

# *Tipperary North County Enterprise Board*

## *Annual Report 2001*



City and County Enterprise Boards are funded by the Irish Government and part-financed by the European Union under the National Development Plan, 2000-2006

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## *Chairman's Statement*

This is the eighth Annual Report to be published by the Tipperary North County Enterprise Board since its inception in October 1993. The first report covered a 15-month period ending on 31 December 1994 and each subsequent report, including this one, covered a 12-month calendar year.

The year 2001 was a challenging one for enterprise in North Tipperary in terms of sustaining employment and generating new opportunities. External factors including a slow down in the global economy and the September 11 attacks in the USA resulted in an almost immediate downturn and lack of confidence in the market place which had far reaching consequences for almost every country including Ireland. Indigenous firms many of whom are sub-suppliers to multi national firms faced increasing competitive pressures such as labour costs and skills shortages, international buyers in the crafts sector lost confidence and the food sector suffered two major blows in the form of Foot & Mouth & BSE outbreaks.

In North Tipperary, both before and after the above events, there was a growing concern about continuing job losses in traditional and low value added industries and in a difficult economic climate it will not be easy to secure replacement industries for projects such as MoulinexBrant, GMX, Thurles which ceased trading in mid 2001 with a loss of 230 jobs (representing almost 20% of total industrial employment in Thurles).

The number of persons registered as unemployed in the County at the end of the year was 2063 which represented a drop of 40 on the previous year. The national unemployment rate of 4% at the end of 2001 was only fractionally higher than that which applied at the end of 2000 (3.9%). Employment growth of 2.4% was recorded in all regions including North Tipperary and in the B.M.W. Region employment grew at a rate of 2.8%.

The Tipperary North County Enterprise Board continued to make strides in job creation and the strength of the micro-enterprise employment base is reflected in the Annual Employment Survey carried out by the Board which revealed that for the eighth successive year an increase in employment was recorded by enterprises supported. These increases while modest were none the less welcome and the cumulative benefit to the local economy was an additional 459 full-time and 206 part-time jobs during this 8 year period up to the end of 2001.

During the year the Board introduced a number of new initiatives which were aimed at increasing the entrepreneurial and managerial capability of micro enterprises through training and development initiatives. This shift in emphasis by the Board from direct to indirect supports is in line with the requirements of the National Development Plan 2000-2006.

The National Development Plan and the S.&E. Regional Operational Programme signalled the changing role for County Enterprise Boards and made provision to support micro-enterprise development during the period 2000-2006. This Annual Report sets out in concise terms the main activities of the Board during the year in question and sets out the progress achieved under the micro-enterprises Measure of the Productive Investment Sub-Programme

of both the Regional and National Plans. The three main measures under which support was offered by the Board during 2001 included; Measure 1 – Selective Financial Assistance for Micro-Enterprises, Measure 2 – Entrepreneurial & Capability Development and E-commerce/E-Business – Empower Programme. Also during 2001, the Board received a special allocation for Childcare Grants which were designed to encourage the establishment of and/or expansion of childcare facilities and places available.

An audit of enterprise supports undertaken by the Board during the year in the context of formulating our Action Plan for 2002-2006, highlighted the proliferation of incentives and supports available from many agencies operating in the County. The setting up of the County Development Board was an effort to produce an overall Strategic Plan which would co-ordinate the activities of all organisations and bodies operating at county level. However this approach does not address the underlying problem which is exacerbated by the creation of new bodies rather than expanding the remit of existing organisations or the merger of two or more where the core activities could be deemed to be compatible.

Finally the achievements outlined in this report would not have been possible without the voluntary and committed contributions made by my fellow directors and members of both the Enterprise Board and Evaluation Committee during the year. I would also like to convey, on behalf of the Board, my thanks to the executive staff, under the leadership of the Chief Executive Officer, Ms. Margaret Roche for providing an excellent service to the Board and its Committees during the year.

Terry Ó Niadh  
Chairperson

## *Chief Executive's Report*

As Chief Executive of Tipperary North County Enterprise Board it gives me great pleasure to present the Annual Report for the year 2001.

As can be seen from the report the range of supports to the business community is very comprehensive and considerable progress was made during the year in furthering the skills of owner/managers at all levels.

The allocation of funding under the Empower initiative to further the IT skills of management and staff of small business should prove of enormous benefit to the business community. The response, both county-wide and nationally exceeded expectations with all targets having been exceeded.

We are very conscious of the fact that training is the key to successful business and we continue to promote this aspect to the best of our ability. The number of participants in programmes run during the year, including Empower, was 410, the highest ever. Overall expenditure on Soft Supports increased by 20% and if expenditure under Empower is taken into consideration the increase is 41%.

A new venture during the year was the 'Women in Business Network' successfully launched by An Tánaiste, Ms. Mary Harney, T.D., Minister for Enterprise, Trade & Employment, in September. The overall aim of the network is to increase the number of women in business in the county and the Board appointed a co-ordinator to manage the network and provide mentoring to participants.

Also new during the year was the Childcare initiative under which the Board received a special allocation for employment grants. As will be seen from the report 5 people involved in childcare availed of support under this initiative.

The number of jobs created during the year was 56 full-time. 25 further projects were approved with a job potential of 37 full-time and 12 part-time jobs. The approvals ranged over manufacturing, craft and service sectors and embraced both start-up and business expansion. In line with government policy there was a dramatic reduction in the money available for grant approvals – down 27% on previous year.

