

## FOREWORD

County Cavan's Local Economic and Community Plan is an ambitious and forward-looking plan which provides a framework to guide local economic and community development in County Cavan over the next six years. To deliver the actions set out in both the economic and community elements of this plan, Cavan County Council and Cavan LCDC will work closely with local business, community and voluntary organisations, educational facilities, public and private sector agencies. It is my belief that this partnership approach adopted by the key service providers, stakeholders and local agencies in developing this LECP will contribute to the ultimate achievement of a wide range of important objectives for our county.

This plan represents our commitment to fulfil this important function and to work collaboratively with local stakeholders to achieve our vision *"that Cavan 2021 will be a place that we can be proud of; a place where people can have a good quality of life; a better place to live, to work and to enjoy"*.

**Cllr Paddy Smith** Cathaoirleach Cavan County Council (2016)

Our priorities in the Local Economic and Community Plan focus on developing an innovative local economy that supports and generates business, jobs and enterprise, delivering a county with a quality natural and built environment with vibrant, sustainable, inclusive, healthy and active communities who have a high quality of life and wellbeing. The plan gives us the framework to provide strategic leadership to our community. The plan is ambitious in scope and ensures that all bodies are pursuing the same shared objectives. It will help us plan and deliver services in a way that guarantees there are no gaps and no overlaps. The plan is only the beginning of the work. We look forward to working alongside all partners in achieving our stated goals over the coming years.

**Tommy Ryan** CEO, Cavan County Council

## INTRODUCTION

Vision, goals, objectives, links with national policy, national initiatives, regional objectives and the objectives of the LECP.

This Local Economic and Community Plan [LECP] for County Cavan sets the objectives and actions needed to support and guide economic and community development in County Cavan over the next six years. As the principal plan for the county, it cultivates a stronger role for local government in economic, social and community development, as envisaged by the Local Government Reform Act 2014. The policy context for the LECP is Putting People First: Action Programme for Effective Local Government. The LECP will be the primary mechanism at local level to progress relevant actions arising from measures under the Action Plan for Jobs and other statements of Government policy including the report

of the Commission for the Economic Development of Rural Areas [CEDRA].

The development of the economic elements of the LECP was led by the SPC for Economic Development, while the development of community elements was led by the LCDC. Both elements were informed by the feedback gathered as part of a widespread public consultation process.

The LECP is a mid-level plan; it is a strategic but action focused document. It contains high level Goals for both economic and community development, supported by specific Objectives under each element. Each objective within the economic and community elements will be achieved through the implementation of specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time bound [SMART] Actions.

These actions will be delivered through a range of stakeholders in partnership with the LCDC, the Economic SPC and Cavan County Council. Delivery will be supported through the programmes of the local authority and other stakeholders. Mainstream services of the main public sector agencies have not, in general, been listed as actions in the LECP, for example Council roads, planning, housing services, ETB education and training services. However, where new projects are being developed in response to specific issues identified during the consultation process and where aspects of the work require an interagency response, specific actions have been named in the plan and additional resources will be sought to implement these.

In addition to the specific actions identified in this plan, a number of strategic infrastructure projects

will be implemented either directly by the local authority or through government agencies such as Transport Infrastructure Ireland and Irish Water. Cavan County Council will support and champion the implementation of these projects in order to ensure that the necessary infrastructure is in place to facilitate and harness economic and enterprise expansion. Cavan County Council has consulted with neighbouring local authorities in relation to proposed actions that will cross county boundaries. Cross-county actions include but are not limited to work on developing Greenways, the Marble Arch Caves UNESCO Global Geopark, regional promotion of angling tourism, REDZ, the Upper Shannon Erne Future Economy Project and cross border links for Peace IV and other European funding opportunities.

## NATIONAL POLICY

*People, Place and Policy, Growing Tourism to 2025* is the Government's national tourism policy and it sets out ambitious goals for tourism in Ireland. The policy commits to "an enhanced role for Local Authorities and recognition of the contribution of communities to tourism".

