

Waterford LCDC Annual Report 2020

Chief Officer's Statement:

The Waterford Local Community Development Committee (LCDC), an independent subcommittee of the Council, continued to meet and deliver on the Community element of the Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) in 2020. The LCDC provides the basis for a more coherent, streamlined and co-ordinated approach to local and community development programmes. The LCDC has primary responsibility for planning and oversight of local development spend. Public and non-public bodies from local government, state agencies, local communities, development, social, and economic interests are represented on the LCDC.

The LCDC met nine times during 2020, with a quorum achieved at each sitting. The April and May meetings were cancelled due to Covid 19 and the meetings for the remainder of the year were held by way of Zoom.

The following are the details relating to these meetings:

Meeting Date	No. Of members	In attendance	Apologies
9/1/20	19	15	4
13/2/20	19	13	6
12/3/20	19	15	4
11/6/20	19	15	4
9/7/20	18	14	4
10/9/20	18	17	1
8/10/20	19	14	5
12/11/20	19	15	4
10/12/20	19	14	5

Minutes of the LCDC meetings are available on the Community section of the Council's website.

Membership of the LCDC at 31/12/2020 was as follows:

Senan Cooke	PPN
Jenny Beresford	Dungarvan/West Waterford Chamber of Commerce
Gabriel Foley	PPN
Heather Kiely	PPN

Breda Fell	PPN
Gerald Hurley	Waterford City Chamber of Commerce
Maggie Flanagan	PPN
Catherine Quinlan	ICMSA
Richard Grant	WAP
Jimmy Taaffe	WLP
Cllr. Damien Geoghegan, Mayor	Elected member WCCC
Councillor Adam Wyse	Elected member WCCC
Councillor Lola O'Sullivan	Elected member WCCC
Derval Howley	HSE
Richie Walsh	Head of Waterford L.E.O.
Michael Walsh	C.E. WCCC
Michael O'Brien	WWETB
Julie Somers	CYPSC/Tusla
Brendan Lawton	Dept. of Social Protection

LCDC Subgroups:

In 2020, *the Health and Well-being LCDC subgroup* which reports to the LCDC at each LCDC meeting, continued the work of the Healthy Waterford initiative that has taken place over the past number of years. Due to Covid 19 restrictions, funding for a number of actions was reallocated to other actions including the *#InThisTogether- Waterford's Response to Covid 19* initiative. A key action completed was research that highlighted and celebrated the response of the community, voluntary and statutory groups in Waterford to Covid 19 during the first lock down that began in March 2020. The report also explored the impact of the Community Response Forum and role the CRF played in the facilitation and coordination of this local response. The Healthy Waterford Co-ordinator was instrumental in facilitating a coherent response to Covid 19 demands in 2020.

In the context of the LECP objective “to co-ordinate employment, skills and local economic development policy”, the **Skills Enhancement LCDC subgroup**, consisting of members from WCCC, SERSF, WWETB, WLP, WAP, LEO, Skillnet, LCDC and DSP met on a number of occasions in 2020 to consider initiatives to address the skill gaps existing in Waterford and to make recommendations to the LCDC to tackle these and make Waterford best in class at up skilling workers.. Particular focus was given towards advancing the “Skills to Advance” initiative locally. Consideration was given to the need to ensure coordination in the delivery of training and upskilling by the various providers in Waterford in 2021. This subgroup is another example of co-ordination between public agencies, under the auspices of the LCDC, to improve services for the people of Waterford

The **LCDC SICAP subcommittee** carried out regular reviews of the implementation of the SICAP programme being delivered by the Waterford Area Partnership and reported back to the LCDC at each meeting.

Progress under elements of the Local Economic and Community Plan

- ***In the context of the LECP objective, “Stronger, Healthier Safer Waterford”***

- **Joint Policing Committee:**

Waterford has a proactive JPC which has been addressing various issues to make Waterford a safer place for all. In 2020 Commissioner Harris attended the March meeting and gave a presentation in relation to proposed changes to Garda divisions. Due to the pandemic only two JPC meetings were held in 2020 but the JPC Steering & Oversight Committee continued meeting throughout the year to oversee the objectives and ensure implementation of various facets of the 2020 Annual Work Plan. The first An Garda Síochána and Waterford JPC Youth Awards were held in February, this event recognised the contributions that young people in County Waterford are making in their communities.

