

Case Study

Community Development

Ballytra is situated 80 kilometres from the nearest city and 20 kilometres from four other large towns. The town has an attractive river running through it with a large oak forest to the west of the town. There is one primary school, a community college and a community training centre located in the town. There is one old hotel with sixteen rooms which is in need of refurbishment. A 19th century country house, in need of repair, with a nine hole golf course attached to it is situated 8 kilometres from the town.

Ballytra is home to a company called Choc O'Late Ltd. for the past eight years. This is a confectionery business owned by two brothers. It is situated on an industrial site just outside the town. This company has sixty five employees. In 2002 the turnover was nine million euro but this has decreased to seven million euro in 2004 due to the lack of demand for confectionery products. Also, increased competition and increases in insurance and wage costs have affected the company. This has led to some employees losing their jobs and the company is now talking of downsizing their business further having conducted an audit of the company's finances.

Due to the job losses in Choc O'Late Ltd. and lack of continued new employment in the area, local people realised their children would not be in a position to settle down in the town in the future. This jolted them into action and the business community and local people were invited to a public meeting. Here, various ideas and proposals were discussed. Several enterprise ideas were put forward which could be developed in the area. The challenges of setting up new business ventures in the town are very significant especially with regard to necessary resources and expertise.

A community development committee was selected to oversee any development initiatives. The intention of the committee is to use a local resource audit to establish the community's resources and strengths and to try to negotiate the establishment of a Business Park with local authorities. Certain members of the committee are highly environmentally conscious and would like to see socially and environmentally responsible businesses set up in their town.

1. What facilities do teenagers require in, or near, their home town? (6)
2. Choc O'Late is considering downsizing its operations. What alternatives should be considered before this decision is taken? (12)
3. The community development committee decides to draw up a document outlining the attractions of the town for potential enterprises.
 - (a) Put, in order of priority, your list of advantages of Ballytra and briefly explain each.
 - (b) What are the advantages of a Business Park in the area?
 - (c) Draw up a list, in order of importance, of the qualities required by the committee in enterprises applying to locate in the proposed Business Park. (12)