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**Minutes of Donegal Local Community Development Committee**

**Held by web conference 2pm on 17th November 2020**

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| **Members** | Clr Niamh Kennedy (Chair), Clr Maire Therese Gallagher, Michael MacGiolla Easbuig, Anne McHugh, Shauna McClenaghan, Padraic Fingleton, Joe Boland, Charlene Logue, Kathleen Bonner, Aengus Kennedy ,James O Donnell and Seamus Bonner |
| **Apologies** | Paul Hannigan, Michael Tunney & Liam McElhinney |
| **Chief Officer** | Paddy Doherty |
| **Attending** | Liam Ward, Seamus Canning, Adrienne Kelly, Eileen Burgess, Claire McCallan, Margaret Fitzgerald and Kathleen Browne |

**Welcome**

Clr Niamh Kennedy, Chairperson, welcomed everyone and thanked the members present for participating in the meeting.

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1. **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

Draft minutes of the LCDC meeting of 20th October 2020 were considered with no matters arising.

On the proposal of Shauna McClenaghan, seconded by Clr Maire Therese Gallagher, the minutes were adopted.

1. **Healthy Ireland Fund**

Margaret Fitzgerald, Healthy Ireland Co-Ordinator, joined the meeting. Margaret made a presentation to members to update them on the background and progress of the Healthy Ireland Fund (Appendix 1)

1. **Community Resilience - Keep Well Campaign**

Liam Ward advised members that a report had been circulated in advance of the meeting setting out details of the government plan for living with COVID 19. He advised that Within the Plan a commitment was made to deliver the following:-

* A local campaign element will be delivered by local authorities to promote awareness of and participation in local programmes, initiatives and amenities.
* Supported by Sláintecare through the Healthy Ireland Fund, a programme of “citizen empowerment” wellbeing activities and initiatives will be delivered by local authorities with local partners, including activities supporting healthy living, physical activity, community food, creativity, managing chronic diseases and positive ageing, including for those living in long-term residential care.

Members were advised that the first phase of the Campaign was launched on Thursday 29th October 2020 by An Taoiseach, Micheál Martin T.D. The campaign was an invitation to individuals, communities, voluntary groups, sporting organisations, those involved in creativity and the arts, local heritage and history, businesses, as well as local and national government to find ways to support everyone to discover new activities and routines that will do us good.

The national Healthy Ireland team had been liaising with all the Healthy Ireland coordinators throughout the country in recent days to advise and assist with the setting up of a new web page on our existing Healthy Ireland website to promote the Community Resilience Campaign locally. The themes of the Keep Well Campaign are:

* **Keeping active**
* **Switching off and being creative**
* **Staying connected**
* **Eating Well**
* **Minding your mood**

He confirmed that the HSE will launch a series of “Minding Your Wellbeing” resources in the coming days. In addition, the Children and Young Peoples’ Services Committees (CYPSC) around the country are being supported to provide enhanced services to children, young people and families over the coming months.

**Liam advised members that a Healthy Ireland Sub-committee/Keep Well Campaign Committee had already been established by Donegal LCDC with a membership as follows:-**

Cllr Niamh Kennedy, LCDC Cathaoirleach.

Paddy Doherty, Chief Officer LCDC

Anne McAteer, HSE representative on LCDC.

Anne Timoney-Meehan, Donegal CYPSC.

Charles Sweeney, Donegal County Council, Social Inclusion Coordinator.

He informed members that money had been allocated to the county to deliver the initiatives outlined. It was proposed that the Healthy Ireland sub- committee be responsible for the co-ordination of the delivery of the Keep Well Campaign in Donegal. In that regard it was also proposed to enlarge the subcommittee to include representatives from Age Friendly Alliance, Cultural Services Division of the Donegal County Council, Donegal Sports Partnership, An Garda Síochána, Donegal Local Development Company, Inishowen Development Partnership and PPN with support being provided by the Healthy Ireland Coordinator

Members unanimously agreed to the proposal that the membership Healthy Ireland Sub Committee be expanded as set out and that this Sub Committee be responsible for the co-ordination of the delivery of the Keep Well Campaign in Donegal.

