



Ms. Anne Marie Walsh,
Senior Executive Officer,
Corporate Services,
Kilkenny County Council,
County Hall,
John Street,
Kilkenny, R95 A39T

October 2020

Dear Ms. Walsh,

I have been asked by the Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, Simon Harris T.D. to refer to your correspondence of 2 October in relation to the progression of a technological university in the South East.

Firstly, it should be highlighted that Government continues to support the development and progression of Technological Universities (TUs) as a key national strategic objective in advancing the higher education, skills, access, research and regional development agendas. The Programme for Government 2020 underlines this support and, in particular, recognises the urgency attached to the establishment of a TU for the South East of Ireland.

However, as autonomous Higher Education institutions it remains a matter for the governing bodies of individual Institutes of Technology engaged in a consortium seeking TU designation under the requirements of the Technological Universities Act 2018 to progress their proposals appropriately subject to their particular circumstances.



The TUSEI consortium of IT Carlow and Waterford IT continues to actively develop its application for TU designation. In late July the Minister announced that Mr. Tom Boland had been appointed as independent programme executive director for the TUSEI project and tasked with driving the necessary change management process and ensuring the submission of an application under the 2018 Act. The Minister has spoken to Mr. Boland and will be meeting later this month with him and with the presidents and chairpersons of the governing bodies of both Institutes in relation to the progression of their application and the development of a project plan for same.

In meeting the new project executive director the Minister underlined Government's expectation that significant process should be made in the remaining months to year end in developing a robust project plan and with a view to the submission of a high-quality application under the Technological Universities Act 2018 as soon as feasible. Subject to further detailed engagement with the presidents and chairpersons the Minister and the Department understand at this juncture that an application is being readied with a view to its submission to the Minister through the prescribed legislative process in Quarter 2 of 2021.

The Department and the Higher Education Authority continue to assist all TU development consortia, including TUSEI, both financially through appropriate funding mechanisms and in terms of providing expert advisory guidance as required.

Under the first tranche of the new Technological University Transformation Fund the Minister and the Higher Education Authority announced on 7 October an allocation of €5.1 million to the TUSEI development consortium to advance their proposals; this brings the total Exchequer funding for the TUSEI development proposals to €8.8 million. Further funding under the €90 million Transformation Fund will be allocated annually in the period to 2023.

Given the commitment in the Programme for Government 2020 to supporting recently established TUs and to working closely with consortia to establish new TUs and, moreover, recognising the urgency to establishing a TU in the South East, the Minister



and the Department continue to work with the TUSEI consortium with a view to ensuring the earliest possible establishment of a new TU subject to the relevant legislative requirements

I trust this is of assistance to the Elected Members of the Council.

Yours sincerely,

Frank Mac Carthy

P.P. Frances-Mary Long

Private Secretary to Minister Simon Harris T.D.,
Minister for Further and Higher Education,
Research, Innovation and Science