

Local Community Development Committee (L.C.D.C)

**Minutes of the Meeting of
Westmeath Local Community Development Committee, (LCDC)
on Friday 12th February 2016 at 10.00am in Aras an Chontae.**

Present: Pat Gallagher, WCC – (Chairman)
Cllr Tom Farrell, WCC
Joe Whelan, HSE
Des Sheridan, PPN
Bob Morrison, PPN
Christine Charlton, WCC – LEO
Des Henry, DSP
Dave Raftis, PPN
Paddy Donnelly IFA
Joe Potter, WCDL

Apologies: Cllr Avril Whitney WCC
Cllr Aengus O'Rourke, WCC
Joyce Furlong, PPN
Hugh McGuire, PPN
Denis Hogan, COC
Denis Rohan, IMPACT

In Attendance: David Hogan, DOS, WCC
Hugh O'Reilly, Chief Officer LCDC
Annette Barr Jordan, A.O Community Development, WCC
Anne Galvin, A.O Community Development, WCC
Maria Kearney, C.O Community Development, WCC
Frank Murtagh, WCDL
Gareth Buckley (on behalf of Christy Duffy) LWETB

Welcome

Chairman, Pat Gallagher welcomed everyone to the meeting and apologies were noted.

1. Approval of Draft Minutes of LCDC Meeting of Friday 4th December 2015.

On the proposal of Cllr Tom Farrell and seconded by Dave Raftis the minutes of the previous LCDC meeting held on Friday 4th December 2015 were approved.

2. Matters Arising

No matters arising.

3. Consider LCDC Annual Report 2015.

Hugh O'Reilly, Chief Officer, briefed the Members on the draft LCDC Annual Report for 2015 as circulated. This outlined the progress in 2015 on the LEADER programme and the SICAP

programme and advised the members that the Local Economic & Community Plan 2016-2021 had been formally adopted by the full council at its December 2015 meeting.

On the proposal of Des Henry and seconded by Bob Morrison the Annual Report as circulated, was approved for submission to the next meeting of Westmeath County Council.

4. Update on LEADER Rural Development Programme.

Hugh O'Reilly, Chief Officer gave an overview of the process undertaken in preparing the Local Development Strategy for the County which provides a strategy for implementation of the LEADER programme in line with Themes set out nationally. This strategy is currently being evaluated by the Department of Environment, Community & Local Government.

Joe Potter informed the members that the commencement date for the rolling out the implementation of the programme is awaited but it is hoped that Westmeath will be one of the first counties to commence implementation in 2016.

Chairman, Pat Gallagher thanked all those involved for the great effort in preparing the strategy and looks forward to implementation of the goals and targets of the programme in the County. It was agreed that a copy of the Strategy will be circulated when it has been finally approved by the DECLG.

5. Review of Implementation of SICAP for 2015.

Pat Gallagher advised that we are currently at the end of year assessment stage of the implementation of SICAP for 2015. He thanked the SICAP subcommittee for their very active approach in evaluating the implementation of SICAP and their report which was based on guidance provided from Pobal and the Department.

Frank Murtagh WCDL delivered a presentation on the implementation of SICAP for the 9 months of 2015 along with information which is not captured on the IRIS system. He outlined the work undertaken including the findings of the two Case Studies which contributed to employment through TK Maxx and the extensive work carried out in Willow Park, Athlone resulting in a 2015 nomination for the All Ireland Pride of Place Awards. He further advised that WCDL have engaged with consultants from Centre Parcs Longford Forest holiday village development with regard to their requirements of training programmes etc.

Joe Whelan commended the work of Anne Galvin as Rapid Co-ordinator in the Willow Park area. In response to Joe Whelan, Frank Murtagh agreed to provide a report in respect of the disadvantaged areas in Moate. Joe Potter advised that Moate has a strong community spirit with the formal launch of Moate Partnership Action Plan, and suggested that it could be a role for the Moate groups to identify the training and employment needs of the town.

Annette Barr Jordan, A.O, Community Development, outlined the evaluation process by the subcommittee including the SICAP End of Year Performance Checklist for 2015 as circulated. She explained to the members the main observations to be noted was the underspend of budget costs which will be treated as cash on hand rather than a carryover of funds in accordance with Department approval. The conclusion of this process found that Westmeath Community Development Ltd as programme implementers have achieved their targets through the appropriate key performance indicators. Annette advised the committee that Pobal has also

carried out an extensive assessment and the conclusion was that approval of the end of year report was recommended.

On the proposal of Des Henry and seconded by Joe Whelan the End of Year Report as circulated was approved including releasing the remainder of the first quarterly payment due to WCDL.

6. Proposed inclusion of Low Income Families in SICAP for 2016

Hugh O'Reilly, Chief Officer asked members to note correspondence received from Department of Environment Community and Local Government which provides for the inclusion of Low Income Families as a new target group who will qualify for assistance under SICAP. He also clarified this change is to include low income farm families who are at risk of becoming unemployed.

The members welcomed the inclusion to the change and funding will be more targeted to this group who will qualify in meeting the criteria. Dave Raftis suggested that these groups/families should be informed of the proposed change and the need to create awareness of this.

7. Consider SICAP 2016 Annual Plan

Frank Murtagh delivered a presentation on the goals and targets for the 2016 SICAP Annual Plan. He advised the members of the proposed changes for 2016 programme such as working with Westmeath County Council to establish RAPID type structures in all disadvantaged areas and the implementation of actions from the Local Economic and Community Plan. It was noted that the new target group for low income families will be included under Goal 3 – Employment Supports under SICAP.

A general discussion took place and it was noted that the Annual Target figure for progressing into self-employment will be challenging under Goal 3. It was also agreed that WCDL should liaise with both Chamber of Commerce to secure greater employment opportunities under the programme.

Annette Barr Jordan A.O Community Development briefed the committee on the Appraisal Template for the 2016 SICAP Annual Plan. In response to Joe Whelan it was noted that the Athlone Institute of Technology should be considered as a research resource centre. It was noted that RAPID and the Older Persons Structures will be supported under Goal 1.

On the proposal of Des Henry and seconded by Joe Whelan the SICAP Annual Plan for 2016 was formally approved.

8. Information Sessions for LCDC Members

Chairman Pat Gallagher informed members of the forthcoming information sessions. He advised any interested members can confirm their attendance through Hugh O'Reilly in the Community Development Section.

9. Schedule of LCDC Meetings for 2016

The schedule of LCDC meetings for 2016 as circulated was approved with one amendment agreed for the October meeting to be changed from 21st October to 28th October 2016. In

response to Joe Potter it was agreed the allowance for an additional meeting will be accommodated if required.

10. AOB

Pat Gallagher, Chairman outlined request received from Cllr Whitney that future meetings be held later in the day and following a discussion it was agreed by the members that the early morning meeting results in a good attendance therefore a 10am meeting should stay in place.

Chairman, Pat Gallagher thanked Maria Kearney for all her work in the last 20 months and informed the committee of her transfer to the Finance Section.

11. Next Meeting Date

The next meeting of the LCDC:

- Friday 15th April 2016 at 10.00am in the Executive Lounge, Áras an Chontae, Mullingar, Co Westmeath.

Chairman Pat Gallagher thanked the members for their attendance and called the meeting to a close.

Approved


Chairman


Date