Liam advised members that the national campaign was being strongly promoted though radio advertising and promotion of the initiatives locally will be undertaken through local radio promotion, and through the various social media platforms operated by Healthy Donegal and partner organisations.

The Department of Health will issue more detailed guidance on the roll out and delivery of the campaign, including the allocation of funding to local authorities, CYPSCs and Sports Partnerships in the coming days.

He advised that a number of supports were already in place, i.e the Age Friendly Packs, Door Step Deliver by the Library service and the good works already carried out through the PPN and the Local Development Companies. Liam further advised that this programme would run until the end of March next year and a copy of the programme would be circulated to members when it was finalised.

1. **SICAP –Expenditure Update**

Members were advised that correspondence had been received from the Department of Rural and Community Development confirming that limit for under spend for the 2020 SICAP Programme which could be carried over into the 2021 Programme had been increased from 5% to 10% due to the impact of the COVID Pandemic on the delivery of the SICAP Programme.

Shauna McClenaghan, Inishowen Development Partnership confirmed that the expected under spend for Lot 33-1 was 5.74% which would be carried over into the 2021 Programme.

Padraic Fingleton, Donegal Local Development Company, confirmed that there would be an under spend in the SICAP Programme for both Lot 33-2 and 33-3. He advised that the under spend would be below the 10% allowed by the Department for both Lots. He welcomed the decision from the Department to increase the percentage that could be carried over into 2021 and advised members that all of the under spend, irrespective of where it occurred, would be included in the budget for Communities in 2021.

1. **Outdoor Recreation Strategy**

Claire McCallan joined the meeting.  Claire updated members on the Outdoor Recreation Strategy which would be funded as an LCDC Project under the LEADER Programme.

Members were advised that it had been intended to commence this process earlier in the year but this had been delayed as a result of Covid.  Claire then set out details of the engagement process to inform the Terms of Reference for the appointment of a Consultant.  Members were advised that it was hoped to hold a meeting in workshop early next year as part of this process – and subject to government guidelines in relation to Covid

Claire confirmed to members that the Terms of Reference issued on etenders on 4th November seeking Tender Response for the Provision of Services for the Delivery of an Outdoor Recreation Strategy for Donegal.  She advised that it was clear that the scope of the subject matter was extensive across the County and included both land and water based activities.  In this regard, she advised that the contract for the provision of services for the delivery of an Outdoor Recreation Strategy would be delivered in two phases as part of a single contract as follows:-

Phase 1:    An Audit of the existing, ongoing and future potential offering of Outdoor Recreation in Donegal.  The Audit will be extensive and will form the basis of the outputs of  Phase 2

Phase 2:    Will build on the findings of Phase 1 and deliver a number of separate though inter-related items

* Development of a step by step guide to assist local communities in developing walking trails outlining the process from concept to delivery
* A 3 minute drone video showcasing the key elements of Outdoor Recreation in the County
* A 6 Year action focusedStrategy for Outdoor Recreation in Donegal to 2028 within an overall vision to 2040.

Claire advised that there was a huge and diverse range of activities across the County which includes for example walking, hiking, surfing swimming, birdwatching   and cross referenced the guidance as outlined in the National Recreation Strategy 2006.  She also informed members that a review of the National Recreation Strategy is ongoing and which maybe available to the public in the second half of 2021. This works very well with the timelines for the Donegal Strategy and will go some way to ensure that the Outdoor Recreation Strategy for Donegal aligns with and compliments the aims and objectives of the National Recreation Strategy.

Members were advised that the tender return dates are scheduled for 24th November and subject to evaluation, it is hoped to appoint a successful contractor in January 2021 with a view to launching a strategy at the end of the first quarter of 2022.

Aengus Kennedy queried if any environmental parameters would be included.  Claire McCallan confirmed that the environment was one of the primary guiding thematics of the project.