- **Age Friendly:**

The Waterford Age Friendly Alliance continues to grow and develop with the programme having nine active thematic subgroups. During 2020, the programme, in partnership with the Waterford Older Persons Council, engaged with the Community Call initiative and latterly with the Keep Well Campaign. The Older Persons Council held regular online events to assist in keeping older people connected within their community in addition to actively participating with the Digital Connectivity Subgroup.

- ***In the context of the LECP objective, “Build Stronger Futures”***

- **Supporting the development of our young people:**

Comhairle

Comhairle na nÓg continues to flourish and grow in Waterford. The LCDC actively supports the work of the Comhairle. Thirty five young people are currently members with a host of projects being delivered including the creation of an App in 2020 which allows young people build a community of engagement on environmental matters in the county; the development of a Native Irish Tree Trail at the Greenway car park by WIT arena on the outskirts of Waterford city in collaboration with WIT Forestry Department; and the creation of a 'Musical Youth' group which will bring together young people from Comhairle and young people from marginalized migrant communities to make music together.

Update regarding the implementation, management and oversight of publicly funded programmes

The main publicly funded programmes managed by the LCDC are SICAP (Programme Implementer being Waterford Area Partnership who were successful in winning the tender to implement the programme 2018-2022) and the Rural Development Programme (Implementing Partner being Waterford Leader Partnership). The Chief Executives of both Waterford Leader Partnership and Waterford Area Partnership are members of the LCDC.

Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme:

There is a clear focus on social inclusion and marginalised communities in the LECP. The SICAP programme in Waterford assists in addressing many of the objectives set out in the LECP including reducing youth unemployment and making stronger connections between services and people. The SICAP budget for 2020 was €1,154,027. Significant work was undertaken and delivered upon by Waterford Area Partnership during 2020, especially in the context of Covid 19. Some of the key indicators relating to the delivery of the LECP in 2020 were as follows:

Headline Indicator	Target	Achievement
KPI 1: Number of local Community Groups assisted under SICAP	65	65
KPI 2: Number of individuals assisted under SICAP	520	580

No remedies were applied to the Programme Implementer as all Key Performance Indicators were achieved.

Rural Development Programme:

During 2020, the LCDC, acting as the Waterford Local Action Group (LAG) progressed the delivery of the local development actions approved in the Local Development Strategy for the rural community. 9 LAG meetings were held. 36 payments were made to project promoters during 2020 totalling € 1,167,078.58. These investments create economic,

environmental and community benefits including the creation of additional new jobs through new initiatives and business expansion. Throughout 2020 there were 4 Public Targeted Calls for projects, 8 evaluation committee meetings, 12 public meetings across the County and 3 Community training initiatives progressed. The Waterford Local Action Group (LAG) was ranked number 1 nationally in 2020 for project delivery (payments).

General measures advanced during the period:

- **Support to local communities:**
 - Support was provided for communities through the *Supporting Waterford Community Grant Scheme* whereby local sports clubs, tidy towns, residents associations and community & voluntary groups are financially assisted to ensure sustainability. 404 applicants were eligible (an 11% decrease on 2019) and €195,500 was allocated in 2020 for this initiative.
 - *Community Enhancement Programme 2020* – a programme under the auspices of the LCDC - funded projects which enhanced facilities and communities in disadvantaged areas. The Programme offered not-for-profit groups access to capital funding in order to kick-start, advance or complete their projects. The Programme addressed some of the difficulties these groups face in terms of accessing small scale levels of funding to match their own fundraising efforts. The total grant received from the Department was €64,039, which was allocated to 63 community groups for a variety of projects. The Department of Rural & Community Development under the *Community Enhancement Programme Community Centres* which provided capital grants towards the maintenance, improvement and upkeep of community centres and community buildings, €167,006 was allocated in total to 41 organisations.
 - The *Covid-19 Emergency Fund 2020* provided grants to groups that are participating in the Waterford Community Call effort in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. Priority was provided to organisations which incurred costs on direct delivery of frontline services to people, such as Meals on Wheels and other similar activities. €73,177 was allocated to 42 registered groups.
 - *Community Festival Grants:* The Community Department continued to support community festivals during the year, though many were cancelled or postponed due to the pandemic. 34 festivals were allocated funding from a budget of €34,350.
 - Under the Healthy Ireland Fund, the *Community Mental Health Small Grant scheme* aimed to support innovative, cross sectoral programmes and initiatives which support and improve the mental health of priority population groups. This grant was available to not-for-profit local community, voluntary, sporting, arts and youth groups in Waterford City and County, to support the delivery of actions

aimed to improve the mental health and wellbeing of vulnerable groups. €30,000 was allocated to 9 organisations.

- **Covid 19 response:** The Community Department, on behalf of the LCDC, was to the fore in respect of the response to the Covid 19 pandemic. From March on, staff were fully involved in leading out in responses, e.g. supervisory report to the Community Call helpline; active engagement in the provision of care packs to those in need; supporting the Community Response Forum; organising grants schemes to mitigate the impact of Covid on individuals and communities; supporting the Healthy Waterford initiative to progress Covid responses and leading out on the Staying Connected and Keep Well initiatives.
- **Public Participation Network:** Membership of the PPN increased by 15% in 2020. 744 member groups are now registered with the PPN. The Community Department part-funds and supports the work of the PPN. The Council was a lead partner in the annual Community Awards, organised by the PPN online in 2020 due to the pandemic. These awards give recognition to the work of communities across the City and County.
- **Social Inclusion 2020:**
 - **Migrant Integration Strategy:** In early 2018, Waterford City and County Council and Waterford LCDC established an Inter-agency Task Group to respond to the call made under the **National Migrant Integration Strategy: A Blueprint for the Future**. Local Authorities are responsible for establishing a Migrant Integration Forum and updating their integration strategies. Following the recruitment of a consultant to initiate a Migrant Forum, preliminary meetings with open invitations took place in Dungarvan and Waterford City. Subsequent meetings and consultations with a variety of migrant groups resulted in the formation of a Migrant Forum with eighteen seats. The official Forum launch took place in February 2019. The role of the Forum is inter alia, to contribute to the development of an integration strategy for the entire county. A working group comprised of representatives from various local organisations continued to meet in 2020 to support the development of a strategy. Consultants were recruited to develop the Waterford Migrant Integration Strategy 2021 – 2024 but unfortunately due to Covid-19 the launch could not take place in 2020 and will now take place virtually in April 2021.
 - **Traveller Inter-agency Group:** This grouping of relevant statutory agencies and state supported initiatives involved in providing the full range of services to Travellers has its focus on improving the integrated practical delivery of such services. The Waterford Traveller Interagency Group aims to find ways of securing better outcomes for

Travellers and improve the use of resources allocated across Government departments for Traveller-specific measures. Waterford TIG met ten times in 2020, five meetings were held between the 29th April 2020 and 23rd June 2020 and discussed Covid-19 specific issues within the Traveller Community. Notable outcomes/actions included the development of a combined Needs Analysis and Strategic Plan for Waterford which is almost complete but encountered delays because of the pandemic and restrictions. Funding for this initiative was received from the HSE National Lottery Funding and from other agencies. The Inter-agency group secured funding for the 'Yellow Flag Programme' which has already been rolled out to three Waterford Schools and with a commitment to fund at least a further two Schools over the next three years. The 'Yellow Flag Programme' is a progressive equality and diversity initiative for primary and secondary schools which promotes and supports an environment of multiculturalism and diversity.

Signed:

Don Tuohy

Don Tuohy

Senior Executive Officer/ Chief Officer to Waterford LCDC

Community and Sport Department

March 2021

