

**Minutes of  
 West Cork Local Community Development Committee (LCDC)  
 Council Chamber Kent Street Clonakilty & Via Microsoft Teams**

**Date: 27th April 2023**

**Time: 3.30pm.**

**Present:**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Public/Private</b>
Cllr. John O' Sullivan	Cork County Council	Public
Cllr. Patrick Gerard Murphy	Cork County Council	Public
Cllr. Declan Hurley	Cork County Council	Public
Cllr. Alan Coleman	Cork County Council	Public
Mr. Enda McWeeney	Cork ETB	Public
Ms. Arran O'Driscoll	West Cork Dev. Partnership CLG	Private
Ms. Phoebe Bright	Environment Pillar	Private
Ms. Máire Uí Mhaoláin	Comhar na nOileán Teo	Private
Ms. Eileen O'Shea	Civic Society	Private
Mr. Ryan Howard	SECAD Partnership CLG	Private
Mr. Finbarr Harrington	Cork County PPN	Private
Mr. Cornelius Buckley	Farming Pillar/IFA	Private

**Apologies:**

Ms. Clodagh Henehan	Divisional Manager West Cork	Public
Mr. Kevin Curran	North and West LEO	Public
Ms. Leighann Kennedy	Department of Social Protection	Public
Ms. Máire Ní Shé	Udarás na Gaeltachta	Public
Ms. Helen O'Sullivan	Cork County PPN	Private
Mr. Colm Leen	Cork Chamber	Private
Vacant	Foroige	Private

**Staff in Attendance**

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

<p><b>Quorum = 11 (50% of 19 rounded up +1 = 11)</b>  <b>In attendance = 12 (6 Private: 6 Public)</b>  <b>Apologies = 7</b>  <b>Total membership = 19</b></p>
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## **Welcome & Introduction**

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

### **1. Confirmation of Minutes of the Previous LCDC Meeting of 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2023.**

The Minutes were adopted on the proposal of Cllr. Patrick Gerard Murphy and seconded by Cornelius Buckley.

## **Matters arising**

N/A

### **2. SICAP: West Cork Development Partnership 2022 Ukraine Supports Case Study by Fergal Conlon**

## **A Psychosocial response to the Ukrainian crisis**

Introduction - context

On February 24th, 2022, Russia launched an invasion of Ukraine from Belarus to the north, the Russian -annexed Crimea Peninsula to the south, and its own territory to the east. This war has resulted in the displacement of millions of Ukrainian people.

This case study outlined how the SICAP team delivered their supports during an unprecedented demand for services from 1,000+ people who have relocated to the West Cork/Bandon Kinsale area.

Fergal outlined the supports under the headings of Initial response – The Community Development Approach, development of conversational English language classes with the support of Cork ETB, health & wellbeing initiatives, multicultural activities and how integration with the local community was instigated.

Issues that arose included:

1. Communication with accommodation service provider – acknowledged that the staff in this area are under increase pressure with an increase of over 55,000 + people during this time period.
2. Host families – the support that was needed by these families was not undertaken by any main agency. A lot of these relationships broke down in the initial 3-month period, often due to the transport difficulties of placement in rural Ireland as well as lack of support.
3. Groups of people arriving from CityWest and not being aware of rural location.
4. Groups of people arriving and being moved within a short time span and being unaware of follow-on location.
5. Staff at hotels/hostels being untrained in dealing with trauma. These staff would have been previously trained in the hospitality industry and would have clear guidance around tourists as opposed to meeting the needs of a static population.

6. Transport – placing people in a rural environment where English is not their first native language and there is a lack of availability.
7. Some private service providers were found to be not providing adequate services, room sharing with nonfamily members.
8. The two-tier system that has evolved during this crisis e.g. right to work, driving license swap, access to social welfare. This has causes difficulties for SICAP staff dealing with the individuals accessing the International Protection system seeking asylum in Ireland from other countries.
9. Differences in the Childcare system between Ireland and Ukraine. This has resulted in Child Protection issues.
10. Support for volunteers. The role of this group was instrumental in SICAP carrying out this work but the support for these volunteers sometimes daily was provided by SICAP staff.

### Summary

Fergal outlined how the role of SICAP has been highlighted during this current crisis. The team of SICAP has expanded during this year with the introduction of 3 new team members who are Ukrainian. A helpline for people from Ukraine has been set up and is manned by one of the team. The increase of 1,000 + in the population of a vastly rural area has had an effect on the community at large and valuable lessons have been learned.

The Chair Cllr. John O’Sullivan thanked Fergal Conlon for the presentation and said that it was very enlightening.

Phoebe Bright asked if is expected that Ukrainians now living in West Cork will stay or return home. Fergal Conlon confirmed that approximately 1,000 Ukrainians have been arriving in Ireland a week since August 2022 with approximately 77,000 now living in Ireland and 1,700 in West Cork alone. He noted that while small numbers are returning to Ukraine it is unlikely that the majority of Ukrainians will leave before the war ends. He said that there is no way of knowing when this will happen but noted that the housing crisis is a factor for Ukrainians wishing to stay in Ireland.