Activities relating to enterprise involvement were wide ranging starting with primary school programmes – Bí Gnóthach aimed at 11-12 year olds, to second level students with the Young Entrepreneur Scheme and the new Enterprise Encounter at LCVP level. None of this would have been possible without the co-operation of teachers and their support is greatly appreciated. Other activities as regards enterprise culture are aimed at the business community and the co-operation of the Chambers of Commerce, the business community at large and community groups is greatly appreciated.

In conclusion a very special word of thanks to former Chairperson, Mr. Ger Lewis, who resigned as Chairman during the year having served five years as Board Chairman. Tribute is paid to the members of the Board and Evaluation Committee who gave so generously of their time and expertise to Board activities. Tribute is also paid to the Board Staff for their hard work and dedication, Noel Cleary, Assistant CEO, Fionnuala Devaney, Business Development Executive and Niamh O'Reilly, Clerical Officer.

**Peggy Roche,**  
**Chief Executive Officer**

## ***Background***

County Enterprise Boards were established by the Government in 1993 to provide a range of supports for Micro-Enterprises and the Minister for Enterprise and Employment in confirming the details of the Membership and organisation of County Enterprise Boards stated that: -

*“The Boards will fill a gap which has become apparent in the support services for local enterprise initiatives. They will bring a variety of interests together to set objectives for promoting enterprise in their area, prepare a strategic plan and provide assistance to small enterprise projects which can yield a cost effective return in terms of job creation.”*

The Board must have regard to the strategies and objectives set out in the Enterprise Action Plan in determining their priority areas for financial assistance. The Tipperary North County Enterprise Board undertook a review of their Action Plan during the year and consulted widely with the business sector, agencies and trainers/ business advisers. Focus Group meetings facilitated by Tipperary Institute were organised and all issues impeding the growth and development of the micro-enterprise sector were addressed. The Action plan for the period 2002-2006 which is in accord with the County Strategy Plan, will be published in 2002. Any strategies drawn up by the Board must be as envisaged in the Task Force Report on the Integration of Local Government and Local Development Systems. County Enterprise Boards are funded by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment and the EU Commission under the National Development Plan and the Southern and Eastern (S&E) Regional Operational programme which were drawn up for the period 2000-2006. Each Enterprise Board must operate in accordance with the criteria and guidelines laid down by the Department under both Regional and National Policy Measures.

The Tipperary North County Enterprise Board is a private company limited by guarantee and has 14 Directors/Members drawn from the following interest groups in accordance with the Operating Agreement executed between the Board and the Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment and also as laid down in the Memorandum and Articles of Association of the Company:-

- ◆ North Tipperary County Manager
- ◆ Shannon Development/Enterprise Ireland Nominee
- ◆ A FÁS Representative
- ◆ A nominee of an Employer Organisation
- ◆ A nominee of a Trade Union Organisation
- ◆ A nominee of a Farmers Organisation
- ◆ Four nominees of North Tipperary County Council

Four other persons to include Local Business People or Local Community Organisation Representatives or persons from a Local Economic Development Organisation

## **The Evaluation Committee**

Tipperary North County Enterprise Board is advised by an independent Evaluation Committee on the most appropriate level and form of assistance for all eligible enterprise projects having regard to, among other things:-

- ◆ The objectives of the County Enterprise Action Plan and any sectoral objectives therein
- ◆ National and EU Commission Policies in relation to sensitive sectors
- ◆ The quality, local relevance and cost effectiveness of the project

- ◆ The prospect of attracting funding and assistance for the project from sources other than the Board.

The Evaluation Committee comprises of representatives from the financial, banking and private sectors in addition to nominees of Shannon Development and North Tipperary County Council.

## **The Evaluation Committee - 8 members**

*Mr. Pat Horan, Accountant,*

*Mr. Bobby O'Dwyer, Banker,*

*Mr. Tomás Ó Domhnaíll, Agency (Shannon Development),*

*Mr. Paddy Heffernan, Public Sector - Local Authority,*

*Mr. Con Harrington, Business & Agriculture,*

*Mr. Conor Scott, Business,*

*Ms. Hilary Henry, Business,*

*Ms. Sinéad Ní Riain, Business.*

## **The Board - 14 members**

*Mr. Terry Ó Niadh, Public Sector Agency (Co. Manager),*

*Mr. Tom Berkery, MCC Elected Representatives,*

*Mr. David Collins, General & Community (Teagasc),*

*Ms. Kathleen Costello, General & Community (Business),*

*Mr. Joe Gleeson, Social Partners (Business),*

*Mr. John Hanafin, MCC Elected Representatives,*

*Ms. Hilary Henry General & Community (Business),*

*Ms. Máire Hoctor, MCC Elected Representatives,*

*Mr. Ger Lewis, Social Partners (Trade Union),*

*Mr. Jimmy Murphy, Social Partners (Farming),*

*Ms. Anne Murray, General & Community (ICA),*

*Mr. Tomás Ó Domhnaíll, Public Sector Agency (Shannon Development),*

*Mr. Mattie Ryan (Coole), MCC Elected Representatives,*

*Mr. Dermot Tobin, Public Sector Agency (FÁS).*

## **The Board Executive/Staff at 31 December 2001**

**Margaret Roche**

**Noel Cleary**

**Fionnuala Devaney**

**Niamh O'Reilly**

## *Introduction*

### **Annual Allocations/Budgets**

Funding for the activities of the Board during 2001 was provided by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment under a number of specific headings or measures: -

