

**Minutes of Donegal Local Community Development Committee
County House, Lifford, 2pm on 20th September 2016**

Members	Seamus Neely (Chair), Maire O'Leary, Martin McBride, Michael MacGiolla Easbuig, Jim Slevin, Susan McLoughlin, Michael Tunney, Paul Hannigan, PJ Hannon, Cllr Niamh Kennedy, Cllr Martin McDermott, Emmett Johnston, , Nóirín Uí Mhaoldomhnaigh
Apologies	James O Donnell, Jan Feenstra, Anne McHugh, Susan McCauley and Cllr Marie Therese Gallagher, Anthony Doogan
Chief Officer	Paddy Doherty
Attending	Liam Ward, Eamon Boyle, Colin McNulty, Eimear McDermott, Kathleen Browne

Welcome

Seamus Neely chaired the meeting and welcomed everyone and thanked the members present for accommodating the change of date and time of the meeting, necessitated by the requirement to submit the Stage II element of the Peace IV application by 23rd September.

Seamus Neely introduced the new staff members, Eimear McDermott and Kathleen Browne, to those present. Martin McBride, on behalf of the LCDC Members, requested that their thanks and appreciation be passed on to Donna McGroarty for all her work with the Committee.

1. Minutes of Previous Meeting

Draft minutes of the LCDC meeting of 29th July 2016 were proposed by Michael MacGiolla Easbuig and seconded by Martin McBride.

2. Matters Arising

Martin McBride enquired whether it would be possible to incorporate the PPN into the Evaluation Committee. This matter had been discussed at linkage group meetings attended by himself and Susan McLaughlin.

3. Peace IV Action Plan

Seamus Neely advised those present that the Council received, by letter dated 15th September 2016, notification that the Stage 1 application was approved by the SEUPB Steering Group on 12th September. This letter also invited Donegal County Council to submit the Stage Two Peace application by 23rd September 2016. Whilst this short notice raised many challenges for submission of a completed application, it was decided to submit the application by the closing date rather than submit a late application.

A copy of the Part One Application Form for PEACE IV was circulated to all members present. Paddy Doherty updated the members on the position in relation to the application, setting out to those present that the details of the three Objective Areas which were contained in the application: Children & Young People, Shared Space and Building at the Positive Relations at the Local Level. Paddy also set out the amount of Peace IV investment received by the Council under each object area:-

Peace IV Objective Area	Peace IV Investment at a Programme Level	Donegal Peace IV Action Plan Allocation	Donegal Peace IV Action Plan Proportional Contribution to Results at the Programme Level
Children & Young People	€64,990,182	1,166,620	1.79%
Shared Space	€78,328,235	1,971,761	2.51%
Building at the Positive Relations at the Local Level	€47,514,165	2,414,310	5.08%

He then took the members through the key actions identified under each heading as follows:-

Children and Young People

Action Ref	Action	Target Participant Numbers	Budget
A1	Programmes to develop a greater understanding and respect for diversity, access new opportunities and become active citizens	92	€52,000
A2	Programmes to support the positive mental health and wellbeing of children and young people, thereby combating isolation and exclusion, through integrated programmes dealing with anxiety management, substance abuse, alcohol and drug related harm, anti-social behaviour, bullying, cyber safety and sexual health	150	€150,000
A3	To facilitate community support services for young LGBT people	150	€150,000
A4	Active citizenship through youth work, ensuring young people feel connected to and remain a sustainable asset in the community. Achieved through volunteering opportunities, outdoor recreation programmes, team building, residential activities, environmental activities and leadership development programmes.	44	€24,700
A5	Address conflict issues through restorative practices programmes which assist in making, maintaining and repairing relationships, changing attitudes and fostering a sense of social responsibility and shared accountability.	44	€24,700
A6	Development of a Roots of Empathy type programme teaching skills of empathy for others to foster enhanced understanding of good relations and inter-personal relationships for primary aged children	120	€120,000
A7	Connection programme for youth providers facilitating trialling of sports across traditional community backgrounds	177	€100,100
A8	Programme of engagement for young people in the use of digital media and music to facilitate the building of new friendships	89	€50,050
A9	Programme of informal education and recreational activity to support young people aged 13-24 at risk of anti-social behaviour, or becoming involved in dissident activity with a particular focus on young men	177	€100,100
A10	Develop the use of libraries as a shared resource for safe conversational space to build understanding and inter-	266	€150,150

	personal connection through the exploration of fictional/factual resources enabling discussion of difficult topics		
A11	Support for parenting programmes for teens offsetting the potential for isolation	177	€100,100
	Total	1,485	€1.02m

