

Sligo County Council
Comhairle Contae Shligigh



County Sligo
Local Economic and Community Plan
(LECP) 2016-2021



January 2016





Contents

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Message from the Cathaoirleach | iv |
| Foreword from the Chief Executive Mr Ciarán Hayes | v |
| Introduction from the Chair of Sligo Local Community Development Committee | vi |
| Preface to Report | vii |
| Executive Summary | 1 |
| Chapter 1. Context for the Plan | 5 |
| 1.1 Overview | 7 |
| 1.2 Plan Structure | 8 |
| 1.3 Preparation of the Plan | 9 |
| 1.3.1 Role of the various bodies in the preparation of the Plan | 11 |
| 1.3.2 Key considerations in the preparation of the Plan | 11 |
| Chapter 2. Policy Framework | 15 |
| 2.1 Principles underpinning Plan | 16 |
| 2.2 Europe 2020 Targets for Ireland | 17 |
| 2.3 Overview of key EU, National, Regional and Local Policies | 18 |
| 2.3.1 Overarching Policies | 18 |
| 2.3.2 Policies linked to Employment and Economic Activity | 18 |
| 2.3.3 Policies linked to Education and Training | 19 |
| 2.3.4 Policies linked to Social Inclusion, Equality and Poverty | 20 |
| 2.3.5 Policies linked to Health and Wellbeing | 20 |
| 2.3.6 Policies linked to Environment and Climate Change | 20 |
| 2.4 Planning Context | 21 |
| 2.4.1 County Sligo overview and demographic patterns | 21 |
| 2.4.2 National Spatial Planning Framework | 22 |
| 2.4.3 Regional Spatial Planning Framework | 23 |
| 2.4.4 County Development Plan and Core Strategy | 24 |
| 2.5 Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), Appropriate Assessment and LECPs | 26 |
| 2.6 Equality and Human Rights Statement | 28 |



Contents (Continued)

| | | |
|---|--|-----------|
| Chapter 3. Consultation | | 29 |
| 3.1 | Public Consultation | 30 |
| 3.2 | Priority Themes | 31 |
| 3.3 | Thematic Consultation | 32 |
| 3.4 | Key messages from the Consultation | 33 |
| Chapter 4. Key points from the Socio-economic Analysis | | 35 |
| Chapter 5. Strengths, Challenges, Opportunities, Threats | | 45 |
| 5.1 | Economic Strengths, Challenges, Opportunities, Threats | 46 |
| 5.2 | Community Strengths, Challenges, Opportunities, Threats | 50 |
| Chapter 6. Visions, Goals, Objectives and Targets for Sligo 2021 | | 55 |
| 6.1 | Overarching Vision for County Sligo | 56 |
| 6.2 | Vision for Sustainable Economic Development | 56 |
| 6.3 | Vision for Sustainable Community Development | 56 |
| 6.4 | High Level Goals for each Theme | 57 |
| 6.5 | Sustainable Economic and Community Development Objectives | 58 |
| 6.6 | High Level Targets and Indicators of progress | 61 |
| Chapter 7. ACTION PLAN | | 63 |
| 7.1 | Theme: Employment and Sustainable Economic Activity | 64 |
| 7.1.1 | Overview of Employment and Sustainable Economic Activity | 64 |
| 7.1.2 | Table of Objectives | 66 |
| 7.2 | Theme: Education and Training | 75 |
| 7.2.1 | Overview of Education and Training | 75 |
| 7.2.2 | Table of Objectives | 76 |
| 7.3 | Theme: Health and Wellbeing | 81 |
| 7.3.1 | Overview of Health and Wellbeing | 81 |
| 7.3.2 | Table of Objectives | 82 |
| 7.4 | Theme: Social Inclusion, Equality and Poverty | 87 |
| 7.4.1 | Overview of Social Inclusion, Equality and Poverty | 87 |
| 7.4.2 | Table of Objectives | 88 |



Contents (Continued)

| | | |
|------------------------------|---|------------|
| 7.5 | Theme: Environment and Climate Change | 95 |
| 7.5.1 | Overview of Environment and Climate Change | 95 |
| 7.5.2 | Table of Objectives | 95 |
| 7.6 | Theme: Collaborative Framework | 100 |
| 7.6.1 | Overview of collaborative framework | 100 |
| 7.6.2 | Table of Objectives | 101 |
| Chapter 8. Monitoring | | 103 |
| 8.1 | Advisory Steering Group | 104 |
| Appendices | | 105 |
| A. | Sligo Deprivation/Affluence Maps 2011 | 106 |
| B. | Role and Function of the LCDC | 107 |
| C. | Members of Sligo Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) | 108 |
| D. | Members of Sligo County Council Strategic Policy Committee (SPC) for Planning, Community and Economic Development, Arts and Culture | 109 |
| E. | Members of the Advisory Steering Group for the preparation of LECP | 109 |
| F. | Members of Sligo County Council | 110 |
| G. | Staff involved in preparation of the Local Economic & Community Plan | 110 |
| H. | Proofing Measures | 111 |
| I. | Comparative Socio-economic Indicators | 112 |
| J. | Matrix of priority and cross-cutting themes | 117 |
| K. | Abbreviations | 118 |
| L. | Acknowledgements | 119 |



Message from the Cathaoirleach

It is an honour to introduce the first Sligo Local Economic and Community Plan 2016-2021, which provides a roadmap for collective action in relation to local economic and community development in County Sligo.



The Plan represents the commitment of Sligo County Council to provide leadership at a local level, towards achieving the following vision for the county as:

“...An enterprising, inclusive, resilient and environmentally sustainable place which values and celebrates its unique landscape and rich culture and heritage and where the wellbeing of future generations is central to everything we do”.

This Plan makes a clear statement about how we would like to see our county develop, building on its unique selling points and strategically directing the resources available for local economic and community development. It recognises the importance of developing Sligo as an economic driver for the Northwest Region and supports measures to win and sustain investment, create jobs, support quality of life, target and alleviate poverty, promote equality and human rights and safeguard our natural and built environment.

The preparation and approval of this Plan by Sligo County Council represents the fulfilment of an important function bestowed on local government under the Local Government Reform Act, 2014. We look forward to working with the Local Community Development Committee and all local stakeholders in the county towards the delivery, monitoring and implementation of this Plan.

Cllr Rosaleen O'Grady,
Cathaoirleach Sligo County Council



Foreword from the Chief Executive Mr Ciarán Hayes

The launch of Sligo's Local Economic and Community Plan marks a most significant milestone for Sligo County Council.



The Local Government Reform Act of 2014 bestowed responsibility on local government to provide strategic leadership and direction at a local level in the area of economic and community development. The compilation of this Plan and its ultimate delivery involves extensive engagement, consultation and collaboration in a partnership manner with relevant stakeholders, public sector bodies, community and voluntary organisations, business representatives, local development bodies etc active in the county.

The Plan outlines measures to assist and sustain investment into the county and to facilitate job creation by way of creating a healthy and vibrant environment for entrepreneurship to flourish. Building on County Sligo's unique strengths it prioritises the importance of developing Sligo City and county as a whole, and lays the framework to act as the economic driver for the Northwest Region of Ireland. The Plan is equally cognisant of what public sector bodies can do to support enhancement of our quality of life as well as targeting and alleviating poverty and disadvantage whilst promoting equality and human rights to safeguard our natural and built environment.

Acknowledging the pivotal role that the community and voluntary sector play, the Plan hopes to build on this and sustain support and encouragement for the many initiatives undertaken by the community and voluntary sector as they endeavour to make a difference within their communities. Sligo can be very proud of its role in promoting active citizenship as it is well recognised worldwide that a key determinant of a healthy society is the degree to which individuals are prepared to give of their time on a voluntary basis. The extent of volunteering and community participation in a society is a barometer of its civic health.

Sligo County Council in partnership with all stakeholders will drive this Plan forward and ensure that the strategic priorities identified for Sligo are delivered albeit in challenging times.

I would like to acknowledge the work of the LCDC, the SPC for Planning, Community & Economic Development, Arts & Culture, the PPN and all of the statutory and non statutory bodies, community and voluntary organisations, business representatives and local development bodies who gave of their time and contributed to the preparation of the Plan.

Mr Ciarán Hayes
Chief Executive, Sligo County Council



Introduction from the Chair of Sligo Local Community Development Committee

Sligo County Council, working with Sligo Local Community Development Committee (LCDC), has been entrusted with the responsibility of promoting economic and community development under the Local Government Reform Act 2014 through the development of this six-year Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) for Sligo.



The Sligo Local Economic and Community Plan represents the culmination of over eighteen months' work involving extensive research, public consultation, analysis, workshops and strategic planning meetings.

The members of both the LCDC and the Strategic Policy Committee (SPC) for Planning, Community and Economic Development, Arts and Culture have been delighted and heartened by the response of the general public, local agencies and organisations and community groups to our invitation to participate in the process. This is a clear indication of the desire of the people of Sligo to work together to build on the County's many strengths to bring about sustainable growth for all.

As Chairperson of both the LCDC and the SPC for Economic Development I would like to sincerely thank all those who have participated in this consultation and planning process to date. I also wish to acknowledge and thank the staff of Sligo County Council who have worked so diligently on the project over the past eighteen months.

Bearing in mind the harsh reality of our current financial climate, we are reliant on the willingness of local organisations, statutory bodies and people to work collectively and imaginatively to deliver on the goals and objectives in this Plan.

There are over 70 organisations named in this Plan. This is not an exclusive or exhaustive list. All groups and organisations with a role in supporting community and economic development are encouraged to get involved in the ongoing review and implementation of the Plan.

It is our hope that this Plan will give focus to the tremendous energy and momentum in County Sligo to work towards securing a better future for our people and our economy. We cannot achieve this working alone; therefore we invite you to join with us on this journey to deliver on this vision for our County.

Cllr. Seán MacManus

Chair of Sligo Local Community Development Committee

Chair of Sligo County Council's Strategic Policy Committee for Planning, Community and Economic Development, Arts and Culture



Preface to Report

The Sligo Local Economic and Community Plan 2016-2021 (LECP) aims to improve the wellbeing of the people and the economy of the county through enhanced strategic planning, better targeting and co-ordination of resources and more meaningful impacts for local communities.

It will provide the strategic framework for all publicly-funded economic, local and community development programmes in the county and for the development of Sligo as the social, cultural and economic capital of the region.

In July 2014 Sligo County Council, working with Sligo Local Community Development Committee, embarked on an extensive research and consultation process to identify Sligo's key challenges, opportunities and priorities from both a community and economic perspective. The outcome of that process forms the basis of this six-year action plan for the county. It includes six priority goals to be achieved through the delivery of 32 high-level objectives. These have been distilled further into 179 actions, which will be reviewed over the lifetime of the plan depending on the availability of funding or the emergence of new opportunities or synergies.

It is acknowledged that many of the major issues affecting the county's development are contingent on the national policy and funding framework. This plan focuses on what can be achieved locally by working together to bring about a higher quality of life and more sustainable economic development in Sligo.

The plan aims to develop a culture of trust, co-operation and collective purpose by providing a framework for the achievement of common goals for the good of County Sligo. No single agency or organisation has the capacity to deliver on these goals acting alone. As such, the commitment by all local organisations with a role in the promotion of local economic and community development will be central to the successful implementation of the plan.



It is important to note that the LECP does not come with an independent or new source of finance; however, it will inform the many programmes that influence economic and community development being delivered at a local level. Its added value lies in the fact that it provides a statutory basis for collective action by diverse stakeholders at a county level, complementing the land use and spatial planning framework set out in the Sligo County Development Plan 2011-2017. The priorities identified through the LECP process will form the strategic framework for the delivery of key community and economic development programmes, such as the Rural Development Programme (LEADER), Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) and the European Rural Development Fund (ERDF) co-financed Designated Urban Centre Scheme, and it will inform the operational plans of the various agencies and organisations named within the plan. The process of collectively identifying and working towards a shared vision and goals for the county will ensure that the operational and strategic plans of local organisations are aligned in a more cohesive way, minimising duplication and making maximum use of the resources available.



This report brings together both economic and community elements as developed across six priority thematic areas. It includes actions to support job creation and stimulate economic activity; to harness training and educational opportunities; to promote community wellbeing and health; to address poverty and enhance social inclusion and equality; and to address environmental sustainability and climate change. Integrated throughout these priority themes are specific measures relating to rural and community development, enterprise development, infrastructure and services, tourism and the promotion of Sligo, cultural development, life-cycle planning, spatial planning and the sustainable use of resources.

The Sligo LECP aims to be succinct, clear, effective and focused on action. For this reason much of the background documentation supporting this draft is available in separate reports. This plan does not contain a reference to every submission or point made in consultations as this would make the document unwieldy and would dilute the key messages. The plan aims to ensure that the key points are captured and presented in a way that is clear and easy to understand.





Executive Summary





Executive Summary

Section 66B of the Local Government Act 2001, as amended by Section 44 of the Local Government Reform Act 2014, requires local authorities to prepare a six-year Local Economic and Community Plan for their administrative area for the purposes of promoting economic development and promoting local and community development.

This document is the first Local Economic and Community Plan for County Sligo. The plan will be reviewed in 2016 in the context of the new Regional Economic and Spatial Strategies to be prepared by the Northern and Western Regional Assembly and the Sligo County Development Plan 2017-2022.

1 **Chapter 1** describes the contextual background to the plan, giving an overview of its vision and structure, the stages in its preparation and the role of key organisations such as the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) and the Strategic Policy Committee (SPC) with responsibility for Economic Development. It summarises the key considerations in the preparation of the plan related to resources, sustainability, the regulatory framework and definitions of what constitutes the promotion of economic and community development in the context of the Local Government Reform Act 2014.

2 **Chapter 2** describes the European, national and local policy frameworks for the plan including Europe 2020 targets for Ireland. It describes the planning context for Sligo as defined in key policy documents such as the National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020, the Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022 and the Sligo County Development Plan 2011-2017. This section includes reference to the spatial planning framework, the core strategy for the county and national and regional priorities for development and investment that are critical to the development of County Sligo. This section also describes the measures taken to determine whether the policies or objectives of the plan will be likely to have significant effects on the environment through the Strategic Environmental Assessment and Appropriate Assessment screening processes. It includes a Statement on Equality and Human Rights on behalf of the local authority and the LCDC.





3

Chapter 3 outlines the consultation process and the key messages that have informed the plan.

4

Chapter 4 summarises key socio-economic data that has informed the plan, comparing data (where available) for Sligo to the national average. It includes indicators in relation to population and demography, employment, economic performance, social inclusion, education, households, health and the environment. These indicators will provide a baseline for the measurement of the county's progress into the future and how Sligo compares to the rest of the country.

5

Chapter 5 summarises the county's strengths, challenges, opportunities and threats from an economic and community perspective.

6

Chapter 6 outlines the overarching vision for the county which is:

'County Sligo will be an enterprising, inclusive, resilient and environmentally sustainable place which values and celebrates its unique landscape and rich culture and heritage and where the wellbeing of future generations is central to everything we do'.

More specific vision statements for Sustainable Economic Development and Sustainable Community Development are also included in this section. They have been developed into *Sustainable Economic Development Objectives (SEDO)* by the Strategic Policy Committee with responsibility for Economic Development and *Sustainable Community Development Objectives (SCDO)* by the Local Community Development Committee. These are set out in six high-level goals based on the priority themes identified through the research and consultation process. These priority themes are: Employment and Sustainable Economic Activity, Education and Training, Health and Wellbeing, Social Inclusion, Equality and Poverty, Environment and Climate Change and Collaborative Framework. The goals for each of the six themes are broken down into a series of numbered objectives. Each thematic goal has been given a series of detailed targets and indicators.



7

Chapter 7 is the Action Plan. It is split into six themed sections aligned to each of the high-level goals, with their objectives and targets, which are outlined in Chapter 6. In the Action Plan each objective is broken down into detailed actions, which include targets and/or desired outcomes. Lead agencies for delivery and support agencies that will play an important role in the delivery of the action are identified. This list is not exhaustive and through the review process it will be possible to integrate other organisations and actions on an ongoing basis as new opportunities or synergies arise. An indicative timeframe for implementation is also identified for each action with the annotation **S** referring to short term or actions that will be delivered in one year or less, **M** referring to medium-term actions or actions that will be delivered between two and four years and **L** referring to long-term actions or actions that will be delivered between four and six years. Progress in reaching these targets can be used as indicators of success or overall progress.

8

Chapter 8 outlines the process and key structures for monitoring the ongoing implementation of the plan.

The plan also includes a number of appendices that supplement the document, including maps indicating areas of the county that have the highest levels of socio-economic disadvantage, information on the role and function of the LCDC, the names of committee members and staff involved in the preparation of the plan, comparative socio-economic data, proofing measures and the matrix of priority and cross-cutting themes utilised to develop specific actions and objectives.





> Chapter 1: Context for the Plan



Chapter 1: Context for the Plan



Sligo's Local Economic and Community Plan is underpinned by the vision set out for local government in the Action Programme for Effective Local Government, Putting People First:

'That local government will be the main vehicle of governance and public service at local level, leading economic, social and community development'.

The LECP seeks to advance the overarching purpose of local government as being 'to promote the wellbeing and quality of life of citizens and communities'.

The making of an integrated Local Economic and Community Plan comprising community and economic elements is a statutory requirement of local authorities under Section 66B of the Local Government Act 2001, as amended by Section 44 of the Local Government Reform Act 2014. Its purpose is to set out for County Sligo over a six-year period the objectives and actions needed to support:

- a. The promotion of economic development, and
- b. The promotion of local and community development.

The plan includes actions that Sligo County Council will deliver directly and also actions led by or delivered in partnership with other economic and community development stakeholders. It provides a framework for collective action for the promotion of economic, local and community development and will act as the primary mechanism at local level to bring forward relevant actions arising from measures under the 'Action Plan for Jobs'.

The economic element has been prepared by Sligo County Council and the community element has been prepared by Sligo Local Community Development Committee. Both elements have been integrated into a Local Economic and Community Plan for consideration and adoption by Sligo County Council. The plan is consistent with the core strategies and objectives of the Sligo County Development Plan 2011-2017 and the Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022. It is consistent with national policy on economic development including the Medium Term Economic Strategy 2014-2020 and the Enterprise Strategy, Making it Happen: Growing Enterprise for Ireland. It will be revised, if necessary, to reflect the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy when it is developed.



1.1 Overview

The process has been overseen by an Advisory Steering Group (ASG), which is made up of members of the LCDC and the SPC for Planning, Economic Development, Arts and Culture. (To view the composition of the ASG see Appendix E).

The LECP includes:

- a summary of the background, roles of the various bodies and consultation process to date
- a summary of the key policies that affect the promotion of economic, local and community development
- a summary of socio-economic and environmental data, comparing Sligo to the average figures for the state where possible
- an analysis of the strengths, challenges, opportunities and threats of the county from an economic and community perspective
- an overarching vision for the county with specific vision statements for economic and community development
- high-level goals for the county
- sustainable economic and community objectives
- high level targets and indicators
- a detailed action plan, which contains a thematic context and specific actions under each goal and objective including proposed lead and support agencies, desired outcomes/targets and indicative timeframe for implementation
- A framework for monitoring the plan.

The flowchart overleaf illustrates the connection between the overarching vision, specific economic and community visions, high-level goals and targets, objectives and actions.



1.2 Plan Structure

Local Economic and Community Plan – Structure

Overarching Vision

County Sligo will be an enterprising, inclusive, resilient and environmentally sustainable place which values and celebrates its unique landscape and rich culture and heritage and where the wellbeing of future generations is central to everything we do.

Economic Vision

County Sligo will be known locally, nationally and internationally for its rich talent, innovative education system, robust infrastructure, supportive business environment, entrepreneurial culture and high quality of life.