Specifically, the policy envisages that Local Authorities will:

- > Continue to act as primary developer of a range of public tourism infrastructure, including outdoor tourism infrastructure and urban and rural heritage;
- > Act as a link between the State tourism agencies and communities by supporting community effort with regard to major national tourism initiatives such as the Gathering;

- > Support community effort in destination development, including assisting communities to align their efforts with the tourism agencies brand architecture and consumer segmentation model;
- > Provide a competitive environment for tourism enterprises through continued focus on high quality maintenance of public infrastructure frequently used by visitors;
- > Contribute to capacity building in tourism nationally by co-ordinating exchange of knowledge between established and developing tourism destinations; and
- > Provide a range of advice and support through the Local Enterprise Offices.<sup>1</sup>

The recognition of tourism as a priority in the Local Economic and Community Plans [LECPs] was identified as a policy priority in *People, Place and Policy, Growing Tourism to 2025*. Every Local Authority has developed an LECP and they each have a strong tourism dimension. The LECPs outline each Local Authority's tourism outputs, identify tourism partners and set out specific goals, objectives and actions related to tourism. The majority of the LECPs explicitly reference *People, Place and Policy, Growing Tourism to 2025*. Furthermore, many local authorities have created detailed tourism strategies which build upon their tourism plans as outlined in their LECP.

All of the LECPs are prepared by the Local Community and Development Committees [LCDC], adopted by the elected members and submitted to

the Minister for Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government. Each local authority develops a plan that considers unique local factors through a process that includes extensive public consultation. The strength of the LCDC lies in its composition. This membership of the LCDC is critical to the delivery of the actions set out in the LECP. The Act clearly provides for a role for the local elected members and the Chief Executive of the City or County Council, the voluntary sector, community groups and agencies that are central to the delivery of public services in local areas.

<sup>1</sup> *People, Place and Policy, Growing Tourism to 2025*, Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport, March 2015.

## REGIONAL ACTION PLAN FOR JOBS

### Tourism Objectives and Actions as set out in the Regional Action Plan for Jobs.

Cavan County Council's LECP complements and supports the Action Plan for Jobs for the North East/North West region in that it aims to support enterprise growth and job creation. The North East/North West Action Plan for Jobs aims to increase employment in the region by 15 per cent by 2020, increase the number of start ups by 25 per cent and increase IDA investment. Over the life of the LECP we will work with the IDA to increase investment in the county and seek to stimulate entrepreneurial activity. Among its key

objectives, the regional Action Plan for Jobs commits to increasing the value of the agri-food sector and growing tourism numbers through the 'Ireland's Ancient East' brand. The Cavan LECP is consistent with these objectives, containing specific actions for agri-food development and tourism marketing. Cavan's new Tourism Strategy outlines an objective of increasing tourist visits to the county and economic return by 15% - 20% over five years.



**THIS IS  
CAVAN!**



## LECP TOURISM OBJECTIVES

- > Development of a new Tourism Strategy for County Cavan 2017 – 2021
- > Enhance and further develop the This is Cavan! brand
- > Develop and implement a Food Strategy for County Cavan – a pillar of which will be focussed on Food Tourism
- > Enhance the visitor experience at Cavan Burren Park
- > Develop visitor attraction at Castle Saunderson
- > Develop and implement a Master Plan to upgrade visitor facilities at Killykeen Forest Park
- > Enhance and develop the visitor experience at Cavan County Museum and World War 1 Trench Experience
- > Develop a new Angling Strategy for County Cavan
- > Engage and promote restoration of the Ulster Canal
- > Develop and increase walking infrastructure in County Cavan
- > Ongoing development of Marble Arch Caves Global Geopark
- > Raise profile of the Counties signature festivals – Taste of Cavan, Heritage Week, Culture Night and Cavan Walking Festival



## TOURISM WORK PROGRAMME 2017 – 2022 KEY ACTIONS IN COUNTY CAVAN

- > New Tourism Strategy for County Cavan and implementation of same
- > Review and reimagining of This is Cavan! brand
- > Further integration of Cavan visitor attractions and trade into Ireland's Ancient East
- > Better engagement with tourism trade in the County
- > New Food Strategy for County Cavan implementation of same
- > New Angling Strategy for County Cavan with implementation of angling action plan
- > Feasibility studies undertaken and applications made to relevant agencies to develop strategic visitor attraction in Co Cavan
- > Ongoing review and promotion of county signature festivals
- > Ongoing support for community groups to maximise tourism return for towns and villages as part of Town & Village Renewal Scheme and LEADER programme, in line with county and national objectives.
- > Contribute to and support the work of other sections in Cavan County Council which impacts on tourism such as the development of a Diaspora Strategy, Arts and Heritage Strategies.

