

## 6. PRIORITISING RESOURCES AND ACTIONS



IN ORDER TO MAXIMISE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE COUNTY COUNCIL IT MUST BE SELECTIVE IN THE POLICY MEASURES THAT IT SUPPORTS. THIS RELATES TO THE MEASURES PROPOSED IN THE PREVIOUS CHAPTER, BUT ALSO TO FUTURE PRIORITISATION OF RESOURCE.

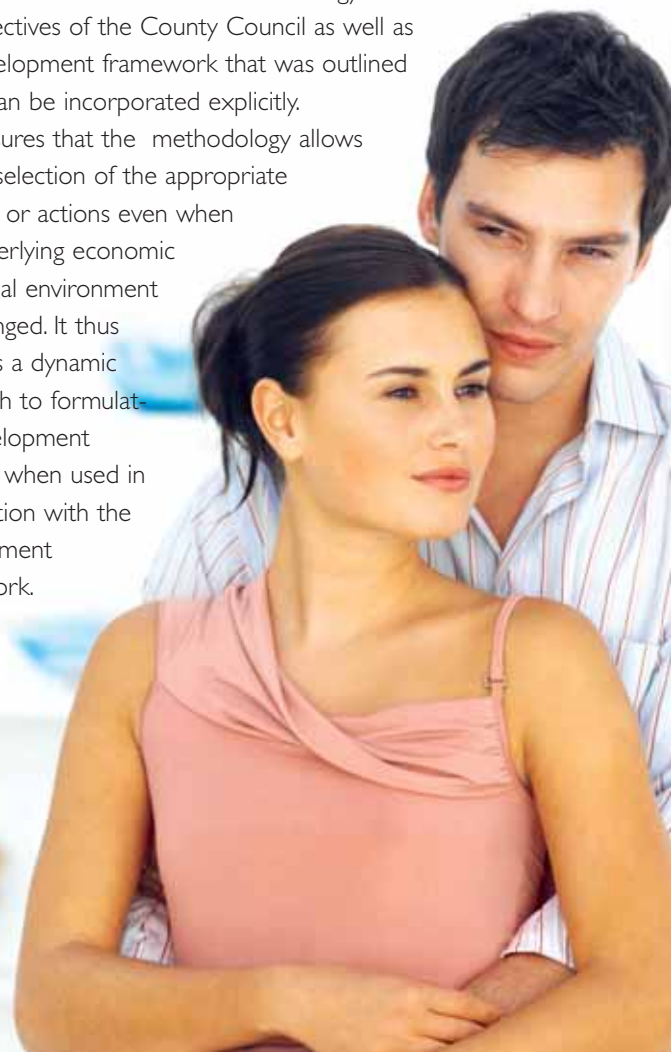
A range of policies are relevant at the county level. Broadly speaking these can be divided into own resource policies, which are implemented by the County Council using resources that are at the disposal of the county council, and secondary policies which are implemented by other bodies and agencies but which may be influenced by the County Council through co-ordination and lobbying.

As was shown above, there are clearly a wide range of possible actions available for the county council, ranging from land use planning to infrastructure provision and the facilitation of various other policies by external bodies. However, it is also clear that not all policies can be supported, either because they are mutually exclusive – one can not have a factory and housing on the same piece of land, or because due to the limited resources only some actions can be pursued. Thus, it is necessary for the County Council to prioritise between the different actions.

One traditional method for the identification of the best projects is the cost-benefit analysis (CBA), which as the name suggests weighs up all the costs against all the benefits of a particular project. This however can be quite problematic when not all costs or benefits can be accurately identified. Furthermore, the method relies on a range of parameters that are often not well established. In general, CBA is most useful for clearly demarcated projects, such as infrastructure projects, and is less well suited to policies such as land use planning where the costs and benefits are difficult to predict ex-ante.

An alternative to this method is Multi Criterion Decision Analysis (MCDA), which has become particularly popular in management science. A particular branch of this type of analysis is Multiple Attribute Utility Theory (MAUT), which is most usefully applied to identify a ranking among a set of alternative measures, which can then be used to select particular measures for implementation. The basic idea behind this method is that the decision maker aims to maximise well-being by choosing among alternative measures according to a set of criteria. Thus, this methodology formalises the usual decision making process that a policy maker would use.

An important feature of this methodology is that the key objectives of the County Council as well as the development framework that was outlined above can be incorporated explicitly. This ensures that the methodology allows for the selection of the appropriate projects or actions even when the underlying economic and social environment has changed. It thus provides a dynamic approach to formulating development strategy when used in conjunction with the development framework.





Depending on this match it is given a score between one and minus one for each of the criteria. Each score is multiplied by appropriate weight and those weighted scores are added up to yield a composite score.

Given that all projects are evaluated on the same basis, the methodology allows one to rank projects, which given the usual resource constraint can then be used to determine which projects should be supported. Indeed it is customary to set a minimum score, which is required before a project is deemed worthy of support. This ensures that only good projects receive resources, thus increasing value for money. Overall, this method allows for a focusing of resources onto projects that make the greatest contribution to the overall objective.

The method proposed here also has the advantage of simplicity as it can be developed in three simple steps. Firstly, one needs to classify the categories of policies that will be enacted. Secondly, a key task is to choose the appropriate criteria by which policy proposals are to be measured. This can only be achieved if one first considers what types of decisions are to be considered with the methodology. Finally, since the criteria are not of equal importance each criterion must be given a weighting. Once the methodology has been set up any project can be evaluated against the set of criteria and a score, which identifies how well a project matches the ideal criteria is established.







Major exhibitions and cultural events are a perfect platform to promote the county to a national and international audience.





Kildare County Council plays an important role in ensuring that the growth drivers are in place. How individual priorities on the growth drivers are defined is easily as important as ensuring delivery. In this respect it must always be kept in mind that people are key to a successful future.