Community Vision

County Sligo will be a vibrant social and cultural hub where all members of the community are encouraged to achieve their full potential, where active citizenship is fostered and where human rights, equality, and diversity are valued and respected.

| THEMES | Employment & Economic Activity | Environment & Climate Change | Education & Training | Collaborative Framework | Social Inclusion | Health & Well-being | THEMES |
|---------|--------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|---|---------------------------|-----------------------------|---------|
| | GOAL | GOAL | GOAL | GOAL | GOAL | GOAL | |
| TARGETS | Increase Employment Rates | Improved environmental sustainability indicators | Improved educational attainment rates | Increase interagency working & local partnerships | Decrease in poverty rates | Increase in life expectancy | TARGETS |
| | 9 Objectives | 4 Objectives | 6 Objectives | 2 Objectives | 5 Objectives | 6 Objectives | |
| | 57 Actions | 21 Actions | 33 Actions | 5 Actions | 37 Actions | 26 Actions | |

1.3 Preparation of the Plan

The plan was developed in six stages detailed below.

| | |
|--|---|
| 1 Preparation | This involved preliminary socio-economic research and consultation; review of the policy context; development of high-level goals, targets and objectives; and establishment of key structures including the LCDC, Public Participation Network (PPN) and Advisory Steering Group. |
| 2 Initial Public Consultation | This involved an initial public consultation phase from 30th July 2014 to 10th September 2014 aimed at identifying key issues, priorities and opportunities for County Sligo. A high-level framework for the plan was prepared following the consultation process. |
| 3 Development of Actions and Objectives | More detailed socio-economic data was collated and utilised to inform a series of thematic workshops involving 350 stakeholders in spring 2015. Through the workshops, objectives, actions, targets and desired outcomes, timeframes for delivery and lead and support agencies for implementation were identified. Two plans were prepared on the basis of these – a draft economic plan, which was agreed by the Strategic Policy Committee for Planning, Community and Economic Development, Arts and Culture, and a draft community plan, which was agreed by the LCDC. |
| 4 Second Public Consultation | The two plans were integrated into a single Local Economic and Community Plan for the county and put on public display between the 11th August and 8th September 2015. Various agencies were also invited to comment. Following this and the completion of the Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening & Habitats Directive Assessment Screening, the plan was amended. |
| 5 Finalisation of the Plan | Statements supporting the plan were adopted following presentation to the Sligo Municipal District and the Ballymote-Tobercurry Municipal District. The final plan was considered and adopted by Sligo County Council on the 11th January 2016. The plan was also submitted to the Minister for Environment, Community and Local Government. |
| 6 Review and Monitoring | Advisory Steering Group to monitor implementation of the plan. |

STAGES 1 & 2

Preparation / Socio-economic Framework

- Establishment of key structures including LCDC, PPN, SPC
- Preliminary data collection and analysis
- First public consultation
- Vision for area drafted
- Identification of high-level goals/key data gathered & analysed
- Consultation at MD level with sectoral and local stakeholders
- Draft framework for area agreed by LA & LCDC

STAGE 3

Local Community Plan Element

- Thematic workshops with stakeholders
- Focused socio-economic analysis to build on identified framework priorities
- Draft of community elements of LECP prepared
- Development of actions & objectives & public consultation
- Community elements of LECP adopted by LCDC

STAGE 3

Local Economic Plan Element

- Thematic workshops with stakeholders
- Focused socio-economic analysis to build on identified framework priorities
- Draft of economic elements of LECP prepared
- Development of actions & objectives & public consultation
- Economic elements of LECP adopted by SPC

STAGES 4 & 5

Integrated Local Economic & Community Plan

- Public consultation on the Integrated Local Economic and Community Plan
- Economic and community elements of plan considered by MD Members, RA Members, LCDC and LA
- Statements regarding both elements of plan adopted by MD Members, RA Members, LCDC and LA
- Both elements of plan and the statements of the various bodies presented to LA Members, LECP adopted by LA Members with or without amendments

STAGE 6

Monitoring & Implementation

- Advisory Steering Group to monitor implementation of plan

1.3.1 Role of the various bodies in the preparation of the Plan

Responsibilities under the Local Government Reform Act 2014 in relation to the process for the formulation of the LECP include the following:

- The making of the overall LECP is a reserved function of Sligo County Council
- The economic element of the LECP is prepared by the SPC with responsibility for economic development and enterprise on behalf of the local authority. In the case of Sligo, these functions fall under the remit of Strategic Policy Committee 3 - Planning, Community and Economic Development, Arts and Culture
- The community element is prepared by the Local Community Development Committee
- An Advisory Steering Group is responsible for overseeing the integration of the Economic and Community elements of the Plan. The Advisory Steering Group is made up of nominees from the LCDC and the SPC with responsibility for Economic Development
- Consultation with the Regional Assembly to ensure the consistency of the LECP with the Regional Planning Guidelines (RPG) / Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) and a statement adopted on the draft of both elements of the plan
- Consultation with the Municipal Districts and a statement adopted on the draft of both elements of the plan

1.3.2 Key considerations in the preparation of the Plan

The following have been taken into account in the development of the LECP:

1. The need to ensure sustainable development considerations have been taken into account in relation to each thematic priority area.
2. The resources that are available or likely to become available for the purpose of the plan and the need to secure the most beneficial, effective and efficient use of such resources. It should be noted that the LECP does not bring with it a separate or new source of finance. However, existing and new operational plans for public funding related to local, economic and community development must be aligned with the strategic priorities identified in this plan. Currently the two programmes that have aligned with the implementation of the LECP to date are the new Rural Development Programme (2014-2020) and the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (2015-2017).
3. The need to ensure that the LECP is complementary to the regulatory framework and does not undermine or prejudice any existing statutory plans of the local authority or other organisations.
4. The need for co-operation with, and the co-ordination of its activities with, those of other local authorities, public authorities and publicly funded bodies.





5. The need for consistency with the policies and objectives of the government or any minister of the government or another public authority in so far as they may affect or relate to the promotion of economic development, with the Core Strategy of Sligo County Development Plan 2011 – 2017 and with the environment-related policies and objectives contained in the County Development Plan.
6. Consultation with members of the public.
7. Consultation with public authorities and publicly-funded bodies engaged in economic development activities.
8. Consultation with any persons or body prescribed by regulations made by the Minister.
9. The definition of the promotion of economic development and definition of the promotion of community development set out in the Local Government Reform Act 2014 and summarised in sections 1.3.2.1 and 1.3.2.2 below.
10. The need to ensure that the LECP is subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment and Appropriate Assessment/Habitats Directive Assessment.

1.3.2.1 Economic Elements

For the purposes of the LECP and in accordance with the Local Government Reform Act 2014, the promotion of economic development includes but is not limited to the following activities:

- Creating and sustaining jobs
- Promoting the interests of the community including enterprise and economic development, foreign direct investment, indigenous industry, micro, small and medium enterprises, tourism, agriculture, forestry, marine sectors and other natural resources sectors
- Identifying local attributes that are essential to:
 - + enhancing local economic performance including the accessibility, physical character and infrastructure in cities, towns and rural areas
 - + quality of life and employment opportunities which can enhance competitiveness supported by investment decisions relating to economic infrastructure
 - + promoting local economic activities
- Supporting enhancement of local innovation capacity including investment in research and development capacity, technology transfer, up-skilling and re-skilling
- Identifying opportunities for existing businesses to engage with local government on relevant matters in setting up and managing their businesses and to ensure speedy and co-ordinated access and response

- Identifying local strengths, challenges, opportunities and threats relevant to economic performance
- Identifying economic potential and the requirements to realise it

1.3.2.2 Community Elements

For the purposes of the LECP, and in accordance with the Local Government Reform Act 2014, the promotion of local and community development includes but is not limited to the following activities:

- Enhancing quality of life and wellbeing of communities by;
 - ✦ Tackling poverty, disadvantage and social exclusion
 - ✦ Supporting training and up-skilling, employment and self-employment and investing in local development
 - ✦ Provision of infrastructure and community facilities, investment in physical regeneration and environmental improvements

- Capacity building of communities to improve quality of life
- Supporting social enterprise, social capital, volunteering and active citizenship
- Developing integrated and evidence-based approaches to service planning and delivery
- Identifying community needs and priorities and making best use of local assets to address these
- Making best use of public and private funding to stimulate development
- Supporting community involvement in decision making processes in relation to planning and delivery of services







> Chapter 2: Policy Framework

2



Chapter 2: Policy Framework



2.1 Principles underpinning Plan

The LECP is underpinned by a number of guiding principles, which reflect how the European Commission wishes to see Europe grow and develop in a smart, inclusive, sustainable manner by 2020. These guiding principles are:

Promotion and mainstreaming of equality

One of the main aims of Europe 2020 is to reduce the numbers at risk of poverty in the EU by 20 million

Sustainability

Promotion of a more resource-efficient, inclusive and green economy

Maximizing returns

from resources by avoiding unnecessary overlap and duplication and by achieving synergies through co-operation and collaboration

Participative planning

through meaningful community participation and consultation using a bottom-up approach

Community development principles

need to be given central consideration

Accessibility and ownership

The plan should be the people's plan and convey a sense of ownership by all stakeholders



2.2 Europe 2020 Targets for Ireland

The five targets as laid out in the National Reform Programme for Ireland are:

1 Employment

To raise the employment rate for women and men aged 20-64 to 69%-71%, through the greater participation of young people, older workers and low-skilled workers and greater integration of legal migrants

2 Research and Development

To raise combined public and private investment levels in this sector to 2.5% of GNP (approximately equivalent to 2.0% of GDP)

3 Climate Change

To reduce emissions in the non-traded sector by 20% compared to 2005 levels; to increase the share of renewables in final energy consumption to 16%; and to move towards a 20% increase in energy efficiency

4 Education

To reduce the percentage of 18 to 24-year-olds with, at most, lower secondary education and not in further education and training to 8%; and to increase the share of 30 to 34-year-olds having completed tertiary or equivalent education to at least 60%

5 Poverty

To reduce the number experiencing consistent poverty to 4% by 2016 (interim target) and to 2% or less by 2020, from the 2010 baseline rate of 6.3%, which will lift at least 200,000 people out of the risk of poverty and exclusion between 2012 and 2020



2.3 Overview of key EU, National, Regional and Local Policies

A number of local and national policies have informed the preparation of the Sligo Local Economic and Community Plan. These policies, listed below, are grouped generically in accordance with the principal sections of the action plan they are linked to. Please note that the list is not exhaustive and the categorisation is indicative, as several of the policies affect more than one area of the action plan.

2.3.1 Overarching Policies

1. Action Programme for Effective Local Government - Putting People First (October 2012)
2. Ireland - National Reform Programme 2015 (April 2015)
3. Local Government Reform Act 2014 (January 2014)
4. Department of Environment, Community and Local Government - Circular LG 1/2015 AL 1/2015 (January 2015)
5. Border Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022 (September 2010)
6. Sligo County Development Plan 2011-2017 (June 2011)

2.3.2 Policies linked to Employment and Economic Activity

1. OECD - Delivering Local Development: Ireland (2013)
2. Our Communities: A Framework Policy for Local and Community Development in Ireland (DRAFT) (March 2015)
3. Action Plan for Jobs 2015 (Jan 2015)
4. A Strategy for Growth – Medium-Term Economic Strategy 2014-2020 (Dec 2013)
5. Pathways to Work 2015 (October 2014)
6. Construction 2020: A Strategy for a Renewed Construction Sector (May 2014)
7. Costs of Doing Business in Ireland 2014 (April 2014)
8. Energising Ireland's Rural Economy - Report of the Commission for the Economic Development of Rural Areas (CEDRA) (April 2014)
9. Evaluation of Enterprise Supports for Start-Ups and Entrepreneurship (April 2014)
10. Food Harvest 2020 (July 2010)
11. Ireland's Competitiveness Challenge 2014 (Dec 2014)
12. Ireland's Competitiveness Scorecard 2014 (July 2014)

13. Local Government Sectoral Strategy to Promote Employment and Support Local Enterprise - Supporting Economic Recovery and Jobs - Locally
14. Making it Happen - Growing Enterprise for Ireland (Oct 2010)
15. Our Cities: Drivers of National Competitiveness (April 2009)
16. Policy Statement on Foreign Direct Investment in Ireland (July 2014)
17. Regional Labour Markets Bulletin 2014 (Sept 2014)
18. Review of Business Mentoring Services in Ireland (July 2014)
19. Supporting Enterprise, Local Development and Economic Growth - Analysis of Local Authority Activity for 2012
20. Regional Operational Programmes 2014-2020 for NUTS 2 Areas
21. Gateways and Hubs Development Index 2012 (May 2013)
22. Forfás Regional Competitiveness Agendas
23. Good for Business, Good for the Community - Ireland's National Plan on Corporate Social Responsibility 2014-2016 (April 2014)
24. County Incomes and Regional GDP Reports 2011 (April 2014)
25. Small Business Act of Europe (European Commission, 2008)
26. People, Place and Policy - Growing Tourism to 2025, Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport (March 2015)

2.3.3 Policies linked to Education and Training

1. Further Education and Training Strategy 2014-2019 (May 2014)
2. Developing the Arts: Arts Council Strategic Statement (Nov 2013)
3. National Parenting Strategy 2020
4. National Early Years Strategy
5. Arts in Education Charter (Dec 2012)
6. Opportunities For All - The public library as a catalyst for economic, social and cultural development: A Strategy for Public Libraries 2013-2017 (Dec 2013)
7. Right to Read (July 2014)
8. 20-Year Strategy for the Irish Language 2010-2030 (Dec 2010)
9. National Strategy for Higher Education 2030 (Higher Education Authority 2013)



2.3.4 Policies linked to Social Inclusion, Equality and Poverty

1. Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014 (July 2014)
2. National Action Plan for Social Inclusion 2007-2016 (Feb 2007)
3. Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures - The National Policy Framework for Children and Young People 2014-2020 (April 2014)
4. Social Housing Strategy 2020 (Nov 2014)
5. Ireland's National Traveller/Roma Integration Strategy 2011
6. Report of the High-Level Group on Traveller Issues (March 2006)
7. National Disability Strategy Implementation Plan 2013-2015 (July 2013)
8. Promotion of Equality in the Delivery of the Local Economic and Community Plans (LECPs) (Local Government Management Agency 2015)

2.3.5 Policies linked to Health and Wellbeing

1. Túsla Corporate Plan 2015-2017 (Feb 2015)
2. National Strategy on Children and Young People's Participation in Decision Making 2015-2020 (June 2015)
3. The National Positive Ageing Strategy (April 2013)
4. Healthy Ireland - A Framework for Improved Health and Wellbeing 2013-2025 (June 2013)
5. Connecting for Life – Ireland's National Strategy to Reduce Suicide 2015-2020
6. Building a high quality health service for a healthier Ireland, Health Service Executive 2015-2017

2.3.6 Policies linked to Environment and Climate Change

1. Our Sustainable Future: A Framework for Sustainable Development for Ireland (June 2012)
2. Developing a Green Enterprise (July 2011)
3. Green Paper on Energy Policy in Ireland (May 2014)
4. Harnessing our Ocean Wealth (July 2012)
5. Delivering our Green Potential - Government Policy Statement on Growth and Employment in the Green Economy (Nov 2012)



2.4 Planning Context

The LECP is required to complement the County Development Plan (CDP), which sets the spatial planning framework for the county. The LECP must be consistent with the broad spatial planning, settlement and land use policies of the CDP and not present alternative or competing proposals that lead to inconsistency. The enhanced local government role in economic and community development should ultimately ensure that the planning and development role is focused on supporting and promoting economic activity rather than being excessively regulatory. This section summarises the planning framework as it applies to the LECP.

2.4.1 County Sligo overview and demographic patterns

County Sligo is located in the province of Connaught, in the northwest of Ireland, encompassing a total land surface of approximately 1,837.11 kilometres squared (183,110 hectares). Sligo is bordered by Counties Leitrim, Roscommon and Mayo and is the most westerly county in the Border Region. The county is flanked to the west by almost 200 kilometres of scenic Atlantic coastline, which is dotted with beach resorts such as Enniscrone, Strandhill, Mullaghmore and Rosses Point. The landscape is largely mountainous with Benbulbin to the north, the Bricklieve and Curlew Mountains to the south and the Ox Mountains to the west. Notable inland waterways include Lough Gill and Lough Arrow. Over 115,450 hectares of land or 63% of total land area is in agricultural use and approximately 12% of the land area is dedicated to forestry.

According to the 2011 Census, Sligo has a population of 65,393 consisting of 32,435 males and 32,958 females and representing a 1.4% share of the national population. The total population of Sligo together with neighbouring Counties Mayo, Donegal, Roscommon and Leitrim is 453,031 and Sligo has access to an immediate hinterland with a population of approximately 250,000 people.

Since 1971, the population of the county increased by 30% with the Border Region growing at a marginally lower rate (27.8%). Notwithstanding the recent recession, the population has grown by 7.4 % between 2006 and 2011, marginally slower than the national rate of 8.2%. The number of people born outside of County Sligo has increased significantly since 1991 due to inward migration from other counties and countries. This is a major factor contributing to the population growth of the county's population since 1991 as the indigenous population remained relatively static over this period.

County Sligo's population density of 35 persons per square kilometre is significantly lower than the national average of 67. However, almost 30% of people live in Sligo City (formerly known as Sligo Borough). In contrast to neighbouring large urban settlements, Sligo City has experienced a drop in population of almost 2% between 2006 and 2011. (For example neighbouring Carrick-on-Shannon experienced a 13.7% increase). Between 2006 and 2011, significant population growth was seen in areas to the immediate south and north of Sligo City such as Coolaney, Ballygawley, Ballintogher and Carney.



According to the 2011 Census, 41,059 people in Sligo or 62.8% of the population live in rural areas or towns with populations under 1,500 in 2011, significantly higher than the state average of 38%. Relatively low population densities and a dispersed settlement pattern in the more remote rural areas to the south and west of the county indicate a lack of critical mass and associated difficulties with service provision.

2.4.2 National Spatial Planning Framework

As the national planning framework for Ireland, the National Spatial Strategy (NSS) (2002-2020) aims to achieve a better balance of social, economic and physical development across the state, supported by more effective planning.

Sligo City is designated as a Gateway city under the NSS, meaning its location and scale support the desired critical mass necessary to sustain strong levels of economic growth and prosperity in the Northwest. It is regional headquarters to a number of regionally significant public and private sector organisations and medical and educational services. Key support towns include Tubbercurry, Enniscrone and Ballymote whilst the principal gateway satellites are Ballisodare, Collooney, Grange, Rosses Point and Strandhill.

Sligo was selected as a Gateway because of its strategic location in the Northwest, its physical and infrastructural capacity and its stock of the critical factors such as water services, education and healthcare necessary to support Gateway functions. According to the NSS, Sligo's spatial position means *'it is capable of energising a wider area encompassing parts of Mayo, Leitrim, Donegal and Sligo County itself*

as well as capitalising on emerging cross-border co-operation, while being part of a broader corridor of cities spanning from Cork to Derry.' As an urban centre in the Border Region, Sligo is critical to activating the potential of the area by virtue of its proximity to Northern Ireland.

Of significance to Sligo in the context of the NSS is its emphasis on the need to reinforce transport linkages and to improve energy infrastructure, electricity supply and communications infrastructure. Particular priorities for Sligo include the N4 link to Dublin, the N17 to Galway, the N15 to Derry/Letterkenny (the Atlantic Road corridor) and the N16 to Enniskillen and Belfast. Linkages with NSS hubs in the region such as the N59 to Ballina and the N17/N5 to Castlebar are also highly significant. The N17/N5 is particularly important in the context of enhancing the county's attractiveness to tourists and inward investors given its linkage with Ireland West Airport Knock. Other national priorities affecting Sligo include securing progress on the proposed national grid link from Galway to Sligo, the extension of the Corrib Gas pipeline to Sligo via a spur from the Mayo/Galway pipeline and the development of regional broadband networks.

Whilst elements of the NSS were largely set aside in 2012 due to the economic downturn, the broad strategic objectives, particularly in relation to Gateway designation and the reinforcement of linkages between cities, gateways and hubs, still apply to the Sligo Local Economic and Community Plan. The LECP will be reviewed when the new National Spatial Planning Framework is finalised.