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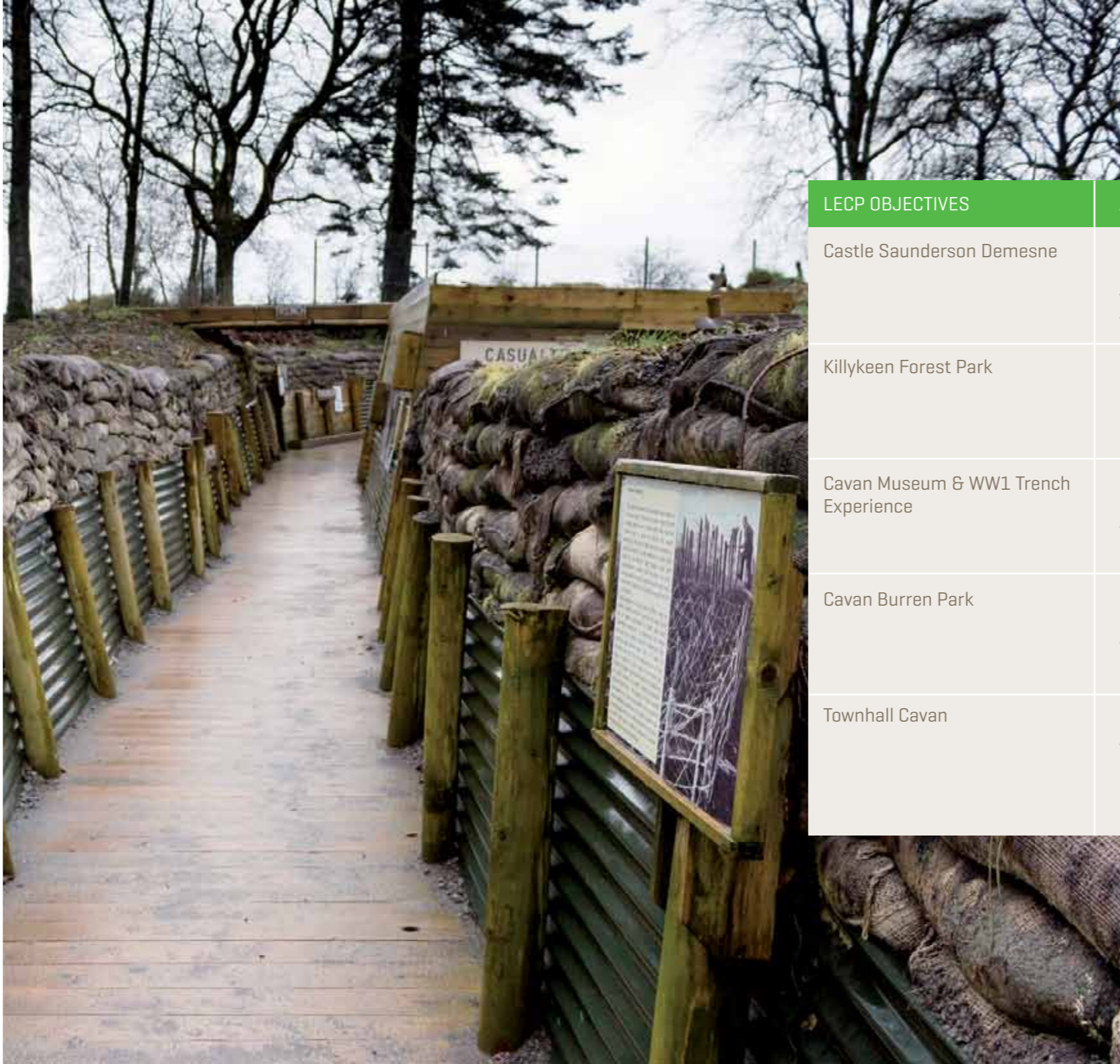