- ◆ Measure 1 – Selective Financial Assistance
- ◆ Measure 2 – Entrepreneurial & Capability Development
- ◆ Empower – E-Commerce Support Programme
- ◆ Administration – Running Costs including Salaries & Wages

A total of £651,130 was received from the Departments of Enterprise, Trade and Employment and Finance during 2001 as detailed hereunder:-

<b>PROGRAMME</b>	<b>AMOUNT RECEIVED 2001</b>
Measure 1	£176,000
Measure 2	£195,000
Empower	£69,630
Childcare	£28,500
Administration	£182,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£651,130</b>

Additional revenue was raised by the Board through fees levied on participants towards the cost of various initiatives, courses and programmes etc. delivered throughout the year.

This Annual Report includes detailed information on the many initiatives and programmes undertaken by the Tipperary North County Enterprise Board during the year ended 31 December 2001.

## ***Measure 1***

### ***Selective Financial Assistance for Micro-Enterprises***

Under this Measure the Board operates a scheme aimed at assisting, through standard grants and refundable aid – capital or employment – the establishment of small-scale economic projects with the central objective of facilitating the creation and maintenance of sustainable jobs and the development of economic infrastructure at local level.

The Board's remit is restricted to projects with a capital investment of £100,000 (€127,000) or less and in the case of projects in the manufacturing and the internationally-traded services sectors, employment potential not exceeding 10 full-time jobs.

The Board's allocation for grant approvals during the year was £210,500 (€267,280) in addition to which a special allocation of £28,500 (€36,188) was made available towards the creation of additional employment in the childcare sector under a special Childcare Initiative.

### **Project Selection**

The Tipperary North County Enterprise Board pursues a systematic appraisal of all project proposals. The initial application is assessed by the Evaluation Committee and a recommendation is made to the Board on the level and form of assistance having regard to a number of factors including the following key selection criteria: -

- ◆ The quality of the project proposal and its local relevance and economic benefits
- ◆ The commercial viability of the proposed project
- ◆ Availability of matching finance/current funding position of the applicant
- ◆ The cost effectiveness of the proposal
- ◆ The contribution of the proposal to the development of the Enterprise in terms of internal capacity
- ◆ Potential for dead-weight or displacement impact on poverty, equality, rural development and the environment

The following additional criteria for project selection and incentive levels has been laid down by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment and confirmed in the S&E Regional Operational Programme and the National Development Plan 2000-2006 which stipulated that:

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1. Priority must be given to manufacturing and internationally traded services which over time can develop into strong export entities and graduate to the Enterprise Ireland portfolio.
2. Tourism projects aimed predominantly at overseas visitors.
3. Locally provided services promoted by the unemployed or those recently made redundant and also women re-entering the workforce – such projects must avoid dead-weight and displacement and cannot represent more than 25% of the Board's annual approval capacity.

## Business Proposals

Over 64% of all business proposals received are offered some form of financial assistance by the Board as evidenced by the following statistics for the year 2001:

Business Proposals Received	39
Projects Approved	25
Applications Refused	8
Referred to Other Agencies	-
Withdrawn/Deferred	6

Grant assistance in the amount of £210,500 was awarded during the year as follows:

- Capital                   £167,000
- Employment           £32,500
- Feasibility              £11,000

Seven applications were processed under the new Childcare Initiative and 5 were approved assistance to the value of £28,500.

## Incentive Levels

1. A maximum of £50,000 or 50% of the cost of eligible fixed assets, whichever is the lesser, subject to that portion of the incentive in excess of 35% being in refundable form (equity/repayable grant).
2. Employment grants up to a maximum of £5,000 per employee for 10 employees but only in cases where it can be demonstrated clearly that labour shortages do **not** exist, employment grants cannot represent more the 25% of the Boards annual approval capacity.
3. 50% of the cost of engaging in a feasibility study or preparing a business plan, subject to a maximum limit of £4,000 per project.
4. Not less than 35% of the Board's annual approval capacity shall be in refundable form.

The introduction of refundable aid from 1 July 2000 means that the Board is obliged to come up with a combined incentive package, including capital grants and refundable aid, which will meet the Department's new criteria as detailed above.

The following guidelines have been adopted by the Tipperary North County Enterprise Board in relation to the offer of refundable aid: -

1. Refundable Aid will only apply initially to capital grants for investment in site development and buildings works and also the purchase of machinery and equipment.
2. The maximum repayment period is set at 5 years.
3. A moratorium on repayment of both principal and interest up to a maximum of two years may be granted in certain circumstances.

4. Interest would be set initially at 0% for all projects and these limits will be reviewed on an annual basis with provision for an overall upper limit of 6%.
5. Recipients of refundable aid will be required to execute a Deed of Covenant and Promissory Note with the Board before payment of the refundable aid is discharged.

It has also been determined that all repayments received under the Refundable Aid Scheme will be used by the Board exclusively to fund further advances of refundable aid in the future.