2.4.3 Regional Spatial Planning Framework

The Border Regional Planning Guidelines (RPG) 2010-2022 is a long-term strategic plan that aims to direct the future growth of the Border Region and implement the planning framework set out in the National Spatial Strategy.

The Border RPG includes the key planning issues and investment priorities for the region. It incorporates the Core Settlement Strategy for the region including a Regional Economic Strategy, policies on environment and amenities, social infrastructure and building sustainable communities and a Regional Flood Risk Appraisal.

The Core Settlement Strategy includes the population growth framework, housing targets and housing land requirements for each local authority. It emphasises the importance of the achievement of critical mass within the Gateways of Sligo and Letterkenny (the Atlantic Arc) that will be necessary to sustain growth and to act as a catalyst for and driver of growth within the region. It projects that by 2022 the population of County Sligo will be 77,350 and the population of Sligo and Environs will be 23,200. Recent CSO estimates (2013) are considerably more conservative and it is envisaged that population growth will be considerably lower than projected in the RPGs.



The RPG's Economic Strategy identifies the following key sectors for potential growth and development in the region:

- **Agri-food Sector** – taking advantage of depth of capacities, natural resources and changing consumer demands
- **Internationally Traded Services** – including Global Business Services
- **Renewable Energy and Environmental Products and Services** – Clean Technologies based on the natural resource base and on existing capabilities in engineering
- **Life Sciences** – strengthening existing research and development capabilities
- **Tourism** – major untapped potential through product development.

Other important sectors identified include:

- **Natural Resource Sector** – including forestry, extractive industry, mariculture and aquaculture
- **Creative Sector** – largely small industries, for example, design, digital media, fashion, crafts, visual arts etc.
- **Caring Sector** – demand for elder care due to high proportion of population in older age categories
- **Retail Sector** – affected by cycles arising out of currency differentials due to proximity to the border.



Issues of significance to Sligo identified in the Border RPG include its emphasis on the importance of the Atlantic Road Corridor; the Western Rail Corridor; road networks such as N4, N17 (improving connectivity with Ireland West Airport) and N59; socio-economic linkages between west Sligo and north Mayo and north Roscommon; Sligo and south Leitrim; potential renewable energy sources such as wind energy in the Ox Mountains; and, in particular, landscape sensitivity and designation issues between Sligo and Leitrim.

The Border RPG will remain in force until 2016 when it will be replaced by the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) due to be prepared by the Northern and Western Regional Assembly. The LECP will be reviewed at this juncture to ensure consistency with the RSES.

2.4.4 County Development Plan and Core Strategy

The current Sligo County Development Plan (CDP) 2011-2017 was adopted on 16th May 2011. The plan outlines a vision for the county and specifies the type, amount and quality of development needed to achieve that vision and seeks to protect and enhance the environment and amenities.

The strategic goals of the County Development Plan include:

1. Supporting balanced economic development
2. Carefully managing development patterns
3. Conserving environmental quality
4. Driving urban renewal
5. Promoting effective transportation
6. Delivering improved infrastructure

The Sligo County Development Plan's Core Strategy is consistent with the NSS and the Border Regional Planning Guidelines (RPGs) in supporting balanced development throughout the county in parallel with the growth of Sligo as a Gateway City and the strengthening of its links to other significant urban centres in the Border Region and beyond. The implementation of the Core Strategy is through the spatial development framework, the settlement structure and the development land requirements set out in the CDP.

The Spatial Planning Framework is centred on the core aim of developing Sligo as a Gateway City as envisaged by the National Spatial Strategy. It identifies Sligo and Environs as having a significant impact on its sub-regional area, and supports the development of the key support towns of Enniscrone, Ballymote and Tubbercurry in light of their considerable impact on their rural hinterland.

The CDP provides for the growth of Sligo towards a target population of up to 74,000 by 2017 based on the population projections in the Regional Planning Guidelines (RPGs). As pointed out previously, population targets need to be reviewed in the context of the 2016 Census as preliminary projections from the CSO (2013) indicate a much slower rate of growth than envisaged in the RPGs.

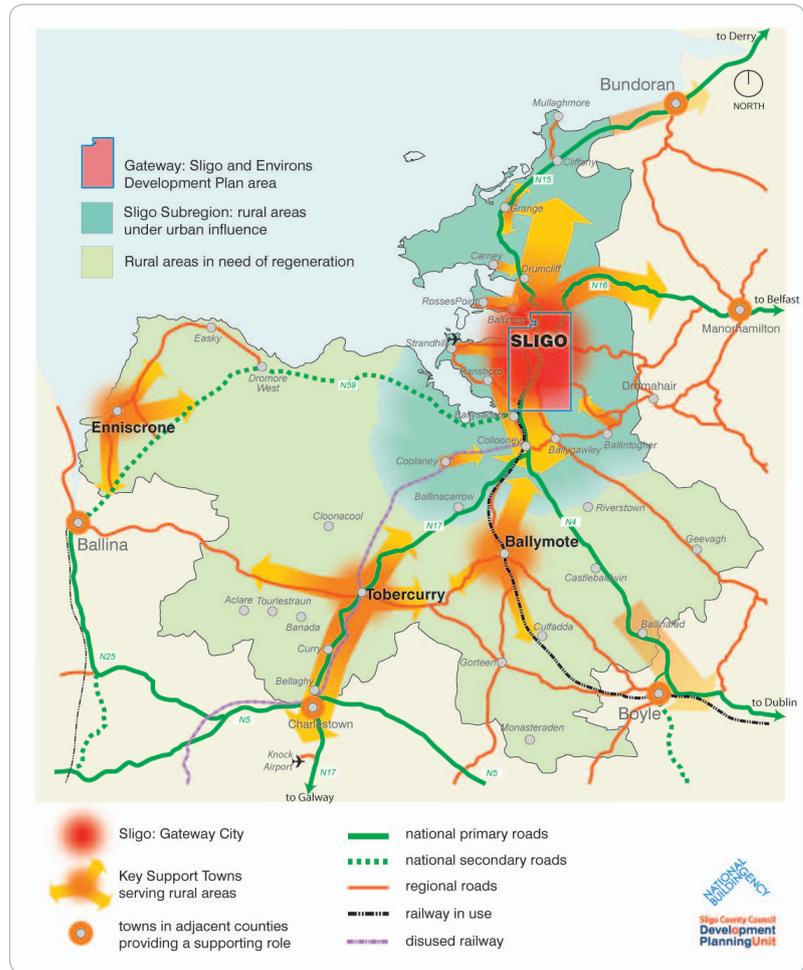


The CDP aims to ensure the conservation and protection of Sligo’s natural and cultural heritage as a driver of Sligo’s identity and attractiveness for investment and business activities, and as a key legacy to be passed on to future generations. It advocates the build-up of the regional-level linkages and collaboration in relation to critical enabling infrastructure between County Sligo and other parts of the Border Region and adjoining regions such as the Western Region and Northern Ireland. The Spatial Planning Framework for Sligo is illustrated in the adjacent map.

The CDP must be read together with the Sligo and Environs Development Plan (SEDP) 2010-2016. These policies are brought to a more local level through local area plans and mini-plans. Local Area Plans have been adopted by Sligo County Council for those settlements that came under significant development pressure in the early 2000s (i.e. Enniscrone, and Ballymote).

There are 31 mini-plans adopted as part of the County Development Plan 2011-2017.

The process for the preparation of the County Development Plan 2017-2023 has commenced. The new CDP will be adopted in 2017 and the LECP will be revised in the context of this and of the various local area plans and mini-plans for towns and villages as they are developed.



Whilst both the CDP and the LECP share certain broad objectives in relation to improving the quality of the environment and enhancing local economic performance, it is envisaged that the LECP will specifically inform public expenditure in relation to the promotion of economic, local and community development and the operational plans of the organisations named in the LECP action plan (Chapter 7).

2.5 Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), Appropriate Assessment and LECPs

Guidelines from the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government on Local Economic and Community Plans issued in January 2015 advise that *'it is the responsibility of the local authority preparing the LECP to take account of the SEA Directive and Article 6 of the Habitats Directive and ensure compliance as appropriate'*.

Strategic Environmental Assessment

Article 2 of the SEA Directive details the characteristics that 'plans and programmes' must possess for the SEA Directive to apply and include those:

'which are subject to preparation and/or adoption by an authority at national, regional or local level or which are prepared by an authority for adoption, through a legislative procedure by parliament or government, and, which are required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions'.

The LECP comes within the scope of Article 2 of EU Directive 2001/42/EC because it is a plan that is (a) subject to adoption by a local authority and (b) is directed by the legislative and regulatory provisions (i.e. Section 66B of the Local Government Reform Act 2014).

EU Directive 2001/42/EC, as transposed into Irish law by SI No. 435 - European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004 (as amended by SI No. 200/2011), provides under Article 9 (2) that a determination needs to be made as to whether certain plans or



programmes are required to undertake a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA).

Making such a determination is the first stage of the SEA process and is known as 'Screening'.

Appropriate Assessment

In accordance with the requirements of the EU Habitats Directive (43/92/EEC) and EU Birds Directive (79/409/EEC), the impacts of the policies and objectives of all statutory plans on certain sites that are designated for the protection of nature (Natura 2000 sites¹), must be assessed as an integral part of the process of drafting of the plan. This is to determine whether or not the implementation of plan policies could have negative consequences for the habitats, or plant and animal species for which these sites are designated. This assessment process is called an Appropriate Assessment (AA) and must be carried out on all stages of the plan making process.

¹ Natura 2000 sites include Special Areas of Conservation designated under the Habitats Directive and Special Protection Areas designated under the Birds Directive. Special Areas of Conservation are sites that are protected because they support particular habitats and/or plant and animal species that have been identified to be threatened at EU community level. Special Protection Areas are sites that are protected for the conservation of species of birds that are in danger of extinction, or are rare or vulnerable. Special Protection Areas may also be sites that are particularly important for migratory birds. Such sites include internationally important wetlands.

Articles 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive set out the decision making tests for plans and projects likely to affect Natura 2000 sites (Annex 1.1). Article 6(3) establishes the requirement for Appropriate Assessment (AA):

Article 6(3): “Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the [Natura 2000] site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, shall be subjected to an appropriate assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site’s conservation objectives. In light of the conclusions of the assessment of the implications for the site and subject to the provisions of paragraph 4, the competent national authorities shall agree to the plan or project only after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned and, if appropriate, after having obtained the opinion of the general public.”

Article 6(4): “If, in spite of a negative assessment of the implications for the site and in the absence of alternative solutions, a plan or project must nevertheless be carried out for imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature, Member States shall take all compensatory measures necessary to ensure that the overall coherence of the Natura 2000 is protected. It shall inform the Commission of the compensatory measures adopted. Where the site concerned hosts a priority natural habitat type and/or a priority species the only considerations which may be raised are those relating to human health or public safety, to the beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment or, further to an opinion from the Commission, to other imperative reasons of overriding public interest.”

Appropriate Assessment is carried out in accordance with the European Commission Environment DG Document “*Assessment of plans and projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 sites: Methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC*”, referred to as the “EC Article 6 Guidance Document”. The guidance document provides a non-mandatory methodology for carrying out assessments required under Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive, and is viewed as an interpretation of the EU Commission’s document “*Managing Natura 2000 sites: The Provisions of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC*”, referred to as “MN2000”. In addition, “*Appropriate Assessment Guidance for Planning Authorities*” was published by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government in December 2009 (DEHLG, 2009) and amended in March 2010.

The Habitats Directive promotes a hierarchy of avoidance, mitigation and compensatory measures. In the first instance, the Plan should aim to avoid any negative impacts on European sites by identifying possible impacts early in the plan-making, and writing the plan in order to avoid such impacts. Following that, mitigation measures should be applied, if necessary, during the AA process to the point where no adverse impacts on the site(s) remain. If the Plan is still likely to result in adverse effects, and no further practicable mitigation is possible, then it is rejected. If no alternative solutions are identified and the Plan is required for imperative reasons of overriding public interest (IROPI test) under Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive, then compensation measures are required for any remaining adverse effect.

Screening is required under the above-mentioned regulations to determine whether the policies or objectives of any plan or programme would be likely to have significant effects on the environment.



Sligo LECP has been screened in accordance with the regulations to determine if the policy objectives are likely to have significant effects on the environment. The conclusions of the Strategic Environmental Assessment and Appropriate Assessment Screening for the LECP has been fully considered by the

competent authorities (Sligo County Council and SPC 3) prior to adoption of the LECP. Accordingly the competent authorities are satisfied that the adoption of the LECP will not result in significant effects on the environment or on the Natura 2000 network.

2.6 Equality and Human Rights Statement

The promotion of equality in the Sligo Local Economic and Community Plan serves to support the 'Positive Duty' requirement in accordance with the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014 (Section 42 Positive Duty), wherein public bodies are required to set out the equality and human rights issues relevant to the functions and purpose of the body and report in this regard in their annual report. In line with the recommendations of the Local Government Management Agency in relation to the Promotion of Equality in the Delivery of the Local Economic and Community Plans (LECPs), the Advisory Steering Group for the Sligo Local Economic and Community Plan has adopted the following statement:

Equality and Human Rights Statement

The Sligo Local Economic and Community Plan promotes an environment which is fair, transparent and welcoming for all individuals and organisations – employees, service-users, visitors to Sligo and elected members. Sligo County Council, the Local Community and Development Committee (LCDC) and the Advisory Steering Group for the LECP undertake to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination; advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations when making decisions, developing and implementing policies.

This statement is underpinned by the following core values based on recommendations of the Equality Rights Alliance:

- **Autonomy:** encompassing choice, agency, freedom, self-determination and the absence of coercion
- **Democracy:** encompassing participation, voice, empowerment and accountability from those in positions of power
- **Dignity:** encompassing respect, relationships of care and love, human worth and the absence of inhumane and degrading treatment, harassment and discrimination
- **Inclusion:** encompassing a sense of belonging and community, interdependence, collective responsibility and a valuing of diversity
- **Social Justice:** encompassing redistribution of wealth, income, jobs and social goods and the absence of privilege and entitlement

A series of steps have also been taken to proof this plan in relation to sustainability, equality, poverty, rurality, age and disability. These steps are outlined in Appendix H.



> Chapter 3: Consultation

3



> Chapter 3: Consultation

The Sligo LECP has been developed using a collaborative and consultative methodology with a strong focus on stakeholder, community and citizen participation. The priorities, objectives and actions have been identified through a mixture of public calls for submissions, socio-economic analysis, discussion with key local agencies, thematic focus groups and ongoing representation from the community and economic sectors on key local policy making structures such as the LCDC and SPC for Economic Development. This section summarises the consultation methodologies utilised to date and key messages that have emerged through the process.



3.1 Public Consultation

The public consultation process commenced in July 2014 with an invitation to the general public, local businesses and public and community organisations to identify the key issues, challenges, priorities and opportunities for Sligo over the next six years. A call for submissions was published in local newspapers and a public consultation briefing paper was devised and distributed throughout libraries, county council offices and public offices of the HSE, MSLETB, community centres and civic spaces throughout the county. Email and social media were used extensively to distribute the information. Key workers in the field of social, economic and community development were briefed on the process and distributed information on the consultation process through their own networks, databases or social media links. Various other groups and individuals also assisted by posting information to their websites, contacting groups and organising meetings in relation to submissions. In total, 4,000 groups and individuals were contacted directly in this way.

Ninety-eight submissions were received from a wide variety of individuals, groups, networks, public organisations and businesses. These were summarised, collated, analysed and reviewed by the LCDC members and by key staff in Sligo County Council.

3.2 Priority Themes

All submissions were analysed in the context of five high-level priority areas or themes identified by the Local Community Development Committee based on the Europe 2020 targets. Where submissions addressed more than one key theme they were categorised under more than one priority area.

The most frequently raised theme was the need to develop measures to stimulate employment and economic activity (69%), followed by the need to address social inclusion and poverty (46%), health and wellbeing (21%), education and training (19%) and climate change and environment (14%). The following is a summary of the priority themes and the number of submissions that referred to them.

PRIORITY AREA

PERCENTAGE OF SUBMISSIONS REFERRING

| | |
|----------------------------------|----------|
| Employment and Economic Activity | 69% (68) |
| Social Inclusion and Poverty | 46% (45) |
| Education and Training | 19% (19) |
| Climate Change and Environment | 14% (14) |
| Health and Wellbeing | 21% (21) |



3.3 Thematic Consultation

In spring 2015, Sligo County Council and Sligo LCDC brought together 350 local stakeholders with a role in economic and/or community development to participate in a series of workshops aimed at critically examining the priority themes and issues identified through the research and consultation process. Workshops were organised in relation to the following themes: Employment and Economic Activity; Social Inclusion, Equality and Poverty; Health and Wellbeing; Education and Training and Climate Change and Environment. A wide range of groups was represented at the workshops including representatives from the local government, local development, statutory, community and voluntary, business, tourism, farming and trade union sectors.

Through this process it became clear that there was a vast array of policies, reform proposals, methodologies and mechanisms designed to address many of the major community and economic issues that were raised through the public consultation process. The problem was not the absence of good ideas, positive energy or an appetite to work together in County Sligo, but rather the complexity of the community and economic development landscape due to a wide range of simultaneous reform initiatives. Added to this were the very real constraints on the resources available to respond effectively to the increase in demand for services.

To minimise the jargon and complexity, Sligo LCDC and Sligo County Council devised a framework of cross-cutting themes or enablers for achieving high-level targets, based on national or local policies. These took the form of simple prompt questions, with each question designed to engage key stakeholders in examining how existing tools or policies could be used to address current economic

and community issues in Sligo. Each thematic working group discussed these cross-cutting themes and prompt questions in the context of achieving targets in relation to employment and economic activity, social inclusion, health and wellbeing, environment and education. Participants were asked to consider how these enabling tools can be utilised to frame specific objectives and action areas under each of the priority areas:

- **Promoting Sligo** - How can we take collective action to promote Sligo as a desirable place to live, work, play, visit, invest and grow old?
- **Tourism Development** - How can we work together to maximise the significant social and economic opportunities arising from Sligo's untapped tourism potential?
- **Enterprise and Job Creation** - How can we work together locally to support entrepreneurship and job creation?
- **Sustainable Development** - How can we ensure development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs?
- **Community Development** - How can we involve, enable and support members of a community (of place, identity or interest) to work collectively to improve the quality of their lives, their community and their society?
- **Rural Development** - How can we improve the quality of life and economic wellbeing of people living in relatively isolated and sparsely populated areas?
- **Cultural Development and Inclusion** - How can we embed cultural considerations in the promotion of economic and community development?

- **Life-cycle Planning** - How can we improve outcomes for children and young people, people of working age, older people and people with disabilities?

Through discussions it was possible to identify if issues were problematic due to a lack of awareness of existing supports, infrastructure or programmes or if the existing supports, infrastructure, resources or programmes were insufficient or inadequate to meet the needs, thus requiring more comprehensive interventions. The outcome of these discussions was used to inform the objectives and actions in the draft strategy, which was put on public display from the 11th August to the 8th September 2015. The LECP was amended following the public consultation process.

3.4 Key messages from the Consultation

The following is a summary of the key messages from the consultation process:

1. Employment and the creation of a quality environment whereby people can access high-quality jobs at a local level is a major priority for the county in terms of stimulating economic activity, addressing poverty and social exclusion and improving community wellbeing.
2. There is a need for all organisations working in Sligo, both public and private, to work together to promote the county collectively, innovatively and more effectively. Sligo is well placed to do this with the headquarters of several important local and regional organisations based in the county.
3. The community and voluntary sector plays a pivotal role in the county's social and economic wellbeing. There are several opportunities to utilise community development approaches to address social exclusion, build resilience and community wellbeing, improve the environment and stimulate economic activity. The community sector needs to be supported to do this.
4. Enterprise development is central to job creation in County Sligo. The plan should include measures to support enterprise development in key sectors such as engineering and tool-making, life sciences, digital/ICT sectors, creative industries, the green economy and the hospitality sector. The plan should also include measures to create a more supportive environment for sustainable economic development.
5. Investment in transport infrastructure, energy supply and broadband is critical if Sligo is to realise the full potential of its strategic location as a Gateway to the Northwest Region and enhance the attractiveness of the location for inward investment and job creation.
6. There is a need for the LECP to maximise the county's major untapped tourism potential arising out of Sligo's rich heritage, vibrant arts scene, unique landscape and wide variety of sporting and recreational opportunities. The plan should reflect that the people of Sligo are proud of its landscape and heritage and place great importance on creativity and the value of culture.





