



MEDIA RELEASE

MARKETING BOOST FOR CLARE TOURISM FORUM

- Forum to apply for maximum funding from Shannon Development

County Clare, IRELAND, Monday 12th February 2007 – Mr. John O'Donoghue TD, Minister for Arts, Sport and Tourism has informed the Clare Tourism Forum that Shannon Development is in favour of supporting a marketing plan by the newly establish group on a local level. Minister O'Donoghue has advised forum representatives that functions previously administered centrally by Fáilte Ireland had now been passed to Shannon Development as part of regional restructuring.

The Clare Tourism Forum representatives met with the Minister in advance of his attendance at the official opening of the Cliffs of Moher New Visitor Experience. The objective of the meeting was to inform the Minister of the work of the Forum since its formation, its achievements to date and its marketing plans for 2007. The Minister was also presented with a CD of the new Clare Brand '**Clare – live the Life**'.

Cllr. Richard Nagle, Chairman of the Forum thanked the Minister for allocating 24% of the total funding approved nationally for projects under the Tourism Product Development scheme 2000-2006 to County Clare.

He added, *"I am delighted with the Minister's statement that Shannon Development was committed to supporting the Forum and providing substantial funding to assist with the marketing and promotion of County Clare. The Tourism Forum looks forward to working with the newly appointed Shannon Development Tourism Development Officer to deliver on the forums objections in 2007. We will be making an immediate application to Shannon Development to draw down the maximum funding."*

Forum member Paul Madden, Managing Director of the Temple Gate Hotel in Ennis stated, *“From a trade perspective, the establishment of the Clare Tourism Forum was a very welcome development in Clare Tourism in 2006. The funds raised by the trade at a recent Gala Dinner in Dromoland Castle showed the level of commitment that we have towards working together as one unit in the interests of promoting Clare tourism.”*

In his meeting with the Clare Tourism Forum, Minister O’Donoghue highlighted the National Product Development Fund to be launched in the coming weeks with a fund of €317 million. He also said that the recent announcement in the budget of Tax Incentives for East Clare presented definite opportunities for Clare tourism moving forward.