Clr Maire Therese Gallagher welcomed the project but cautioned that it was important to ensure that it is strategic and that the requisite infrastructure is in place to allow people to access and use the facilities being promoted.  She raised her concerns that as there is no strategic plan in place that there would be no connection between the projects and facilities.  She agreed on the importance of Bio-diversity.

Clr Gallagher advised maintenance/development works were needed in some areas of Bealach na Gaeltachta, a 280km walking trail and that it should be properly branded and promoted.  She also suggested that the Burtonport to Letterkenny Railway Greenway be rebranded.  Clr Gallagher stated that the Audit element of the Outdoor Recreation Strategy would be invaluable.

Seamus Bonner welcomed the initiative and stated that it was important to ensure that it linked in with other initiatives such as Greenways.

Clr Niamh Kennedy advised that at the recent Economic Development Meeting it was agreed that each Municipal District would collate what information they have and submit it centrally.

Claire McCallan agreed that consolidation and connectivity was key for this strategy and as was clearly referenced as part of the Cross Directorate engagement in relation to the scope of the subject matter.  She confirmed that theStrategy would be at a high level and may, through the process identify the need for further strategies with a particular thematic emphasis eg waterbased/marine/coastal recreation, or cycling or equestrian. The Outdoor Recreation Strategy for Donegal will provide a road map informing the future sustainable development of outdoor recreation across the County.

1. **Migrant Integration Strategy**

Seamus Canning updated members on the Migrant Integration Strategy, which had been agreed by the LCDC in July. He advised that the project will be delivered by IDP on behalf of the LAG. He informed members that the strategy is expected to respond to national and local priorities by creating specific recommendations and actions for implementation. The aim of the strategy is to provide an evidence based, inclusive strategically aligned plan, targeted at all migrants. The approach will be participatory, building on the identified issues, needs and concerns of migrant and ethnic communities as outlined through the recent consultation process led by the Donegal Intercultural Platform, and scoping an action based, five year strategy which will respond to the highlighted issues.

Members were advised that the research is complete and the procurement to write the strategy is underway. It is expected to bring the project before the LAG in December for approval.

1. **Interim Leader Programme**

Seamus Bonner queried whether there would be an interim programme for LEADER. Liam Ward advised that the next LAG meeting would see the final allocations under the current programme. He confirmed that an interim RDP was referenced in the Programme for Government but that no further detail had issued yet.

1. **Water Charges for Community Buildings**

Clr Maire Therese Gallagher raised the issue of water charges being invoiced to small community groups and queried if there was any funding stream available to assist them to meet these costs. Liam Ward acknowledged that this was an issue for small groups whose income had been badly affected by the COVID pandemic, however he advised that he was not aware of any specific funding available to assist. Padraic Fingleton stated that the Local Development Companies had lobbied unsuccessfully to have the SICAP Programme Requirements amended to allow them to provide assistance to groups with their day to day running costs. Clr Gallagher stated that this would become a bigger issue and requested that the LCDC contact the Department and Irish Water to request action on this matter.

1. **Promotion of Supports and Activities**

Clr Maire Therese Gallagher commended all the work being done through the LCDC, PPN and Local Development Groups. She queried how this work could be promoted to ensure more people were aware of what was being one. She commended DLDC on the Volunteer Awards.

Seamus Canning advised that all activities can be promoted through the Healthy Ireland Campaign and its various social media platforms. Liam Ward confirmed that raising awareness of services and programmes available was one of the obligations of the Healthy Ireland Programme and confirmed that a dedicated webpage was available to promote all activities. Padraic Fingleton confirmed that the promotion of all support services was something that needed to be reviewed as the concentration of promotion on social media resulted in the exclusion of people who don’t have Wifi access or ability. He confirmed that DLDC were working on how to overcome these obstacles. Kathleen Bonner agreed with the point raised by Padraic Fingleton and advised that the Men’s Shed were providing Zoom Training to members on a voluntary basis but called for dedicated people to be brought in to provide this support to all who needed it.

1. **Next Meeting**

Clr Niamh Kennedy thanked everyone for their attendance and contribution and confirmed that the next meeting was scheduled for 16th December at 11.100 am.

This concluded the business of the meeting.