7. It is important to ensure that environmental sustainability is aligned to economic development and tourism so as to bring communities and businesses together with a shared agenda.
8. There is a need to improve the physical fabric and appearance of Sligo City and its towns and villages for residents, businesses and visitors.
9. There is a need to ensure that the education and training courses available in the county reflect the actual skills required to sustain and drive the local economy and create employment and that resources are strategically invested to support research, innovation and skills development.
10. Life-long learning plays a very important role in breaking the cycle of disadvantage and alleviating poverty, as well as providing opportunities for people to improve their standard of living by improving literacy and numeracy, up-skilling and/or retraining. The plan should build on and develop initiatives that are effective in engaging people in education throughout the life cycle from early years to adult education.
11. There is a need for all organisations to work together to develop the services, programming, infrastructure and spatial planning policies that will support health, wellbeing and a better quality of life for all throughout the county.
12. There is a great diversity of people and communities in Sligo with differing needs. The plan must include initiatives to support and encourage those most marginalised, excluded and at risk of poverty to participate equally in the social, economic and cultural life of the county.
13. There is a need for a more effective management of information that relates to the county to support evidence-based planning, reduce duplication and improve take up of local, national and international opportunities.
14. Organisations should also work together more effectively to improve governance, share resources and reduce red tape.



➤ Chapter 4: Key points from the Socio-economic Analysis

4



Chapter 4: Key points from the Socio-economic Analysis

Over the course of the preparation of the plan, a detailed socio-economic profile of the county was collated and utilised to inform the development of objectives and actions.



The following is a summary of the key trends that have emerged. (A more detailed list of socio-economic indicators comparing Sligo figures to the national average is included in Appendix I and a complete baseline data report is available on the Sligo County Council website).

General

- Between 2006 and 2011 the overall population of County Sligo has grown more slowly than the national average. Settlements on the outskirts of the city such as Collooney, Ballisodare, Grange, Calry, Ballintogher and Coolaney have grown significantly whilst the population of Sligo City has declined, in contrast to other large urban settlements in the region. Measures to address the infrastructural deficit that has contributed to the decline of Sligo City are essential if the county is to develop its major potential as the economic driver for the region.
 - 62.8% of the population live in rural areas with settlements of less than 1,500, indicating a clear need for the plan to include a measure to support quality of life in rural areas.
- Sligo has a significantly higher number of people in the older age categories than the national average. It is predicted that by 2025, there will be 16,500 or 26% of the population in County Sligo over 65. This indicates there is a need to focus particularly on projects/initiatives that improve services, amenities and the overall quality of life of the increasing numbers in this age cohort.

Employment and Economic Activity

- In May 2015 there were 4,511 people on the Live Register in Sligo, having dropped from a peak of 5,481 in 2011. Census 2011 showed an unemployment rate of 18.1%, marginally lower than the national average. Live Register figure indicate that actual unemployment is significantly lower than the 2011 census figure. Quarterly Household Survey figures for the Border Region also support the evidence that there has been a reduction in unemployment since its highest point in 2011.

- Almost a half of those on the Live Register in May 2015 were previously employed in the construction or crafts sectors, whilst a further 750 were plant or machine operators. The provision of targeted employment, education and training opportunities linked to employment growth sectors is critical if unemployment in Sligo is to be addressed.
- Sligo has low numbers in the peak working age cohort, and in the 25-44 age group in particular, compared to the average for the state or the Border Region.
- The most significant trend in relation to changes in social class in Sligo between 1986 and 2011 is the doubling of the population classified as 'managerial and technical' and 'non manual' and significant decreases in the numbers classified as 'skilled manual' and 'unskilled'. There were 2,001 people in 2011 classified as 'unskilled'.
- Disposable income per person per year in Sligo in 2013 was €18,211, its lowest point since 2004 (CSO). This is lower than the state average of €19,055 but higher than the average for the Border Region.
- The largest employment sector in Sligo is professional services, which accounts for 27% of those employed. Professional services include those employed in the education, public administration, health, community and social sectors (mainly public sector). There are significantly more women than men employed in these sectors.
- Sligo has a significantly higher proportion of the population working in the public sector than the national average (36.6% compared to 25.9%). With the public sector recruitment embargo in place over the last seven years and ongoing reduction in public service numbers, this is no longer a sector that Sligo can rely upon to sustain the local economy. Initiatives are required to stimulate new and growing sectors such as modern manufacturing, creative industries, the knowledge economy and digital business, tourism, recreation and green technology.



- There were 12,736 people employed in the 2,294 active enterprises² registered in County Sligo in 2012. This represents a decline of 14% from the situation in 2006 when there were 14,809 people working in 2,736 enterprises. Sligo had the second best overall enterprise performance in the Western Region. Sligo's performance however was still significantly poorer than the average for the rest of the state (-9.8%). There is a clear need for a focus on enterprise development in County Sligo, in particular on micro and small and medium-size enterprise (which make up 92% of total enterprises in the county).
- Sligo has a well-developed industrial base and several significant indigenous and foreign-owned companies in the life sciences, environmental science (Clean Tech), engineering and automotive sectors are located in the county. Sligo has a tradition in the areas of tool-making and precision engineering, which have seen a resurgence in recent years as the industry has adapted to the needs of the medical and life science industries. All of these sectors benefit from the strong linkages developed with IT Sligo, MSLETB Training Centre and St Angela's College.
- Currently, 55.6% of assisted employment³ in County Sligo is in foreign-owned companies, the third highest share in the Western Region. This is notably below the share in 2004 (63.4%) and over the ten-year period foreign employment fell by almost a quarter. Irish-owned employment in contrast increased gradually from 2004 to 2007 but then declined sharply.
- A high proportion of the population (63%) live in what could be called rural or farming communities, where the economies of adjacent towns and villages are at least partly dependent on local agricultural production. Farming activities create both direct and indirect employment opportunities in the supply of inputs and services but also in the marketing, distribution and sale of agricultural outputs.
- County Sligo is accessible by a diverse range of transport modes including road, air, sea and rail. It is served by national primary routes. Key roads infrastructure include the N4, linking Sligo to Dublin; the N15 to Derry (Atlantic Arc); the N16 to Enniskillen and Belfast; and the N17 linking Sligo to Galway and to Ireland West Airport Knock. It is critical that this infrastructure is developed in order to address the perceived peripherality of the county in the national context.
- High energy costs are one of the major inhibitors to business expansion and the attractiveness of Sligo to inward investors. Sligo is one of the few areas of the country that does not have natural gas.

² These are based on the address at which an enterprise is registered for Revenue purposes, rather than where the business actually operates from, because no comprehensive administrative source is currently available for business locations.

³ Agency Assisted Employment refers to employment supported by either Enterprise Ireland (EI), Industrial Development Authority (IDA) or Údaras na Gaeltachta





- There are 3,528 people in Sligo employed in the retail and wholesale sector representing a significant portion of the number at work in Sligo. The retail sector in County Sligo has been affected significantly by the economic recession and recorded the highest commercial vacancy rate in Ireland at 15.3% in Q3 of 2013. This was reflected in the county's three biggest towns, with rates of 17.8% in Sligo, 13% in Tubbercurry and 14% in Enniscrone.
- In 2014, the Sligo Business Improvement District Project was formed to identify ongoing challenges and opportunities for Sligo City and enhance Sligo's status as a destination of choice for residents and visitors to the Northwest. The three key core themes and priorities for Sligo identified as part of these projects were marketing, accessibility and collaboration.
- Tourism is a sector with significant potential in Sligo, building on the county's landscape, heritage and vibrant cultural tradition. Total tourism revenue in 2013 for overseas and domestic visitors was €83 million (Fáilte Ireland). Revenue from overseas visitors into Sligo was €44m, an increase of €14m from the previous year in 2012. In contrast, Galway's revenue for this period was €308m, whilst Donegal and Mayo were €63m and €60m respectively. Sligo does considerably better than neighbouring counties in attracting visitors from mainland Europe; however, it lags behind Donegal, Mayo, Galway and Cavan in attracting revenue from visitors from the US.
- As regards domestic tourism expenditure, Sligo has experienced a reduction from €60m in 2010 to €40m in 2013. Donegal's domestic tourism revenue improved over the same period. It is clear that Sligo needs to develop a more effective national and international marketing strategy if the county is to derive maximum benefit from its tourism potential.



Poverty, Social Inclusion and Equality

- Sligo is not characterised by particular extremes either with regard to affluence or deprivation. Like any other part of the country, Sligo has been affected massively by the economic downturn after 2007, although Sligo's position has marginally improved from being the thirteenth most affluent to the twelfth most affluent local authority area in Ireland. (*Source: The Pobal HP Deprivation Index, 2013*)
- The Pobal HP Deprivation Index identifies four areas in Sligo as 'very disadvantaged', with 31 'disadvantaged' areas (see map Appendix A). The LECP aims to ensure resources are targeted to address disadvantage in these areas.
- There are also a number of key groups who are particularly vulnerable to poverty and exclusion in County Sligo. These include the unemployed, lone parents, new communities, Travellers, older people and people with disabilities. Interventions to address social inclusion must be targeted strategically to maximise their impact on those most in need of supports.
- The lone parent ratio in Sligo has doubled over the past 20 years although it is still marginally below the national average (20% compared to 21%). There are marked differences between urban and rural areas with significantly higher concentrations of lone parents in urban areas.
- Sligo has a diverse community with several minority ethnic groups. In 2011 there were 8,339 people (13% of the population) in Sligo from minority ethnic backgrounds with 67 different languages spoken. Non-Irish nationals accounted for 9.9% of the population of Sligo compared with a national average figure of 12%. UK nationals (2,150 persons) were the largest group, followed by Polish (1,562 persons).
- There are 56,038 Roman Catholics in County Sligo, representing 88% of the total population, together with a number of minority religions. Five per cent or 3,123 people state they have no religion, which represents a significant increase since 1991.
- The 2013 Traveller Census shows a population of 517 Travellers in Sligo (417 in CSO 2011). The population trend varies between male and female members of the Traveller Community until the age 40+, after which the population for both sexes decreases significantly, in contrast to figures for the total community.
- Sligo has a higher portion of people with disabilities than the national average and a higher percentage of unpaid carers.



- Childcare costs in Sligo are marginally lower than the national average, i.e. €160 per week compared to €165 per week nationally. This averages at €8,000 for one child per year in full-time childcare. This is significantly higher than the European average and remains a major barrier to the take up of employment and educational opportunities, particularly considering the relatively low average disposable income in Sligo.
- The highest level of need in terms of social housing remains for those seeking one- and two-bed accommodation.



Education

- There has been a continuous improvement in the level of education amongst the adult population over the past 20 years in County Sligo. In 1991, 36.1% of the adult population had primary education only. This had fallen to 20.1% in 2006 and 16.6% in 2011, closely resembling national trends.
- The proportion of Sligo's population with third level education has grown from 13.0% in 1991 to 29.0% in 2006 and 30.0% in 2011. This 20-year growth is almost identical to national trends, with significantly more female graduates to male. Interestingly, 38.7% of 30 to 34-year-olds in Sligo have a third level qualification, which is considerably less than the national figure of 48.4%. This may be indicative of high levels of migration of the young educated cohort out of the county.
- The most common qualifications in Sligo are in the areas of social science, business, engineering, manufacturing, health, welfare and education and teaching.
- The amount of financial support for research and development generated by third level institutions is an important measure of innovation, knowledge creation and technology transfer. The amount of research and development funding allocated to institutions in Sligo increased from €215 per admission in 2006 to €326 per admission in 2010. More updated data is needed in respect of this (Source: Gateway Development Index, 2012).



- There is a need to link training and education opportunities available in Sligo to key economic growth sectors including engineering, life sciences, tourism and catering, creative industries and green technologies.
- There remain pockets within the county where a considerable proportion of the adult population have primary education only. Tubbercurry has over double the rate for the rest of the county and the state, and most of the areas within Ballymote range from 21% to 27%. Several predominantly rural and agricultural EDs – Aughris (31.4%), Rathmacurkey (31.3%) and Lisconny (30.7%) – have similar patterns. Many of these areas also have low levels of third level attainment. Any animation and support activities need to take account of these gaps.
- The same areas in Tubbercurry and Ballymote that demonstrated high levels of ‘primary school only’ education also score the lowest for third level attainment. Not surprisingly, male unemployment rates in these areas are significantly higher than those for the county, particularly in Tubbercurry, which reaches nearly three times the county rate. Tubbercurry also features the highest female unemployment rate in both small areas, followed by Mountain Drive in Ballymote. At ED level, again mirroring the situation with regard to the higher incidences of low education levels, there are particularly low shares of population with third level education in Castleconor East (11.7%) and Rathmacurkey (12.8%), although neither falls below the 10 per cent level.
- Sligo has higher rates for 20-day absences or more in primary schools than the state or provincial average.
- Broadband access and PC ownership in Sligo is marginally better than the average for the Border Region but lags quite significantly behind the national average (Census 2011).

Health and Wellbeing

- Health is intrinsically linked with poverty rates and inequality. A higher proportion of persons are covered by medical cards, with 448 per 1000 in the Sligo Leitrim area compared to 406 per 1000 nationally.
- Birth rates were lower in Sligo than the national average in 2012. However, neonatal and infant mortality rates are higher than the national average. Teenage birth rates (Live birth per 1000 females aged < 20) are lower in Sligo than the national average. Breastfeeding rates for all at time of discharge from hospital are significantly lower than the national average.
- Sligo has the highest incidence nationally of female malignant melanoma and male prostate cancer but average or below average for all other cancers.
- Sligo is below the national average for most causes of death apart for respiratory disease for those under 65 years.
- Deliberate self-harm rates amongst males and psychiatric inpatient admissions are higher than the national average in Sligo. While suicide rates in Sligo are marginally lower than the state average, those rates have increased at a faster rate than the national average since 2009.



- Although Sligo has lower levels of mortality in relation to certain illnesses there are significantly higher numbers of people treated for cancer, cardiovascular disease, respiratory disease and injuries and poisoning than the national average.
- There is very limited information on obesity levels at a county level. The last study was conducted in 2007 and showed that Sligo, in common with the other counties in the Border Region, had amongst the highest level of obesity in the country.
- Sligo has the third highest incidence of treatment for problem alcohol use in the country and is one of five counties reporting more than 224 problem cases per 100,000 among its 15 to 64-year-olds over the period 2008 to 2012.
- Social capital describes the pattern and intensity of networks among people and the shared values that arise from those networks. Greater interaction between people generates a greater sense of community spirit. Participation in the voluntary sector and voter participation can serve as indicators of social capital, networks and participation in civic activity.
- The local elections of May 23rd 2014 saw the second lowest turnout levels for local election contests in the history of the state. Only the turnout levels at the 1999 contests were lower. Sligo was amongst a handful of counties that had participation levels in excess of 60%. Whilst the turnout in Sligo was significantly higher than the national average it represented a significant decline of 7.5% since 1999, in common with other counties in the Border West and Midlands Region. Lowest turnout was associated with Dublin and its immediate hinterland, whilst Leitrim had the highest turnout in the country with 67%. At constituency level the Ballymote / Tobercurry Municipal District recorded one of the highest levels of voter turnout in the country.
- Voluntary activity was not measured in the 2011 Census but the 2006 Census showed higher levels of participation in the voluntary sector in Sligo than the national average when 23% of people indicated that they were involved in voluntary activity compared to 21% nationally.
- There were 6,488 recorded crime offences in the Sligo Leitrim Garda Division in 2014 representing 3% of the total recorded crime in the state (but only 2% of the national population). The most common type of offences related to theft, public order, disorderly conduct and damage to property.



Environment and Climate change

- Sligo's rich heritage, environment and cultural tradition are central to the county's identity. Safeguarding this significant asset and addressing climate change is important, not only in the interests of the communities who live in Sligo but also from an economic perspective of the county's tourism product.
- The most popular means of travelling to work or school was by car (driver) with this mode accounting for 65.2% of all journeys according to Census 2011. There is a need for proactive policies to reduce car dependency in the county.
- There are five wind farms in Sligo, compared to eight in Mayo and nine in Leitrim. The capacity for Sligo is 49.15MW, compared to 81.58MW in Mayo, and 67.90MW in Leitrim. This sector offers considerable potential as do the areas of biomass and biofuels.
- The percentage of commercial waste going to landfill decreased by 19% between 2009 and 2014. Correspondingly, commercial waste recycling has increased over this period. However, the percentage of household waste increased by 11.8% and household recycling has declined. There is a clear need to encourage more sustainable waste management practices.
- 82% of the population are served by public water supplies. Analysis of the quality of drinking water by the EPA shows high levels of compliance in Sligo.
- The estuaries and the coastal water of the Western River Basin District (which includes Sligo) are generally of a good environmental status. Investment in waste water treatment infrastructure has shown some improvement in the trophic status of key estuaries in the Western River Basin District, with both Galway and Sligo now being classed as 'unpolluted' for trophic status and 'good status' under the Water Framework Directive.
- The main threats to water quality are agriculture and septic tanks but in some instances, identification is not easily established. The challenge facing Sligo is that of maintaining high and good-status lakes while improving less than good status lakes and controlling the spread of zebra mussels and other alien species.
- Sligo has a built and natural heritage of national and international significance with over 3,500 heritage sites and 200 national monuments located in the county.
- Sligo was awarded one Blue Flag Award for Rosses Point, with Green Coast Awards going to Rosses Point, Dunmoran, Streedagh and Mullaghmore. There is a need to work with local communities to improve Sligo's significant coastal assets.



