

**Miontuairiscí ó Chruinniú an Choiste um Fhorbairt Pobail Áitiúil na Gaillimhe  
a tionóladh ar 15ú Feabhra 2022, ag 4.30 p.m.**

Minutes of Galway County Local Community Development Committee held on  
15<sup>th</sup> February 2022, at 4.30 p.m.

**Present:**

Cllr. Noel Thomas, LA Member (Chairperson)	Public
Cllr. Pdraig Mac An Iomaire, LA Member	Public
Breda Fox, Head of Local Enterprise	Public
Donal Walsh, GRETB	Public
Michael Keady, HSE West	Public
Tom Turley, IFA	Community
Terry Keenan, FORUM Connemara Ltd (Vice-Chairperson)	Community
Máire Uí Mhaoláin, Comhar na nOileán Teo	Community
Mairín Ní Chonghaile, PPN Community	Community
Kevin Gavin, PPN Social Inclusion	Community
Peter Gohery, PPN Social Inclusion	Community
Gerard Costello, PPN Community	Community
Steve Dolan, Galway Rural Development	Community

**Apologies:**

Jim Cullen, Chief Executive	Public
Cllr. Karey McHugh Farag, LA Member	Public
Ruairi O'Neill, Údarás na Gaeltachta	Public
Regina Higgins, Dept. Social Protection	Public
Kenny Deery, Galway Chamber	Community
Venetia McEllin, PPN Environment	Community

**Also in Attendance:**

Alan Farrell, Chief Officer  
Mary McGann, Linda Potter, Rita Tansey, Galway County Council  
Anne Cassidy, GRD

**1. Miontuairiscí ó chruinniú an Choiste um Fhorbairt Pobail Áitiúil (LCDC) a tionóladh ar  
an 23ú Meán Samhain 2021**

Minutes of Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) held on 23<sup>rd</sup> November  
2021

N. Thomas welcomed everyone to the meeting.

N. Thomas asked if there were any matters arising from the Minutes of the previous meeting and none were declared. On the **PROPOSAL** of M. Uí Mhaoláin, **SECONDED** by K. Gavin, the Minutes of the Meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> November were **APPROVED**

**2. SICAP 2021: Céadú Athbhreithniú Deireadh Bliana 2021**

SICAP 2021: Approval of End of Year Review 2021

**3. SICAP 2022: Plean Bliantúil - Faomhadh**

SICAP 2022: Annual Plan – Approval

N. Thomas confirmed that Items 2 & 3 would be taken together and introduced Anne Cassidy, SICAP Team Leader with Galway Rural Development to the meeting.

A Cassidy gave a presentation to the members on the End of Year Review for SICAP 2021 and the Annual Plan for 2022, which had been circulated to the Members prior to the Meeting.

In relation to the End of Year Review for 2021, A. Cassidy outlined:

- 130 Local Community Groups had been supported (KPI 115)
- 1,200 Individuals had been supported (KPI 900)
- 23 Social Enterprises had been supported
- 165 Young People who were not in training, education or employment were supported
- €61,000 provided in grants to community groups
- €23,000 provided for a Pilot Community Group Equipment Loan Scheme
- Key areas of support were access to information and support, mental health and wellbeing supports, capacity building and collaboration with agencies such as GRETB, HSE

In relation to the Annual Plan for 2022, A. Cassidy outlined:

- The Budget increase of 5%
- In accordance with a direction from Pobal, KPI's were maintained at the same levels as 2021.
- The focus on 3 priority areas in accordance with the Mid-Programme Review – Older People, Mental Health including young people, New Communities.
- A renewed focus on community development work to build capacity of community groups at local level and provide information on services to marginalised groups
- A focus on improving health and wellbeing through community events, and targeting groups such as Farmers, Travellers and Migrants
- Address social isolation and loneliness, particularly for Older People, through community based initiatives, intergenerational initiatives and supporting befriending initiatives

N. Thomas complemented A. Cassidy on the detailed report stating that it is a difficult task to compress into a presentation the vast amount of work achieved, and the information was well conveyed.