## Seed Capital Scheme

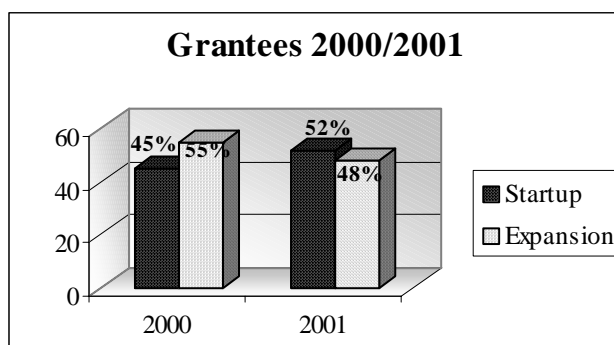
The Seed Capital Scheme which is operated by the Revenue Commissioners provides for a refund of tax paid over a 5-year period, subject to certain limitations, to a person who invests in and takes up employment in a new company. The company must be involved in qualifying activities such as manufacturing, internationally traded services, certain tourist undertakings, research and development etc. The activity must be certified by a relevant agency confirming that it is a bone fide new venture and under the 1997 Finance Act the certification process was extended to include the County Enterprise Boards.

The scheme will be of particular interest to employees, unemployed or redundant persons, who have paid income tax over the previous five years, and are interested in setting up their own business or investing in a new company.

## Status of Grantees

Applications approved may be summarised as follows:

Start-up	52%
Expansion	48%



## Sectoral Analysis of approvals

Manufacturing	48%
Services	48%
Craft	4%

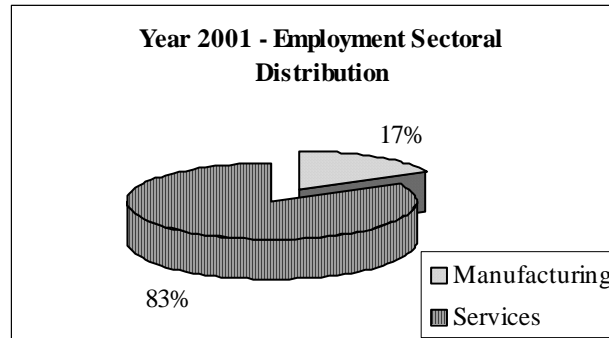
## Job Potential

The job potential of the projects approved – Capital and Employment – was 37 full-time and 12 part-time.

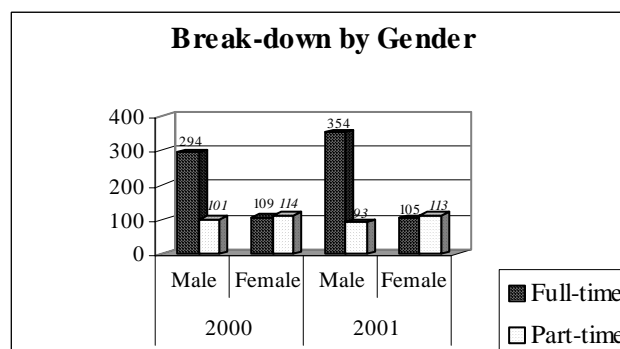
## Job Creation

A total of 114 enterprises supported by the Board were surveyed at the end of 2001 to monitor progress in achieving job targets. The annual employment survey established that 18 firms showed an increase in their employment levels, 19 firms recorded a decrease and 77 remained static. Overall while 86 new full-time positions were created 30 jobs were lost in 19 firms leaving a net gain of 56 additional full-time jobs.

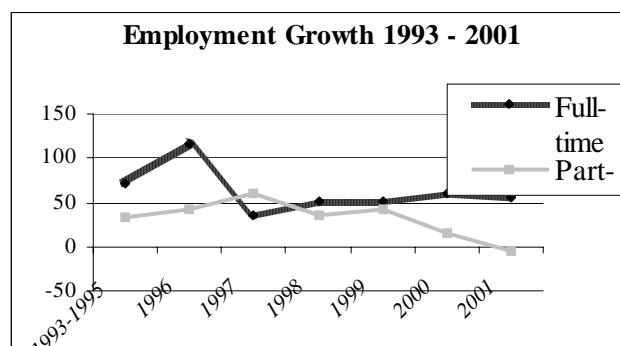
The following chart highlights the sectors in which jobs gains were recorded:



Employment created in Board supported enterprises since the inception of the Board may be categorised as follows:



A total of 459 full-time and 206 part-time positions have been created in enterprises supported by the Tipperary North County Enterprise Board over the period November 1993 to December 2001 (average 55 ft jobs, 28 pt jobs per annum).