## PRODUCT / EXPERIENCE DEVELOPMENT

County Cavan continues perform relatively well in terms of domestic visitor numbers and with 140,000 overseas visitors per year (many of whom are anglers) is doing reasonably well. However, the County does underperform in attracting overseas leisure visitors and domestic mid-week holiday-makers. In order to increase visitor numbers, grow spend and expand dwell time, the County requires investment in propositions of scale. We need to create authentic, engaging and memorable experiences, delivered in a number of languages. This could be achieved by investing in enhancing the

visitor experience in existing attractions such as Cavan Burren Park, Castle Saunderson, Killykeen Forest Park, Cavan Museum and the World War 1 Trench Experience. These attractions are currently attracting over 20,000 visitors annually but investment and marketing is required to grow these numbers to fifty-thousand and above. The county's proximity to Dublin is an advantage, as is the fact that the county is in **Ireland's Ancient East** and en-route to the West and the **Wild Atlantic Way**.



LECP OBJECTIVES	ACTION	LEAD	PARTNERS	TIMEFRAME
Castle Saunderson Demesne	Feasibility study of Castle and grounds. Deliver of new trails and amenities for visitors including extension of Ulster Canal to Castle Saunderson.	Cavan County Council	Waterways Ireland Fáilte Ireland Monaghan County Council Scouting Ireland	2017 - 2020
Killykeen Forest Park	Development of new Master Plan to guide development of the park.	Cavan County Council	Coillte Fáilte Ireland Geopark Local Community	2017 - 2020
Cavan Museum & WW1 Trench Experience	Feasibility Study auditing the visitor experience. Applications made to funders to enhance visitor experience and increase numbers.	Cavan County Council	Fáilte Ireland Local Community	2017 - 2020
Cavan Burren Park	Feasibility study to develop Phase II of Burren experience. Application to funders for development, enhancement of existing experience.	Cavan County Council	Coillte Geopark Fáilte Ireland	2016 - 2020
Townhall Cavan	Delivery of €750K grant aid from Dept. Of Arts to create an Arts Space / Tourism & Cultural experience in Cavan town.	Cavan County Council	Arts Office Dept of Arts Local Artists Local community	2016 - 2018

Future funding opportunities through Fáilte Ireland, Inland Fisheries Ireland, LEADER, Peace, Rural Towns & Village Initiatives etc will be approached with an awareness of the importance of tourism, the overall vision for Cavan as a destination, and the role tourism can play in creating jobs and contributing to the local economy.



LECP OBJECTIVES	ACTION	LEAD	PARTNERS	TIMEFRAME
Castle Lake Forest	Support local community in developing tourism experience in the Forest Park.	Bailieborough Dev. Assoc.	Cavan County Council Coillte LEADER	2017 - 2018
Heritage Assets	Ongoing development and promotion of the suite of heritage assets in County Cavan. Build linkages with Ireland's Ancient East.	Cavan County Council	Heritage Office Local Community Fáilte Ireland	2017 - 2021
Angling attractions	Development of a new world-class coarse angling location in the County. Ongoing upgrades of angling sites. Diversity in angling offering, increasing profile of pike and trout angling. Develop and implement new Angling Strategy.	Cavan County Council	Inland Fisheries Ireland Local community LEADER	2016 - 2021
Water based recreational activities eg. canoeing & the Shannon – Erne Blueway	Ongoing development and support for canoeing, canoe trails and the profile of the Shannon – Erne Blueway.	Cavan County Council	Waterways Ireland Local tourism trade	2016 - 2021





## FESTIVALS & EVENTS

It is intended to further raise the profile of the County via the main festivals and events taking place such as the annual Taste of Cavan Food Festival and Cavan Walking Festival. The Taste of Cavan Food Festival in August sees approximately 37,000 visitors every year with a benefit of €1.5m to the local economy. Cavan Walking Festival has been running annually since 2012 and attracts approximately 1,200 people. Other important events include Culture Night and Heritage Week and the year – round programme Geopark events. There are further opportunities to promote the county through both council – run and community – run festivals and events and this plan commits to the supporting of a minimum of three flagship events in the county each year over the lifetime of the plan.



