

**Minutes of Clare Local Community Development Committee meeting (LCDC) on Thursday, 6<sup>th</sup> July 2017 at 11.00 a.m. in Training Room, Level 0, Áras Contae an Chláir, New Road, Ennis, Co. Clare.**

**In Attendance:**

Cllr. Bill Chambers  
 Cllr. Johnny Flynn  
 Cllr. Mike McKee  
 Cllr. Richard Nagle  
 Ms. Margaret Slattery  
 Mr. Dermot Hayes  
 Ms. Dóirín Graham  
 Mr. Christy Leyden  
 Ms. Mary O'Donoghue  
 Mr. Martin McKeown  
 Mr. Padraic McElwee  
 Mr. Pat Dowling  
 Mr. Cillian Murphy

**Organisation:**

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

Ms. Monica Meehan  
 Ms. S. Brennan

Chief Officer  
 Rural Development

**Apologies**

Ms. Aobhan Haverty  
 Mr. Jim Lynch  
 Mr. Andrew Dundas  
 Ms. Esther Connellan  
 Ms. Helen Downes  
 Mr. Michael Neylon

Education & Training Board  
 Department of Social Protection  
 Agricultural Farmers Sector  
 HSE  
 Employers/Business  
 Rural Development

**1. Minutes of LCDC meeting held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2017 and matters arising.**

Cllr. B. Chambers referred to the minutes of the last meeting and invited members to raise any matters from the minutes. No matters were raised and the minutes were proposed by Cllr. R Nagle and seconded by D. Hayes.

**2. Declaration re Conflict of Interest**

Cllr. B. Chambers invited members to declare any conflict of interest that they might have in relation to any item on the agenda. D. Graham and D. Hayes declared in respect of the two items relating to the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme.

### 3. Communities Facilities Scheme

A report on the Communities Facilities Scheme was circulated at the meeting. It was noted that a total fund of €64,500 is available under the scheme and that seventy three applications were received. The scheme allows grants of up to a maximum of €1,000 per project and the LCDC has discretion to exceed the maximum limit if it believes the project requires the additional funding in order to be delivered successfully.

M. Meehan advised that the role of the LCDC is to ensure that applications meet the eligibility requirements of the scheme and that projects are in keeping with the LECP. She also confirmed that the LCDC is required to make a recommendation to the Municipal District and that the Municipal District makes the final decision on the applications taking into consideration the LCDC recommendation.

In order to assess the applications, she explained that they were categorised into four groups with a grant level recommended as follows:

<b>Category</b>	<b>Suggested Grant Level (€)</b>
Equipment (lawnmowers, strimmers, office equipment, other equipment)	500
Area Enhancement/Amenity improvements	800
Minor Renovation works	1000
Major Renovation works	3,712

D. Hayes enquired as to the rationale behind giving eight groups a larger amount. M Meehan advised that these were larger projects and considered to be major renovation projects and therefore expenditure was significant. She also referred to the deprivation levels and the fact that the project would benefit not just the local area but also the adjoining hinterlands. C. Murphy enquired as to why one project which was the painting of a hall was deemed ineligible while another project included painting works as part of a larger renovation job. M. Meehan explained that a painting contract on its own is deemed maintenance while if part of a renovation job is deemed capital expenditure.

Cllr M. McKee also asked if application CFS21/17 had applied to purchase new equipment would they have received a grant. M. Meehan confirmed that this application was to repair dry suits and therefore deemed ineligible under the scheme. If the application was to purchase dry suits, this expense would have been deemed eligible.

A brief discussion then took place about the terms of the scheme. Mr C Murphy requested that when writing to the groups that they are provided with reasons as to why their projects were deemed ineligible. C. Leyden stated that this year was a learning process and going forward the groups could be made more aware of what would make them qualify for future schemes. He also asked if this funding would be available next year. M. Meehan stated that she believed it would be available.

D Graham acknowledged that the funding will be of benefit to all groups and asked if the bigger projects would have to utilise the funding they received by the end of the year or could they receive the money and continue to raise more funding until it is sustainable for them to start the project. M. Meehan stated that applicants had to indicate other sources of funding in their applications i.e. fundraising, LEADER support and the applications were assessed taking all the information as provided into account. M. Meehan confirmed that she would clarify if the monies had to be spent by the end of 2017.

Cllr R. Nagle asked that if groups did not spend the money could it be reallocated to other groups. M Meehan advised that that would be a matter for the LCDC. A discussion took place on whether the Municipal District could increase or decrease a grant after the LCDC recommendation. It was explained that the final decision on grant approval rests with the Municipal District and therefore if changes were proposed they would apply to groups within the relevant Municipal District.

Mr P Dowling stated that more clarity was needed about the scheme particularly around what could classed as capital works and what was considered as operational costs. He said that this was the first year of the scheme and felt that the proposals as evaluated should be endorsed.

M. O'Donoghue stated that the projects being supported should fit with the LECP. She felt that by giving larger amounts of funding to less groups that this approach would facilitate early completion of a project rather than giving small amounts to all groups.

C. Leyden said that it was important that money was coming into the County and the scheme was very welcome.

The members agreed to recommend the grants to the Municipal Districts as per the report as circulated and this was proposed by Cllr. R. Nagle and seconded by Cllr. J. Flynn.

#### **4. Healthy Ireland**

M. Meehan advised that the Department has indicated that funding will be made available through the Healthy Ireland initiative to support projects that deliver on the relevant objectives and actions contained within the LECF. In order to avail of this funding stream, LCDCs are asked to become part of the National Healthy Cities and Counties of Ireland Network and to support and implement Healthy Ireland.