## Capital Grants – Approvals 2001

<i>Name, Address, Description</i>	<i>Grant £</i>	<i>Refundable Aid £</i>	<i>Total Approved £</i>
<b>Liam Brennan</b> , Millbrook, Ballinacloyh, Nenagh <i>Manufacture &amp; production of timber home &amp; kitchen accessories</i>	14,500	14,500	29,000
<b>Ragnall Cagney</b> , Graffin, Clonmore, Templemore <i>Environmental cleaning</i>	5,187	-	5,187
<b>Gabriel Curran</b> , 1 Church Road, Borrisokane <i>Equestrian centre</i>	12,500	12,500	25,000
<b>Tom Hampton</b> , 68 Kenyon Street, Nenagh <i>Technical components</i>	5,000	5,000	10,000
<b>James Hennessy</b> , Killea, Templemore <i>Engineering works</i>	5,921	5,921	11,842
<b>Rona Keenan</b> , Cornview Lodge, Terryglass, Nenagh <i>Corporate giftware</i>	4,500	4,500	9,000
<b>Colm Keogh</b> , 10 Cluain Airne, Monadreen, Thurles <i>Butcher blocks and kitchen islands</i>	9,837	9,838	19,675
<b>Rachel McCarthy</b> , Ballyhane, Birdhill <i>Massage and sports therapy training</i>	1,956	-	1,956
<b>Martin O'Neill</b> , Finline Enterprises Ltd, Cork Road, Newport <i>Engineering works</i>	4,300	4,300	8,600
<b>Anthony Seymour</b> , Annabeg, Dromineer, Nenagh <i>All weather gallop</i>	10,250	10,250	20,500
<b>Shanahan Fascia &amp; Soffit</b> , Toomevara <i>Manufacture of fascia &amp; soffit</i>	3,750	3,750	7,500
<b>Dermot Troy</b> , Monanore, Toomevara <i>Iron works</i>	5,250	-	5,250
<b>Denis Cleary</b> , Pallas, Toomevara, Nenagh <i>Horse livery and training service</i>	4,000	4,000	8,000
<b>David McElgunn</b> , 1 Emmet Street, Thurles <i>Portrait painting</i>	450	-	450
<b>Martin O'Neill</b> , Finline Enterprises Ltd, Cork Road, Newport <i>Engineering works</i>	5,040	-	5,040
<b>Total</b>	<b>£92,441</b>	<b>£74,559</b>	<b>£167,000</b>

## Employment Grants – Approvals 2001

<i>Name, Address, Description</i>	<i>Grant £</i>	<i>Refundable Aid £</i>	<i>Total Approved £</i>
<b>John Maher</b> , 26 Summerhill, Nenagh <i>Handcrafted stained glass</i>	5,000	--	5,000
<b>Stella Majewsky</b> , Castlecranna, Carrigatoher, Nenagh <i>Human resource development</i>	5,000	--	5,000
<b>Jonathan Stein</b> , Darklite SCE, Apt 10 The Willows, Thurles <i>Software development</i>	15,000	--	15,000
<b>Donnach O'Donnell</b> , 7 Ormond Keep, Nenagh <i>Craft</i>	5,000	--	5,000
<b>Madeline Dollard</b> , Golden Grove Road, Roscrea <i>Montessori Pre-School</i>	2,500	--	2,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>£32,500</b>	<b>£0.00</b>	<b>£32,500</b>

## Childcare Initiative

<i>Name, Address, Description</i>	<i>Grant £</i>	<i>Refundable Aid £</i>	<i>Total Approved £</i>
<b>Helen Cody</b> , Benedine, Nenagh <i>Montessori School &amp; Crèche</i>	5,000	--	5,000
<b>Cordelia Cormack</b> , 31 Melrose, Nenagh <i>Pre-School &amp; Childcare Centre</i>	13,500	--	13,500
<b>Paschalina Ely</b> , Newhill, Two-Mile-Borris, Thurles <i>Montessori Nursery School</i>	2,500	--	2,500
<b>Margaret McAdams</b> , Dernasling, Ardcroney, Nenagh <i>Crèche</i>	2,500	--	2,500
<b>Eileen Ryan</b> , Kavanagh Place, Thurles <i>Naíonra</i>	5,000	--	5,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>£28,500</b>	<b>£0.00</b>	<b>£28,500</b>

## *Feasibility Study Grants - Approvals 2001*

<i>Name, Address, Description</i>	<i>Total Approved £</i>
<b>St. Sheelans</b> Community Childcare Services, Templemore Childcare services	2,000
<b>Rory Kinane</b> , Nenagh Road, Borrisoleigh Manufacture of plastic products	3,000
<b>Stella Majewsky</b> , Castlecranna, Carrigatoher, Nenagh Human resources development	2,000
<b>Noel Morris</b> , Woodfield House, Eyre Court, Co Galway Wind energy	2,000
<b>Maureen Mounsey</b> , Lower Clashnevin, Nenagh Wind energy	2,000
	<b>Total      £11,000</b>

## Capital Grants – Expenditure 2001

<i>Name, Address, Description</i>	<i>Grant</i>	<i>Refund. Aid</i>	<i>Total for 2001</i>	<i>Cumulative paid to 31/12/01</i>
<b>Theo Tierney</b> , Tipperary Garden Peat, Terryglass <i>Moss peat</i>	6,615	-	6,615	29,285
<b>Colm Keogh</b> , Stradavoher Industrial Estate, Thurles <i>Butcher blocks &amp; kitchen islands</i>	6,511	9,838	16,349	16,349
<b>Martin O'Neill</b> , Finline Enterprises Ltd., Newport <i>Engineering works</i>	4,300	4,300	8,600	8,600
<b>Ella, Bill (Snr) &amp; Bill (Jnr) D'Arcy</b> , Pallas Hill Drombane <i>Hilltop open farm and adventure playground</i>	5,976	-	5,976	5,976
<b>Rona Keenan</b> , Cornview Lodge, Terryglass <i>Corporate giftware</i>	4,500	4,500	9,000	9,000
<b>David Donnelly</b> , Greenhills, Loughan, Dunkerrin <i>Karting centre</i>	8,523	8,523	17,046	17,046
<b>Shane Broderick</b> , Cullagh, Rathcabbin <i>All weather gallop</i>	7,500	7,500	15,000	15,000
<b>Morgan Cahalan</b> , Southpark, Ballingarry, Roscrea <i>Horse rehabilitation centre</i>	4,875	4,875	9,750	9,750
<b>Patrick &amp; Seamus Cody</b> , Clonakenny, Roscrea <i>Bed frames</i>	7,284	7,283	14,567	30,667
<b>Liam &amp; Patrick Fitzgibbon</b> , Thurles <i>Light engineering</i>	1,050	-	1,050	15,630
<b>Jim &amp; Breda Maher</b> , Cooleeney Cheese Ltd., Moyne Thurles <i>Cheese manufacturing</i>	8,925	8,926	17,851	43,097
<b>Rachel &amp; Andrew Sterling</b> , Annagh Lodge, Coolbawn <i>Outdoor arena</i>	1,039	1,039	2,078	10,178
<b>Total</b>	<b>£67,098</b>	<b>£56,784</b>	<b>£123,882</b>	<b>£210,578</b>

