



**Minutes of Donegal Local and Community Development Committee
County House, Lifford, 10am, 27th May 2015**

Attendance

Members	Seamus Neely, Michael Tunney, Cllr Niamh Kennedy, Cllr Martin McDermott, Cllr Marie Therese Gallagher, Maire O'Leary, Shaun Purcell, Paul Hannigan, Jim Slevin, Susan McCauley, Martin McBride, PJ Hannon, James O'Donnell, Emmett Johnson
Apologies	Anthony Doogan, Jan Feenstra, Noreen Ní Mhaoldomhnaigh
Chief Officer	Micheál Ó hÉanaigh
Secretariat	Charles Sweeney, Donna McGroarty
Attending	Paddy Doherty, Denis Kelly, Sinead Harkin, Colin McNulty, Eamonn Brown, Caroline Britton, Loretta McNicholas, Barney McLaughlin, Caitlin Ui Chochlainn, Sean O'Daimhin, Eileen Burgess, Margaret Fitzgerald, Adrienne Kelly, Bobby Smith

Welcome

Seamus Neely, Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and apologies were noted. The meeting was advised that the members of the Economic Development Committee would be joining the meeting for a joint presentation in relation to agenda item no. 8 - Update on Preparation of Donegal Local Economic and Community Plan.

1. Minutes of previous meeting

Maire O'Leary advised that the Plan she referred to at the previous meeting would now be called 'Connecting for Life Donegal'.

Minutes of the previous meeting were proposed by Jim Slevin and seconded by PJ Hannon.

2. Matters Arising

Michael O'hEanaigh provided the following areas of clarification:

- Confirmation has been received from the Department that FRC's are considered eligible under the LEADER / RDP. Susan McCauley agreed to relay this information to other FRC's.
- As per normal practice, it is only necessary for those who have declared Conflicts of Interest in relation to SICAP to be excused from meetings when decisions are being taken but this does not apply to general discussion on the matter.
- With regard to Cllr. Martin McDermott's query in relation to additional funding which may be available in parallel to the LEADER / RDP, Michael advised that this would be considered and pursued as part of the preparation of the LDS. This item is also due to be discussed at a meeting of the DCEN on Thursday, 28th May.

3. Update on PPN

The Chairman invited Charles Sweeney to provide an update. Charles Sweeney advised the meeting that the Secretariat has been in place for approximately 6 months and that over 400 invites to community & voluntary organisations to register with the PPN have been issued. Charles Sweeney advised of the need for the PPN to establish 7 linkage groups for areas such as community, health, social inclusion etc. The first role of the Social Inclusion Linkage Group will be to review and prepare a submission on the LECP.

Maire O'Leary queried if there was a possibility of duplicating groups and committees by the establishment of new linkage groups. Charles advised that this was unlikely to create an issue and advised that each linkage group will have a PPN rep and will operate a two-way flow of information from the PPN Secretariat to the linkage group.

4. Update on SICAP Programme

The Chairman invited Eamonn Brown to make a presentation to the meeting by way of update. Eamonn advised that SICAP contracts have been effective from the 1st April 2015 and LOTS have been awarded as follows:

- Lot 33-1 Inishowen awarded to Inishowen Development Partnership
- Lot 33-2 Gaeltacht awarded to Donegal Local Development Company Ltd.
- Lot 33-3 Donegal awarded to Donegal Local Development Company Ltd.

With regard the monitoring query raised at the previous meeting, Eamonn Brown advised that at a local level the LCDC is the key decision-making body for SICAP with responsibility for monitoring the implementation of the programme including financial oversight.

Eamonn Brown referred to the IRIS system which is the online planning and monitoring programme used for SICAP. Staff from DCC, DLDC & IDP have attended training events on this system recently. Programme Implementers (i.e. IDP & DLDC) are responsible for inputting their respective data and information onto IRIS and the Department has set a deadline date of May 22nd for this task.

Donegal County Council (DCC) is responsible for ensuring that the tender actions are fully and accurately reflected in IRIS; administering the SICAP budgets and; releasing payments to programme implementers, following approval from the LCDC. DCC will also consider any sanctions required (in extreme cases).

Pobal has a national oversight role providing information to the Department on a county, regional and national basis. Pobal also support the role of the local authorities in relation to SICAP.

Eamonn Brown advised of 2 key reports which will be prepared and submitted to the LCDC each year – a mid-year, which is to be submitted by the 2nd week in September in 2015 and an end-of-year report to be submitted in mid January 2016. Once received, the LCDC is required to review the reports within two weeks and once approved by the LCDC, monies will be released to the Programme Implementers. From 2016, reports will be submitted annually in mid July and mid January (of the following year).

