

Minutes of Clare Local Community Development Committee meeting (LCDC) on Wednesday, 13th September 2017 at 3.00 p.m. in Training Room, Level 0, Aras Contae an Chláir, New Road, Ennis, Co. Clare.

In Attendance:

Cllr. Bill Chambers
 Cllr. Johnny Flynn
 Cllr. Mike McKee
 Ms. Margaret Slattery
 Ms. Dóirín Graham
 Mr. Christy Leyden
 Ms. Mary O'Donoghue
 Mr. Martin McKeown
 Mr. Padraic McElwee
 Mr. Cillian Murphy
 Mr. Andrew Dundas

Organisation:

Elected Member (Chairperson)
 Elected Member
 Elected Member
 Youth Sector
 Clare Local Development Company
 Community & Voluntary Interests
 Social Inclusion Interests
 Environment Interests
 Head of Enterprise
 Community & Voluntary Interests
 Agricultural Farmers Sector

Ms. Monica Meehan
 Ms. Deirdre Power
 Ms. Siobhán Brennan

Chief Officer
 Rural Development
 Rural Development

Apologies

Mr. Pat Dowling
 Cllr. Richard Nagle
 Mr. Dermot Hayes
 Mr. Paul Patton
 Mr. Jim Lynch
 Ms. Esther Connellan
 Ms. Helen Downes
 Mr. Michael Neylon

Chief Executive
 Elected Member
 Social Inclusion
 Education & Training Board
 Department of Social Protection
 HSE
 Employers/Business
 Rural Development

1. Minutes of LCDC meeting held on the 6th July 2017 and matters arising.

Cllr. B. Chambers referred to the minutes of the last meeting and requested approval of the minutes. The minutes were proposed by Christy Leyden and seconded by D. Graham.

Cllr B. Chambers invited members to raise any matter arising from the minutes. D. Graham and M. O'Donoghue requested an update on the previously recommended projects under Measure 3 of the CLÁR Programme. M. Meehan advised that four projects were submitted to the Department, namely North West Clare Family Resource Centre, Miltown Malbay Community Development, Michael Cusack Centre and the Connolly Bog Walk.

She confirmed that funding was announced under measures 1 and 2 and that the Council recently received correspondence confirming that the projects submitted under measure 3 were not successful. The members expressed disappointment and noted that the projects that were submitted were all worthy community projects.

M. Meehan referred to the previous meeting where the Communities Facilities Scheme was discussed and in particular to the evaluation process for any future funding streams. She recommended that a Funding Sub-Committee of the LCDC be established for the purpose of evaluating funding requests and making recommendations to the LCDC. The members discussed the matter and agreed to put in place a sub-group that would prepare guidelines for the carrying out of funding evaluations. The following members agreed to sit on the sub-group: C. Murphy; Cllr. J. Flynn; M. Slattery; D. Graham; P. McElwee.

2. Declaration re Conflict of Interest

D. Graham and M. Slattery declared in respect of the SICAP Tendering Process and Cllr. J. Flynn and Cllr. M. McKee with regard to the Healthy Ireland Fund.

There was a discussion with regard to 'conflict of interest' in general and it was agreed that it would have to be determined on a case by case basis.

3. Election of Chairperson

Cllr. B Chambers advised the members that his three year term as Chairperson has now expired and that a new Chairperson was required to be elected. He requested nominations for the position of Chairperson. M. McKeown proposed A. Dundas and this was seconded by C. Leyden. As there were no other nominations, A Dundas was elected as Chairperson.

A. Dundas accepted the position and thanked the outgoing Chairperson for his commitment to the LCDC and also thanked the members for their ongoing work.