Phoebe Bright asked if this uncertainty surrounding timeframes and accommodation acts as a blocker for Ukrainians to get involved in their new West Cork communities. Fergal Conlon said that it might be worthwhile to suggest to the Ukrainians that the situation may be a long term one. He acknowledged how difficult the situation is for them as many are part of now divided families. He added that West Cork Development Partnership’s shift of focus from the labour market to wellbeing in recent years is paying dividends in offering support to Ukrainians.

Arran O’Driscoll said that the SICAP response to the Ukrainian crisis across the country has been incredible. She acknowledged the significant numbers of refugees and the huge amount of work being done by Local Development Companies to support them. She commented that the relationships developed a year ago are still being maintained with new people arriving all the time. She noted the key issues of the language barrier and the uncertainty regarding accommodation but said that SICAP is working well.

The Chair Cllr. John O’Sullivan described the work being undertaken on the ground by all Local Development Companies in relation to the Ukrainian crisis as excellent.

### 3. Local Economic and Community Plan 2023 – 2029 Socio-Economic Statement and High-Level Goals by Sharon O’Connell, Executive Planner, Cork County Council

#### Overview

- Purpose of the LECP and Draft Document
- Development and Structure of Document
- Role of LCDC
- Draft High-Level Goals and Associated Objectives

#### Purpose of LECP

- Sits within and must be aligned with the Hierarchy of National, Regional and County Development Plans.
- It is not a spatial plan and will not include zoning or planning policy objectives.
- Framework for delivering on the objectives from National Planning Framework, RSES, CDP and Government Statements at a local level to Promote and Support the Economic and Community Development of the County for the next 6 years.

#### Draft Socio-Economic Statement and High-Level Goals

- Socio-Economic Statement - Outlines the current social and economic status of Cork County
- High Level Goals and Objectives Developed from:
  - Socio-Economic Statement
  - Review of Higher Order Plans and Statements of Government
  - Comments from LCDC and SPC meetings
  - Advisory Group on 24<sup>th</sup> March – Document was reviewed and Advice given by group
- High Level Goals are a specific vision that Cork County Council wishes to deliver or achieve either directly or in partnership with other economic and community development stakeholders during the lifetime of the LECP (2023-2029).
- Objectives are key priority areas and factors which are intrinsically linked to the High-Level Goal and are important to achieve in order to most effectively deliver the desired results of this plan.
- High Level and Strategic Framework Document for Whole County
- Actions – Specific Steps to Achieve High Level Goals - Detailed in Implementation Plans- 2024  
Subject to Public Consultation 15<sup>th</sup> May to 26<sup>th</sup> June
- Revised based on Public Consultation – Stage 2
- Stage 2 - Subject to Sign off by SPC/LCDCs

#### Draft High-Level Goals

- **COMMUNITY** **SIGN OFF BY LCDCs**

- HIGH LEVEL GOAL 1: SUSTAINABLE, RESILIENT AND EMPOWERED COMMUNITIES
- HIGH LEVEL GOAL 2: A SOCIALLY INCLUSIVE COUNTY
- HIGH LEVEL GOAL 3: A HEALTHY AND ACTIVE COUNTY
- **COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC**                      **SIGN OFF BY LCDCs and SPC**
  - HIGH LEVEL GOAL 4: A LOW CARBON AND CLIMATE RESILIENT COUNTY
- **ECONOMIC**    **SIGN OFF BY SPC**
  - HIGH LEVEL GOAL 5: A COUNTY THAT SUPPORTS ENTERPRISE
  - HIGH LEVEL GOAL 6: A SMART AND INNOVATIVE COUNTY

#### HLG 1: Sustainable, Resilient and Empowered Communities

- Facilitate the building of sustainable communities to encourage sustainable housing development.
- Promote and support placemaking to ensure the creation of liveable, well designed, high quality sustainable places and communities.
- Support initiatives and maximise potential opportunities for funding from various schemes to renew and regenerate our towns and villages.
- Support the delivery of sustainable and inclusive digital and multi-modal transport connectivity.
- Support initiatives and projects to increase availability, improve access and enhance existing sports, recreation and community facilities.
- Facilitate the delivery and promotion of active and sustainable travel infrastructure
- Promote and support community safety and security initiatives.
- Encourage initiatives to enhance community integration, diversity and engagement.
- Promote and further develop Cork County as a vibrant tourism destination.
- Support community led groups who work to improve and enhance the towns, villages and communities in the county.
- Promote and support the Heritage, Culture and the Arts of the County.
- Support sustainable job creation within our communities.