Shared Space

Action Ref	Action	Budget
B1	Development of sports training facilities to ensure engagement on a cross community basis, with a particular focus on encouraging women e.g. Gaelic sports, rugby, hockey, basketball, cricket, soccer and badminton	€1.1m
B2	Intergenerational/cross-community garden allotment and sensory garden/reflective space to create positive health and wellbeing through outdoor activity and enable relationship building through engagement in joint activities and space	€100k
B3	Programme to resource the re-imaging of existing perceived single identity spaces, ensuring inclusivity of people of all ages and backgrounds e.g. minority Protestant Community and ethnic minority residents	€200k
B4	Enhancement of outdoor play areas and provision of outdoor gym equipment to increase usability and encourage cross community engagement	€300k
	Total	€1.7m

Building Positive Relations

Action Ref	Action	Budget
C1	Combat isolation and marginalisation through programmes designed to enhance positive mental health and wellbeing	€150k
C2	To strengthen social capital by harnessing the traditional skills, culture, language, music traditions, food traditions, built heritage and creative resource of the County (including Ulster Scots and Irish Language)	€150k
C3	Programmes to promote community leadership and capacity building to foster social justice and equality by developing supports and educational opportunities which facilitate participation within community and civic life.	€200k
C4	Programmes to promote and support people with disabilities to participate fully in economic, social and cultural life and support for carers	€200k
C5	Programmes to recognise and educate in relation to the diverse cultures found in Donegal through cultural competency and other initiatives which foster inter-culturalism. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programmes to recognise and embrace the rich and diverse culture of communities Facilitate participation and engagement of marginalised communities in economic, social and civic life Explore the potential to pilot an 'Intercultural Quality Mark' to target racism and discrimination 	€150k
C6	To support and develop equality based initiatives for LGBT communities	€150k
C7	Develop the work of the restorative justice, mediation and conflict resolution programmes commenced under the Peace III programme to address sectarianism, racism and local conflict issues	€200k

C8	Implement an intergenerational border lives project on a cross border basis dealing with the legacy of the past and fostering understanding of the impact of the conflict on individuals and communities, thereby reducing the impact of fear and mis-trust.	€150k
C9	Develop the programme of commemorative events to ensure awareness raising and understanding by all sections of the community and enhanced sense of cross community ownership of commemorative spaces.	€120k
C10	Delivery of a programme of activity to strengthen cross community and cross border relations at community level through a small grant scheme and to enhance the proposed PEACE IV shared spaces Riverine project.	€500k
C11	Delivery of an engagement programme for ex-service personnel, ex-combatants and people becoming disenfranchised with the Peace process to deal with concerns.	€150k
	Total	€2.12m

Seamus Neely advised that it would be necessary to add contextual detail to the recommendation going forward; how it was to be administered, the mechanism of bidding for funding and how money will be invested. Paddy Doherty advised that a lot of work would be required to agree which mechanism would be used for delivery eg, partner delivery or small grants. He advised that an Action Plan would be drawn up and that groups will have the opportunity to compete for funding.

Martin McBride sought clarification of the procurement process. Paddy Doherty clarified this advising that all projects would be uploaded onto etenders and tenders would be submitted for the carrying out of the various programmes. Seamus Neely advised that this process will have to be replicated in respect of each tender. Martin McBride stated that he was particularly happy with the allocation of funding to the Development of a Roots of Empathy programme for children and young people.

Seamus Neely asked the members for any comments they had on the application.

Emmett Johnston advised that he was supported of the application submitted, but raised a query in relation to the phrasing used in the application and felt that the legacy of the troubles should be brought to the fore in the application with minorities and LGBT coming after. He felt this should be reflected in the budget also. He queried the danger of rushing the application and hoped that clarification would be sought after the closing date.

Nóirín Uí Mhaoldomhnaigh, Paul Hannigan and Cllr Niamh Kennedy all agreed with the decision to submit the application for the deadline of 23rd September. Maire O Leary acknowledged the pressure to submit the application in such a short timescale but raised concerns that there would be a perception of a 'closed shop' in relation to this funding. Seamus Neely clarified that the Stage 2 application was conceptual, details of which it is going to deliver and the nature of projects won't be finalised at this stage.