## *Employment Grants – Expenditure 2001*

<i>Name, Address, Description</i>	<i>Grant</i>	<i>Total for 2001</i>	<i>Cumulative paid to 31/12/01</i>
<b>Restoration Building Products Ltd</b> , Killoran Slate Quarry Portroe, Nenagh <i>Recycling building materials</i>	7,500	7,500	25,000
<b>Philip Hanafin</b> , Knocknagrave, Borrisoleigh <i>Decorative ceramics</i>	2,500	2,500	2,500
<b>Colman Bulfin</b> , Ashmere, Roscrea <i>Wrought iron work</i>	3,750	3,750	17,500
<b>Anthony Ryan</b> , Newtown, Ballinree, Nenagh <i>Aerial photography</i>	2,500	2,500	5,000
<b>Jason Cahill</b> , Pallasbeg, Carrigatoher, Nenagh <i>UPVC repairer</i>	5,000	5,000	5,000
<b>Tina &amp; Michael Ryan</b> , Scart, New Road, Roscrea <i>Montessori school</i>	2,500	2,500	7,500
	<b>£23,750</b>	<b>£23,750</b>	<b>£62,500</b>

## *Childcare Initiative – Expenditure 2001*

<i>Name, Address, Description</i>	<i>Grant</i>	<i>Total for 2001</i>	<i>Total paid to 31/12/01</i>
<b>Cordelia Cormack</b> , 31 Melrose, Nenagh <i>Pre-school &amp; childcare centre</i>	6,250	6,250	6,250
	<b>£6,250</b>	<b>£6,250</b>	<b>£6,250</b>

## *Feasibility Study Grants – Expenditure 2001*

<i>Name, Address, Description</i>	<i>Grant</i>	<i>Cumulative paid to 31/12/01</i>
<b>Stella Majewsky</b> , Castlecranna, Carrigatoher, Nenagh <i>Human resource development</i>	2,000	2,000
<b>Maureen Mounsey</b> , Lower Clashnevin, Nenagh <i>Wind energy</i>	2,000	2,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>£4,000</b>	<b>£4,000</b>

## *Measure 2*

### *Entrepreneurial and Capability Development*

The Tipperary North County Enterprise Board received an allocation of £195,000 from the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment towards the cost of carrying out a number of programmes and initiatives which were aimed at increasing the managerial capability of individuals and enterprises through a series of ‘soft support’ measures.

Actions under this Measure include the promotion of enterprise attitudes among business, education and community interests through encouraging increased enterprise-related activities.

The Board also commissioned Tipperary Institute to prepare an Enterprise Action Plan for the period 2002-2006. Focus group meetings with stakeholders and with Board members were held during the year and areas of priority identified. The Plan will be available during 2002.

In addition to services such as advice, counselling and mentoring on a one-to-one basis, seminars, workshops and training programmes, ranging from basic training to management development, are also run. These initiatives are designed to promote entrepreneurship, build the management capability of owners and managers and generally upskill individuals working in small enterprise in the county. Programmes implemented under this Measure during 2001 are summarised hereunder:

<b>Programme/Courses</b>	<b>No. of Approved Participants</b>
Computerised Management Accounting Training (x 3 Programmes)	30
Euro QuickBooks Changeover	104
ExtraOrdinary Manager (participating firms)	13
Local Tour Guide	13
Mentor Programme	26
Presentation Skills	7
Professional Advice	7
Safety Statement	12
Staffing Programme	12
Start Your Own Business Training (x 4 programmes)	55
Export Market Entry Programme	1
Partnerships in Europe	2
<b>Total (16)</b>	<b>282</b>

### **Young Entrepreneurs Scheme**

The aim of the Young Entrepreneurs Scheme is to encourage initiative, creativity, innovation and entrepreneurial skills among young people in a relaxed and rewarding way.

Nine second-level schools participated in the competition during 2000-01 involving 163 students. For the first time there were entrants in the intermediate category.

The county final took place in March 2001 in Nenagh. The first two finalists in the senior category went forward to the regional final and were successful in going forward to the national final. The successful finalist in the intermediate category went forward to the regional final.

Each school was provided with a mentoring service by the Board in areas such as ideas generation, market research/marketing, finance, business plan presentation and report writing.

## **LCVP Programme**

During the year the Board contributed towards the cost of introducing the Enterprise Encounter Programme to the LCVP enterprise module in second-level schools. Enterprise Encounter is a national enterprise education programme which allows students the opportunity to interact with local entrepreneurs, thereby allowing them to identify with business and to be influenced by the entrepreneur as a role model. The programme will be run in conjunction with the Department of Education and will be an integral part of LCVP.

