

Miontuairiscí ó Chruinniú an Choiste um Fhorbairt Pobail Áitiúil na Gaillimhe a tionóladh ar 10ú Eanáir ag 10.00 a.m.

Minutes of Galway County Local Community Development Committee held on 10th January 2024 at 10.00 a.m.

Present:

Cllr. Noel Thomas, LA Member (Chairperson)	Public
Cllr. Gabe Cronnelly, LA Member	Public
Cllr. Padraig Mac An Iomaire, LA Member	Public
Donal Walsh, GRETB	Public
Laurence Gaughan, HSE West	Public
Liam Conneally, Chief Executive	Public
Regina Higgins, Department of Social Protection	Public
Sean O'Coisdealbha, Udaras na Gaeltachta	Public
Valerie Kelly, Local Enterprise Office	Public
Anne Mitchell, IFA	Community
Gerard Costello, PPN Community	Community
Jen Fisher, PPN Environment	Community
Máire Uí Mhaoláin, Comhar na nOileán Teo	Community
Mairín Ní Chonghaile, PPN Community	Community
Peter Gohery, PPN Social Inclusion	Community
Steve Dolan, Galway Rural Development	Community

Apologies:

Kevin Gavin, PPN Social Inclusion	Community
Terry Keenan, FORUM Connemara Ltd (Vice-Chairperson)	Community
Kenny Deery, Galway Chamber	Community

Also in Attendance:

Anne Cassidy, Galway Rural Development
Kieran Coyne Chief Officer, Mary McGann, Helen Melia, Galway County Council

N. Thomas welcomed everyone to the meeting and also noted the apologies received for the meeting. He specifically welcomed Laurence Gaughan as this was his first meeting since replacing Michael Keady as the HSE representative on the LCDC. N. Thomas acknowledged the contribution and active input of Michael Keady in the operation and programmes administered by the LCDC and wished him well in his retirement on behalf of the LCDC Members.

1. Miontuairiscí ó chruinniú an Choiste um Fhorbairt Pobail Áitiúil (LCDC) a tionóladh ar an 26ú Iúil 2023 / Minutes of Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) held on 26th July 2023

N. Thomas asked if there were any matters arising from the Minutes of the previous meeting and none were declared.

On the **PROPOSAL** of S. Dolan, **SECONDED** by G. Cronnelly, the Minutes of the Meeting held on 26th July 2023 were **APPROVED**.

2. SICAP: Plean Forfheidhmithe Q1 2024 – ceadú / SICAP: Implementation Plan Q1 2024 – approval

M. McGann advised that the SICAP Programme 2018-2023 had been extended into Quarter 1 2024, pending the finalisation of the tendering process for the SICAP Programme 2024-2028. Pobal had advised that an Extension Plan must be approved by the LCDC for Q1 2024 by 10th January 2024, and had also advised the LCDC of the proportionate budget and KPI's, i.e.

- KPI 1 – Local Community Groups: 17

- KPI 2 – Individuals: 135

A. Cassidy, Galway Rural Development, would outline to the members the actions in the scaled-down plan, with the budget and KPI's assigned to each action.

A Cassidy presented the SICAP Extension Plan Q1 2024 to the members as follows:

GOAL 1 – Local Community Group Supports:

- **Action 1** will provide a range of supports to Local Community Groups to promote their capacity to engage with the community and other organisations.
- **Action 2** will provide a range of training and equipment grants to Local Community Groups.
- **Action 3** will provide a range of supports and information to communities to help address physical and mental health issues and reduce the impact of social isolation on older people – this was primarily collaborative work.
- **Action 4** will provide a range of training and other supports to social enterprises, which contribute to SICAP outcomes and will primarily involve mentoring and finalisation of a feasibility study.
- **Action 5** will provide a range of supports to communities to improve and promote their capacity to identify and meet the needs of Ukrainian refugees, particularly social integration and English language needs.

GOAL 2 – Individual Supports:

- **Action 6** – will provide labour market training support and educational grants to 20 individuals in the Ukrainian refugee community to access information, services, and educational and employment opportunities.
- **Action 7** – will provide one-to-one mentoring, personal development and coaching courses, and programmes to 35 individuals to support positive mental health and wellbeing.
- **Action 8** – will provide one-to-one mentoring to 15 young people aged 15-24, in addition to training/educational supports, Galway Music Education Programme in DEIS schools, homework clubs in Tuam and Gort, and other measures to support retention of disadvantaged young people in the education system.
- **Action 9** – will provide a range of supports and training to prepare 40 individuals for employment.
- **Action 10** will provide support for 15 clients with disabilities to access educational, training, and employment opportunities.
- **Action 11** – will support 10 individuals to access one-to-one support and courses such as Start your Own Business, to move towards self-employment and entrepreneurship.
- **Action 12** involves GRD advocating for improvements in educational, employment and service provision for SICAP eligible individuals through their membership of relevant interagency committees.

N Thomas thanked Anne Cassidy for her presentation on the programme and handed over to the chair of the SICAP Sub-Committee D. Walsh.