➤ Chapter 5: Strengths, Challenges, Opportunities, Threats

5



Chapter 5: Strengths, Challenges, Opportunities, Threats

5.1 Economic Strengths, Challenges, Opportunities, Threats

STRENGTHS

1. Resilient and mature manufacturing sector with strong tradition in life sciences, precision engineering, tool-making and automotive sectors
2. Attractive location for FDI with 22 major international companies located in the county
3. Excellent educational infrastructure with two third level campuses, one regional training centre, adult education centres and an agricultural college
4. Gateway status designation for Sligo City
5. Large student population
6. Talented, well-educated workforce with third level qualifications well above national average
7. 67 different languages spoken in the county
8. Well-developed research and innovation resources available, in particular IT Sligo and St Angela's College
9. Regional headquarters of several major public sector organisations including the IDA and Enterprise Ireland
10. Proactive Local Enterprise Office with well-developed business networks
11. Accessibility by road, rail, harbour and air including close proximity to Ireland West International Airport
12. Unique environmental infrastructure and landscape with 200 kilometres of Atlantic coastline and 50-foot waves
13. Vibrant creative industry sector
14. Strong capacity in relation to culture and heritage-based tourism with several cultural institutions located in Sligo
15. Excellent fisheries resources, both inland and at sea, of value both as a recreational outlet for local people and as a highly valuable tourism attraction
16. Experience of hosting major national and international events such as the Fleadh Cheoil, World Rally, An Post Tour etc.
17. Archeological heritage of national and international importance
18. Armada wreck site at Streedagh, North Sligo
19. Yeats family legacy
20. Large health sector that provides significant employment opportunities via hospitals, care homes, primary care facilities and other HSE facilities
21. Regeneration Status for East City Area
22. Plans for major transport infrastructure projects well developed
23. Imminent broadband development through SIRO (ESB/Vodafone Joint Venture Company) project and national broadband strategy
24. Food sector

5.1 Economic Strengths, Challenges, Opportunities, Threats

CHALLENGES

1. Insufficient co-ordination and strategic planning in relation to the collective promotion of Sligo
2. A lot of complex reform happening at the same time
3. Peripheral location in Northwest
4. High commercial vacancy rates, with negative impacts both for unemployment and the visual appearances of the city, towns and villages
5. Tourism potential under developed
6. Need for improved accessibility and interpretation in relation to tourism attractions
7. Sligo only receives 1.1% of national share of FDI despite 1.4% share of employment
8. Skills shortages in key growth sectors in particular precision engineering, IT, tourism, medical device manufacturing and need for improved linkages with education and training providers
9. Need for review and updating of existing apprenticeship programmes particularly in relation to precision engineering
10. Transport infrastructural deficits are constraining job creation and economic activity in particular N4, N16, N17 and Eastern Garavogue Bridge
11. Lack of Western Distributor Route curtailing access to industrial land-bank at Oakfield
12. Energy infrastructure deficits and cost to business due to lack of access to natural gas
13. Poor accessibility, traffic congestion and limited taxi and parking infrastructure in Sligo City inhibits economic activity and deters visitors, coach operators and shoppers
14. Limited affordable enterprise space for companies that are making a transition from start-up to expansion
15. Transport costs and infrastructure problematic
16. Legacy of dispersed settlement policies that have not generated a supportive economy
17. Lack of awareness of potential cost savings by energy saving/conservation
18. Landscape degradation and coastal erosion
19. Lack of integrated information point on education opportunities
20. Cost of childcare still major barrier to labour market participation
21. Need to reduce the cost of doing business
22. Need for improvement to rail services
23. Limited intermodal linkage infrastructure to support sustainable transport



5.1 Economic Strengths, Challenges, Opportunities, Threats

OPPORTUNITIES

1. To capitalise on the county's natural and built heritage and vibrant arts and culture and Purple Flag status for tourism development
2. To develop adventure tourism, outdoor recreation and Sligo's competitive edge in relation to 'Place and Authenticity' including Wild Atlantic Way/ Greenways/ Glens to Atlantic and development of rural-based tourism products
3. To promote and develop Sligo as a national centre of excellence for precision engineering and medical/life sciences
4. To create job opportunities by supporting the development of IDA site at Oakfield
5. To explore innovative means of utilising vacant sites and buildings including business start-ups or to promote access to the arts
6. To develop enterprise in niche sectors, e.g. eco-tourism, food hub, creative industries, festivals, digital hub
7. To develop Sligo as a hub for green enterprise and sustainability
8. To explore rural development opportunities in particular renewable energy, bioenergy and forestry
9. Major potential for the development of alternative energy sources including wind and wave energy, biofuels and biomass
10. To utilise more creative means to promote Sligo such as film, social media, awards etc.
11. To maximise the developmental potential of aquaculture and marine facilities including piers, harbours and pontoons, in particular Sligo Port
12. To maximize the economic potential of sporting events/activities/infrastructure in Sligo including cycling, horse-racing, angling, football, fishing etc.
13. To harness the skills and business acumen of older people
14. To support the incorporation of corporate responsibility and sustainability principles at a county and local level
15. To benefit from National Broadband Strategy and SIRO rollout
16. To benefit from Connect Ireland Scheme and strengthen engagement with Sligo's global diaspora and international networks
17. To maximise benefits arising from European funding including INTERREG V, PEACE IV and LEADER and other ESF and ERDF funds
18. To eliminate duplication by working together
19. To deliver key economic infrastructure projects such as the N4, Eastern Bridge and Western Distributor Route, which are at an advanced stage of development
20. To work with neighbouring authorities and relevant bodies towards the re-instatement of the Western Rail Corridor, the improvement of existing services and the potential development of freight services from Sligo
21. To develop Rural Economic Development Zones (REDZ) that support the development of rural towns and their hinterlands
22. Significant potential for the development of the food sector linked to Sligo's tourism product supported by St Angela's College and Food Technology Centre

5.1 Economic Strengths, Challenges, Opportunities, Threats

THREATS

1. Failure to secure funding for key infrastructure projects including N4, Western Distributor Route and Eastern Garavogue Bridge
2. Failure to secure buy-in from key stakeholders in relation to a co-ordinated and strategic approach to economic development
3. Failure to effectively co-ordinate information on education and training opportunities available
4. Failure to lead tourism development in the county of Sligo
5. Failure to invest in research, education and training programmes
6. Failure to link research activity with local industry needs
7. Amount of red tape involved in applying for funding may stifle many good initiatives
8. Unsustainable agriculture, industry and land use may be a threat to Sligo's landscape
9. Invasive non-native plant and animal species present a serious threat to bio-diversity and consequently to tourism, economic and community development
10. Meeting the needs of ageing population will depend on investment in infrastructure and services
11. Failure to benefit from broadband rollout
12. The danger of not addressing issue of poverty will lead to intergenerational spiralling disadvantage and will adversely affect the local economy
13. Failure to listen to and respond with adequate speed to the needs of business and the community
14. Failure to implement, monitor and review the LECF
15. Failure to allocate resources to research to ensure Sligo benefits from National and European funding targeting economic development
16. Threat to bio-diversity as a result of non-native plant and animal species which spread due to increased local, economic and community development
17. Failure to appropriately address the impact of climate change



5.2 Community Strengths, Challenges, Opportunities, Threats

STRENGTHS

1. Strong tradition of community development with several examples of good practice which have been mainstreamed nationally
2. Vibrant cultural sector with a large number of community based festivals and arts initiatives
3. Rich tradition and appreciation of cultural heritage of national and international importance with several groups active in the area of local history, conservation and heritage
4. Strong network of arts and cultural organisations in Sligo including several publicly-funded venues such as The Model, Hawk's Well Theatre, The Factory Performance Space/Blue Raincoat Theatre Company and the Coleman Heritage Centre
5. Rich and diverse musical talent and heritage of international renown from traditional, classical, jazz, baroque to popular music
6. Extensive educational and lifelong learning opportunities with two third level colleges, a regional training centre, two MSLETB adult learning and education centres including an agricultural college and several community based informal education initiatives
7. Proactive Public Participation Network providing a structure for networking, community participation and information sharing in the community sector
8. Rural transport service in place serving towns and villages throughout the county
9. Rich diversity of cultures in county with 67 languages spoken
10. Unique environmental infrastructure and landscape providing major opportunities for community based tourism projects
11. Relatively low infant mortality and teenage pregnancy rates
12. Regeneration status for East City Area
13. Network of community based family support services throughout the county
14. Developed youth sector
15. Volunteer Centre with over 2,000 volunteers
16. Sligo European Town of Sport 2014
17. Purple Flag Status for Sligo City
18. Well developed sport and recreation sector and infrastructure
19. LEADER funding to support rural development
20. Social Inclusion & Community Activation Programme targeting disadvantaged areas and marginalized communities
21. Disability Network to support policy development in the disability sector
22. Reduction in commercial waste going to landfill over past six years
23. 100% of schools in county participating in environmental initiatives

5.2 Community Strengths, Challenges, Opportunities, Threats

CHALLENGES

1. Poverty and exclusion still prevalent in certain areas and communities of interest
2. A lot of change and reform in the community sector at the same time - lack of clarity about new roles
3. Need to address the 'achievement gap' in education resulting from poverty
4. Need for more measures to improve mental health, address substance abuse and prevent suicide
5. Levels of obesity, circulatory disease, asthma and diabetes are higher than national average
6. Need for more integration in relation to children and family services
7. Need to plan for needs of ageing population
8. Need for improved civic spaces and cultural services, e.g. City Library and museum facilities
9. Need to address racism and discrimination
10. Substance abuse, drug-related intimidation and illegal money lending still major issues for certain communities
11. Insufficient recreational facilities in south Sligo
12. No refuge for victims of domestic violence and insufficient interagency co-operation in relation to the issue
13. Public transport in urban areas is expensive for people on low income
14. Insufficient awareness of the rural transport service and need to link rural transport services to employment and educational opportunities
15. Need for more action to improve accessibility in urban areas for people with mobility problems
16. Need to ensure more opportunities for people with disabilities to participate in policy making at a local level
17. Measures needed to improve conditions for asylum seekers living in Sligo
18. Gender imbalance on local boards
19. Need for greater awareness of religious and cultural diversity
20. Relatively high absenteeism in primary schools especially amongst the Travelling community and limited resources invested to address this
21. Fuel poverty and insufficient awareness of measures and supports to address this
22. Large rural population and dispersed services
23. Perceived duplication in education sector
24. Limited broadband, transport and mobile phone coverage in certain areas
25. Increase in household waste going to landfill over past six years
26. High dependency on oil for heating and car for transport



5.2 Community Strengths, Challenges, Opportunities, Threats

OPPORTUNITIES

1. To harness the potential of good-quality early years education to improve the life chances of children and enhance their capacity to contribute to the community and economy
2. To improve access to employment by most marginalised through Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme.
3. To improve access, quality and diversity of music education for young people through the Music Generation Sligo Programme
4. To utilise more creative means such as film, social media and awards programme to promote what is good about Sligo
5. To draw on the learning from the Fleadh and The Gathering events and explore opportunities for hosting other national and international events
6. To work together to promote the many lifelong learning opportunities in Sligo to address unemployment and skills shortages
7. To use sport as a mechanism to address social exclusion and develop community skills, resilience and leadership through Sligo Sports and Recreation Partnership
8. To develop an integrated strategy to prevent and reduce alcohol related harm in Sligo City
9. To develop an Age Friendly Strategy for County Sligo
10. To develop and implement a Healthy County Strategy for Sligo
11. To explore the potential of developing a cultural centre for children and families
12. To support the incorporation of corporate responsibility and sustainability principles in business at a county and local level
13. To develop social prescribing as a means for improving community wellbeing
14. To establish community organic gardens in vacant spaces/existing parks
15. To promote cycling/walking as a form of everyday transport
16. To provide consumer friendly information point for all available services and supports in the county
17. To reinforce community spirit and action through developing local initiatives such as Men's Sheds
18. To improve the quality of the local environment by encouraging, promoting and strengthening the work of the Sligo County Coastal Care Groups and Tidy Towns Groups
19. To develop Sligo as a sports/health hub of the North West, incorporating good cycling/walking infrastructure

5.2 Community Strengths, Challenges, Opportunities, Threats

THREATS

1. Cutbacks to funding of key social, educational, health and community infrastructure and programming
2. Failure to implement the National Broadband Strategy will damage capacity to create jobs in rural areas
3. Failure to invest adequately in sustainable positive mental health initiatives in both urban and rural areas resulting in over-reliance on volunteers
4. Failure to reach those most in need
5. Rural isolation due to failure to invest in additional transport service
6. Red tape could be a deterrent to take up of incentives to promote sustainable economic and community development
7. Failure to invest in library services including infrastructure and staff training
8. Lack of take up of Rural Transport Services in the most isolated areas, resulting in reduction in funding allocation and withdrawal of service
9. Lack of engagement by communities in initiatives to improve community/agency networking
10. Failure to review and improve the effectiveness of programmes targeted at addressing deprivation levels in disadvantaged areas
11. Failure to deal effectively with illegal money lending enabling it to spread and affect vulnerable people in many localities throughout the county
12. Risk of increase in occurrence of racist incidents and segregation of communities, if measures to ensure equality, cultural awareness and integration are not implemented
13. Lack of resources to tackle school absenteeism resulting in perpetuating educational disadvantage and cycle of poverty
14. Environmental degradation due to unsustainable waste and energy practices and behaviour
15. Failure to secure buy-in both from agencies and communities to pursuing collective action in the interest of the county
16. Failure of organisations to share information effectively and to allocate resources to support evidence-based planning



DROM DHÁ EITHIAR
DROMAHAIR
SLIGEACH
2¼ SLIGO

DRUIM CAORTHAINN
DRUMKEERAN 8¾
CLUAINÍN UÍ RUAIRC
MANOR...

BAILE AN TÓCHAIR
BALLINTOGER 3
SLIGEACH
SLIGO 12¼

CORA DROMA RÚISC
CARRICK-ON-SHANNON 28½

DROIM SEAN-BHÓ
SHANNON 20¼





➤ Chapter 6: Visions, Goals, Objectives and Targets for Sligo 2021



Chapter 6: Visions, Goals, Objectives and Targets for Sligo 2021



This section includes the overarching vision for Sligo developed following consideration of issues raised through the consultation process.

It is broken down further into twin visions for Economic and Community Development that are set out across six cross-cutting themes each with its own primary goal.

The broad thematic goals are broken down into a series of detailed objectives. These objectives will be achieved through reaching a further set of specific targets, which also may be used as indicators of success. Objectives are developed further into specific actions in Chapter 7.

6.1 Overarching Vision for County Sligo

County Sligo will be an enterprising, inclusive, resilient and environmentally sustainable place which values and celebrates its unique landscape and rich culture and heritage and where the wellbeing of future generations is central to everything we do.

6.2 Vision for Sustainable Economic Development

County Sligo will be known locally, nationally and internationally for its rich talent, innovative education system, robust infrastructure, supportive business environment, entrepreneurial culture and high quality of life.

6.3 Vision for Sustainable Community Development

County Sligo will be a vibrant social and cultural hub where all members of the community are encouraged to achieve their full potential, where active citizenship is fostered and where human rights, equality, and diversity are valued and respected.

6.4 High Level Goals for each theme

The following goals underpin the commitment of Sligo County Council and Sligo LCDC to promote economic and community development in County Sligo.

1

Theme 1: **EMPLOYMENT AND ECONOMIC ACTIVITY**

GOAL 1: We will promote and develop Sligo as the economic driver of the North West and as an attractive location for sustainable investment, tourism, commerce, entrepreneurship and employment.

2

Theme 2: **EDUCATION & TRAINING**

GOAL 2: We will harness the transformative power of education and training to boost sustainable economic and community development.

3

Theme 3: **HEALTH AND WELLBEING**

GOAL 3: We will promote community wellbeing by making Sligo a healthier place to live, grow, work and play through lifecycle planning.

4

Theme 4: **SOCIAL INCLUSION, EQUALITY AND POVERTY**

GOAL 4: We will promote a culture of inclusion and equality and address poverty.

5

Theme 5: **ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE**

GOAL 5: We will safeguard our environment for future generations by supporting only sustainable economic and community development which ensures that the receiving environment is adequately protected.

6

Theme 6: **COLLABORATIVE FRAMEWORK**

GOAL 6: We will create a framework for joint working through strategic planning, sharing of services and resources, evidence-based research, the elimination of duplication and a clear commitment amongst all sectors to collaborative action.



6.5 Sustainable Economic and Community Development Objectives

This section outlines the sustainable economic development objectives (SEDO) and the sustainable community development objectives (SCDO) that have been developed and integrated across the six priority themes.

| Economic and Community Objectives | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|-----------|
| Theme | Employment and Sustainable Economic Activity | |
| Goal 1 | We will collectively promote and develop Sligo as the economic driver of the North West and as a quality location for sustainable investment, tourism, entrepreneurship and employment | |
| | Objectives | SEDO/SCDO |
| 1.1 | Provide the strategic leadership to ensure that all organisations working to improve employment and economic activity in Sligo are working collaboratively and in the collective interest of the county | SEDO |
| 1.2 | Develop a culture within Sligo County Council that is strongly supportive of sustainable economic development and ensure it is to the forefront in delivering services for ensuring a high quality of life for residents and visitors to Sligo | SEDO |
| 1.3 | Maximise the regional significance of Sligo as an economic hub and the gateway to the North West Region and improve the county's connectivity and economic infrastructure | SEDO |
| 1.4 | Support job creation and sustainable economic development in communities throughout County Sligo | SEDO |
| 1.5 | Develop and implement an integrated and sustainable tourism strategy for the county and engage all sectors in the collective promotion and development of Sligo | SEDO |
| 1.6 | Promote Sligo as an attractive investment location for foreign direct investment and the development and expansion of the indigenous enterprise sector | SEDO |
| 1.7 | Support and develop Sligo's important micro-enterprise and SME sectors including the expansion of existing enterprises and the start-up of new businesses | SEDO |
| 1.8 | Develop sustainable 'place-specific' economic development initiatives to stimulate thriving urban communities and strengthen the fabric of towns and their hinterlands, building on their key strengths | SEDO |
| 1.9 | Activate and support marginalised communities and individuals to access employment opportunities | SCDO |

| Theme | Education and Training | |
|--------|--|---------------|
| Goal 2 | We will harness the transformative power of education and training to boost sustainable economic and community development | |
| | Objectives | SEDO/SCDO |
| 2.1 | Promote and develop Sligo as a regional centre of excellence in education | SCDO |
| 2.2 | Support Lifelong Learning and initiatives to support access to education | SCDO |
| 2.3 | Utilise arts and culture as tools for education and personal development | SCDO |
| 2.4 | Develop targeted measures to address educational disadvantage and reduce the achievement gap | SCDO |
| 2.5 | Facilitate better linkages between schools, colleges and local employers | SEDO/ SCDO |
| 2.6 | Develop the skills and educational infrastructure to support job creation in key local economic sectors | SEDO/ SCDO |
| Theme | Health and Wellbeing | |
| Goal 3 | We will ensure community wellbeing by making Sligo a healthier place to live, grow, work and play | |
| | Objectives | SEDO/SCDO |
| 3.1 | Empower, build capacity within the community and support participation in health and community wellbeing initiatives | SCDO |
| 3.2 | Introduce measures to improve accessibility and equality in the delivery of health and community services | SCDO |
| 3.3 | Promote positive mental health and wellbeing | SCDO |
| 3.4 | Reduce risk factors for chronic diseases through community based initiatives | SCDO |
| 3.5 | Plan for a healthy and sustainable environment recognising different needs and abilities | SCDO |
| 3.6 | Develop integrated measures to improve community safety | SCDO |

| | | | |
|---|---------------|---|---------------|
| 4 | Theme | Social Inclusion, Poverty and Equality | |
| | Goal 4 | We will promote a culture of inclusion and equality and address poverty | |
| | | Objectives | SEDO/SCDO |
| | 4.1 | Develop measures to address exclusion and poverty in disadvantaged and isolated areas | SCDO |
| | 4.2 | Develop initiatives that support social inclusion amongst groups that are vulnerable to poverty and exclusion | SCDO |
| | 4.3 | Build and strengthen leadership and capacity in the community sector and increase networking, collaboration and joint planning amongst all organisations | SCDO |
| | 4.4 | Develop measures to ensure equality, cultural awareness and integration | SCDO |
| | 4.5 | Improve services and outcomes for children, young people and families | SCDO |
| 5 | Theme | Environment and Climate Change | |
| | Goal 5 | We will safeguard our environment for future generations by supporting sustainable economic and community development which ensures that the receiving environment is adequately protected | |
| | | Objectives | SEDO/SCDO |
| | 5.1 | Promote awareness of and policies supporting environmental sustainability and energy efficiency across all sectors | SEDO/ SCDO |
| | 5.2 | Enact policies that position Sligo as a leader in sustainable tourism while safeguarding our unique environmental infrastructure, landscape and built and natural heritage | SEDO |
| | 5.3 | Increase the local environmentally sustainable production, supply and use of alternative sources of energy subject to Habitats Directive Assessment and Environmental Impact Assessment as appropriate | SEDO |
| | 5.4 | Promote and support greater community involvement and business participation in sustainable environmental initiatives | SCDO |
| 6 | Theme | Collaborative Framework | |
| | Goal 6 | We will create a framework for joint working through strategic planning, sharing of services and resources, evidence-based research and a clear commitment amongst all sectors to collaborative action | |
| | | Objectives | SEDO/SCDO |
| | 6.1 | Develop a central portal for socio-economic research and data collection to support policy development in relation to economic and community planning and to maximise funding opportunities available to the county | SEDO/ SCDO |
| | 6.2 | Identify areas for collaborative action in relation to training, development and strategic planning | SEDO/ SCDO |