The meeting was advised of the following timeline for the release of payments to programme implementers:

Q1: April 2015	Funds released by DCC on receipt of signed Contracts
Q2: July – September'15	DCC will release Q2 funding on receipt of confirmation that the Annual Plans have been uploaded onto IRIS.
Q3: October – December'15	DCC will release Q3 funding once the Mid Year Report has been approved by LCDC.

It is intended that a SICAP sub-committee will be established to act as a resource to the LCDC in relation to this programme. Seamus Neely advised in relation to the establishment of this sub-committee that departmental guidance is currently awaited and this will be circulated to the group once received.

Maire O'Leary queried the levels of sanction under SICAP.

Michael O'hEanaigh advised that sanctions are not applicable in year one however sanctions will be set nationally going forward and ultimately the decision will be made by the LCDC. DCC will work with project implementers with the aim of achieving targets set. From 2016, targets will be the responsibility of the LCDC.

Martin McBride welcomed the fact that targets can be set locally rather than nationally.

5. Update on LEADER / RDP

A copy of the submitted EOI was circulated to the meeting. Michael O'hEanaigh advised that following a very positive consultation process, that an Expression of Interest was submitted by Donegal County Council for the county. Michael thanked all agencies and organisations for their input and hoped to receive a response from the department in the coming weeks

It is necessary to establish a working group in order to develop the LDS to include DCC staff, 4 representatives from the LCDC and PPN reps. It was agreed to include membership of this working group as an agenda item for the next meeting of the group.

Michael O'hEanaigh reminded the group that the county's allocation totals €12.9m and that further sources of funding are also being considered including REDZ Funding (trans-boundary & trans-national), Peace IV & Interreg V etc. in conjunction with the Council's EU Unit.

The group formally recorded their satisfaction with the submitted EOI on the proposal of Cllr Niamh Kennedy and seconded by Martin McBride.

5. Plean Gaeilge an Chontae Update

Michael O'hEanaigh stated that at the first meeting of the LCDC it was agreed that Plean Gaeilge an Contae would be prepared under the auspices of Donegal LCDC and that its aims and objectives would be reflected in the Donegal LECP. It was agreed that a sub-committee would be set up to progress this work on behalf of Donegal LCDC. This approach has been endorsed by the Department.

The Chairman invited Sean O'Daimhin to update the meeting with regard to the Plan.

A copy of the update report was circulated and Sean O'Daimhin advised that the sub committee had met earlier that morning and had extracted actions which relate specifically to An Gaeltacht and An Phlean Gaeilge from the LECP to assist the development of an Irish Language Development Plan for the county. The sub committee has identified the need for broader participation in the group to ensure that objectives and actions set out in An Phlean Gaeilge can be delivered by the most relevant organisation(s). Sean O'Daimhin will arrange a meeting of relevant agencies and organisations in the coming weeks.

Sean O'Daimhin also advised of an immediate need to carry out an audit of organisations in the county which are directly involved in the Irish language and a report will be brought to the LCDC once this work has been carried out.

6. Gaeltacht Service Towns

The Chairman invited Caitlín Uí Chochlainn to update the meeting with regard the Gaeltacht Service Towns.

Caitlín Uí Chochlainn advised that a list of Gaeltacht Service Towns will be published following a public consultation process conducted by the Department of the Arts, Heritage and Gaeltacht. Either Údarás na Gaeltachta or Foras na Gaeilge will work with relevant organisations to prepare and implement language plans in the identified Towns. It has been confirmed that there will be an initial focus of three towns / cities – Letterkenny, Galway City & Daingean Uí Chúis.

Following submission of an Expression of Interest to Foras na Gaeilge, Donegal County Council has been indentified to prepare and implement language plans for the county. Confirmation is now awaited from Foras na Gaeilge with regard the Irish Network and Language Planning prior to progressing the initiative.

Seamus Neely thanked both Sean O'Daimhin & Caitlín Uí Chochlainn for the updates and for the work carried out to date in their respective areas. Seamus Neely queried if it was reasonable to suggest that a draft Irish Language Plan could be prepared by the end of summer. Cllr Gallagher advised that a lot of work has been done to date with regard the Irish language but that the task of preparing the draft Plan is considerable and that the end of summer may not be a realistic timeframe. Cllr Gallagher also advised that it was important to ensure that there is no duplication of work.

James O'Donnell advised of the need to ensure that the processes undertaken are inclusive so that people without the Irish language do not feel isolated.

7. Update on Donegal Local Economic and Community Plan

Members of the Economic Development Committee joined the meeting and Cllr. John Campbell invited Denis Kelly and Sinead Harkin to provide a presentation to the members of both committees on the progress of the LECP.