D Walsh advised that Sub-Committee Members had assessed the Extension Plan and advised that the Sub-Committee were of the option that the target groups for all actions were very clear, and the Sub-committee were also satisfied that all actions would be concluded in full by the end of Quarter 1. D. Walsh also confirmed that the actions were in line with the priorities of the LCDC for the SICAP 2018-2023 programme, i.e., older people, mental health, and new communities. D. Walsh stated that the Sub-Committee were satisfied to recommend approval of the Extension Plan, including the split of funding across Goal 1 and 2 as 36% and 64%, versus the recommended 60/40 split.

On the **PROPOSAL** of D. Walsh, **SECONDED** by L. Conneally, the SICAP Extension Plan for Q1 2024 was **APPROVED**.

3. Clár chun Pobail a chumhachtú: Tuarascáil a dhul chun cinn 2023 – ceadú / Empowering Communities Programme: Progress Report 2023 – approval

M. McGann stated that LCDC approval was required for the review of the Programme of Works for the Empowering Communities Programme 2023 and referenced the full report which was circulated to all LCDC Members in advance. M. McGann confirmed that the report related to work under the programme which related to St. Grellans/St. Theresa's/St. Anne's small area of Ballinasloe Town, which was the most disadvantaged area in County Galway under the Pobal HP Deprivation Index based on Census 2016 data.

S. Dolan confirmed that the Empowering Communities Programme had been introduced to target the 14 most disadvantaged areas in the country, which covered 10 different local authority areas. Yvonne Hoary was engaged as a Community Engagement Officer to liaise directly with the affected areas and implement activities, events, and programmes, across several key priority areas. S. Dolan stated that Galway Rural Development believe there is scope under the programme to employ a second Community Worker as a support role in 2024, with the integration of new arrivals into Ballinasloe being a fresh focus for the programme. S. Dolan also referenced the need to focus on specific barriers faced by women in accessing training, education or employment supports – particularly access to childcare. S. Dolan stated that meetings were ongoing between the Programme Implementers and Community Engagement Officers of the Empowering Communities Programme at a national level to increase learnings for Year 2 of the programme.

G. Cronnelly stated that there was a need for further supports for People with Disabilities to access part-time employment, and P. Gohery referenced further barriers and impediments such as the potential impact of delays in notifying the Department of Social Protection where the individual is in receipt of Invalidity Pension. S. Dolan stated that Galway Rural Development have recently announced 3 new posts on their Workability programme in north/east/south Galway, which is similar to the programme administered by Forum Connemara, to assist and mentor people with disabilities to access employment. M. Ní Chonghaile also referenced the difficulties in ensuring that parents access the relevant supports and subventions for childcare services.

On the **PROPOSAL** of G. Cronnelly, **SECONDED** by M. Ní Chonghaile, the Progress Report for Year 1 of the Empowering Communities Programme was **APPROVED**.

4. **An Ciste Tacaíochta Pobal faoin CEP 2022: athleithdháiltí a cheadú / The Community Support Fund under CEP 2022 – approval of re-allocations**

M. McGann confirmed that Galway County LCDC had received an allocation of €300,432 under the Community Support Fund from the Department of Rural and Community Development, which was allocated as equally as possible across capital grants and running cost grants. M. McGann outlined the total underspends which comprised a total underspend on capital grants of €3,738.22 by 18 groups, and a total underspend of €420 on running cost grants by 2 groups. Formal approval was sought for re-allocation of underspends as follows:

- reallocation of €3,738.22 to Clarinbridge Men's Shed for purchase of property marking signage which would facilitate the roll-out of property marking to community facilities across East Galway.
- reallocation of €420 to Glenamaddy Community Centre to support their running costs.

On the **PROPOSAL** of D. Walsh, **SECONDED** by P. Mac An Iomaire, the re-allocation of underspends on the Community Support Fund was **APPROVED**.

5. **Clár Feabhsúcháin Áitiúil 2024 – tosaíochtaí áitiúla / Local Enhancement Programme 2024 – local priorities**

M. McGann confirmed that Galway County LCDC had received an allocation of €185,377.04 under the Local Enhancement Programme 2024, which was separated into 2 separate funds – a General Fund, and a ring-fenced allocation for Women's Groups. M. McGann clarified that an important aspect of the scheme in 2024 was that the scheme had reverted in full to a Capital Grants Scheme, and the diversion of part of the funding to support groups with operating/running costs since the onset of COVID-19 had now ceased.

In relation to the Women's Fund, M. McGann confirmed that €30,896.17 has been ring-fenced for capital grants towards equipment and projects for Women's Sheds, groups, clubs, and other social networks, which was to be allocated in a relatively equal manner across all eligible groups in accordance with departmental guidelines. However, M. McGann clarified that Women's Groups were also entitled to apply for funding under the General Fund. In order to target eligible groups, M. McGann confirmed that Galway Rural Development CLG would provide contact details for Women's Groups established through SICAP supports, and there would also be direct targeting of organisations such as the ICA, LGFA, and the Irish Girl Guides. M. McGann also asked the LCDC Members to notify the Community Department if they were aware of any other Women's Groups who should be notified of this fund.