Susan McLaughlin advised that at the recent PPN Meetings concern and frustration at the rushed nature of the process had been voiced. She was happy to hear that this element of the application process was conceptual. She was concerned that with having to rush the application there may not have been enough time to do all the work necessary. She felt it was important to keep the trust of all of the groups involved by being seen to be open and transparent. Seamus Neely advised that there was a three day period available to submit this application. He confirmed that the three headings being used in the application process were informed through a public consultation process.

P J Hannon queried if we had learned anything from previous projects. Paddy Doherty confirmed that we had in the area of auditing and identifying spend in areas where the most benefit was received from.

Michael Tunney supported the submission of the application by the deadline date. He queried why the Youth and Young People element of the application, which had clearer targeted outputs than the other elements had got a lesser budget. Paddy Doherty clarified that the Budget heads were controlled by the Budget Parameters which were already set and that the three main headline figures were not negotiable. Jim Slevin also expressed his agreement to submitting the application on time and work on any clarification afterwards.

Martin McBride agreed with Emmett Johnston in relation to highlighting the importance of the Peace Programme in the application.

Clr Martin McDermott confirmed that he agreed with the submission of the application for the deadline date. He raised a query in relation to the shared space heading – querying whether the funding allocation for sports facilities was for capital programmes for facilities to embrace a mixture of sports.

Michael MacGiolla Easbuig queried the specification of the age of 16 on the element of the application form relating to children and young people and queried how flexible we could be with this. Liam Ward clarified that this age was part of the guidelines. It was agreed to revert to the consultants on this matter to clarify if it were possible to extend this to cover ages 12 – 24.

Liam Ward thanked the LCDC for its acknowledgement and approval of the approach being taken to the submission of the application. He confirmed that significant work would be necessary and confirmed that the process had been informed by the Public Consultations. He confirmed that there was a lot of work to be done when the plan is submitted and approved and that partners and other would be included in the roll out of the scheme.

On the proposal of P J Hannon, seconded by Martin McDermott, members agreed the submission of the Peace IV Action Plan application.

4. Town and Village Renewal Scheme 2016

Eamon Boyle made a presentation to those present on the Town and Village Renewal Scheme. He set out the objectives of the scheme and the types of activities supported by the scheme. He advised the members that the focus of the scheme was on Towns/Villages with a population of less than 5,000 or Towns and Villages with a population of 5,000-10,000. He then took the members through the Scheme's implementation and selection process and scheme details. He advised the members that the Local Authority could award up to eight grants for eight separate town and village projects and that there was funding of €380,000 for each county. The deadline for the application is 30th September. Eamon Boyle then explained the selection process used by the Council and advised that a workshop of Members took place on 5th September. It was agreed to target the submission of five applications, one from each Municipal District to ensure a balanced spatial approach. The workshop agreed that the five selected towns would be

Carndonagh – Inishowen MD
Ballybofey/Stranorlar – Stranorlar MD
Dungloe – Glenites MD
Ballyshannon – Donegal MD
Ramelton – Letterkenny MD

Eamon Boyle advised that the Council are currently liaising with community networks in each town.

Seamus Neely thanked Eamon for his presentation. He acknowledged the frustration of Members with the submission of this application. He advised that the turnaround time for this submission did not allow for the traditional consultation with towns and community groups. He advised that it was agreed to go with five towns to ensure that they divided the funding available in a way that would ensure each had a reasonable amount of funding available to them to carry out works. He said the challenge now was to get engagement from Communities and

businesses in the areas selected and to get the value from the funding. He highlighted to members that the selection process used shows the importance of the LECP. Seamus Neely advised that it is hoped that this scheme will be repeated on an annual basis for the next 3 years. He then asked members present for their comments/views.

Martin McBride raised the possibility of a role for the PPNs to facilitate a buy in to this scheme for Community Groups. Eamon Boyle advised that he was trying to work with local groups in relation to development and would discuss the matter with Martin McBride outside of the meeting to identify any groups that may be left out of the process. Nóirín Uí Mhaoldomhnaigh expressed her disappointment at not knowing about this scheme as she felt it would have been a perfect fit for the Islands. Seamus Neely advised her that the scheme was devised at National Level. The scheme was aimed at Urban Centres of significant mass and would not therefore be a fit for the Islands. He went on to advise her of a Failte Ireland Scheme which provided funding of up to €200,000 which would be suitable for an application from the islands. He suggested a joint approach from Failte Ireland, Donegal County Council, Comhar na nOilean and Udaras should be taken to making an application for this funding.

