

ANNUAL REPORT
FOR
MEATH LOCAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
2018

1.0 Chief Officer's Statement

LCDC's are required under Part 6 of the Local Government Act 2014 (S128B of the Local Government Act 2001) to prepare, adopt and submit an annual report to the Local Authority no later than the 31st March each year in respect of the performance of its functions in the previous year.

This report outlines progress in respect of the various LCDC functions during 2018.

Since the submission of the last report, Meath LCDC and its sub-groups had a busy and productive year.

A new Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme (SICAP) 2018-2022 commenced from January 2018. Meath Partnership were awarded the tender as Programme Implementer. The sub-committee has been working constructively in its review and monitoring of the SICAP programme.

The LCDC acts as the Local Action Group (LAG) for the Rural Development Programme 2014-2020 in Meath. The LEADER programme has added to the already significant role played by the LCDC in the oversight of public funding to bring about the improved social, economic and community development of the County.

Following on from the LEADER plenary session with the Department in 2017 numerous actions were agreed to improve the application process. These actions started to take effect from the middle of 2018 and this is reflected in the increase in the pipeline of projects coming on stream. As per previous LEADER programmes, claims for payment of projects from the promoters are submitted towards the latter end of the programme, when all works are completed and inspected. To date twenty four projects have been approved for funding with six of these projects already paid out to the applicant.

The LCDC managed, implemented and collaborated in relation to a number of public-funded programmes under its remit which included the Healthy Ireland fund and the new Community Enhancement Programme which was an amalgamation of the Rapid and Community Facilities Scheme from the previous year. The LCDC ensured that both these schemes complied with and delivered on some of the actions in the Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP).

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. Four quarterly reports have been presented on progress to the LCDC.

The Meath LCDC has 19 members and during 2018 there were 2 changes in membership with Mr. Robert Bradley, Trade Union Sector and Mr. Tadhg Ó

Conghaile, Údaras na Gaeltachta resigning their seats. Replacements from each organisation were sought and Ms. Ita McGuigan, Údaras na Gaeltachta and Mr Noel Maguire, Trade Union sector attended their first meetings in November 2018.

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

The Membership of the LCDC at 31st December 2018 was:

- Ms Jackie Maguire, Chief Executive, MCC
- Cllr Sharon Tolan
- Cllr Sinead Burke
- Cllr Sharon Keogan
- Ms. Margaret Cranney, Dept of Employment Affairs & Social Protection
- Ms Sadie Ward McDermott, Louth / Meath Education & Training Board
- Ms. Dorothy Kerrigan, Health Service Executive
- Ms Ita McGuigan, 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 Sector
- Ms Jacinta O’Sullivan, Social Inclusion Sector
- Mr John V. Farrelly, Business Sector
- Ms Suzanne Brady, Environmental Sector
- Mr Seamus McGee, Farming Sector
- Mr Noel Maguire, Trade Union Sector
- Ms Geraldine Hogarty, Youth Work Ireland Meath

During 2018 a total of 11 meetings were held. Dates of the meetings are listed below:

- 26th January 2018
- 23rd February 2018
- 30th March 2018
- 27th April 2018
- 25th May 2018
- 29th June 2018
- 27th July 2018
- 31st August 2018
- 28th September 2018
- 26th October 2018
- 30th November 2018

As set out in the Standing Orders, the quorum for LCDC meetings is 11 and for LAG meetings is 10. All meetings in 2018 met the requirement for the quorum. No meetings during 2018 had full attendance.

I look forward to supporting the LCDC in carrying out its functions during 2019.

Áine Bird
A/Chief Officer

2.0 Progress on the Community Elements of LECP

The LECP was prepared in a collaborative manner with the various agencies. The LCDC monitors and reviews the implementation of the LECP with the lead agencies who submit their progress updates on actions to the LCDC on a quarterly basis. The LECP advisory group met during 2018 and reviewed the Economic and Community aspects of the plan.

While acknowledging the initial successes in the implementation of the LECP it is recognised that ongoing progress requires continuous engagement between the various agencies and partners involved. Of the 55 actions progressed during 2018, 6 miscellaneous actions could not be progressed due to resource issues.

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

3.0 Implementation, Management & Oversight of Public-Funded Programmes

- **LEADER (RDP) 2014 – 2020**

The implementation of the LEADER programme continued during 2018 with 24 projects approved by the LAG following the recommendation by the Independent Evaluation Committee (IEC). Six claims were submitted for payment by the promoter with all monies paid out.

Eligible Expressions of Interest's continued to be received under the rolling calls and under the targeted call for Equine. These will be progressed accordingly and brought to an IEC meeting for consideration before recommendation to the LAG for approval.

The Rural Development Programme monitoring committee met in January and October to review progress of the programme. It was agreed by the Local Action Group (LAG) to transfer funding allocations within the programme to areas where there is a greater demand for funding as per circular 14/2018 from the Department. Consideration is also being given to the development of some LAG "in house" projects which were identified as part of the Local Development Strategy.

A further plenary meeting relating to the implementation of the LEADER programme was held in September 2018 with Minister Ring, IP's, LAG chairs and Chief Officers. The Minister reviewed progress on the programme

nationally and encouraged all LAG's to ensure that programmes were kept on target within their LAG areas.

- **Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme (SICAP) 2018-2022**

SICAP is a national programme which aims to tackle poverty and social exclusion through local engagement and partnership between disadvantaged individuals, community organisations and public sector agencies. The aim of SICAP is to reduce poverty and promote social inclusion and equality through local, regional and national engagement and collaboration.

A new 5 year programme commenced in 2018 with Meath Partnership awarded the contract as Programme Implementer. The programme now is based on 3 annual goals, supporting community groups, supporting individuals and persons living in disadvantaged areas. This programme is based on the quality rather than quantity of Programme interventions.

The SICAP sub committee met a number of times in 2018 to review mid-year and end of year progress with the programme implementer. All targets were exceeded under each goal and the allocated budget of €393,336 for 2018 was on target. There has been very good engagement between the SICAP sub-group and the PI in raising issues that should be addressed or progressed.

- **Funding Schemes**

A number of funding initiatives were made available to the LCDC in order to recommend funding allocations to applicant groups. Under the Healthy Ireland scheme, €75,000 was allocated and 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 5 projects with all 5 projects approved namely the preparation of a Healthy Meath Strategy, provision of agility equipment in Carlanstown, Agewell project by 3rd Age Foundation, Sensory Walls and a Fit-bit challenge by Meath Local Sports Partnership.

The Community Enhancement programme was new in 2018. This scheme amalgamated the Community Facilities scheme and the Rapid initiative. A total fund of €371,923 was made available under two tranches with 30% of the fund ring-fenced for small capital works up to a maximum of €1,000 and

the rest of the fund allocated towards larger capital projects. A total of 85 grants were awarded by the LCDC with projects due to be completed by end of March 2019.

This funding has been a welcome investment in the communities. It is acknowledged by all that the delivery of actions in the LECP requires the input of resources and all funding streams which help in this regard are vital.

The LCDC will continue to work together and seek funding from other sources for their local area and community.

John Higgins
LCDC Chairperson