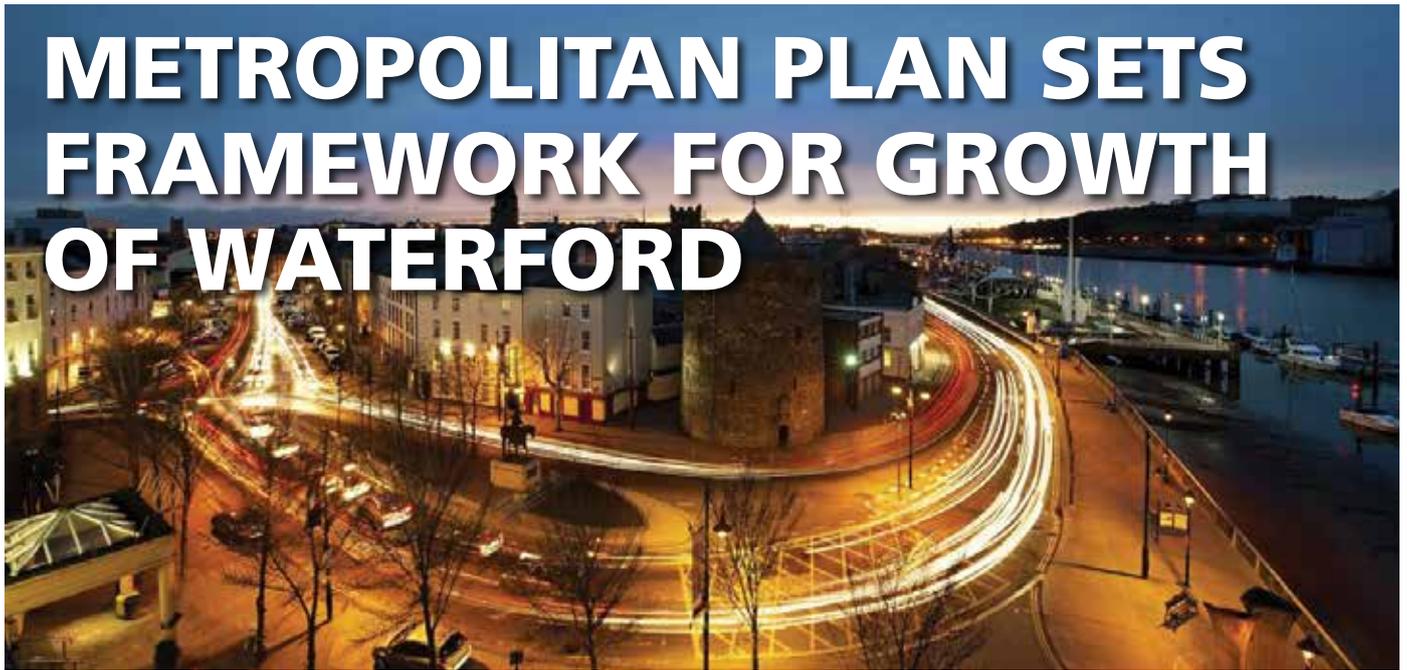


# METROPOLITAN PLAN SETS FRAMEWORK FOR GROWTH OF WATERFORD



**Waterford's Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan provides a high level framework for the sustainable development of the overall Metropolitan Area. It became effective on 31 January 2020 as part of the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region.**

**T**he National Planning Framework (NPF/Project Ireland 2040) published in February 2018, determined that there should be a renewed focus on our regional cities – Waterford, Limerick, Cork and Galway – to support balanced regional development and address unsustainable levels of growth in the Greater Dublin Area.

The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Southern Region reflects this focus and is built on the pillars of the Cork, Limerick - Shannon and Waterford to realise their combined strengths and potential for the region.

For Waterford this meant new targets for population and employment growth and the designation of a Metropolitan Area based around Waterford City and its suburbs and within both Waterford and Kilkenny administrative areas.

Fast forward to 2020 and the new Waterford Metropolitan Area has a Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan (MASP) in place which provides a high-level framework for the sustainable development of the overall Metropolitan Area. The MASP became effective on 31 January 2020 as part of the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Southern Region made by the elected members of the Southern Regional Assembly.

The central focus of the Waterford MASP is population and employment growth and, in particular, how to grow Waterford from a 2016 population base of c54,000 by 60% to become a 'Regional City of Scale' with a minimum target of 81,000 people by 2040.

The MASP identifies Key Enablers to support this transformation and has set a path for the city to become a more balanced and concentric city so that a greater proportion of the urban population will be living north of the River Suir.

These key enablers include the provision of a university,

enhanced regional and international accessibility through the Port of Waterford and Airport, sustainable transport across the Metropolitan Area, enhanced access to the harbour, river and public open space, the development of high quality residential accommodation to meet citizens' needs, all supported by the provision of high quality public services including health services commensurate with the planned expansion.

With the establishment of the Technological University of the South-East (TUSE) Waterford will finally become a University City, building on the reputation established by WIT as an internationally recognised centre of excellence for education, research and innovation. This will enable Waterford to grow in many different ways and assist in Waterford achieving UNESCO Learning City Status.

## STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT ZONE

A primary driver for Waterford will be the development of the North Quays Innovation District. Designated by Government as a Strategic Development Zone, this area of former port and industrial land located directly across from the city has planning permission for a major transformative mixed-use development of the site.

This development of this ambitious project backed by funding from the Government's Urban Regional Development Fund (URDF) will fulfil multiple strategic objectives for Waterford. These include the extension of the city centre to north of the river, a new bridge to forge new north-south accessibility, the relocation of Waterford's Plunkett Railway Station to the North Quays, the creation of a Multi-Modal Transport Hub for the city and the regeneration of a prominent brownfield site into an attractive waterfront location for enterprise, residential development and leisure activity.

The RSES and Waterford MASP support the development of this key project. Above all, the MASP seeks to achieve a high quality of life across all communities and this objective will guide the development of the Waterford Metropolitan Area – a task that the Southern Regional Assembly fully embraces with its partner local authorities and other stakeholders.