

Miontuairiscí ó Chruinniú an Choiste um Fhorbairt Pobail Áitiúil na Gaillimhe a tionóladh ar Dé Céadaoin 13 Feabhú 2019

Minutes of Galway County Local Community Development Committee held on
 Wednesday 13th February

Present:

Dan Dowling (Vice-Chairperson)	Galway County PPN (Community & Voluntary Interest)
Delia Colahan	Galway Rural Development CLG (Local Development Company)
Enda Conneely	Comhar na nOileán Teo (Local Development Company)
Martin Ward	Galway County PPN (Social Inclusion Interest)
Cllr. Noel Thomas	Galway County Council (Local Government - Elected Member)
Kevin Kelly	Galway County Council (Local Government – Interim CE)
Donal Walsh	GRETB (State Agency)
Seán Ó Coistealbha	Galway County PPN (Community & Voluntary Interest)
Cllr. Jimmy McClearn	Galway County Council (Local Government - Elected Member)
Michael Keady	HSE West (State Agency)
Eoin Brown	Department of Social Protection (State Agency)

Apologies:

Tom Turley (Chairperson)	Irish Farmers Association (Farming/Agriculture Interest)
Terry Keenan	FORUM Connemara Ltd (Local Development Company)
Kathleen Aspel Mortimer	Galway County PPN (Social Inclusion Interest)
Cllr. Dermot Connolly	Galway County Council (Local Government – Elected Member)
Breda Fox	Galway County Council (Local Government – LEO)
Margaret Sheehan	Galway County PPN (Environmental Interest)
Conor O'Dowd	Galway Chamber (Business/Employers Interest)
Mícheál O hÉanaigh	Údarás na Gaeltachta (State Agency)

Also in Attendance:

Alan Farrell, Chief Officer LCDC	Galway County Council
Kieran Coyne, A/Senior Executive Officer	Galway County Council
Ann Mallaghan, Administrative Officer	Galway County Council
Mary McGann, Administrative Officer	Galway County Council
Annette Daly, Senior Staff Officer	Galway County Council
Aoibheann McCann	GRD

In the absence of Mr. Tom Turley, the meeting was chaired by Mr. Dan Dowling, Vice-Chairperson.

- 1 Miontuairiscí ó chruinniú an Choiste um Fhorbairt Pobail Áitiúil (LCDC) a tionóladh ar 5 Nollaig 2018**
 Minutes of Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) Meeting held on 5 December 2018

No matters were arising from the Minutes. On the proposal of K. Kelly, seconded by D. Dowling, the Minutes of the Meeting held on 5th December 2018 were agreed.

2. SICAP 2018 – Ceadú Athbhreithniú Deireadh Bliana
 SICAP 2081 – Approval of End of Year Review

Ms. Aoibhinn McCann, Galway Rural Development (GRD) CLG, gave a PowerPoint presentation to the Members on the Annual Progress Report for 2018 and outlined the key achievements as follows:

- The target for KPI 1, no. of individuals supported, was 1,300, and the actual no. supported was 1,493. This was achieved through the STEPS Programme to engage the individual in their own goal-setting and building their confidence to further engage with training & development programmes. The training programmes included upskilling in areas such as cookery, gardening, digital learning, furniture upcycling, to promote life-long learning, as well as individual training courses such as Safe Pass, English Language, Driving Theory, and other educational qualifications, to promote placement and employment opportunities. GRD employed new staff members to engage with emerging needs groups – a Disability Officer, New Communities Officer, and a Rural Resource Officer – and individuals from these groups are referred to these officers to allow them to provide additional specialist supports. The Rural Resource Officer post arose from a decision of the LCDC to select “socially isolated rural dwellers’ as a key target group, and free Health Checks were given at Maam Cross Mart and Mountbellew Mart during the year, and the IT for Farmers course had a high take-up rate across the county.
- The target for KPI 2, no. of Local Community Groups (LCG’s) supported, was 92, and the actual no. supported was 112. The supports to Community Groups ranged from training courses such as Digital Training, GDPR, and Getting Your Community Group Online, to seminars on Positive Parenting and Disability Awareness. A leaflet entitled “A Guide to Entitlements for people with Disabilities” was prepared and circulated. Grants of €50,000 were awarded to 43 Community Groups, primarily for IT equipment upgrade and replacement. Small grants, training and mentoring were provided to 20 Social Enterprises. In line with the collaborative aspect of the LCDC, many supports were carried out on a collaborative basis:
 - Start Your Own Business (SYOB) and Digital Training courses for business enterprises were organised in collaboration with the Local Enterprise Office (LEO).
 - Community Education courses were organised in collaboration with Galway Roscommon Education and Training Board (GRETB).
 - The Tuam Homework Club was run as a pilot collaborative project with the School Completion Programme, TUSLA, Home School Liaison Officers, and 3 primary schools in Tuam. It provided free healthy snacks, homework support, and extra-curricular activities for 22 participating children in the area.