M. McGann recommended the following for LCDC approval:

- That the LCDC endeavour to ringfence up to 30% of the General Fund for small grants of €1,000 or less, in line with the departmental recommendation to allow a larger volume of community groups with limited resources to receive some funding under the scheme.
- That the LCDC set a maximum grant of €5,000 for any single Group/Organisation under the Local Enhancement Programme, to ensure the funding is distributed as fairly and widely as possible.

M. McGann stated that applicants for grants over €1,000 are required to reference the LECP objective which aligns with their project proposal, and proposed that specific LECP objectives be assigned to the Fund to target funding to address specific areas of disadvantage, i.e.

- A. Improve facilities/services which serve disadvantaged areas per the Pobal HP Deprivation Index, with a particular focus on energy efficiency measures to reduce ongoing operating costs of community facilities in these areas.
- B. Promote access and inclusion for people with disabilities, and other marginalised groups, to participate in mainstream community activities (including associated repairs/upgrades for amenities/facilities hosting these groups).
- C. Increase the range of social and leisure opportunities for children & young people (non-sporting / non-competitive) including associated repairs and upgrades to relevant facilities such as youth clubs, youth cafés, and other safe spaces for young people to hang out.
- D. Increase the range of social and leisure opportunities for older adults, including associated repairs and upgrades to relevant facilities such as Men's Sheds, Meeting spaces for Older People's Groups, etc.
- E. Support home and community safety initiatives.

N. Thomas thanked M. McGann for the outline of the scheme and observed that while the Local Enhancement Programme was targeted at disadvantage, it was very important to look at this not just through the lens of the Pobal Deprivation Index. G. Cronnelly also referenced this point stating that there were issues with accessibility for people with disabilities regardless of the disadvantage rating in the Pobal Deprivation Index. M. McGann clarified that this was acknowledged in the LECP Objectives at B, C, D and E which would be applied countywide, and in the small-scale grants under €1,000 where groups with limited resources would be prioritised, regardless of location in the county.

D. Walsh welcomed the prioritisation of youth groups, particularly referencing the likely lack of GRETB Youth Services funding for volunteer-led youth clubs this year, which would result in a funding gap in this area. In response to a query from D. Walsh, M. McGann clarified that the ring-fenced monies for Women's Groups was solely for capital funding. In response to a query from J. Fisher, M. McGann clarified that the groups would have to confirm that they were comprised fully of and serving women only.

On the **PROPOSAL** of D. Walsh, **SECONDED** by P. Mac An Iomaire, the local priorities for the Local Enhancement Programme were **APPROVED**.

6. Plean Áitiúil Eacnamaíoch agus Pobail 2024 – 2028: Ráiteas faoi Ghnéithe Socheacnamaíochta agus Spriocanna Ardleibhéil bunaithe ar anailís shocheacnamaíochta – ceadú. / Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) 2024 – 2028: Socio-economic Statement and High-Level Goals based on socio-economic analysis – approval.

K. Coyne confirmed that an Advisory Steering Group (ASG) had been established, comprising representatives of community & economic committees, to oversee the preparatory process for the Local Economic & Community Plan. The ASG had examined the Socio-Economic Statement and proposed High-Level Goals in detail, and to date, they had been presented to the Economic SPC for ratification. They were now being presented to the LCDC, and if

approved, will proceed to a public consultation process, after which Objectives and Actions will be identified under each Goal. K. Coyne made a presentation on the proposed Vision and High-Level Goals which are as follows:

LECP Vision:

An inclusive County, with a clear sense of identity, where we work together to achieve the full economic, social, community, linguistic, and cultural potential of County Galway and its people, through citizen engagement at a local level.

Proposed High-Level Goals to form the basis of the LECP consultations:

- Active, Healthy, and Safe Communities.
- Equal, Inclusive, and Engaged Communities.
- A Culturally Rich County.
- A County with Vibrant Urban and Rural Settlements.
- A Sustainable and Climate Resilient County.
- An Economically Resilient County.

N. Thomas confirmed that a detailed analysis of the goals and underlying criteria had been carried out by the Advisory Steering Group and they were satisfied that these Goals could form the basis for objectives and actives to achieve community & economic development.

J. Fisher enquired if the biodiversity crisis was reflected in the high-level goals, as distinct from climate change. In response, K. Coyne advised that this would be reflected in objectives under relevant goals in due course. L. Conneely added the biodiversity and ecological networks were specifically referenced as key issues to be addressed under the Climate Change Goal. He also added that it is imperative that the LECP is progressed and completed as soon as possible so that it will form the basis for funding programmes and funding applications going forward.

7. Dáta don chéad chruinniú eile / Date for next meeting

The next meeting of the LCDC is scheduled for Tuesday 20th February at 4pm via Microsoft Teams.

8. Aon ghnó eile

Any other business

No other business was declared.

Cllr. N. Thomas thanked all the Members for their active participation in the discussions and the meeting ended.



Coiste um Fhorbairt Pobail Áitiúil
na Gaillimhe
Galway County Local Community
Development Committee

Noel Thomas

Cllr. Noel Thomas,
Chairperson

Kieran Coyne

Kieran Coyne,
Chief Officer

Date: 22/2/24.

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