Denis Kelly provided an overview of the consultative process carried out to date, which began in August 2014 and advised that the 43 sets / 700 individual submissions were received as part of this process which, have informed the draft LECP.

A copy of the draft LECP was circulated with proposed changes and amendments highlighted. Sinead Harkin presented the proposed changes to high level actions and objectives to the group and following discussion on the proposed changes, the following amendments were agreed:

Goal	Objective	Agreed Amendment
Goal 1	Amendment to 1.10	To develop marine connectivity within and to County Donegal
	Amendment to 1.12	To contribute to improved connectivity in County Donegal through continued provision of a strategic network of public libraries and the effective delivery of library infrastructure and library services.
	Insertion of 1.13 – Connected People	To promote Donegal as a county where individuals, communities and organisations are connected.
Goal 2	Amendment to 2.3	To ensure that the Irish language and our unique linguistic heritage becomes more visible, audible and integrated into all activities in our county.
	Amendment to 2.8	To connect and promote the county of Donegal on the global platform.
	Amendment to 2.10	To build human, individual and social capital through training, education and learning.
Goal 3	Amendment	To Value, Sustain and Develop our Culture and Creative Resource
	Amendment to 3.1	To maintain and develop the wealth of the cultural and creative resource in County Donegal and provide for its sustainability and growth as well as for its enjoyment.
	Amendment to 3.3	To support local community engagement in harnessing the culture, language and creative resource of the county.
	Amendment to 3.4	To support and develop a sustainable cultural sector in County Donegal.
	Amendment to 3.7	To recognise the importance of the Donegal landscape in informing culture.
	Amendment to 3.9	To protect and engage with County Donegal’s built heritage as an integral component of our culture.
	Amendment to 3.12	To collaborate in the development of training and learning in the cultural and creative sectors.
	Insertion of 3.15 – Vibrant Cultural Sector	To sustain and develop a vibrant cultural sector in the county, including both individual artists and professional arts organisations which embrace all art-forms including; performance arts, visual arts, literature; traditional and contemporary; new artistic work; in Irish, in English and in the languages of Donegal’s new communities.
Goal 4	Amendment	To Promote Sustainable, Inclusive and Healthy Communities
	Insertion of 4.6 – Women	To promote social justice, equality and women’s human rights.
	Amendment to 4.13	To work towards the 5 national outcomes for children as set out in the National Policy Framework for Children and Young People 2014 – 2020.
	Amendment to 4.15 – Traveller and Roma Communities	To work in a partnership approach to identify issues, concerns and barriers to service delivery experienced by the Traveller and Roma Communities and to develop programmes to address these barriers and deliver more effective and efficient services.
Goal 5	Retain 5.7 – Employment	To create and support pathways to employment.
	Insertion of 5.18 – Enterprise	To strengthen the business management and capabilities of SME owner managers.
Goal 7	Amendment	To support the continued development of Letterkenny-Derry linked

	to 7.3	Gateway as the primary growth centre for the region.
	Insertion of 7.4 – Rural Economic Development	To promote and support rural economic development throughout the county.
	Amendment to 7.12	To support sustainable farming, fishing and aquaculture in County Donegal.
	Amendment to 7.20	To develop sustainable social enterprise to tackle economic and social challenges.

Sinead Harkin advised that there a number of next steps involved in developing the LECP including:

- ensuring the completeness of relevant national, regional and sectoral strategies within the LECP,
- refining the established actions which may take the form of prioritising actions into levels 1, 2 & 3,
- developing actions for newly inserted objectives at 1.13, 3.15, 4.6, 5.18 & 7.4,
- developing an implementation framework in accordance with Department requirements,
- identifying and agreeing lead and partner agencies for each action,
- making arrangements for monitoring the implementation of the LECP in accordance with departmental guidelines and in conjunction with both the LCDC for community-related objectives / actions and the EDC for economic-related objectives / actions,
- holding of an additional workshop with the PPN & SIM,
- proofing of the Plan in accordance with departmental guidance,
- inclusion of the socio-economic profile
- working with the EU Unit to include a chapter / section of the funding environment,
- screening and assessment and relevant consultations in this regard.

Michael O'hEanaigh advised that it may be necessary to insert provisional leads at this stage however Denis and the team would be in contact with relevant agencies in advance of the next meeting.

Cllr Paul Canning commended the work carried out to date and proposed the adoption of the LECP subject to the agreed changes, which was seconded by Cllr Niamh Kennedy and this was also endorsed by John Campbell, Cathaoirleach of Donegal County Council.

Next meeting - Council Chamber, Lifford 10am, Thursday, 9th July 2015