## **Library**

The Board's library, which is open to the public during office hours, contains a wide variety of books and publications of interest to the business community. New manuals relevant to business were introduced and the computer facilities were upgraded. The in-house computer facilities allow entrepreneurs and aspiring entrepreneurs to undertake internet based research. The library service is available free of charge.

## **National Enterprise Awards**

The Board contributed to the National Enterprise Awards, but did not subsequently nominate a business to participate. Only one application was received and that company was not in a position to furnish all information required for consideration under the programme.

## **Mentor Programme**

The Mentor programme is designed to enable the Board to provide individuals/companies with temporary advisors to help identify and overcome obstacles in their development stages.

26 businesses availed of the Mentor programme throughout 2001.

In addition professional advisors on marketing and finance were provided to 7 companies.

The Board also provided professional online mentoring and support for 25 small businesses through a specially designed website, [managementdirect.com](http://managementdirect.com). This on-line facility was backed by a team of mentors and advisors under the direction of Sean McGarry, Management Direct based in Dublin.

## **Craftworkers**

Showcase, the Crafts Council of Ireland's international craft, gift and fashion fair, affords companies an opportunity to display their products to a worldwide audience.

Two businesses were subsidised to share the Enterprise Board stand at Showcase 2001 – Havatitye Studios, Wood sculptures (Roscrea) and Páistí Designs (Puckane).

As in the past, the Board contributed to the cost of the North Tipperary Craft Workers Association Craft Fair which took place in Nenagh in December.

## **Exporters Programme**

The Board participated in the Export Market Entry Programme run by the Irish Exporters Association in association with the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment. The programme is designed to give direct practical assistance in getting small companies into export markets in the EU, America and Asia. The company nominated and subsidised by the Board during the year was Fergus Costelloe Studios, Cloughjordan.

## **Partnerships in Eastern Europe**

The Board nominated two client companies to participate in the scheme established by Forfás, the Department of Enterprise, Trade & Employment and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD). The aim of the scheme is to foster partnerships for Irish companies that are seeking expanded business relationships in former soviet countries.

## **Design Shannon**

The Board made a contribution to ‘Design Shannon’ – a new collaborative initiative set-up during the year by Shannon Development, Third Level Institutions and the six CEB’s in the Region. The objective of the initiative is to establish a network of users and supporters of good design and to promote design excellence in the Shannon region.

## **‘Euro’ Information Evenings**

The Board held information evenings in association with the Chambers of Commerce in Nenagh and Thurles during 2001. The attendance at the Thurles event was 55, and in Nenagh 35. The Board also approved a similar initiative for Roscrea in association with the Chamber of Commerce who subsequently decided to organise their own event with financial support from the Board.

## **Women in Business Network**

Having carried out a survey amongst women in business the Board decided to set up a ‘Women in Business Network’ which was successfully launched in September by An Tánaiste, Ms. Mary Harney T.D., Minister for Enterprise, Trade & Employment. In launching the Network she commended the Board for taking the initiative to identify the barriers which prevent women setting up their own businesses and for creating a Network that is relevant, practical and effective.

The network will give women an opportunity to overcome the sense of isolation often felt by women, to share ideas and experiences, to acquire new business skills and to promote their own business and act as a support group. At year end the Board had built a database of 120 women in business, held two network evenings and a networking Christmas dinner. A core of 50 female entrepreneurs attended these events.

## **Start Your Own Business Programmes**

Throughout 2001 the Board organised and ran four Start Your Own Business programmes – three in Nenagh and one in Thurles. The aim of this course is to familiarise participants of all aspects involved in establishing and running a small business. Course content includes idea evaluation, market research, financial planning etc. and culminates in the preparation of a business plan. 55 aspiring entrepreneurs participated in the four programmes delivered during 2001.

The Board introduced an option to submit business plans for NEBS accreditation to course participants in the later half of the year.

## **Presentation skills**

The objective of this course was to help participants learn how to hold peoples' attention, sell ideas and get the desired results. 7 people participated in the programme which was delivered on behalf of the Board by Ó Máille Group.

## **Local Tour Guide Programme**

This programme was launched in Spring 2001 but had to be postponed due to foot & mouth restrictions. While originally there were 23 successful applicants for the programme, when it recommenced in the autumn only 13 people could participate. The course involved an examination and project work and successful participants will be awarded a CERT Local Tour Guide Certificate and their names will be entered in a National Register of Local Tour Guides. The programme was delivered on behalf of the Board by CERT.

## **Computerised Management Accounting Training Programme**

During 2001 the Board ran three Computerised Management Accounting Training programmes during which participants set up their accounts on computer. One of the courses was run in conjunction with FÁS.

In addition to workshops the course included one-to-one on-site training sessions over a period of two months, backed up by a phone-in helpline for a period of six months.

30 business owners/managers participated in the programmes which were delivered on behalf of the Board by Michael Byrnes & Associates.

## **Euro QuickBooks**

This was aimed at participants who had already completed the Computerised Management Accounting training programme. Special training was provided to introduce participants to the QuickBooks Euro package. The training course included four Modules and individual expert file examination. Each participant was provided with a report on his/her file with a recommendation as to adjustments required, if any, to facilitate the changeover. Follow-up open days with advisors were organised for late December and early January to address difficulties encountered with the changeover.

104 participants availed of the course which was delivered on behalf of the Board by Michael Byrnes and Associates.