N. Thomas, Chair of the Sub-Committee for Social Inclusion and SICAP, thanked A. McCann for her presentation. He stated that the Sub-Committee had reviewed the Annual Progress Report, including financial reports in detail, and the report was in line with all requirements set down by Pobal, and the Sub-Committee were satisfied with all aspects of the administration of the Programme by GRD. He advised that one of the aspects highlighted by the Sub-Committee was the delays in quarterly payments to GRD especially at the beginning of the year and proposed that the LCDC write to the Department/Pobal in this regard. S. O’Coistealbha concurred with this point and stated that these delays in payments created serious cashflow problems for local development companies.

S. O’Coistealbha commended GRD on the outcomes under the SICAP Programme especially in relation to groups such as Early School Leavers where supports were put in place for youth at risk of leaving school early, in soft skills such as homework and music clubs, and in hard skills through training programmes. A. Mallaghan stated that there was great value in the work being carried out with under-15’s from a practical and mental health point of view, and unfortunately there was a difficulty in recognising this work as aspects of it were deemed to be non-caseload.

There was a general discussion regarding the intervention figures for SIRD (Socially Isolated Rural Dwellers) which was disproportionately high at 40% relative to the national average of 2%. However, Pobal had confirmed that this was in order as the LCDC had influenced these outcomes by the selection of this category as an emerging need. D. Colohan stated that the employment of a Rural Resource Officer had made a big difference in this area, and also resulted in practical outcomes such as the attendance of farmers at IT classes. E. Brown pointed out that there was an issue with the method of collating these figures which was leading to some distortion.

A Farrell, Chief Officer, thanked the Sub-Committee for their detailed end-of-year review and welcomed the localised approach to target groups which influenced the outcomes according to local needs. He outlined that the SICAP Programme was subject to audit by the Local Government Audit Service (LGAS) who had recently completed the audit of the LCDC funding programmes for 2017 and made several recommendations which M. McGann would now outline. M. McGann outlined the following aspects of the LGAS Report and the outcomes to date:

- a) The report recommended a system of independent checks of the financial records and activities of the Programme Implementer be introduced nationally. Training and guidance had since been provided by the Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD) and Pobal, and the Council would implement a physical examination of records & activities from 2019 onwards through its Internal Audit Department.
- b) The report raised the issue of delays in quarterly payments to the Programme Implementer and the lack of a procedures manual to cover the many deadlines and requirements of the Programme. This has now been developed by Pobal and was circulated to the Members prior to the LCDC meeting, and will be the basis for the annual monitoring of the Programme going forward.
- c) In relation to the RAPID and CFS schemes, the audit report noted that good financial procedures and governance required that proof of payment in the form of invoices marked ‘paid’, must be submitted to the LCDC and all applicants must comply with this requirement. M. McGann advised the Members that this proof of payment was being requested from all grant recipients as a condition of the final drawdown claim.