6.6 High Level Targets and Indicators of progress

TARGET 1: Increase employment and improve economic activity

INDICATORS

- Decrease in unemployment rates/live register figures by 50%
- Increase labour force participation rate
- Increase overall numbers employed by 3,500 focusing on the following sectors
 - hospitality/tourism sectors
 - precision engineering/manufacturing
 - medical devices/life sciences
 - creative industries
 - green economy enterprises
 - agri-food sector
 - other (including ICT/Business outsourcing/Financial Services, Retail etc.)
- Reduction in commercial vacancy rates by 30%
- Increase in number of Foreign Direct Investments by 40% (additional nine companies/projects)
- Increase numbers employed in agency assisted employment by 20%
- Increase in investment in research and development
- 100 new jobs per annum supported by LEO
- Increase in tourism revenue and number of visitors
- Retain Purple Flag
- Maintain and improve drinking and bathing water quality compliance

TARGET 2: Improve Sligo's training and educational attainment rates at all levels

INDICATORS

- Increase in numbers taking up further and higher education and apprenticeships
- Decrease in percentage of the population with primary education only
- Increase in number of early years providers
- Increase in investment in research and development
- Increase in number and take up of training courses available linked to key economic growth sectors
- Decrease in school absenteeism rates

TARGET 3: Improve quality of life, health and wellbeing

INDICATORS

- Increase in number of community based health initiatives
- Decrease risk factors for chronic diseases
- Increase percentage of population involved in the community and voluntary sector
- Number of groups registered with the PPN to increase by 40%
- Increased participation in sporting activities/number of sports groups registered with PPN
- Improvement in mental health indicators including reduction in suicide and self-harm rates
- Increase in life expectancy rates in line with national average



TARGET 4: Decrease in poverty and deprivation rates

INDICATORS

- Decrease in overall HP Pobal deprivation scores and reduction by 30% in number of SAP classified as very disadvantaged or disadvantaged
- Increase in disposable and average income levels
- Reduction in Housing Waiting List
- Reduction in average childcare costs
- Increase in numbers of groups vulnerable to exclusion progressing to education, training or employment

TARGET 5: Improve environmental sustainability

INDICATORS

- Reduce the proportion of household and commercial waste going to landfill
- Increase the proportion of household and commercial waste recycled or composted
- Increase number of green economy enterprises
- Increase take up of energy efficiency and conservation initiatives
- Increase Blue Flag beaches to five
- Reduce car dependency
- Increase in number of funded environmental projects in the county
- Increase in number of environmental interest groups in the county, and registered with Sligo PPN
- 100% school participation in Green School Programme

TARGET 6: Improve collaboration amongst all sectors

INDICATORS

- Increase interagency working and the number of local, regional, cross-border and transnational partnerships
- Number of agencies participating in collaborative strategic planning /research events
- Number of agencies signed up to Collaborative Charter





➤ Chapter 7: Action Plan



Chapter 7: Action Plan

7.1 Theme: Employment and Sustainable Economic Activity

This chapter details the six themes of the plan, the goal, target and indicators associated with each one and the objectives and actions necessary to deliver on that theme.

7.1.1 Overview of Employment and Sustainable Economic Activity:

Generating employment and stimulating economic activity emerged as the single highest priority for Sligo during the preliminary consultation for the development of the Local Economic and Community Plan. With national policy⁴ advocating a stronger and more explicit direct role for local authorities in promoting economic development, the Sligo LECP is underpinned with actions aimed at strengthening the linkages between local government, local businesses and key economic development stakeholders. These actions are also aimed at developing Sligo as a regional driver for sustainable economic development and promoting a more evidence-based and strategic approach to sustainable planning and enterprise development.

Like the Action Plan for Jobs, the LECP recognises that it is businesses and entrepreneurs that create jobs and the plan focuses on what can be done by Sligo County Council working with other agencies to support the business community and encourage entrepreneurship. This is to be achieved by providing local leadership in relation to

the development of supportive policies, focusing on the economic impact of key local authority function areas, advancing key infrastructural projects and providing co-ordinated supports to businesses through various local and regional agencies.

The local authority is committed to advancing and supporting priority economic infrastructural projects that will improve accessibility and connectivity particularly in the areas of transport, broadband and energy. Projects at an advanced stage of development include the N4, Eastern Garavogue Bridge, the Western Distributor Route, and the N17 (linking to Ireland West Airport Knock). The plan also aims to complement the Sligo County Development Plan 2011-2017 by supporting the development of the Sligo Gateway City as an economic driver for the region and strengthening the physical fabric of key towns such as Tubbercurry, Ballymote and Enniscrone. Key projects include the East City Area Regeneration Project, the development of Rural Economic Development Zones in key support towns and supporting the work of Sligo traders in the development of a Business Improvement District.



⁴ Putting People First: An Action Plan for Effective Local Government)

The plan recognises the county’s significant potential, particularly in the area of tourism and the need to act collectively to promote, develop and safeguard Sligo’s sustainable tourism product. Sligo’s creative sector, unique heritage and landscape are central to creating a sense of ‘place’ and specific actions to support place-making include the ongoing development of Sligo’s cultural quarter and key cultural infrastructure such as the County Museum and Library Services, the preparation of a regeneration plan for Sligo’s heritage buildings, the enhancement of civic spaces throughout the county and several signature projects to build on Sligo’s rich literary, outdoor adventure and maritime traditions.

The plan also acknowledges the importance of Sligo’s mature and resilient manufacturing heritage and well-developed indigenous enterprise sector, which provide important support services for high-end production particularly in the life sciences and engineering sectors. Strong linkages with industry in the areas of research and development with IT Sligo and St Angela’s College has resulted in the build-up of significant human capital and a broad skills base. The interconnectivity of these mutually supportive sectors is an important asset of the county in terms of its attractiveness to Foreign Direct Investment.

Despite the decline in the overall number of enterprises active between 2006 and 2012, Sligo has seen incremental growth in Knowledge Intensive (NACE⁵) sectors such as professional, scientific and technical activities, information and communication, ICT and education. Potential growth areas identified include green economy enterprises such as bioenergy, forestry and renewable energy, food, online trading and precision engineering. Creative industries represent a key micro-enterprise growth sector and Sligo has the second highest number of creative businesses in the Western Region.



⁵ NACE refers to an EU Statistical classification for businesses.



7.1.2 Table of Objectives

GOAL 1: We will collectively promote and develop Sligo as the economic driver of the Northwest and as an attractive location for investment, tourism, entrepreneurship and employment

1

TARGET: Increase employment and improve economic activity

INDICATORS:

- › Decrease in unemployment rates / Live Register figures by 50%
- › Increase labour force participation rate
- › Increase overall numbers employed by 3,500 focusing on the following sectors: hospitality / tourism, precision engineering / manufacturing, medical devices / life sciences, creative industries, green economy enterprises, agri-food and other (including ICT / business outsourcing / financial services, retail etc.)
- › Reduction in commercial vacancy rates by 30%
- › Increase in number of FDI investments by 40% (additional nine companies/projects)
- › Increase in tourism revenue and tourism numbers
- › Increase numbers employed in agency-assisted employment by 20%
- › 100 new jobs per annum supported by LEO
- › Retain Purple Flag
- › Maintain and improve drinking and bathing water quality compliance

1.1 Objective - Provide the strategic leadership to ensure that all organisations working to improve employment and economic activity in Sligo are working collaboratively and in the collective interest of the county

| | Actions | Target/ Outcomes | Lead Agency | Support Agencies | Timeframe |
|-------|--|---|-------------|---|------------------|
| 1.1.1 | Establish an Economic Development Forum for Sligo for the purposes of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Planning strategically and directing the economic vision for Sligo › Collectively promoting Sligo in all its facets › Sharing information and best practice | Clear direction for implementation of the economic vision for Sligo Reduce duplication and enhance collaboration | SCC | EI, LEO/SCC, IDA, Business reps, SLPCo, FI, IT Sligo, Sligo Chamber, Sligo Tourism, NWRA, St Angela's College | S (in 1 year) |
| 1.1.2 | Regularly review economic health of the county and facilitate feedback from key industrial sectors in relation to challenges and opportunities for the county | Ongoing data collection Bi-annual reports | SCC | EI, LEO/SCC, IDA, Business reps, SLPCo, FI, IT Sligo, NWRA | Ongoing to 2020 |
| 1.1.3 | Ensure the corporate plans of different local economic organisations are inter-connected and take cognizance of one another | Better co-ordination | SCC | EI, LEO/SCC, IDA, Business reps, SLPCo, FI, IT Sligo | Ongoing |
| 1.1.4 | Review the local, national and international image and profile of County Sligo and plan collectively to project a holistic and current picture of the county's considerable assets | Improved profile of Sligo | SCC | EI, LEO/SCC, IDA, Business reps, SLPCo, FI, IT Sligo, Sligo Chamber of Commerce, Sligo Tourism, Media | S |



| 1.2 Objective - Develop a culture within Sligo County Council that is strongly supportive of sustainable economic development and ensure it is to the forefront in delivering services to ensure a high quality of life for residents and visitors to Sligo | | | | | |
|---|--|--|---------------------|---|-----------|
| | Actions | Target/Outcomes | Lead Agency | Support Agencies | Timeframe |
| 1.2.1 | <p>Establish a dedicated research resource for the county to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Inform evidence-based economic planning ➤ Explore and maximise EU funding opportunities for Sligo such as cross-border, PEACE and INTERREG funding and other transnational opportunities | Better planning, better capacity to access funding | SCC | IT Sligo, WDC, NWRA, St Angela's College | M |
| 1.2.2 | Establish an inter-departmental working group in Sligo County Council to ensure that every aspect of the local authority's service delivery is mindful and supportive of the county's economic role and job creation objectives within the context of the regulatory framework | Enhanced proactive culture conducive to economic development in the LA | SCC | All sections in SCC | S |
| 1.2.3 | Create sectoral, industry-centred fora to assist Sligo County Council in their economic development role and ensure that the Council is alert and responsive to the needs of those that create employment and sustain economic activity in Sligo | Networks or clusters to support the following sectors: Engineering/Tool making/Manufacturing, Tourism/Hospitality/Creative sector, Food | SCC | EI, IDA, Business reps, SLPCo, IT Sligo, Solas, FI, MSLETB, Sligo Chamber, Teagasc, St Angela's College | S |
| 1.2.4 | <p>Formalise a collaborative relationship with Irish Water to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The ongoing delivery of a high-quality water supply to meet the needs of industry and the residential population ➤ That waste-water treatment infrastructure has sufficient capacity to protect the ecological integrity of receiving waters, safeguarding Sligo's environment and sustainable tourism product ➤ Sustainable use of water resources and compliance with the Habitats Directive Assessment and Environmental Impact Assessment Directives where appropriate | <p>Ensure adequate water supply</p> <p>Protect environment</p> | SCC | Irish Water, EPA, IFI | S-M-L |
| 1.2.5 | Maintain high environmental standards in relation to drinking and bathing water to ensure a high quality of life for residents and a quality experience for visitors to Sligo | <p>Ensure compliance with drinking and bathing water standards</p> <p>Increase number of Blue Flags / Green Coast Awards</p> | SCC/ Irish Water | EPA | S-M-L |
| 1.2.6 | Maximise the economic value of the assets in the ownership of Sligo County Council e.g. strategic sites and buildings, zoned land and the development of an Economic Plan for the Docklands subject to Habitats Directive Assessment and Environmental Impact Assessment as appropriate | Delivery of strategic economic projects i.e. Harbour Plan, advancement of Cultural Quarter, Walkways, Parks and Recreation | SCC | Harbour Advisory Committee, DECLG, DTA and other funding bodies | S-M-L |

| 1.3 Objective - Maximise the regional significance of Sligo as an economic hub and the Gateway to the North West Region and improve the county's connectivity and economic infrastructure | | | | | |
|---|--|---|---------------------------------|---|-----------|
| | Actions | Target/Outcomes | Lead Agency | Support Agencies | Timeframe |
| 1.3.1 | <p>Support the IDA in improving Sligo's attractiveness for Foreign Direct Investment commensurate with its status as a Regional Gateway City by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Facilitating the development of the proposed 32-hectare Technology Park at Oakfield › Prioritising the delivery of the Western Distributor Route to improve access to the proposed IDA Industrial Estate at Oakfield, taking cognizance of the environmental sensitivity of the area › Facilitate the further development of the Finisklin Business and Technology Park targeting, in particular, the technology and financial services sectors | <p>Increase in number of FDI companies in Sligo by 40% by 2021</p> <p>Increase employment in FDI sectors by 1000 by 2021</p> <p>Increase number employed in financial services and technologies sectors</p> | SCC | IDA, Sligo Chamber of Commerce, IT Sligo, St Angela's College | M-L |
| 1.3.2 | <p>Ensure the development of priority cultural and recreational infrastructure while having regard to requirements under the Habitats Directive to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Developing an action plan for the provision of a County Museum, which will showcase the county's rich culture and heritage for the community and visitors alike › Ongoing development of Cleveragh Regional Park › Ongoing development of Cultural Quarter at Connaughton Road › Development of strategic plan for Sligo Library Services | Increase visitor numbers to Sligo City and County | SCC | SSRP, Arts Organisations, DECLG, DAHG, DTTS, SLPCo, PPN, CSHF, National Museum, FI, Sligo Tourism, Sligo Library Services | M-L |
| 1.3.3 | <p>Improve connectivity and accessibility through the town by advancing the Eastern Garavogue Bridge and upgrade the N4 in a manner that is sensitive to the local community and the environment</p> | <p>Reduce town centre congestion</p> <p>Improve journey times</p> | SCC | NTA, NRA/TII, DTT | M |
| 1.3.4 | <p>Campaign to advance key strategic infrastructure subject to Habitats Directive Assessment and EIA (as appropriate) to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Transport infrastructure such as N16, N17 and N59 and Western Rail Corridor › The extension of the Corrib Gas pipeline to Sligo via a spur from the Mayo/Galway pipeline | Secure funding for key infrastructure | SCC, Economic Development Forum | EI, LEO/SCC, IDA, Business reps, SLPCo, FI, IT Sligo, Sligo Chamber of Commerce, Sligo Tourism, NRA/TII, DTT, St Angela's College | S |



| | Actions | Target/Outcomes | Lead Agency | Support Agencies | Timeframe |
|-------|--|---|---------------|---|-----------|
| 1.3.5 | <p>Improve accessibility to Sligo City and environs by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Upgrading and implementing new Urban Traffic Control (UTC) Systems to facilitate the efficient flow of traffic in the city environs and in and out of the city centre ➤ Improving car and coach parking facilities and taxi infrastructure for commuters, shoppers and tourists ➤ Ongoing development of the city centre circulatory route (loop) for traffic moving around the urban core ➤ Supporting the creation and enhancement of public spaces and streetscapes specifically the enhancement of key city centre streets, e.g. O'Connell Street | Decrease in commercial vacancy rates, increase in tourism revenue | SCC | Sligo Tourism, Sligo Chamber of Commerce, LEO/SCC, BIDS | S-M |
| 1.3.6 | Assist in the delivery of broadband/improved speeds in the context of the National Broadband Strategy and in the identification of gaps in broadband provision, e.g. support the rollout of SIRO Project and initiatives to address the issue of access to broadband acting as a barrier to the growth of rural enterprise | High-speed broadband rollout in Sligo - every household in the county to receive at least 30mb per second by 2020 | SCC/LEO | SLPCo, EI, PPN and Community groups, Communication Providers, ESB, Vodafone | M-L |
| 1.3.7 | Investigate potential energy supply solutions to reduce the cost of doing business | Increase in take up of SEAI initiatives | SEAI | LEO / SCC | S-M |
| 1.3.8 | Explore the potential for the development of aviation-related industry and ancillary services at Strandhill Enterprise Park | Increase in ancillary aviation-related industry | Sligo Airport | LEO / SCC, EI, IDA | S-M |
| 1.3.9 | Support the enhancement and/or development of passenger and freight rail services in the county working, as appropriate, with regional stakeholders | Develop an action plan in relation to rail services | SCC | Irish Rail, MCC, DCC | M-L |

1.4 Objective - To support job creation and sustainable economic development in communities throughout County Sligo

| | Actions | Target/Outcomes | Lead Agency | Support Agencies | Timeframe |
|-------|---|--|-------------|---|-----------|
| 1.4.1 | Develop and implement a Local Development Strategy for County Sligo for the delivery of the Rural Development Programme 2014-2020 | Increase in employment and enterprise in rural Sligo | LCDC / SCC | SLPCo, LEO/SCC, EI | S |
| 1.4.2 | Support rural entrepreneurs and businesses to develop innovative products and activities in sectors of potential, such as artisan and agri-food, creative industries, marine and renewable energy, etc. | Increase enterprise in rural areas | SCC/ LEO | SLPCo, LCDC, SCC, LEO, St Angela's Food Technology Centre | S-M |
| 1.4.3 | Enhance the physical appearance of rural towns and villages making them more attractive for residents, shoppers and visitors and support community initiatives through investment and support for community initiatives | Enhancement of towns and villages | SCC | SLPCo | S-M |
| 1.4.4 | Promote, develop and maximise the use of rural enterprise space | Improve take up of rural enterprise space | LEO/EI | LCDC | S-M |



| 1.5 Objective - Develop and implement an integrated and sustainable tourism strategy for the county and engage all sectors in the collective promotion and development of Sligo (linked to action 5.2) | | | | | |
|--|--|--|---------------|---|-----------|
| | Actions | Target/Outcomes | Lead Agency | Support Agencies | Timeframe |
| 1.5.1 | Establish a forum to lead local tourism development | Clear direction for the implementation of a Tourism Vision for Sligo Better co-ordination and collaboration | SCC | Sligo Tourism, FI, Hoteliers, Vintners, Cultural institutions, Sligo Chamber of Commerce, IFI | S |
| 1.5.2 | Conduct a tourism asset audit of the county to inform product development and marketing including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Sligo's vibrant music and arts scene › Sligo's outdoor adventure product and major sporting attractions and events › Sligo's rich history, landscape and built and natural heritage › Sligo's capacity to host major events from large festivals to business and trade conferences › Sligo's significant and unique attractions along the Wild Atlantic Way | Improved strategic planning Strong coherent marketing strategy targeted at niche market segments | SCC | Sligo Tourism, FI, Sligo Chamber of Commerce, SCC/LEO, SLPCo, LCDC | S |
| 1.5.3 | Develop Sligo's tourism infrastructure, subject to Habitats Directive Assessment, to include support for signature projects that build on the county's unique selling points, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Improve access and interpretation of heritage sites › Support the development of greenways and cycling routes › Support the development of discovery points along the Wild Atlantic Way at Mullaghmore Head, Streedagh Point, Rosses Point, Strandhill, Aughris and Dunmorán Strand, Easkey Beach and Enniscrone Beach › Maintain and improve Sligo's piers and harbours in particular those close to the Wild Atlantic Way viewing points › Support the development of the National Mountain Bike Centre, Coolaney › Support the development of the Maritime Centre Strandhill › Implement a series of coastal protection works to safeguard local amenities and tourism facilities › Development of tourism product in north Sligo based on the Armada story | 7 Discovery points developed Signature projects advanced | SCC/FI | LEO / SCC, Sligo Tourism, FI, SCC, Sligo Chamber of Commerce, SLPCo, Coillte, local communities | S-M-L |
| 1.5.4 | Develop a marketing strategy for Sligo's outdoor and adventure tourism product | Increase in visitor numbers | Sligo Tourism | LEO / SCC, SLPCo | M |
| 1.5.5 | Support and co-ordinate festivals and events to maximise their economic potential | Increase in visitor numbers | SLPCo | Sligo Tourism, LEO/SCC | M |



| | Actions | Target/Outcomes | Lead Agency | Support Agencies | Timeframe |
|-------|---|--|----------------------------|--|-----------|
| 1.5.6 | Development of Sligo's night time economy through implementation of an annual plan to retain Purple Flag | Retain Purple Flag | LEO / SCC and City traders | Sligo Tourism, FI, Hoteliers, Vintners, Cultural institutions, Sligo Chamber of Commerce | S-M-L |
| 1.5.7 | Make Sligo's rich literary and cultural history, in particular the Yeats family legacy, central to the county's international tourism product including, subject to Habitats Directive Assessment where required: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Annual Yeats Festival calendar of events ➤ Support development of a Yeats Trail and International Centre to commemorate Yeats' legacy ➤ Sligo 1916 Celebrations | Increase in domestic and overseas visitors and tourism revenue | SCC | SCC, FI, LEO, Sligo Museum, St Angela's College, Yeats Society, Sligo Tourism, Sligo Chamber of Commerce, Yeats Centre Group | S-M-L |
| 1.5.8 | Maximise the rural sustainable tourism potential of County Sligo through development of the countryside as a recreational resource for visitors and residents alike including measures to safeguard the environment subject to proper planning & sustainable development criteria, and Habitats Directive Assessment | Increased rural employment in tourism, hospitality sector | LCDC / SLPCo/ LEO | Sligo Tourism, FI, PPN, Environmental Groups | S-M-L |
| 1.5.9 | Develop food trails that combine activities and experiences based on culture | Increase in visitor numbers | LEO / SCC | Sligo Restaurants, SLPCo, FI, Sligo Tourism | S-M-L |