## **Recruit Manage & Retain Your Valued Staff**

This programme was delivered in four modules and the 12 participants received inputs on recruitment & selection, employment legislation, training & development and performance management

All participants received a half-day one-to-one session on-site with the trainer - Profile Training and Development.

## **Safety Statement Training Programme**

The objective of this course was to provide participants with information, guidance and the necessary skills to enable them to fully complete a comprehensive Safety Statement for their own businesses.

All participants received a half-day one-to-one on-site session with the trainer. 12 participants successfully completed this course and produced their own safety statement. The course, which is approved by the Health & Safety Authority, was delivered on behalf of the Board by Darlington Consulting.

## **The ExtraOrdinary Manager**

Aimed at well-established businesses this programme was delivered to 13 small businesses, catering for 14 participants. The programme was designed to enable entrepreneurs to grow and develop their businesses. It included 11 workshops on topics relating to the latest management skills and also six one-to-one on-site mentoring sessions with an experienced consultant.

Each participant received assistance in preparing a comprehensive business plan which was submitted to the National Examining Board for Supervision and Management (NEBS). Successful participants will receive recognised certification. The programme was delivered on behalf of the Board by Ó Máille Group, Galway.

## **Advertising**

All activities and programmes organised by the Board were advertised in the three newspapers servicing the county and they are also publicised on local radio. From time to time the Board advertised in various other publications associated with North Tipperary.

As in previous years, the local media once again gave generous coverage and support throughout 2001 to the many promotional activities implemented and their co-operation and assistance is greatly appreciated.

Thanks is also due to the various parishes throughout the North Tipperary which included Board notices in their weekly newsletters.

# *Empower*

## **Background**

The Board prepared a Strategic Implementation Plan for an e-commerce fast track initiative in 2000 which was submitted in conjunction with the other County Enterprise Boards to the Departments of Finance, Enterprise, Trade and Employment and the Information Society Commission for approval. This submission was successful and a sum of almost £3 million was made available to the 35 city and county Enterprise Boards under an e-commerce initiative which was known as Empower. The Tipperary North County Enterprise Board was allocated a sum of £81,345 for the implementation of an e-commerce/e-business initiative in North Tipperary for the 15-month period ending 31/12/2001.

The Implementation Plan provided for the delivery of the Empower Initiative under seven different measures as follows:-

- ◆ Advertising/Promotion
- ◆ Awareness Seminars
- ◆ Technical Assistance Grants
- ◆ Website Design and Development
- ◆ Training Workshops
- ◆ Mentoring
- ◆ Electronic Networking

## **Progress Report**

The Board conducted an extensive awareness campaign in 2000. The following is a summary of activities undertaken during the entire programme spanning September 2000 to December 2001

Technical assistance grants paid	Software	117
	Website	28
<i>Number of:</i> Businesses which received computer training		67
<i>Number of:</i> Businesses which received mentoring		50

In addition to the foregoing under the programme the Board ran two training courses the objective of which was to assist enterprises to develop and market a web site. At the conclusion of the programmes all participants were trained in the design and maintenance of their own web sites set up during the course. 15 participants established websites.

In the financial year ending December 2001 a total of £71,880 was expended on the foregoing initiatives bringing the total spend over the course of the programme, inclusive of training fees, to £83,910.

## *General*

- ◆ The Board is a company limited by guarantee and is subject to compliance with the requirements of the Companies Registration Office.
- ◆ All Board members are required to make a declaration of interest in respect of any project being considered for assistance and any such declaration is noted in the audited accounts.
- ◆ Hilary Henry resigned as a Director and member of the Evaluation Committee in December 2001.
- ◆ Ger Lewis and the Chief Executive represent the Board on the County Development Board. A submission was made to the CDB on their draft document – ‘Visions, strategic objectives and actions’.
- ◆ The Assistant CEO, was nominated to the Board of Nenagh Community Network in succession to the Chief Executive Officer who had resigned as a Director.
- ◆ The Chairman represented the Board on the economic implementation body established by the Roscrea Community Development Council.
- ◆ The Chief Executive was nominated to the inter-agency Task Force set up by the Minister for Enterprise, Trade & Employment following the announcement of the closure of the GMX factory in Thurles. Board members expressed their concern about the closure and decided that all assistance within the power of the Board should be afforded those who were made redundant.
- ◆ The Board noted and considered all Circulars issued periodically by the Department of Enterprise, Trade & Employment. The Board also considered and noted reports submitted by other Agencies and organisations.
- ◆ The Board gave consideration to securing alternative premises and agreed to reserve accommodation in the new civic offices being provided by North Tipperary County Council in Nenagh in the future.
- ◆ The Board’s internal Auditors carried out an audit during the year and their report was considered and approved by the Board.
- ◆ The Board’s executive compiled and implemented a Plan for the Euro changeover.
- ◆ The Board contributed to the cost of a county web-site developed by North Tipperary County Council.
- ◆ The Board negotiated and completed an agreement with the Tipperary Leader Group on delivery of the micro-enterprise programmes for the period to 2006.
- ◆ The Board held two Annual General Meetings and 8 ordinary meetings during the year. At the February meeting, the Board considered and adopted the Annual Report 1999.
- ◆ At the meeting following the AGM Ger Lewis resigned as Chairman, many tributes having been paid to him. Terry Ó Niadh was elected Chairman and Joe Gleeson was elected Vice-Chairman.
- ◆ At the December AGM the Board considered and adopted the Annual Report for 2000.