Clr Niamh Kennedy advised that she had attended the Workshop of members and that whilst they were not completely happy they had agreed to the recommended approach as it was the best fit. They were hopeful that more funding would be coming down the line.

Emmett Johnston stated that Donegal had seen a fall in population in the census. He advised that there was also a significant fall nationally in the number of people who were living in upland areas. Donegal was the county with the largest upland area in the country. He advised that there were large areas of abandoned land in the uplands throughout this County with one third of the county being affected. Emmett also queried whether the funding under this scheme was 'new' money and whether it would feed into existing projects or be used for new projects. Seamus Neely confirmed that all the works proposed are not works that would have been funded or planned for in any existing works. Eamon Boyle advised that the minimum required spend on each project was €20,000 and the maximum was €100,000.

Maire O Leary expressed her support for this scheme and felt it was better to choose a small number of areas rather than spread the money around a large number of schemes. She advised that the HSE would be very interested in being involved and were in a position to contribute evidence of what would improve the health and wellbeing of the towns. She advised that this scheme fits well with the 'Healthy Donegal' project.

Michael Tunney suggested that the five Towns and Villages selected should also be targeted with funding from Leader.

Seamus Neely thanked the members for their support for the application for funding for five towns from each Municipal District. He advised that there were 35/50 settlements that met the population criteria that needed assistance. He confirmed that it was necessary to ensure that the funding is spread out without destroying it. He stated that it may just be enough to start the works necessary or to put plans/arrangements for necessary works in place but it would help to move them on. He advised that early indications show that Tourism figures had surpassed what was expected. The problem now was that we need to ensure that we have the capacity to extract value from our customers.

Clr Martin McDermott expressed his disappointment that all of the funding applications are under such a tight timescale but stated that all money is welcomed. He queried how some of the smaller towns could be included. He stated that €50/60,000 can make a massive difference to small towns. He suggested that the Council put pressure on to ensure that this scheme doesn't roll out in the same way as last years and he felt the criteria should be re-examined.

Seamus Neely stated that an LCDC Meeting without any other agenda items was needed to consider these issues.

5. Rural Development Programme/Leader

Paddy Doherty advised that the Implementation Partners had to submit their proposals by Friday and a report would be submitted to the LCDC at the next meeting in November. The procedure manuals, including the application form, will issue this week and it is hoped that Implementing Partners will be able to accept applications shortly.

Michael Tunney queried whether the Service Level agreements had been signed by all the groups. Seamus Neely informed him that there were some matters still outstanding but they were in hand. Martin McBride queried whether there was a date set for release of monies. Paddy Doherty advised him that the process takes time and it was unlikely that monies would issue this year. He advised that he would revert to members with proposals for the types of programmes being discussed and that companies will bring their views to bear regarding the implementation of the programme.

6. Any other business

Susan McLaughlin advised that a group of young people from Donegal were participating at an event at the National Ploughing Championships. They had created a garden themed “the Wild Atlantic Way” for a competition sponsored by Aldi. She requested that members support this group. Seamus Neely requested that Susan send details of the event to the Donegal County Council Communications Officer who could promote same.

Seamus Neely advised that the Network of LCDC Chairs was meeting on the 10th October. As he had a prior commitment on the day, he was nominating the Vice Chair, Cllr Martin McDermott to attend.

Emmett Johnston advised the meeting that he was stepping down as the Environmental Representative on the LCDC. He confirmed that another representative would be nominated by the sector and they would be in attendance at the next meeting. He stated that he had enjoyed being part of the Committee and emphasised the importance of representation of the Environmental pillar in this forum. He recommended the appointment of a Bio Diversity Officer by Donegal County Council. Seamus Neely expressed his regret at Emmett Johnston’s departure and thanked him for his contribution to the LCDC during his time as a member. Martin McBride thanked Emmett on behalf of the PPN.

Jim Slevin congratulated Derek Walker, Simply Natural Health & Letterkenny Artisan Market, who was the overall winner of the ILDN National Enterprise Award.

7. Date of Next Meeting

Members were advised that the annual budget meeting for Donegal County Council had been scheduled for 23rd November, which as the date the next meeting of the LCDC had been scheduled for. It was agreed that the next meeting would be rescheduled for 29th November at 2pm in County House, Lifford.

This concluded the business of the meeting.