1.6

Objective - Promote Sligo as an attractive investment location for foreign direct investment and the development and expansion of the indigenous enterprise sector

| | Actions | Target/Outcomes | Lead Agency | Support Agencies | Timeframe |
|-------|--|---|---------------------------------|---|-----------|
| 1.6.1 | Develop Sligo's mature and resilient manufacturing sectors, in particular the following sectors: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Life sciences and medical devices ➤ Automotive/engineering and tool-making | Increase national share of FDI to 1.4% Increase in numbers employed in life sciences and engineering sectors | IDA | LEO / SCC EI (larger businesses), IT Sligo, Solas, MSLETB | M |
| 1.6.2 | Present Sligo as an attractive location to invest, building on and developing the 'Invest Sligo' campaign through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The development of a website or portal to showcase what Sligo has to offer to potential investors ➤ Regularly update research and information ➤ Targeting of global services investment | Increase in number in FDI in particular in the financial and technology services | Sligo Chamber of Commerce / SCC | IDA, LEO / SCC, IT Sligo, EI | M |



Chapter 7: Action Plan

| | Actions | Target/Outcomes | Lead Agency | Support Agencies | Timeframe |
|-------|---|--|----------------------------|--|-----------|
| 1.6.3 | <p>Develop mutually beneficial linkages with Sligo's international community including recent emigrants, second/third-generation Irish and other groupings who have a connection to or interest in County Sligo by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Developing a Sligo Global Diaspora Network › Developing a multi-media platform to reconnect with our diaspora, build cultural connections with both recent and more established emigrants and to create employment opportunities by promoting County Sligo as a location for tourism and investment › Developing connections with the alumni of Sligo-based educational institutions › Linking with various institutional networks including embassies, IDA, EI, industry networks and cultural networks such as the GAA and CCE | Establish International Diaspora Network connecting to Sligo | Sligo Chamber of Commerce | LCDC, LEO / SCC, Connect Ireland, IT Sligo, St Angela's College, GAA, PPN, CCE, IDA, EI, Embassies | M |
| 1.6.4 | Support the rollout of Connect Ireland Initiative through Sligo's international business and community connections | Secure investment in the county | LEO / SCC | Connect Ireland, PPN, GAA, CCE, Sligo Chamber of Commerce | S-M |
| 1.6.5 | Promote Sligo's highly-educated labour force and excellent educational infrastructure as key selling points in attracting inward investment | Increase in share of inward investment | Economic Development Forum | SCC, IDA, LEO / St Angela's College, IT Sligo, EI, | S-M |

1.7 Objective - Support and develop Sligo's important micro-enterprise and SME sectors including the expansion of existing and the start-up of new businesses

| | Actions | Target/Outcomes | Lead Agency | Support Agencies | Timeframe |
|-------|---|---|-------------|---|-----------|
| 1.7.1 | Explore the feasibility of developing a regional digital hub in Sligo | Increase in number of new digital enterprises, expansion of existing enterprise, increased employment in ICT | LEO/SCC | EI, IDA, WDC, Sligo Chamber of Commerce, IT Sligo | L |
| 1.7.2 | Support and develop Sligo's vibrant and growing creative industry sector and explore the potential of developing collaborative working spaces for start-up businesses and creative industries and artists, where feasible using vacant public buildings | <p>Increased employment in creative industries</p> <p>Reduced costs for start-up creative industries</p> | LEO/SCC | LCDC/SCC, SLPCo, WDC, EI | S-M-L |
| 1.7.3 | <p>Provide mentoring support and training to micro-enterprises and SMEs including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Providing supports for the development of online trading › Supports to micro-businesses to develop their export capacity › Assist businesses to avail of public sector opportunities by providing training in public procurement › Assist micro-businesses to grow and expand | <p>Increase in training provided and take up</p> <p>Increase in take up of online voucher scheme</p> <p>Improved take up of programmes that assist micro-businesses in particular to export</p> | LEO/SCC | EI's Centre of Excellence, St Angela's College | S-M-L |



| | Actions | Target/Outcomes | Lead Agency | Support Agencies | Timeframe |
|--------|--|--|-----------------------------------|---|-----------|
| 1.7.4 | Work with financial institutions to raise awareness of finance opportunities and improve access to funding and venture capital | Take up of EI's Venture Capital and Business Angel programmes; take up of micro-finance loans | EI and LEO / SCC | AIB, BOI, IT Sligo, WDC | S-M |
| 1.7.5 | Assist micro enterprises and SMEs cut costs by improving energy efficiency | Promote energy efficiency measures among businesses | SEAI | LEO / SCC, SLPCo, EI | S-M |
| 1.7.6 | Support innovation through ongoing investment in research and development particularly in key growth sectors such as agri-food, renewable energy and green technology, engineering, life sciences and creative industries | Increased investment in R&D | EI, IT Sligo, St Angela's College | LEO/SCC, Sligo Chamber of Commerce, St Angela's Food Technology Centre, BIC | S-M-L |
| 1.7.7 | Simplify the process for accessing enterprise supports in Sligo by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Further developing the LEO as Sligo's First Stop Shop for enterprise ➤ Ensuring a comprehensive information system for micro and small businesses with a professional sign-posting system to relevant agencies including; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Compiling and regularly updating an enterprise supports guide for Sligo and ➤ The development of shared business information points for small businesses through the public library service | Eliminate any areas of overlap that may be identified | LEO/SCC, Library Service | LEO / SCC, EI, SLPCo, MSLETB, Sligo Chamber of Commerce | S-M |
| 1.7.8 | Promote female entrepreneurship in particular through the Sligo Women in Business Network | Increase in number of women setting up businesses. Increase in number of networking events and members | LEO/SCC | EI, MSLETB, Solas, SLPCo | S-M |
| 1.7.9 | Work with Community Enterprise Centres as appropriate to increase capacity and improve their facilities and support services | Greater take up of community enterprise space in the county. Increase in space available in accordance with need | EI, LEO/SCC | SLPCo | S-M-L |
| 1.7.10 | Provide leadership in the development of the green economy and support enterprise development in relation to green technology, building practices, waste recovery, environmental training and sustainable transport | Increase in number of sustainable green economy enterprises | LEO/SCC | Sligo Chamber of Commerce, EI, IT Sligo, WDC | S-M |



| 1.8 Objective - Develop sustainable, area-based development initiatives to stimulate thriving urban communities, towns and their hinterlands | | | | | |
|--|---|--|--------------------------------------|---|-----------|
| | Actions | Target/Outcomes | Lead Agency | Support Agencies | Timeframe |
| 1.8.1 | Develop Rural Economic Development Zones (REDZ) in key rural towns and kick-start the process with creation of a REDZ in Tubbercurry and surroundings as a pilot initiative under the new programme | REDZ application for Tubbercurry | SCC, Tubbercurry Chamber of Commerce | SLPCo, LEO/SCC, EI, MSLETB, Local Groups | M-L |
| 1.8.2 | Finalise and implement Sligo East City Area: Cranmore and Environs Regeneration Plan subject to Habitats Directive Assessment and Environmental Impact Assessment as appropriate | Improvement in quality of life for the community | SCC | SLPCo, LEO/SCC, EI, MSLETB, HSE, DSP, Túsla, Gardaí, Cranmore Community Co-op, Abbeyquarter Centre, Men's Group, RHP, Focus Ireland | S-M-L |
| 1.8.3 | Support local businesses to develop Sligo City as a Business Improvement District | Strong collaboration with local businesses | LEO / SCC | Representatives of city traders, Sligo Chamber of Commerce, Tidy Towns, etc. | M |

| 1.9 Objective - Activate and support marginalised communities and individuals to access employment opportunities | | | | | |
|--|--|---|-----------------------------|--|-----------|
| | Actions | Target/Outcomes | Lead Agency | Support Agencies | Timeframe |
| 1.9.1 | Provide self-employment and pre-employment supports for long-term unemployed individuals from disadvantaged areas and disadvantaged groups through the delivery of the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) | Numbers progressing to employment /training | LCDC/ SCC | SLPCo, LEO MSLETB | S-M |
| 1.9.2 | Promote social and community based enterprise initiatives as a means of addressing economic disadvantage | Number of social enterprises supported | LCDC / SCC | SLPCo, MSLETB | S-M |
| 1.9.3 | Provide employment supports for young people not in education, training or employment | Number of young people progressing to employment/ training | LCDC/ SCC/ SLPCo | SCC/LCDC, MSLETB, DSP, Foróige, Túsla, CYFSC | S-M |
| 1.9.4 | Promote labour market activation schemes to ensure they enhance employment prospects | Number of people progressing into employment following activation schemes | DSP | SLPCo | S-M-L |
| 1.9.5 | Promote employment supports for people with disabilities | Number of people with disabilities progressing to employment | DSP | DFI, SLPCo, NTDI, MSLETB, LEO/SCC, SLPCo | S-M |
| 1.9.6 | Develop and enhance employment supports for Travellers | Number of Travellers progressing to employment/training | SLPCo | STSG, HSE, TIG, MSLETB, LEO/SCC | S-M |
| 1.9.7 | Harness the knowledge and experience of older people by developing intergenerational business mentoring programmes | Skills development and community building | SCC (Age Friendly Alliance) | HSE, Age Friendly Ireland, SLPCo, LEO/SCC | S-M |



7.2 Theme: Education and Training

7.2.1 Overview of Education and Training:

The LECP recognises the transformative power of education and training not only as a key driver of employment growth and productivity, but also as a critical factor in breaking the cycle of disadvantage and poverty and improving quality of life for all. The LECP draws from the National Further Education and Training Strategy 2014-2019, which aims to ensure that education contributes to sustainable development by equipping learners with knowledge, skills and values that will motivate them to become informed active citizens.

There is a wide range of education and training opportunities available in County Sligo and a significant proportion of the workforce are employed in the education sector. The overall skills profile of the county is relatively strong, for example, the proportion of Sligo's population with third level education has grown significantly over the past 20 years from 13% in 1991 to 30% 2011. There are also significant numbers of people who have completed education beyond Leaving Certificate (but who have not completed a degree). The most common qualifications are in the areas of social science, business, engineering, manufacturing, health, welfare and education and teaching. There are 67 different languages spoken in the county, with Polish, French, German and Spanish the most commonly spoken languages after English and Irish.

Consultation with business and community sector representatives indicate that there is a need for a better match between the education and training courses available in the county to reflect the skills required to sustain and drive the local economy and create employment. In particular, skills shortages have been identified in the hospitality/tourism, manufacturing and precision engineering sectors, whilst apprenticeship programmes have declined despite the need. The plan emphasises the importance of ensuring that resources are strategically invested to support research, innovation and skills development and that better linkages are developed between industry and education providers to improve the take up of local employment options. Significant reforms in the education sector including the establishment of the Education and Training Boards offer opportunities for more flexibility and responsiveness at a local level in relation to the type of education and training options available locally.

Research indicates that there are a number of geographic areas particularly in the west of the county and in certain parts of Sligo City where overall education attainment rates are significantly below the county and national average. There are also particular communities of interest within the county with poorer levels of attainment. A more targeted, tailored approach is required to engage with these



groups and improve life chances. Measures to address this include lifelong learning initiatives aimed at improving literacy and numeracy, up-skilling and/or retraining. The plan recognises the importance of engaging people in education throughout the life cycle from early years to adult education, building confidence and emphasising the importance of supporting parents as the primary educators of their children.

A key element of the LECP is the recognition of the wide range of community based education initiatives that provide positive options by involving people in collaborative learning in their

local areas. Community consultation suggests that mainstream programmes need to be tailored more effectively to have a real impact on the most disadvantaged people and communities. There has been a number of successful, innovative initiatives in Sligo that could be built on, for example, community based sports initiatives that explore opportunities to expand on the training and empowerment of community personnel with a view to enhancing their opportunities for employment as coaches and instructors, whilst community based arts education initiatives utilise creative tools as a means of challenging or overcoming social exclusion.

7.2.2 Table of Objectives

Goal 2: We will harness the transformative power of education and training to boost sustainable economic and community development
Target: Improve Sligo’s training and educational attainment rates at all levels

2

INDICATORS:

- › Increase in numbers taking up further and higher education and apprenticeships
- › Decrease in percentage of the population with primary education only
- › Increase in number of early years providers
- › Increase in investment in research and development
- › Increase in number of courses available (and take up) linked to key economic growth sectors

2.1

Objective - Promote and develop Sligo as a regional centre of excellence in education

| Actions | Target/Outcomes | Lead Agency | Support Agencies | Timeframe |
|--|---|-------------------------------|---|-----------|
| 2.1.1 Submit bid to the Higher Education Authority (HEA) for re-designation of regional Institutes of Technology as a Technological University | Technological University status for IT Sligo Increase attractiveness of region for enterprise and job creation | Connaught -Ulster Alliance | Galway-Mayo IT, Letterkenny IT and IT Sligo | S |
| 2.1.2 Promote Sligo as a place of study locally, nationally and internationally through Sligo’s Diaspora | More students choosing Sligo as a place to study | IT Sligo/ St Angela’s College | MSLETB, LCDC, Sligo Chamber of Commerce | SML |
| 2.1.3 Promote the wide range and high quality of further and higher-level education available in Sligo, from personal development to vocational training to academia | Greater take up and variety of courses | MSLETB | LEO/SCC, EI, SLPCo, St Angela’s College, IT Sligo | SML |

| 2.2 Objective - Support Life Long Learning and initiatives to support access to education | | | | | |
|---|---|--|----------------|---|-----------|
| | Actions | Target/Outcomes | Lead Agency | Support Agencies | Timeframe |
| 2.2.1 | Place learners at the centre of the learning process to improve confidence in their own abilities and educational attainments and offer a wide range of relevant, high-quality courses to learners including accredited options, blended learning and distance learning options | Increase in options available and take up of courses | MSLETB | SLPcO, LCDC, FRCs | S-M |
| 2.2.2 | Address gaps and provide progression routes so learners can move on to further education and training by offering a thorough grounding in literacy, numeracy and ICT with a focus on services in Sligo City, Ballymote, Riverstown, Coolaney and Tubbercurry | Increase take up of courses in Sligo City, Ballymote, Riverstown, Coolaney and Tubbercurry | MSLETB | SLPcO, LCDC, FRCs | S-M |
| 2.2.3 | Support the delivery of affordable childcare to enable greater take up of education opportunities | More community childcare places | SCCC | CYPSC LCDC, FRCs | S-M |
| 2.2.4 | Provide more language courses for new communities particularly those who do not have a high standard of English | Improve English Language | MSLETB | SLPcO | S-M |
| 2.2.5 | Support access to ICT training in rural areas by developing broadband capacity in community settings | Improve ICT skills | SLPcO/ LCDC | LEO / SCC | S-M |
| 2.2.6 | Improve transport linkages to community education initiatives | Increase take up of courses | TCU | SCC/LCDC, SLPcO | M-L |
| 2.2.7 | Improve third level take up amongst disadvantaged communities/groups by developing targeted programmes with further education and third level providers through supports such as 'The Access Foundation' and 'Access Schools Programme' | Better take up of education from disadvantaged communities | MSLETB | FRCs, SLPcO, LCDC, IT Sligo, St Angela's College | M-L |
| 2.2.8 | Promote awareness and take up by employers of the Skills for Work Programme which provides up-skilling supports to existing employees | Enhanced skills | MSLETB | LEO / SCC, Sligo Chamber of Commerce, EI, IDA | S-M |



2.3

Objective - Utilise arts and culture as tools for education and personal development

| Actions | Target/Outcomes | Lead Agency | Support Agencies | Timeframe |
|---------|--|--------------------|--|-----------|
| 2.3.1 | Bring together various age groups and cultures using the arts to help share knowledge and understanding for universal similarities | SLPCo | SCC Arts, SIF, Foróige, Community Organisations, PPN | S-M |
| 2.3.2 | Further develop arts, music and education programmes and awards that enrich the curriculum and help connect schools and young people with the wider community, giving an opportunity for self-expression outside of their normal scope | SEC, MGS, SCC Arts | SCC Arts | S-M |
| 2.3.3 | Explore the feasibility of developing a cultural centre for children, which will be of benefit for the North West Region with potential for it to become a national hub and resource | Kids Own | SCCC, Túsla, SCC, Education Sector, Cultural Centres | S |

2.4

Objective - Develop targeted measures to address educational disadvantage and reduce the achievement gap

| Actions | Target/Outcomes | Lead Agency | Support Agencies | Timeframe |
|---------|---|-------------|--|-----------|
| 2.4.1 | Use evidence-based approaches including socio-economic profiling and feedback from learners to inform strategic planning in relation to education in the county | MSLETB | SCC/LCDC, IT Sligo, St Angela's College | S |
| 2.4.2 | Provide early years services with information and training on the National Childcare Programmes that support parents returning to education and training including Community Childcare Scheme (CCS) Training Education Community (TEC) and Afterschool Child Care Scheme (ASCC) | SCCC | Túsla, CYPSC | S |
| 2.4.3 | Roll out more family learning education programmes to support parents in their role as the child's primary educator and support parents own educational needs and aspirations | MSLETB | SLPCo, SEC, LCDC, SCC, SICAP | S-M |
| 2.4.4 | Further develop measures to improve educational attainment for Travellers | SLPCo | STSG, MSLETB, TIG | S-M |
| 2.4.5 | Support educational opportunities for people with disabilities | MSLETB | National Learning Network, SLPCo, DFI, St Angela's College | S |



| | Actions | Target/Outcomes | Lead Agency | Support Agencies | Timeframe |
|-------|---|---|------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------|
| 2.4.6 | Provide education supports for people living in direct provision centres and new communities | Improved access to education for new communities | MSLETB/ SLPCo | LCDC, SLPCo, SCCC | S |
| 2.4.7 | Develop local initiatives to deal with school absenteeism by working with education providers | Reduction in primary and secondary school absenteeism | Túsla | LCDC, FRCS, STSG, SLPCo, Foróige | S-M |
| 2.4.8 | Provide adult education supports for long-term unemployed including training and mentoring | Increase take up of adult education courses | MSLETB | LEO / SCC, SLPCo | |

| 2.5 Objective - Facilitate better linkages between schools, colleges and local employers | | | | | |
|--|--|---|---------------|--|-----------|
| | Actions | Target/Outcomes | Lead Agency | Support Agencies | Timeframe |
| 2.5.1 | Develop and expand youth entrepreneurship initiatives | Development of entrepreneurial culture in school | LEO / SCC | MSLETB, SEC, Primary and Secondary Schools, Foróige | S-M |
| 2.5.2 | Develop a regional skills forum involving industry, economic development agencies and training providers | Better match between local training and employment | DES, IT Sligo | LEO/SCC, Sligo Chamber, IDA, Enterprise Ireland, MSLETB, St Angela's College | S |
| 2.5.3 | Ensure more targeted career guidance at second level by involving third level educators and local business and industry to ensure students are aware of local employment options by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Developing feedback mechanisms from third level organisations and industry to enhance and develop MSLETB Adult Guidance services ➤ Promote apprenticeship options in schools and industry particularly in local key growth sectors such as precision engineering ➤ Linking with industrial leaders to showcase local employment options both to schools and adult learners and develop a guide to demonstrate local opportunities | Better awareness of options locally Improve guidance service Greater take up of apprenticeships | MSLETB | EI, IDA, FI, IT Sligo, St Angela's College | |



