

ANNUAL REPORT
FOR
MEATH LOCAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
2017

1.0 Chief Officer's Statement

2017 has been a year of increased activity for the LCDC. There has been increased activity in the LEADER programme with 7 projects approved by the LAG, the introduction of several grant schemes which required the recommendation of the LCDC ensuring compliance with and delivery of some of the actions in the LECP, i.e., Community Facilities Scheme, RAPID and Healthy Ireland. The procurement process for the new SICAP 2018-2022 programme also took place with the LCDC approving the tender recommended by the SICAP Evaluation Committee.

It has been acknowledged that resources from all partners will be required to deliver on the actions of the LECP and all funding which will assist in the delivery is welcomed. RAPID funding will see the delivery of a community garden in Laytown and Healthy Ireland funding will see the completion of the Harvest Walk in Kells, installation of outdoor exercise equipment along the Sli na Slainte in Ashbourne and completion of the Lobinstown playground.

The review of the LCDC also commenced in 2017 with the intention to complete same by the end of quarter 1 in 2018 and will incorporate all aspects of the operation of the LCDC.

The Meath LCDC has 19 members and during 2017 there were 3 changes in membership with Mr. Des Henry, Department of Social Protection, Mr. Tom Oxley, HSE and Ms. Sinead Smith, Social Inclusion representative from the Public Participation Network (PPN) resigning their seats. Replacements from each organisation were sought and Ms. Margaret Cranney, Department of Social Protection, Ms. Jacinta O'Sullivan, Social Inclusion rep from the PPN and Ms. Dorothy Kerrigan, HSE attended their first meetings in February, April and September respectively. John Higgins, Community & Voluntary rep from the PPN was elected the new chairperson of the LCDC in March with Cllr Sinead Burke elected as vice chairperson.

I would like to thank the outgoing members for the contribution to the LCDC during their tenure.

The Membership of the LCDC at 31st December 2017 was:

- Ms Jackie Maguire, Chief Executive, MCC
- Cllr Sharon Tolan
- Cllr Sinead Burke
- Cllr Sharon Keogan
- Ms. Margaret Cranney, Department of Social Protection
- Ms Sadie Ward McDermott, Louth / Meath Education & Training Board
- Ms. Dorothy Kerrigan, HSE

- Mr Tadhg Ó Conghaile, Údaras na Gaeltachta
- Mr Joe English, Local Enterprise Office
- Mr Michael Ludlow, Meath Partnership
- Mr Eamonn Cassells, Community Sector
- Mr John Higgins, Community Sector (Chairperson)
- Ms Sheila Comiskey, Social Inclusion
- Ms Jacinta O’Sullivan, Social Inclusion
- Mr John V. Farrelly, Chambers of Commerce
- Ms Suzanne Brady, Environmental Sector
- Mr Seamus McGee, Farming Sector
- Mr Robert Bradley, Trade Union Sector
- Ms Geraldine Hogarty, Youth Work Ireland Meath

During 2017 a total of 11 meetings were held. Dates of the meeting are listed below:

- 27th January 2017
- 24th February 2017
- 31st March 2017
- 28th April 2017
- 26th May 2017
- 30th June 2017
- 28th July 2017
- 29th September 2017
- 27th October 2017
- 24th November 2017
- 15th December 2017

As set out in the Standing Orders, the quorum for LCDC meetings is 11 and all meetings in 2017 met the requirement for the quorum. The average attendance at the LCDC meetings during 2017 was 14 with no meeting with full attendance.

I look forward to supporting the LCDC in carrying out its functions in 2018.

Fiona Fallon
Chief Officer

2.0 Progress on the Community Elements of LECP

Following the approved Implementation Plan for the LECP, the actions relevant to 2017 were collated and presented to the LCDC at the February meeting. These were considered and approved by the members.

While acknowledging the initial successes in the implementation of the LECP it is recognised that future progress will require ongoing engagement between the various agencies and partners involved. With this in mind further meetings took place during 2017 to further progress actions in the spirit of collaboration.

Of the 58 actions identified for 2017, 56 actions are progressing with the exception of 2 which will see the introduction of new legislation to protect those in precarious works and the appointment of a youth officer will enable another action to be progressed through the preparation of a work programme.

A number of key deliverables in the Community element of the Implementation Plan have been achieved, namely:

- The Personal Micro Credit (PMC) Scheme is being rolled out to credit unions nationwide by an Implementation Group chaired by the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection (DEASP). Nationally 112 credit unions, representing 237 credit union office locations, have signed up as Personal Micro Credit (PMC) scheme participants. The list of participating Credit Unions is updated regularly on the website for the 'It Makes Sense' loan scheme at www.itmakesenseloan.ie/participating-credit-union. Information leaflets are available in the Intreo Centres and in all DEASP Branch Offices.
- Community CCTV scheme launched in Duleek/Donore during summer 2017
- A full day training workshop for PPN groups covering grants, fundraising, governance and data protection took place. A number of exhibitors were present to provide information on insurance, grants, volunteering, waste, training and healthy living.
- Re-establishment of the Meath Intercultural Network with regular meetings held during 2017
- Communications Information day held in Trim on December 5th which was an interagency event that displayed the services and activities available for persons over 55 years.
- JUMP Programme launched by Minister Regina Doherty in Cultúr. The JUMP Programme provides FREE support and training to migrants living in county Meath to facilitate improved access to employment and other support

interventions. It aims to work in partnership with other agencies and local businesses to carry out a work placement scheme that will improve job opportunities for migrants who are unemployed. JUMP is funded under the ESF programme via the Office for the Promotion of Migrant Integration, through the Department of Justice and Equality.