4. Healthy Ireland Fund

A. Dundas invited M. Meehan to speak on this agenda item. M. Meehan advised that the Healthy Ireland Framework was launched in 2013 and focuses on the delivery of four strategic goals and linked policy documents which include Tobacco Free Ireland, National Sexual Health Strategy, National Physical Activity Plan and A Healthy Weight for Ireland Obesity Policy. She confirmed that the Healthy Ireland Fund for 2017 was officially announced by the Department of Health and Pobal in mid August 2017 and that applications can be submitted by the LCDC and the Children and Young Peoples Service Committee (CYPSC).

Prior to the announcement, organisations with an implementation remit for the Local Economic and Community Plan were invited to submit proposals for the Healthy Ireland Fund and a number of proposals were received. She advised that M. Neylon and D. Power attended a workshop in Dublin on the 31st August 2017 which provided further information on the fund and programme.

M. Meehan clarified that Clare LCDC can apply for a maximum fund of €100,000 (which includes a maximum of €20,000 for the preparation of a Strategic Plan) and the CYPSC can apply for a maximum fund of €38,400 which means a potential county fund of €138,400. Joint applications by the LCDC and the CYPSC are permitted.

M. Meehan informed the members that she made contact with CYPSC in Clare to discuss options for the fund. She advised that the members of CYPSC had agreed at their Board meeting this week that a joint application by the LCDC and CYPSC could be made. M. Meehan recommended to the members that a joint application would be made and the members agreed unanimously.

M. Meehan circulated the list of proposals which had been received and there was a broad discussion on the proposals, the application process and the guidelines for the Fund. She advised that the joint application must be submitted to the Department/Pobal by 3pm on this coming Friday and that the final decision on grant amounts will be made by the Department/Pobal. She confirmed that the joint application relates to projects and the preparation of a Strategic Plan while the membership of the Network is only open to the LCDC. She reminded members that at the last meeting of the LCDC, the members agreed that the LCDC would join the Network.

It was agreed that the proposals as presented would be submitted to the Department/Pobal. This was proposed by Cllr. B. Chambers and seconded by C. Murphy. M. Meehan thanks Deirdre Power for her work on the applications and advised the members that Deirdre has recently taken up the position of Staff Officer and will be supporting the LCDC in its work.

The members enquired as to the likelihood of a continuation of the Healthy Ireland funding for future years. M. Meehan advised that it is anticipated that the fund will be in place for a number of years in order to deliver on the Healthy Ireland Framework, the national policies and the local actions in the Local Economic and Community Plan.

The members voiced concern regarding the timing of the announcement of the funding during the summer break and also the short timeframe for submission of applications.

It was felt that it made it very difficult for the smaller voluntary groups to prepare and complete applications while the more professional organisations were able to do so.

It was also hoped that the next planning phase for the fund will allow more generous timescales. M O'Donoghue and C. Leyden expressed concerns that certain groups of people have no representation when it comes to applying for funding and this needs to be looked at to see how they can be included going forward.

M. Meehan advised that the Strategic Plan should be in place next year and should facilitate an improved application process.

She referred to the Healthy Cities and Counties Network and advised that in order to progress this matter, that a sub-committee of the LCDC needed to be formed and requested members to volunteer. Cllr. J Flynn, Cllr. B. Chambers, A Dundas, and M McKeown agreed to participate on the sub-committee and M. O'Donoghue requested that a Social Inclusion representative be invited to participate. It was agreed that a HSE representative and a representative from Clare Sports Partnership also be included.

5. Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme 2018-2020 (Procurement process)

Current SICAP Programme

M. Meehan referred the current programme and invited D. Graham to provide an update since the mid-year review process before discussion on the next Programme. D. Graham advised that since the mid year the Department of Social Protection referral system has changed nationally and the change may impact on the target numbers to be achieved under KPI 1 by year end. This KPI is set at 950 for 2017. D. Graham explained that a high level filtering of potential clients is taking place before the clients are referred and this now means that it is only Back to Work Enterprise Allowance clients that are being referred. She is looking at ways on how the numbers can be achieved, is examining other target groups and will also liaise with Jim Lynch to explore further. There may be a shortfall of 200 clients but she is confident that she can deliver the plan as agreed at the beginning of the year. She confirmed that she wished to flag it to the members at this stage.