She circulated a brief explanatory note regarding the network and it was noted that Keith Wood currently chairs the Healthy Ireland Network. She indicated that the Department intended to announce funding in August/September and that each LCDC will be requested to devise a plan for the implementation of projects/programmes.

It was unanimously agreed that Clare LCDC would join this network.

#### **5. Mid Year Review of the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme**

D. Graham and D. Hayes excused themselves for this item and the next item. Ms M Meehan referred to the SICAP mid-year report as circulated in advance of the meeting. The report noted good progress has been made on the delivery of the Programme to date with KPI 1 being surpassed and KPI 2 being met. It was noted that there is some spend outside the 40%-60% expected at this point in the year but the Programme Implementer has confirmed that this will regularise by year end.

Overall, it was a positive report with all twelve actions being progressed. It was agreed to approve the Mid-year report. This was proposed by Cllr R. Nagle and seconded by C. Murphy.

#### **6. Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme**

M. Meehan advised the members that there were two matters for discussion under this item.

The first related to the site verification visit undertaken by Pobal last August. The purpose of the visit was to review the financial and administrative procedures and processes that were in place by the Programme Implementer in order to manage the delivery of the SICAP Programme. She informed the members that Pobal and the Department requested a meeting to discuss the outcome of the visit and this meeting took place on the 30<sup>th</sup> May 2017. The meeting on the 30<sup>th</sup> May noted that a number of issues that had been raised as a result of the visit had been addressed by the Programme Implementer and that there were outstanding issues to be addressed. Pobal/Department requested the Chief Officer/Council to liaise with Programme Implementer in order to address them.

The outstanding items related to a requirement to review all client files in particular the NEETs files, to provide clarification regarding the completion of timesheets for staff, a review and updating of financial procedures and a review of the apportionment policy.

She confirmed that she and Leonard Cleary, A/Director of Service met with Dairin Graham and Neil Garvey (Chairperson of CLDC) on the 29<sup>th</sup> June 2017 to discuss the matter. Both advised that it would not be possible to review all client files as it would take a considerable amount of staff resources to complete the task, but they would consider reviewing the NEETs files. They also confirmed that the proposed revision of timesheets was not something that they could undertake as they felt it would compromise the integrity of staff, management and the Board.

M. Slattery asked if CLDC are keeping better records of the timesheets now. She advised that it was an unreasonable request to expect that timesheets could be revised at this stage. She also stated that other European countries run these programmes under guidelines however in Ireland they are seen as law. M. O'Donoghue agreed. M. Meehan confirmed that D. Graham will be confirming their position by letter and that Pobal and the Department will be advised of the response and that she will update the members on the matter in due course.

M. Meehan referred to the next SICAP Programme which is the second matter for discussion and decision by the members. She confirmed that as the process for the next Programme is a competitive process that the Department has requested that any members involved in decision making as it relates to the Programme are required to sign a Declaration of Impartiality. She circulated the Declaration and read it to the members. M. Slattery queried if she needed to absent herself from the discussion as she was unsure if she had a conflict of interest or not. She confirmed that Clare Youth Service delivers part of the SICAP Programme under contract to the Programme Implementer. M. Meehan advised that M. Slattery may have a conflict and M. Slattery excused herself from the meeting.

M. O'Donoghue advised the meeting that the West Clare Family Resource Centre receives some small scale funding under the SICAP Programme. The members agreed that M. O'Donoghue did not have a conflict of interest as she was representing the Social Inclusion sector.

P. Dowling advised that the procurement process is very important and that the LCDC must be transparent in how it manages it.

All present members were then requested to sign the Declaration.

M. Meehan advised the members that she together with B. Chambers and a staff member from the Procurement Unit of Clare County Council attended a workshop in Limerick on the 4<sup>th</sup> July regarding the next Programme which was hosted by Pobal and the Department. She confirmed that the next Programme will be a five year Programme running from 2018 to 2022 and that the tender documents will be published on the 31<sup>st</sup> July 2017. By letter dated 26<sup>th</sup> June 2017, the Department confirmed the indicative lot budget and the KPI's for the Clare lot. The lot budget is €872,488 for 2018. She explained that there will be just two indicators to be achieved in the next Programme and the members need to decide on these in order for the Request for Tender document to be available on the 31<sup>st</sup> July 2017. The two indicators are (1) Number of local community groups supported and (2) Number of individuals supported. She stated that the Department has set out in the letter a recommended level and a minimum and a maximum level for each indicator. It is at the discretion of the LCDC to alter these KPIs up to a maximum of 15% either above or below the targets set.

She also advised the members that the 2018 Programme will have thirteen target groups which is an increase from the current Programme and that the members can agree a new target group as the 'emerging needs' target group but this is not a mandatory requirement.



A discussion took place with regard to the indicators and the target group to be identified. The members agreed that the targets for both KPI's should be set at the recommended level and that an 'emerging needs' target group should be included and it should be substance mis-users. A copy of the letter from the Department dated 26<sup>th</sup> June 2017 was circulated to the members at the meeting.

M. Meehan thanked the members for their decisions and advised that the deadline for receipt of tenders is the 29<sup>th</sup> September 2017. She indicated that the tender assessment process will require the input of the SICAP sub-committee as the Evaluation sub-committee and that an Evaluation Team may also be required.

#### 8. **Any Other Business**

The next meeting is scheduled to take place on Wednesday, 13<sup>th</sup> September 2017 at 3pm in the Training Room, Áras Contae an Chláir.

With no other business the meeting concluded.

Signed:    
Chairperson Chief Officer