LECP OBJECTIVES	ACTION	LEAD	PARTNERS	TIMEFRAME
Taste of Cavan Food Festival	Continue to review, develop and improve festival	Cavan County Council	Fáilte Ireland Bord Bia	2016 – 2021
Cavan Walking Festival	Continue to review, develop and improve festival	Cavan County Council [Cavan Sports Partnership]	Sports Partnership Local sports clubs & walking groups	2016 – 2021
Run With Catherina	Grow event as a mass participation event in the County	Cavan County Council [Cavan Sports Partnership]	Sports Partnership Local sports clubs & walking groups	2016 – 2021
Culture Night	Continue to increase events and numbers attending Culture Night	Cavan County Council	Arts Office	2016 – 2021
Programme of Traditional Festivals in the County - Ed Reavy, NYAH, County Fleadh, Milltown Tradfest	Support and promote the programme of Traditional Arts Events in Cavan	Local community and festival groups	Cavan County Council Arts Office Fáilte Ireland Heritage Office	2016 – 2021
Heritage Week	Continue to increase events and numbers attending Heritage Week	Cavan County Council	Geopark Fermanagh & Omagh District Council	2016 – 2021
Programme of Geopark Events	Support and promote the wide range of annual Geopark events in Cavan	Cavan County Council		2016 – 2021

## MARKETING & PROMOTION

This is Cavan! brand was launched in 2012 and has been well received by tourists and local stakeholders alike. The brand has positioned Cavan as a contemporary tourism destination with accommodation and food offerings amongst the best in the Country. Social media, merchandise, signage and physical presence at trade shows have supported this. Cavan County Council plans to undertake a review of the brand and plot a course to further its development within the lifetime of the LECP. Cavan is also part of Fáilte Ireland’s international proposition **‘Ireland’s Ancient East’** within which the county perfectly fits and meets the criteria for promotion. Cavan plans to expand marketing and promoting to capitalise on the counties inclusion in ‘Ireland’s Ancient East’, working closely with Fáilte Ireland to ensure the county can deliver on the promises of the brand and maximise our development and promotional opportunities within it.



LECP OBJECTIVES	ACTION	LEAD	PARTNERS	TIMEFRAME
Review This is Cavan! brand	Undertake a review of the brand and develop a plan to further enhance it	Cavan County Council	Design team	2017 - 2018
Develop and implement Tourism strategy 2017 – 2021	Implement the action plan within the new tourism strategy which will require a new focus on This is Cavan! brand	Cavan County Council	Design team	2017 - 2018

### REGIONAL COLLABORATION AND BESPOKE INITIATIVES

Cavan County Council continues to work with surrounding counties in relevant initiatives which further our collective tourism objectives. Examples of cooperation include:

**Upper Shannon Erne Future Economy Project** – working with Roscommon, Leitrim, Longford and Cavan in developing and promoting the Blueways.

**Marble Arch Caves Global Geopark** – working with Fermanagh District Council in the ongoing develop of, maintenance and promotion of Geopark sites and programme of events.

**LEADER Cooperation Projects** – Cavan County Council is working with potential partners in developing LEADER cooperation tourism projects – complementary cross-county projects.



## MONITORING AND REVIEW

This work programme is aligned with the objectives of the LECP. In doing so, it is agreed by the Local Community and Development Committee. Importantly, it will form an important element of the part of the annual presentation made to the Council on the status and delivery of the LECP.

Implementation, monitoring, evaluation and review of the plan against the objectives and actions for each high-level goal is essential. To this end an annual implementation plan for the community element of the plan and an implementation plan for the economic element are drawn up and approved by the LCDC and Economic SPC. Progress is measured on a bi-annual basis against the respective implementation plans and once these reports are agreed by the LCDC and Economic SPC they are submitted to the elected members. An annual report on the activities of the LCDC (including LECP activities) is prepared and in line with the requirements of the Local Government Act, 2014, presented to the elected members no later than March each year.

### **Mr Tommy Ryan**

Chair, Cavan Local Community Development Committee  
CEO, Cavan County Council



### **Cllr Fergal Curtin**

Cathaoirleach, Cavan County Council