N. Thomas confirmed that the LGAS had also written to the Programme Implementer as part of the 2017 audit of SICAP and the issues raised had been discussed at Sub-Committee level, and D. Colohan would outline the issues raised. D. Colohan confirmed that the issues raised were in relation to purchase of digital licences and i-pads at the end of 2017 which would be used by participants throughout 2018. The Auditor was satisfied with GRD’s explanation that the purchases were bona fida, and the related paperwork was in order, however, all payments had to relate to activities for the current year of the Programme. D. Colohan stated that this requirement would necessitate changes in GRD’s spending pattern and moving activities to the earlier part of the year, whereas heretofore, their focus would have

been on achieving efficiencies through collaboration. N. Thomas stated that the Sub-Committee was satisfied with the explanations given by GRD and felt that the treatment of expenditure on a yearly basis was unfair when it was part of a 5-year programme, however, the related expenditure would be deducted from a quarterly claim by Pobal in due course.

D. Colohan again stressed the difficulties created by delays in processing of quarterly payments but acknowledged that this was a national problem to be addressed collectively by LCDC's.

On the **PROPOSAL** of J. McClearn, **SECONDED** by S. O'Coistealbha, the SICAP End-of-Year Review for 2018 was **APPROVED**.

On the **PROPOSAL** of D. Walsh, **SECONDED** by S. O'Coistealbha, the SICAP Annual Plan for 2019 was formally **APPROVED**.

On the **PROPOSAL** of M. Ward, **SECONDED** by E. Brown, the findings of the LGAS Audit for SICAP 2017 were noted and **APPROVED**.

3. Céadú Tuarascáil Bhliantúil 2018

Approval of Annual Report 2018

M. McGann outlined the legislative background to the preparation of an Annual Report by the LCDC and the main areas in the report.

On the **PROPOSAL** of D. Colohan, **SECONDED** by S. O'Coistealbha, the Annual Report for 2018 was **APPROVED**.

4. Céadú: Athdháileadh don Chlár um Fheabhsú an Phobail 2018

Approval of re-allocations for Community Enhancement Programme 2018

At the outset, M. Ward & S. O'Coistealbha queried whether there was a conflict of interest if they remained in the meeting, however, M. McGann outlined that the purpose was to agree in general terms the re-allocation of monies which were unspent or under-spent. M. McGann outlined that monies for Men's Sheds were ring-fenced and there was general agreement with the proposal to allocate under-spends to Oughterard who were unable to carry out their original proposal due to the costs involved in completing utility connections to their premises. M. McGann outlined the monies to be re-allocated under Type A & B grants, and advised that in light of the timeframe, it may not be possible to complete a new application and that over-expenditures on existing projects could be considered for top-up. A further allocation of €2,000 was approved for a project in Williamstown which had been recommended by the Area Engineer for technical reasons. The basis for re-allocations was agreed on condition that it would not encourage over-spends.

On the **PROPOSAL** of N. Thomas, **SECONDED** by E. Brown, the re-allocations were **APPROVED**.

5. Deireadh Seachtaine Náisiúnta an Phobail 2019
 National Community Weekend 2019

M. McGann outlined the details of the National Community Weekend initiative and the amount of funding which was available to groups and the LCDC. It was generally agreed that there should be a spread of projects across the Municipal Districts and approvals could be made by the Sub-Committee if necessary.

On the **PROPOSAL** of E. Brown, **SECONDED** by M. Ward, the scheme details were **APPROVED**.

6. Dáta don chéad chruinniú eile
 Date for next meeting

The schedule of meetings for the year was noted, and it was agreed that the next meeting would be held on 9th April at 6.30 p.m.

7. Aon ghnó eile
 Any other business

A Mallaghan advised that the next round of Healthy Ireland funding was expected by end March, and requested LCDC approval to the preparation and submission of proposals by the Health & Wellbeing Sub-Committee.

On the **PROPOSAL** of M. Ward, **SECONDED** by E. Brown, the proposal was **APPROVED**.

A Farrell outlined that there had been recent national publicity regarding spend levels on LEADER and that the situation in Galway was that 28% of funding was committed, and he recommended that the LEADER companies be requested to provide updates to the LCDC Meetings on a regular basis.

On the **PROPOSAL** of S. O'Coistealbha, **SECONDED** by N. Thomas, this proposal was **APPROVED**.



T. Turley, Chairperson

Date: 9-4-19



A. Farrell, Chief Officer

Date: 9th April 2019

