

## Laure Antoniotti

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**From:** Sarah Reilly <info@emra.ie>  
**Sent:** Wednesday 23 January 2019 09:31  
**To:** RSES  
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From: Sarah Reilly [REDACTED]  
Organisation: Meath County Council Councillor

Message Body:  
Cllr Sarah Reilly

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

January 23rd

Submission by Cllr Sarah Reilly on the Draft Regional Spatial Strategy and Economic Strategy for the Eastern and Midland Region.

I welcome the opportunity to provide input into the preparation of the RSES for the Eastern and Midland Region. My observations, on the draft document, are influenced by my position of Councillor for Meath representing the Kells Municipal District.

This submission seeks to support and give further credence to that submitted by Meath County Council.

The section contained within this document that considers the MASP (3.3) and the need for a review of same (3.3.1) contains very valid points. It clearly demonstrates the case for the inclusion of Ashbourne and Rathoath in the MASP.

Section 3.5.5 of the County Submission considers the issue of broadband. As detailed in the Local Economic and Community Plan for Meath (2016 – 2021) the access to the internet varies considerably within the County. Rathoath has the highest access at 75.9%. Kells, however, has by far the lowest access at only 57.3%. The low access to the internet for research, commercial and retail progress further compounds the other issues in this MD; as detailed below.

### Meath's Unique Profile

The Local Economic and Community Plan for Meath gives a clear insight into the socioeconomic profile of the county. It demonstrates our unique strengths and weaknesses and cognisance's should be given to it in the RSES.

In particular the Plan highlights our higher than average rate of young people under the age of 18. At a rate of 29% we have the highest number of people under the age of 18 in the country. Our demographics influences the type and range of infrastructure required within the County and as such needs consideration.

Navan 3.2.1

The draft document makes reference to the Navan rail project; which is to be welcomed. The wording in the document on the matter however needs strengthening to demonstrate the real and existing commitment to the delivery of this project within a short to medium timeframe. To attract inward investment, economic growth and to ease the commute of the some 55% of our labour-force who commute daily to work this evidence, time bound commitment is imperative.

#### Kells 3.2.6

While being a dynamic and culturally rich heritage town, Kells differs from other M.D's within the County in certain respects. The percentage of lone parents in the Town at 38.1% is far than that of the County at 19.8 and is also significantly higher than the state average 25.8%. The Plan also identified Kells as being an unemployment blackspot. Unsurprisingly, the Towns economic dependent ratio was rated as the highest in the County. In terms of infrastructure planning, particularly social infrastructure, these points are salient.

This e-mail was sent from a submission form on Eastern & Midland Regional Assembly (<http://emra.ie>)

Cllr Sarah Reilly

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