C. Murphy suggested that Pobal be advised of this issue at this early stage. D. Graham will confirm the details to M. Meehan and M. Meehan will notify Pobal.

A brief discussion took place regarding Community Employment Schemes and the criteria attached to these schemes which make their operation problematic.

D. Graham excused herself from the remainder of the meeting.

2018 - 2022 SICAP Programme

M. Meehan advised the members that the closing date for receipt of tenders for the 2018-2022 Programme is the 29th September. The tenders will need to be evaluated and she recommended that the SICAP sub-committee undertake the evaluation. The evaluation process will be supported by the Procurement Unit of the Council. The members of the SICAP sub-committee are Jim Lynch, A. Haverty, M. Slattery and M. O'Donoghue. She confirmed that A. Haverty is no longer a member of the LCDC as she has moved to another work area within the LCETB. The Corporate Policy Group of the Council and the full Council have agreed that Paul Patton of the LCETB will replace A. Haverty on the LCDC. The members agreed that P. Patton should sit on the SICAP sub-committee and that the SICAP sub-committee undertake the evaluation of the tenders for the next Programme and report back to the LCDC.

M Slattery felt that she may have a conflict of interest but she was requested by the other LCDC members to remain on the sub-committee and if a conflict arose during the evaluation process she could excuse herself at that stage.

M. Meehan advised that Pobal and the Department are organising a tender evaluation workshop in Dublin on the 25th September and a member of the sub-committee is requested to attend. It was agreed that both P. Patton and J. Lynch would be requested to attend.

Site Verification Visit

M. Meehan referred to this item which was discussed at the July meeting. She confirmed that a response had been received from the Programme Implementer which had been forwarded to Pobal. The Department had requested a further update and have confirmed that they are reviewing the matter also. The issue relates to timesheets for programme work carried out in 2015/2016.

SICAP Sub-Contractors listing

M. Meehan advised that she had received the sub-contractors listing for the period January – May from D. Graham at the July meeting. She circulated the list for information. The members noted the list.

6. Any Other Business

M. McKee informed the members that at a recent meeting of the the Shannon Municipal District, the members were disappointed to note that €2,500 was allocated to five projects out of a total fund of €64,500. The Municipal District members requested that the funding be increased to €1,000 for each of the projects listed for Shannon.

M. Meehan confirmed that five applications were received from the Shannon area and one of those was deemed ineligible. She advised that no further funding is available under the Scheme currently.

M. O'Donoghue referred to the launch of the Rural Development Strategy and queried how it relates to all the other plans and strategies including the Local Economic and Community Plan. M. Meehan advised that the Rural Development Strategy will focus on rural areas of the county, is a means of implementing actions within the LECP and has very specific objectives around rural towns and villages, multi-service centres and community development supports.

Cllr. J. Flynn highlighted that Clare is the only county to have launched a rural development strategy and that it was a very positive step forward. C. Leyden complimented the strategy and felt that it will contribute to the ability to maximise funds coming into the county.


C. Leyden queried the LCDC membership. M. Meehan confirmed that there was one vacancy as G. Kelly had stepped down as Chair of the Age Friendly Alliance and has been replaced on the Alliance by P. Dowling who is also on the LCDC. She advised that it will be a matter for the CPG to agree the member to be put forward for ratification to the full Council.

J. Flynn referred to the LECP monitoring and its current status. M. Meehan advised that the Community Implementation Team had met on a number of occasions and that an IT based tracking system for progress on the delivery of actions had been developed. It is intended that there will be an update on progress available for the next meeting now that staff are in place.

The next meeting is scheduled to take place on Wednesday, 8th November 2017 at 11.00 am in the Training Room, Áras Contae an Chláir.

With no other business the meeting concluded.

Signed:



Chairperson



Chief Officer