#### HLG 2: A Socially Inclusive County

- Promote and support equitable access to education, training and lifelong learning.
- Enable the provision of supports to help reduce barriers to employment and increase opportunities for the existing and recently arrived populations.
- Facilitate the delivery of focused programmes and supports to enhance inclusion and diversity and reduce isolation across our communities.
- Support citizens in accessing information on available supports.
- Promote actions that improve the quality of life for all citizens in Cork County to improve their mental, physical, and social well-being.
- Support the provision and enhancement of community-based services to address poverty and social exclusion.
- Support the provision of improved digital and multi-modal transport connectivity to aid social inclusion.
- Facilitate initiatives which support and enable people with disabilities to fully participate in education, employment and in their communities.
- Promote the embedding of accessibility and the principles of universal design into practice.
- Support the Council's Age Friendly Strategy.
- Support initiatives which seek to aid independent living for older people.

### HLG 3: A Healthy and Active County

- Foster cross-agency collaboration and partnerships to continue to improve health and wellbeing and maximise funding opportunities.
- Support and promote increased participation in physical activity and sports for all ages and abilities.
- Support the implementation of health-based initiatives at a local level to improve health and wellbeing.
- Support and promote participation in recreational activities to increase wellbeing and reduce isolation for all ages and abilities.
- Support initiatives that facilitate healthy and positive ageing in association with the Council's age friendly strategy and policies.
- Support and promote increased awareness of, and engagement with, health and wellbeing initiatives.
- Support initiatives which seek to address health inequalities within the county.
- Support public transport initiatives which enhance connectivity for older and disabled people to enable them to live vibrant and healthy lives.

### HLG 4: A Low Carbon and Climate Resilient County

- Promote and support community initiatives to address climate change, become climate resilient, transition to a low carbon economy and work towards achieving net zero carbon.
- Work towards the just transition through supporting opportunities for public and private investment in economic development that is both sustainable and inclusive.
- Facilitate key stakeholders to identify opportunities for decarbonisation and improved sustainable practices.
- Support and facilitate the continued development of opportunities for renewable energy generation and business growth in Cork County,
- Support initiatives to aid all sectors in transitioning to low carbon and sustainable practices.
- Implement and support projects and initiatives which protect biodiversity and support the principle of biodiversity net gain.
- Enable key stakeholders to identify opportunities to support the retrofitting of the existing housing, business, community and municipal buildings.
- Raise awareness of climate change and facilitate education and training.
- Support the continued development of sustainable communities in the County.
- Support the implementation of the Climate Action Plan.
- Collaborate strategically to maximise County Cork's potential for the development of renewable energy.

### Public Consultation

- Consultation Period: 15<sup>th</sup> May to 26<sup>th</sup> June
- Notice in Newspaper & Website/Social Media
- Virtual Room
- Council's Website and Social Media
- Information in Libraries
- Three In Person Events

### Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> May Clonakilty Park Hotel

- Session 1: 1:00pm – 3:00pm



- Session 2: 5:30pm – 7:30pm

**Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> May Hibernian Hotel Mallow**

- Session 1: 1:00pm – 3:00pm
- Session 2: 5:30pm – 7:30pm

**Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> May Raddison Blu Hotel Little Island**

- Session 1: 1:00pm – 3:00pm
- Session 2: 6:00pm – 8:00pm

The Chair Cllr. John O’Sullivan thanked Sharon O’Connell for her presentation.

Phoebe Bright said that the rise of automation might lead to the isolation of individuals not currently isolated and asked what definition of sustainability is being used for the LECP. Sharon O’Connell said that the LECP has a built-in review process and can be constantly amended. She commended the definition of sustainability approved by the LCDC and confirmed that it will align with the work of the LECP.

The Chair Cllr. John O’Sullivan said that primary activities such as agriculture and fishing are vital in rural areas and need to grow to survive which can clash with the goals of sustainability. He said that social issues could appear in the future as a result of a decline in these primary activities. Sharon O’Connell said that building capacity in the economy and the social aspects of this is a key focus of the LECP. Cllr. John O’Sullivan said that if jobs are lost in rural communities due to a decline in agriculture or fishing, these areas must be targeted with new jobs. Sharon O’Connell said that a well-rounded collaborative approach is essential to the LECP. It must look at every issue that communities face.

Ryan Howard commented that traditional primary industries are under pressure. He asked if the LECP will look at the effects of this on local communities. He added the LECP needs to contain a critical element. Sharon O’Connell said that her team is trying to create a strategic framework which will increase the chances of achieving the best results for all communities.

The Chair Cllr. John O’Sullivan agreed with Ryan Howard that the LECP needs to contain a critical element. He said that targets and deadlines as well as follow up if these are not met is vital. Sharon O’Connell answered that all objectives in the LECP must be reported on and accountability is a key element.

The Local Economic and Community Plan Socio-Economic Statement and High-Level Goals were proposed by Phoebe Bright and seconded by Ryan Howard.

**4. Any Other Business**

N/A


**5. Date of Next Meeting**

The date for the next meeting is 25<sup>th</sup> May 2023 at 3.30pm.

**Meeting Concluded**

The Minutes were approved by the West Cork Local Community Development Committee (LCDC)

Signed:

  
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CHAIRPERSON

Dated:

25/05/23