

**Minutes of
 North Cork Local Community Development Committee (LCDC)
 Monday 19th April 2021 @ 2.00p.m.**

Present:

Name	Organisation	Public/Private
Cllr. Bernard Moynihan	Cork County Council	Public
Cllr. Gerard Murphy	Cork County Council	Public
Cllr. Gearóid Murphy	Cork County Council	Public
Mr. James Fogarty	Divisional Manager North Cork	Public
Ms. Tracie Williams	Dept. of Employment Affairs and Social Protection	Public
Ms. Geraldine Canning	Cork Education & Training Board	Public
Mr. Pdraig Casey	Ballyhoura Development CLG.	Private
Ms. Brid Coakley	Cork County PPN	Private
Mr. Michael Doyle	Environment Pillar	Private
Mr. Sean Hegarty	Avondhu Blackwater CLG	Private
Ms. Maura Walsh	I.R.D. Duhallow CLG.	Private
Mr. Sean Kelly	Cork County PPN	Private

Apologies:

Cllr. Pat Hayes	Cork County Council	Public
Mr. Kevin Curran	LEO North Cork	Public
Mr. Julian O'Keefe	IFA (ICMSA)	Private
Mr. Declan O'Leary	Foróige	Private
Vacant	Respond! Housing	Private

CCC Staff in Attendance:

Ms. Kay Keegan	LCDC Chief Officer
Mr. Andrew Lewis	Finance Officer
Mr. Jesse Dorrington	Staff Officer

<p>Quorum=10 (50% of 17 rounded up + 1 = 10) In attendance= 12 (6 Private: 6 Public) Apologies= 5 Total membership= 17</p>

Welcome and Introduction

The LCDC was conducted through Microsoft Teams.

It was noted that a quorum was in place and the meeting commenced.

1. Confirmation of Minutes of the Previous LCDC Meeting of 15th March 2021

The Minutes were adopted on the proposal of Sean Hegarty and seconded by Cllr. Gerard Murphy.

Matters arising

None.

2. SICAP

Overview of SICAP Audit Process by Maurice Murphy, Head of Internal Audit Cork County Council:

Maurice Murphy shared a presentation which covered the following areas:

Obligations of the Internal Auditor. The Internal Auditor must:

- Operate in an independent capacity reporting directly to the Chief Executive and Audit Committee
- Abide by the Audit Charter of Cork County Council as approved and signed by the Chief Executive and Chair of the Audit Committee
- Endeavour to meet Institute of Internal Auditors standards in all activities
- Assess core elements including Governance, risks to performance in meeting objectives and value for money
- In the context of SICAP conduct an audit assessment for each year of SICAP provider activity per an agreement between the CCMA and DRCD

Challenges within the transfer of audit responsibility:

- Differing perceptions as to the role of various stakeholders particularly Internal Audit
- Lack of clarity on how the process would operate
- No developed understanding of how this may impact SICAP providers
- Absence of clear guidance on where the Chief Officer and LCDC sat within the new audit process
- Not fully considered that the Internal Auditor role is quite different to the role of an External Auditor

Current Status:

- The DRCD have commenced reviewing in detail reports on activity for 2018
- Ongoing engagements between Internal Auditors Network and the DRCD to address challenges
- Concerns raised by Audit Committees on the excessive obligation to monitor SICAP providers annually and the imbalance this creates in effective use of IA resources
- Cork County Council is behind with regard to our obligations under the national agreement
- Some clarity has been received from the DRCD resulting in the new approach now being adopted

Our approach going forward:

- Each SICAP cycle will commence with a fairly in-depth review on year one activity. (This was done for 2018 activity)
- Engage with operators annually and advise of the scope of audit we will be conducting which will range from full audit to desktop review based on risk.
- IA will endeavour to keep our impact on provider operations to a minimum. This is dependent on open and timely co-operation from staff and management of the SICAP provider
- All reports will issue to the provider and the Chief Officer who will submit to the DRCD and put forward for consideration within the LCDC structure.
- Reports will also issue to the Chief Executive, Audit Committee and the Local Government Auditor as standard with all IA Reports

The Chief Officer noted that it is hoped that we can co-ordinator audit reports in conjunction with start of year and midyear reviews so that the SICAP Sub Group could review these at the same time.

Following the presentation some discussion took place with both Pdraig Casey & Maura Walsh raising concerns regarding the differing operating procedures between the Local Development Companies & Cork County Council and the time that the audits entail. Both felt that the recommendations of the I.A. team were outside the scope of the SICAP Programme.

Maurice Murphy reiterated that his team must conduct an audit assessment for each year of SICAP provider activity. He said that this auditing process must abide by the Audit Charter of Cork County Council and endeavour to meet Institute of Internal Auditors standards. He recognised however that Local Development Companies may have concerns and advised that these be brought to the Department.

The Chief Officer clarified that the SICAP auditing process was not a role sought out by Cork County Council but transferred from Pabal to Cork County Council by the Department.

Cllr. Bernard Moynihan praised the great services being offered under SICAP by Local Development Companies and expressed his concern that too much time is being spent on audit preparations. Maura Walsh commented these require a significant amount of work which leads to duplication and needs to be addressed at Departmental level.

Maurice Murphy stated that his team is obliged to conduct SICAP audits as per the national agreement. He acknowledged in relation to his own team that an excessive amount of time is being spent on them in relation to the size of the budgets.

Cllr. Gerard Murphy noted that Maurice Murphy is applying the guidelines as he is obliged to. He proposed asking the Department to consider streamlining the auditing process to allow for programmes like SICAP which are administered through Cork County Council. Cllr. Bernard Moynihan seconded this.

Presentation of SICAP Case Study by Triona Dennehy IRD Duhallow: Responding to COVID-19 Needs

Triona Dennehy shared a presentation which covered the following areas:

- Social Impacts of COVID-19
- SICAP Case Study: Impact of COVID-19
- Reaching Out
- IRD Duhallow's SICAP Response to COVID-19:
 - Rural Meals Service
 - Community Laundry
 - Friendly Phone call Service
 - Duhallow Furniture Revamp: making reusable face masks
 - Supporting Care Workers
 - Job Centre
 - Training Supports
 - Afterschool Service
 - Providing Transport to Vaccine Centres in Duhallow
 - SafeFood Cookery Programme
 - Online Engagement and Community IT Hubs
- Conclusions:
 - IRD Duhallow's work over the past 3 decades has focused on building the capacity of community groups and establishing new groups such as active retired. As a result the resilience of the community response in Duhallow has been phenomenal.
 - Unfortunately, the social consequences of the prolonged lockdown and social distancing has resulted in higher levels of social exclusion.
 - The annual plan for 2021 has adapted to reflect the government restrictions and includes remote provision.

- The pandemic has highlighted the limitations for online learners both young and old including the need for computer skills, equipment and internet access to undertake training online.

Cllr. Bernard Moynihan thanked Triona Dennehy and offered thanks to her team on behalf of the LCDC. Michael Doyle praised the working groups who operate on the ground and spot the needs as they arise. He described their contributions as very valuable. Sean Hegarty congratulated IRD Duhallow on their SICAP projects. Cllr. Gerard Murphy said that enormous work is being done by Local Development Companies under SICAP which is hugely appreciated. He commended all staff of the Local Development companies involved.

3. **AOB**

None.

4. **Date of Next Meeting**

The date for the next meeting is 17th May 2021.

Meeting Concluded

Signed:	<u>Bernard Moynihan</u> CHAIRPERSON
Dated:	<u>17th May 2021</u>

