.

It is great to see that the demolition team have started work, and that the project is now well underway. Páirc Uí Chaoimh needs to be rebuilt. This is a project that will generate a lot of pride in Cork once completed.



Photo Larry Cummins, Irish Examiner

€241 MILLION DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME FOR THE SEAFOOD SECTOR

I was delighted to announce a comprehensive €241 million investment package for the seafood sector at the Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM) Seafood Development Centre in Clonakilty. Our Seafood sector is worth in the region of €850 million annually to our economy, with exports growing by 70% since 2009 to €540 million.

Seafood is widely recognised as a high growth area of our economy, with the potential to grow to €1 billion by 2020. This investment package will be a key element in the achievement of that growth potential. It will provide the capital to assist seafood enterprises to sustainably grow their production, add value to our seafood exports and create much needed employment in our coastal communities.



€9 MILLION INVESTMENT IN IRISH SEAFOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRY

Cork seafood processing companies will receive almost €1.5 million in grant aid as part of the €9 million 2015 Seafood Processing Business Investment Scheme awarded to 18 seafood processing companies nationally. The scheme, which is supported by private sector investment, will enable our innovative seafood processors to continue their strong growth trend of recent years that will see the sector continuing to grow sales internationally and grow employment in our coastal communities.

It will put the required technology, infrastructure and standards in place to allow these businesses develop added value seafood products that are in great demand on the global market. The supported projects are projected to deliver 145 Jobs and €41 million in additional sales by 2017.

€6M MILLION EXTENSION FOR SCOIL NIOCLÁIS PRIMARY SCHOOL IN FRANKFIELD

I recently had the honour of opening the new 16 classroom extension in Scoil Niocláis Primary School in Frankfield. The completion of the new 2,968m2 extension means that the school now has 32 permanent classrooms. The large-scale building project, which commenced construction in June 2013, links the two new classroom blocks to the existing school building. Scoil Niocláis is now the largest national school in Munster.

EDMUND RICE COLLEGE CARRIGALINE NOW ENROLLING FOR 2016

I am delighted to hear that Edmund Rice College in Carrigaline is now accepting applications for first year students wishing to enrol for the academic year 2016/2017. The college is due to open its doors in 2016 and I know that plans for the new state-of-the-art school are at a very advanced stage with building work commencing before the end of the year. Application forms are available online at www.erst.ie.

CARRIGALINE NAMED AS ONE OF THE FIRST GIGABIT TOWNS IN IRELAND

Carrigaline has been named as one of the first ten towns that will be part of the roll out of SIRO's 100% Fibre-to-the-Building broadband network. SIRO, a joint venture company between ESB and Vodafone Ireland, will deliver high speed broadband of up to one gigabit to 50 regional towns in 26 counties once completed. This project will put Carrigaline, and Cork, on a par for high speed connectivity with leading international hubs, such as Tokyo and Hong Kong in terms of broadband speed.



I joined An Taoiseach Enda Kenny, TD, in the Naval Base, Haulbowline to mark the despatch of L.É. EITHNE to the Mediterranean. The humanitarian crisis in the Mediterranean is of great concern to Ireland. The quick response by the Irish Government in deciding to despatch a Naval Vessel highlights our commitment to assist with efforts to prevent further tragedy and loss of life at sea. I wish to commend the Defence Forces on their efficient operational and

logistical planning for this deployment. I want to wish each and every crew member of L.É. EITHNE, under the command of Commander Pearse O'Donnell, a safe and successful mission. You will be in our thoughts throughout the duration of your tour of duty. To date the LÉ Eithne has rescued more than 1500 migrants – men, women and children – trying to cross the Mediterranean Sea in appalling conditions.



KEEPING CORK ON THE AGENDA AT CABINET & LOCAL LEVEL

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