



### **Media Statement -26<sup>th</sup> January 2021**

#### **Tipperary Town centre enhancement: The first step in reversing the decline.**

A €5 million improvement scheme is proposed for Tipperary town, and a decision will be made soon as to whether it goes ahead or not. It is important to say - 'The project is not just a road scheme', It is the first step on a journey to halt the decline. In October 2018, thousands of people marched because of the lack of progress in the town. In reply, the Government set up a Task Force and this group is working hard to prepare a Plan of Action. The funding required for this ambitious plan will require the cooperation of Government and other state agencies, it will require private investment and jobs, but most importantly it will require local support from the people of the town.

All towns across the country are competing for investment and for jobs, and it is the most ambitious and attractive towns that will succeed. Plans are being developed to follow this improvement scheme with a series of economic improvements for the town such as the development of a business park, redeveloping of vacant buildings, and most importantly, to attract private investment into the town. The ultimate success of these projects will depend on our ability to attract the necessary funding, and this improvement scheme will make the town an attractive place which is critical to securing that funding.

Concern has been expressed by March4Tipp and business groups that the works will undermine business, and residents will be discommoded because of disruption cause by the works and re-routing of traffic. Yes, the works will cause disruption, yet other Towns across the country are proceeding with such improvements. Other towns recognise that making such improvement is necessary to attract much needed outside investment, and to make the town attractive for people to shop and do business.

The €5 million budget for this improvement scheme is coming from the Transport Infrastructure Ireland funds. If these funds are rejected, this money will be spent in another town, and most likely in another county. Similar works are underway in Thurles, Clonmel and Carrick-on-Suir who have embraced such an opportunity to make their town centres more attractive for investment.

As part of the consultation, people have asked for a bypass. The N24 bypass is proceeding also, and ARUP consultant will be briefing the Council this week on progress to date. This project is likely to take a

minimum of 12 -15 years before it is completed. The question is whether we are happy to let the town continue to decline until the bypass is in place, or do we want the town to improve now? The town needs enhancement, this project is just the first part of a programme of work to improve the town.

The people of Tipperary asked for help to improve the town; is this help to be rejected at the first hurdle? If we are truly ambitious for the town, we need to send out the message that we are open for business, we want to be the best and we want to make Tipp an attractive place to live and do business! Or 'Will Tipperary be left behind again'?

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