- The establishment of a Buggy Buddies programme in Blackwater Park, Navan. This was a free local buggy walking group open to parents and carers of babies and toddlers in buggies, prams or carries. The programme was a huge success and saw 13 Parents & 16 children complete the 5 week programme. Due to its success the programme will run again in 2018.
- Appointment of the programme implementer for the new SICAP 2018-2022 programme

The Meath LCDC will continue to work in collaboration with all the relevant parties to deliver on the actions as identified in the LECF.

3.0 Implementation, Management & Oversight of Public-Funded Programmes

- **LEADER (RDP) 2014 – 2020**

The implementation of the LEADER programme continued during 2017.

A National meeting relating to the implementation of the LEADER programme was held in May 2017 with the then Minister, IP's, LAG chairs and Chief Officers and saw the development of a 31 point action plan to assist in the delivery of the LEADER programme nationwide. Rollout of the actions was substantially completed during 2017.

Following the agreement of the Meath Rural Development Programme (RDP) Monitoring Sub-group on the general membership of the LEADER Independent Evaluation Committee (IEC), the members of the IEC were confirmed.

During 2017 88 eligible EOI's were received through a combination of targeted and rolling calls. A number of these promoters submitted applications which were considered at 3 IEC meetings in 2017. The first IEC meeting took place on 22nd March 2017 at which 5No. projects were recommended to the LAG for funding.

A number of targeted calls for proposals under LEADER were published during 2017 namely:

- Supporting Community Resources and Facilities
- Investing in Festivals and Cultural Events

The IEC meetings to consider the projects received under these targeted calls were held on 26th September and 5th December respectively. A total of 4No. projects were recommended to the LAG for funding from these calls.

During 2017, the LAG considered 7 projects and recommended funding towards all projects to a total of €239,206.66 of which €10,770.17 was approved for payment during 2017.

- **Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme (SICAP) 2015-2017**

For the SICAP programme, the LCDC is the contracting authority and its role is to manage and administer the programme. Meath Partnership was awarded

the contract as programme implementer (PI) for the delivery of the programme following a tendering process. The 2017 SICAP budget was €371,072 and 2017 was the final year of the current programme.

It has been found in relation to Goal 3 that the young people presenting for job supports require further intensive help with personal skills prior to receiving education and training skills. They were therefore helped under goal 2 initially. There is also a cohort of young people which have been identified who are leaving school before the legally permissible age and who cannot claim benefits until 18. It is intended to assist this group through the next SICAP programme through a specifically designed programme. The importance of collaboration and working with various agencies was again stressed by the PI as contributing to the success of SICAP.

During 2017 the SICAP sub-group have met on three occasions – January to approve the end of year report for 2016 and approve the annual plan for 2017, June to discuss the mid-year review and September prior to the final payment for 2017. There has been very good engagement between the SICAP sub-group and the PI in raising issues that should be addressed, i.e., progression of groups to self-sufficiency and mainstreaming of programmes.

The procurement process for the next SICAP programme 2018-2022 took place during 2017. A tender evaluation committee was formed to assess all submitted tenders. The evaluation committee met on 11th and 24th October and a successful tenderer was recommended to the LCDC for approval. The LCDC approved the appointment of Meath Partnership as Programme Implementer for 2018-2022 at their October meeting on 27th October 2017. Contracts were signed between Meath County Council, Meath LCDC and Meath Partnership on 18th December 2017.

The 2018 SICAP Annual plan is very comprehensive and will help deliver on the LECP actions.

- **Funding Schemes**

For the first year the LCDC were asked to recommend funding allocations to applicant groups under the Community Facilities Scheme and the RAPID scheme.

Under the community facilities scheme, there was a fund of €64,500 available for allocation. Following advertising of the scheme, there were 65 grants recommended by the LCDC from amounts of €400 to €1160. These grant

awards were subsequently approved by the full Council of Meath County Council at the September meeting.

Under the RAPID Scheme, an allocation of €64,500 was provided to each LCDC. In Meath, there were 3 applications received under the RAPID scheme. The LCDC made the recommendation to award €64,500 to the Laytown Village Enhancement Committee for their project to create a community garden. The allocation was subsequently approved by the Full Council of Meath County Council at their December meeting.

Healthy Ireland funding was also provided to each LCDC in 2017. Applications were sought for projects which were aligned with health and nutrition, physical activity and smoking cessation. All projects must achieve or help to achieve action(s) related to these topics within the LECP. Meath LCDC submitted 3 projects and was awarded a total of €100,000 grant funding for three projects – Harvest Walk in Kells, Outdoor Exercise Equipment for Ashbourne and Lobinstown playground.

This funding has been a welcome investment in the communities and in the LECP however it was noted that there were time constraints in making grant applications particularly in relation to RAPID and Healthy Ireland.

It is acknowledged by all that the delivery of the LECP requires the input of resources and all funding streams which help in this regard are to be welcomed. The LCDC will continue to monitor the implementation of the LECP annual plan during 2018.

John Higgins
Chairperson