B. Fox complemented A. Cassidy on the amount of work achieved in difficult times and stated it was obvious that SICAP had a very active and busy year. B. Fox also stressed the importance of avoiding duplication of effort with the Local Enterprise Office (LEO) in the provision of equipment, training and grants for Social Enterprises through initiatives such as the Social Enterprise Regeneration Programme (SERP) and stressed that LEO would be open to collaborating with SICAP and with the BIA innovator Campus and other businesses.

G. Costello asked if any of the projects related to support for the elderly as he felt that the projects seem to focus on the bigger towns like Tuam and Ballinasloe. A. Cassidy clarified that Tuam and Ballinasloe are referenced as they are the existing RAPID areas in the County with high levels of deprivation on the Pobal HP Index, however, in terms of dealing with social isolation and loneliness, the intention under the programme is to target areas which are most remote.

N. Thomas stated that it was clear that online delivery has now become a major part of rolling out SICAP programmes. A. Cassidy agreed that the online programmes have worked well and said that there are benefits as people from Clifden to Glenamaddy can both be involved in the same programme without the time and expense of travel. She stated that it is also important to start the “face to face” contact so that people can meet and network and form connections. In particular, she felt that older people need the “face to face” contact as they don’t want the online process or have less access to it. There was a general agreement that a blended approach was likely and that the most appropriate method should be considered on an ongoing basis.

On behalf of the Members, N. Thomas thanked A. Cassidy for her presentation and Q&A session, and she then left the meeting - S. Dolan also temporarily left the meeting while D. Walsh outlined the analysis of the SICAP Sub-Committee to the members so they could consider the two items before them.

D. Walsh informed the members that the SICAP Sub Committee had met twice to review the end of year 2021 SICAP Report and the 2022 SICAP Report. In relation to the End of Year Report for 2021, he outlined:

- the Sub-Committee were very satisfied with the over-achievement of KPI’s in a very difficult year, and also with the high level of collaboration demonstrated with other agencies
- The duration of interventions was below the national average, however, it was raised with Pobal that this was not reflective of the ‘real-time’ engagement with clients as it did not include staff hours spent on development of CV’s, engagement via e-mail, etc.
- Pobal had reported that the audio report on Personal Development Courses gave a good sense of the need and rationale for these programmes, however, the Sub-Committee felt that there could be more focus on quantitative as well as qualitative outcomes as some excellent examples of progression to education and employment were given at the Sub-Committee Meeting but not included in the Case Study Report.

D. Walsh confirmed there were no issues raised that would delay the approval of the End of Year Review for 2021.

On the **PROPOSAL** of T. Turley, **SECONDED** by P. Mac An Iomaire, the end of year review for 2021 was **APPROVED**

In relation to the Annual Plan for 2022, D. Walsh reported that the Sub-Committee were very satisfied that there was clear targeting and collaboration as well as the renewed focus on community development to deal with the challenges associated with the lifting of Covid-19 restrictions. D. Walsh confirmed there were no issues raised that would delay the approval of the Annual Plan for 2022.

On the **PROPOSAL** of D. Walsh, **SECONDED** by T. Turley, the 2022 SICAP Annual Plan was **APPROVED**

#### **4. Tuarascáil LECP** LECP Report

A Farrell referred to the Guidelines for development of new Local Economic and Community Plans which had been issued by the Department of Rural and Community Development and the subsequent Briefing Session held by the Department which had been attended by some members of the LCDC. A. Farrell stated that the guidelines have built on the learnings and experience from the first round of LECP's and these 6-year plans would be more strategic and focus on development of high-level goals and objectives which would be supported by the development of Implementation Plans every 2 years. He confirmed that the initial Implementation Plans would be developed and presented with the overall LECP Framework. A. Farrell confirmed that work is ongoing to finalise the review of the current LECP, and outlined the process for development of the new LECP including preparation of a socio-economic analysis, public consultation, development of the high-level goals and objectives, and the associated roles and responsibilities. In that regard, he outlined the role of the Advisory Steering Group and confirmed that the Corporate Policy Group of Galway County Council had met and agreed the following membership:

- Chair of the LCDC – Cllr. Noel Thomas
- Chair of the Economic Development & Enterprise SPC – Cllr. Karey McHugh
- Chair of the SICAP Sub-Committee – Mr. Donal Walsh
- PPN Representative from LCDC – to be agreed
- Business Representative from SPC – Dave Hickey, Galway Chamber of Commerce (subject to confirmation/ratification by the SPC)

N Thomas thanked Alan for his report and stated that it gives an opportunity to see what worked in the last LECP and what needs to be changed going forward. N. Thomas asked if there is scope to amend the LECP every 2 years and A. Farrell advised that the overall strategic goals and high level objectives would apply for 6 years, whereas flexibility was built into the process through the review of actions to develop an Implementation Plan every 2 years. A. Farrell confirmed that a series of thematic workshops were being arranged by the Department of Rural and Community Development which will equip the Advisory Steering Group and LCDC with the required knowledge and skills to develop the LECP, and there will be an additional Webinar aimed specifically at the Community & Voluntary Sector highlighting how they can engage in the LECP process.

## 5. Fomhadh – Community Activities Fund Community Activities Fund

M. McGann confirmed that the Funding Evaluation Sub-Committee had met prior to the LCDC Meeting to review all applicants under this scheme and summarized the outcomes of the assessment process:

- 262 applications were received with a total amount requested of €994,083 vis-à-vis the available allocation of €286,802
- The Assessment Process had therefore considered any applications which had recourse to alternative Covid Support Schemes such as the Sports Covid Resilience Funds and the Covid Stability Fund and had prioritised projects which were for operating/running costs, essential repairs/adaptations, or met the LCDC's priority of providing social inclusion and community wellbeing benefits at grassroots level.
- It was also noted that due to the scheme being over-subscribed, a maximum allocation for running costs was set at €2,000, and a maximum overall grant of €5,000 was set.
- The application of the above assessment criteria results in 94 applications being deemed unsuccessful and 168 applications approved for funding with the amounts allocated for operating/running costs versus capital projects aligned as closely as possible to the 60/40 split requested by the Department of Rural and Community Development.

It was noted that the detailed assessment and approval process for funding schemes was delegated to the Sub-Committee which normally resulted in a list of approved projects being presented to the LCDC in due course at their next meeting. However, in this case, as the Sub-Committee Meeting had taken place directly prior to the LCDC Meeting and applicants had not been notified of outcomes, it was not proposed to circulate the full list of recommendations to LCDC Members at this stage. After a brief discussion, it was agreed to temporarily share the recommendations and T. Keenan assured the Members there was no reason for a further review as the Sub-Committee had examined all aspects of the applications.

On the **PROPOSAL** of B. Fox, **SECONDED** by P. Mac An Iomaire, the Community Activities Fund allocations were **APPROVED**.

## 6. Dáta don chéad chruinniú eile Date for next meeting

Date for next meeting was agreed for Wednesday, 23<sup>rd</sup> March at 10am.

**7. Aon ghnó eile**  
Any other business

N. Thomas raised the issue of resuming in-person meetings and the possibility of having a mix. This was welcomed particularly by new members of the Committee. A. Farrell stated that some members had requested that consideration would be given to meetings taking place at an earlier time, particularly when they are online as this avoided the travelling. He said that there were benefits to having some meetings in person for relationship development and some online as it enabled good participation without the need for a journey. Mr Farrell stated that consideration also needs to be given to the meetings and consultation process for the LECP and that he anticipated that this would also be a mix with the sub-committees of the LCDC playing an important role. It was agreed that the holding of meetings including time and format would be an item for discussion at the next meeting in March.

The meeting then concluded.

Nool Thomas  
Cllr. N. Thomas, Chairperson

A. Farrell  
A. Farrell, Chief Officer

Date: 23/3/22.

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