2.6 Objective - Develop the skills and educational infrastructure to support job creation in key local economic sectors

| | Actions | Target/Outcomes | Lead Agency | Support Agencies | Timeframe |
|-------|--|--|---|---|-----------|
| 2.6.1 | Support research, development and innovation by providing financial and technical assistance | Provide financial and technical assistance | LEO/SCC, EI | IT Sligo, St Angela's College | S |
| 2.6.2 | Develop local educational and training opportunities to support employment in health and life science sectors | Support medical devices and life science cluster | IT Sligo, MSLETB | LEO/SCC, St Angela's College | S-M |
| 2.6.3 | Develop a pilot training programme aimed at addressing skills gaps within the hospitality industry | Enhanced skills in hospitality sector | MSLETB /Solas | Irish Hotel Federation | M |
| 2.6.4 | Develop a pilot training programme aimed at addressing skills gap in the engineering industry | Enhanced engineering skills | MSLETB | EI, IT Sligo, IDA, LEO/SCC | M |
| 2.6.5 | Develop skills locally to support employment in knowledge economy and global services sectors | Provide training, development and financial assistance | IT Sligo | LEO/SCC, IDA, EI | S-M |
| 2.6.6 | Develop skills to support the employment in agri-food sector | Improve skills in agri-food sector | TEAGASC, St Angela's Food Technology Centre | LCDC/SCC, SLPCo | M |
| 2.6.7 | Review existing apprenticeship options in conjunction with employers and develop new options for Sligo | Apprenticeship options closely aligned to key growth sectors | MSLETB | IDA, LEO, EI | S-M |
| 2.6.8 | Explore the potential of cross-border and regional linkages to develop education and training opportunities in key economic growth sectors | Development of cross-border linkages | MSLETB, St Angela's College, IT Sligo | Cross-Border Partners, University of Ulster | M |



7.3 Theme: Health and Wellbeing

7.3.1 Overview of Health and Wellbeing:

The promotion of wellbeing is central to the overarching vision of the Sligo LECP and a core component of the community element of the plan. The LECP recognises that health and wellbeing outcomes for communities are influenced by a range of social, economic, cultural, environmental, democratic, behavioural and clinical factors. Drawing on learning from the Healthy Cities movement, the LECP promotes a comprehensive and systematic policy and planning for health and wellbeing emphasising the:

- Need to address inequality in health and poverty
- The needs of vulnerable groups
- Participatory governance
- The social, economic and environmental determinants of health

The goal of community development and empowerment is central to the LECP's approach to improving health and wellbeing outcomes. It is intrinsically linked to all of the other goals in the plan and the successful implementation of this goal is contingent on the delivery of other elements of the plan. For example, the well established correlation between good mental health and employment, links health outcomes to initiatives designed to create or support employment and promote social inclusion. Wellbeing is also intrinsically linked to improving democracy, access to decision making and active citizenship. Creating a healthy environment and improving wellbeing are also linked to local policies designed to promote sustainable development, design of housing and streetscapes, facilitate access to



towns and villages, address climate change, improve the quality of water, manage waste etc.

This section of the plan aims to involve people and communities in policy making and decision making together with measures to reduce the risk factors for chronic illness through community based health initiatives to promote healthy lifestyles. It recognises the importance of community safety in relation to wellbeing and includes initiatives to promote good mental health. It also includes a number of objectives that link sustainable planning and infrastructure to health and wellbeing.



7.3.2 Table of Objectives

Goal 3: We will ensure community wellbeing by making Sligo a healthier place to live, grow, work and play through life-cycle planning

Target: Improve quality of life, health and wellbeing

3

INDICATORS:

- › Increase in number of community based health initiatives
- › Decrease risk factors for chronic diseases
- › Increase percentage of population involved in the community and voluntary sector
- › Number of groups registered with the PPN to increase by 40%
- › Increased participation in sporting activities/number of sports groups registered with PPN
- › Improvement in mental health indicators including reduction in suicide and self-harm rates
- › Increase in life expectancy rates in line with national average

3.1 **Objective - Empower, build capacity within the community and support participation in health and community wellbeing initiatives**

| | Actions | Target/Outcomes | Lead Agency | Support Agencies | Timeframe |
|-------|--|--|-----------------------------------|--|-----------|
| 3.1.1 | Develop integrated 'Healthy Sligo' Programme that responds to behavioural, socio-economic and physical environment factors that affect health and wellbeing | Better co-ordination and planning | HSE/SCC | SSRP, MSLETB | M |
| 3.1.2 | Develop pilot Community Health and Wellbeing Initiatives based on needs identified as part of the East Sligo City: Cranmore and Environs Regeneration Programme | Pilot community health project | HSE | Cranmore Co-op, SCC/CRP, Mental Health Ireland, Foróige, Community Organisations, SSRP | M |
| 3.1.3 | Identify projects that will involve community participation and build capacity within Sligo such as Community Health Forums attached to Primary Care Teams | Feedback on health services | HSE Primary Care Development Unit | PPN, Community Groups | S-M |
| 3.1.4 | Support peer education community health initiatives building on Traveller Primary Health Care model | Improve traveller health | HSE | STSG, HSE PHN Service, TIG | S-M |
| 3.1.5 | Support active citizenship in the development and support of the Sligo Public Participation Network including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Facilitate the sharing of community knowledge, services and resources through the use of online platforms and meetings for community organisations to share information › Develop measures to promote and support communities pride of place | Stronger community sector Enhanced civic participation Newsletter, Social Media, Website | SCC/PPN | IT Sligo, Sligo Library Services, SVC | S-M |



| | Actions | Target/Outcomes | Lead Agency | Support Agencies | Timeframe |
|-------|---|---|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------|
| 3.1.6 | Establish a Community First Responder Scheme which will respond to incidents within a pre-defined geographical area such as a village or small town | Improvement in the community's ability to deal with early life saving treatment for victims of cardiac arrest | HSE/National Ambulance Service | Community Groups, Community Care | S-M |

3.2 Objective - Introduce measures to improve accessibility and equality in the delivery of health and community services

| | Actions | Target/Outcomes | Lead Agency | Support Agencies | Timeframe |
|-------|---|---|-----------------|---|-----------|
| 3.2.1 | Develop a voluntary support scheme to respond to the needs of older people or people with disabilities in urban and rural communities, building on and developing the Sligo Lend a Hand model | Reduce isolation | Muintir na Tíre | SLPCo, LCDC, SCC, HSE, SSSC, Active Age, Lyons Club | M |
| 3.2.2 | Create forums to encourage communities to work together building on the existing Men's Shed model | Bring communities together | SLPCo | HSE: (Mental health promotion/ services) | M |
| 3.2.3 | Utilise community development approaches to develop measures to address isolation in the community through the SICAP programme and family support programmes | Reduce isolation | LCDC/SLPCo | FRCs, Túsla, HSE | S-M |
| 3.2.4 | Develop, review and expand existing rural transport currently being delivered by the Local Link Sligo, Leitrim, Roscommon Transport Co-ordination Unit to provide access to a range of social, recreational, educational and health activities and services including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The review of 'collect and connect' services between rural transport services, Bus Éireann and Irish Rail ➤ A promotional strategy to raise awareness of rural transport services in local towns and villages | Improve use of rural transport services | TCU | HSE, Community Care, Bus Éireann, Irish Rail | S-M |



| 3.3 Objective - Promote positive mental health and wellbeing | | | | | |
|--|---|--|----------------------------------|--|-----------|
| | Actions | Target/Outcomes | Lead Agency | Support Agencies | Timeframe |
| 3.3.1 | Co-ordinate a series of information sessions to support volunteers develop skills, building on the Volunteering and Wellbeing Series | Support for volunteers | SVC | HSE, PPN | S |
| 3.3.2 | Deliver on the implementation of the national strategy Connecting for Life by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Developing a county plan 'Connecting for Sligo' to raise awareness of positive mental health and suicide prevention through 'Get Sligo Talking' and other initiatives such as training in suicide intervention skills, stress control programmes and workshops › Developing initiatives to address the mental health impact of direct provision on asylum-seekers › Continuing to develop and implement the Social Prescribing programme in an urban and rural setting. (Pilot project in Cranmore, rural area to be decided) › Developing biblio-therapy and raise awareness of the support services | Better co-ordination and awareness of services Improved mental health and wellbeing Reduction in suicide rates Delivery of ASIT, Self-Talk initiatives, Mind Your Mental Health Workshops, #littlethings campaign | HSE Mental Health Promotion Unit | PPN, Mental Health Services, Mental Health Ireland, Grow, StopSuicide, FRCs, SCC Library Services, Aware, Rennafix, CRP, HSE Health Promotion Unit, HSE Psychology Service, Samaritans | M |
| 3.3.3 | Support social farming initiatives and community gardens | Better mental health | SLPCo/LCDC | HSE/SCC, HSE Mental Health Services, Mental Health Promotion | M-L |
| 3.3.4 | Promote the five-a-day programme for wellbeing in community settings: connect, get active, notice, get involved and give | Delivery of programme in community setting | SLPCo | SSRP, HSE, PPN, SCC, Foróige | S-M |
| 3.3.5 | Develop existing Health Promoting Schools initiatives by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Planning based on recommendations of review into the effectiveness of health promotion initiatives in the education sector conducted with teachers and students › Building and strengthening teachers' capacity to deliver Health Promoting Schools Initiatives › Providing accreditation and/or incentives for schools to take on health initiatives in relation to food, exercise, mental health and/or sex education | Improving mental health and wellbeing in primary and secondary schools | HSE | MSLETB, SEC, Schools | S-M |
| 3.3.6 | Support the work of the Sligo Leitrim Youth Mental Health Initiative in fostering the mental health and wellbeing of young people aged 12-24 years | Improved mental health and wellbeing in young people | HSE / MSLETB | CAMHS, CYPSC, Community organisations, Foróige, FRCs, HYLS, IT Sligo, IT Sligo Student Union, LCC, MSLETB, NEPS, NCYCS, SEC, Sligo GP Society, SLPCo, St. Angela's College, Túsla | S-M |



| 3.4 Objective - Reduce risk factors for chronic diseases through community based initiatives | | | | | |
|--|---|--|-------------|---|-----------|
| | Actions | Target/Outcomes | Lead Agency | Support Agencies | Timeframe |
| 3.4.1 | Increasing physical activity levels through community based sports programming | Reduction in chronic disease rates | SSRP | HSE, Sporting Organisations, LCDC, PPN, Community Organisations | S-M |
| 3.4.2 | Develop a community based initiative to support new mothers to breastfeed | Increase in breast feeding rates | HSE | FRCs, La Leche, CYPSC, St Angela's College | S-M |
| 3.4.3 | Deliver smoking cessation programmes in community settings | Reduction in smoking Reduction in chronic disease rates | HSE | FRCs, PPN | S-M |
| 3.4.4 | Deliver community based programmes to raise awareness about the impact of substance related harm to the people of Sligo and raise public awareness of the benefits of effective action to prevent and reduce substance related harm | Reduction in chronic disease rates | NWRDATF | HSE, PPN, Community Groups, Foróige | S-M |

| 3.5 Objective - Plan for a healthy and sustainable environment that caters for different needs and abilities | | | | | |
|--|--|---|-------------|---|-----------|
| | Actions | Target/Outcomes | Lead Agency | Support Agencies | Timeframe |
| 3.5.1 | Ensure that the County Development Plan includes extensive consultation with local people and reflects social and community objectives in relation to green space, playgrounds, civic spaces and social areas | Greater participation, more ownership | SCC | PPN | S |
| 3.5.2 | Ensure sustainable development through the provision of facilities to support more sustainable forms of transport such as cycling and walking infrastructure, public transport infrastructure including intermodal linkage with more proactive measures to involve people with disabilities and vulnerable road users in the design process, subject to Habitats Directive Assessment and Environmental Impact Assessment as appropriate | Improvement of walking and cycling infrastructure | SCC | DFI, PPN, Community Walking Groups, SSRP, Age Friendly Alliance | S-M |
| 3.5.3 | Improve the 'walkability' of communities as a means of improving health and wellbeing and reducing car dependency | Emphasis on creating spaces for people to come together | SCC | PPN Environmental College, Age Friendly Alliance, DFI | M |

| 3.6 Objective - Develop integrated measures to improve community safety | | | | | |
|---|--|---|-------------|---|-----------|
| | Actions | Target/Outcomes | Lead Agency | Support Agencies | Timeframe |
| 3.6.1 | <p>Reactivate the Joint Policing Committee and develop a six-year strategic plan for policing to include the following initiatives to address:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Anti-social behaviour in urban and rural areas including the development of a dispute mediation service › Interagency networking with communities to respond to urban and rural community safety concerns › Youth engagement initiatives › Safety and the night time economy › Addressing fear of crime › Addressing hate crime and sectarianism › Addressing car crime and road safety › Addressing retail crime › Research into the community safety concerns and crime to inform evidence-based planning | <p>Better interagency working and information sharing in relation to community safety</p> <p>Retain Purple Flag</p> | SCC | Gardaí, HSE, PPN, CYPSC | S-M |
| 3.6.2 | <p>Explore the potential of cross-border collaboration in relation to community safety initiatives</p> | Cross-border initiatives | SCC /JPC | Gardaí, HSE, PPN | M |
| 3.6.3 | <p>Address substance misuse in Sligo through the development of a strategic plan for Sligo City including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Conduct research into the effectiveness of models to address substance misuse and use results to inform strategy › Provide grants to support local initiatives to address substance misuse › Support safe, family-friendly initiatives and healthy festivals and learn from best practice | <p>Better health, safer community</p> <p>Learn from best practice</p> | NWRDATF | SCC, Gardaí, HSE, Foróige, Community Organisations, CYPSC | S-M |



7.4 Theme: Social Inclusion, Equality and Poverty

7.4.1 Overview of Social Inclusion, Equality and Poverty

The Local Economic and Community Plan is underpinned by a commitment to promote social inclusion by tackling social exclusion as it is defined in the Irish Government's National Action Plan for Social Inclusion 2007–2016 as follows:

'People are living in poverty if their income and resources (material, cultural and social) are so inadequate as to preclude them from having a standard of living which is regarded as acceptable by Irish society generally. As a result of inadequate income and resources people may be excluded and marginalised from participating in activities which are considered the norm for other people in society.'

Tackling exclusion and poverty with limited resources requires a strategic approach, targeting areas and communities that experience the highest level of deprivation and disadvantage. This includes targeting specific areas of Sligo town and a number of electoral divisions to the west of the county for intervention. These areas are illustrated in Appendix A.

'Communities of interest' identified as experiencing particularly high levels of exclusion and/or poverty and targeted for support include:

- People with disabilities
- New Communities
- Travellers
- Roma
- Older people



- People living in disadvantaged areas
- Lone parents
- Unemployed
- LGBT
- Carers
- Children and Young at risk of poverty



The Community Vision for the Sligo Local Economic and Community Plan includes a commitment to value and respect human rights, equality and diversity. One of Sligo's major strengths is the diversity of its people and it is critical that these diverse needs are taken into account in programming for local economic and community development. This section of the plan includes a number of objectives and actions aimed at eliminating discrimination, promoting equality of opportunity and protecting human rights in line with The Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act (2014).

7.4.2 Table of Objectives

Goal 4: We will promote a culture of inclusion and equality and address poverty
Target: Decrease in poverty and deprivation rates

4

INDICATORS:

- Decrease in overall HP Pobal deprivation scores and reduction by 30% in number of SAP classified as very disadvantaged or disadvantaged
- Increase in disposable and average income level
- Reduction in housing waiting list
- Reduction in average childcare costs
- Increase in numbers of groups vulnerable to exclusion progressing to education, training or employment
- Plan in place and implemented to improve services to older people

4.1 Objective - Develop measures to address exclusion and poverty in disadvantaged and isolated areas

| | Actions | Target/Outcomes | Lead Agency | Support Agencies | Timeframe |
|-------|--|--|----------------|---|-----------|
| 4.1.1 | Provide training in social inclusion, equality and community development for agencies that engage with disadvantaged communities | Better understanding of social inclusion | SLPCo/ LCDC | MSLETB, HSE, DSP, Teagasc, SCC, Túsla, CYPSC | M |
| 4.1.2 | Build social capital in disadvantaged areas with the support of professional community and youth workers, developing residents' committees, issue-based groups, parent support networks, youth clubs and afterschool clubs | Stronger voluntary sector groups | SLPCo/ LCDC | Foróige, Túsla, PPN, MSLETB, SSRP, HSE, CYPSC | S-M |
| 4.1.3 | Develop, implement and review the social regeneration plan for Sligo East City Area: Cranmore and Environs | Better quality of life | SCC | Cranmore Co-op MSLETB, HSE, DSP, SCC, Túsla, IT Sligo, SSRP | S-M |
| 4.1.4 | Develop initiatives to address illegal money lending in Sligo by reactivating the interagency group CAIM (Communities Against Illegal Lending of Money) | Raise awareness of impact of illegal money lending | SVP | SCC, HSE, Túsla, FRCs, CRP | S |

| | Actions | Target/Outcomes | Lead Agency | Support Agencies | Timeframe |
|-------|---|---|----------------|--|-----------|
| 4.1.5 | <p>Maximise the opportunities for rural dwellers and communities in Sligo under the Rural Development Programme 2014-2020 (LEADER Element) by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Establishing a Local Action Group for the delivery of the rural development programme (LEADER) ➤ Developing and implementing a local development strategy in consultation with the community and key stakeholders, utilising bottom-up LEADER methodology ➤ Equipping rural dwellers and communities with the appropriate range of skills and training to derive maximum social and economic benefit from the initiatives available ➤ Supporting the development of social, economic and cultural infrastructure, services and human resources in hard-to-reach and geographically disadvantaged communities subject to Habitats Directive Assessment and Environmental Assessment as required. | <p>Structure in place to deliver LEADER Programme</p> <p>Increase in employment</p> | LCDC | SLPCo, SCC | S |
| 4.1.6 | Support community based groups to develop gardens as a means of addressing food poverty and social exclusion and make spaces available for gardens | Address food poverty | SLPCo/ LCDC | SCC, HSE | M |
| 4.1.7 | Support initiatives targeting young people in rural areas aimed at fostering employment and entrepreneurship and improving participation by young people in community life and decision making | Improve quality of life for rural youth | SLPCo | LCDC, Foróige, Gaisce, HSE, SSRP, CYPSC | S |
| 4.1.8 | Support the development of outdoor recreational infrastructure in south Sligo, working with the community, subject to Habitats Directive Assessment and environmental assessment as required | Improved recreational infrastructure in south Sligo | SLPCo/ LCDC | SCC, Community Groups, Athletic Club, SSRP, FRCs, SSRP | S-M |
| 4.1.9 | <p>Work collaboratively to co-ordinate rural transport services in the region in order to ensure the national strategy to promote rural transport services is delivered locally by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Identifying local transport needs and consulting with the community in relation to the development of rural transport services ➤ Reviewing, designing, delivering and dispatching all rural and community based transport services in County Sligo and support the preparation of a Transport Plan for the county ➤ Supporting voluntary car schemes in rural areas ➤ Support the rollout and promotion of local Hackney Licences through Sligo County Council | Improve transport in rural areas | TCU | SCC, SLPCo, LCDC, HSE, MLSETB, CYPSC | S-M |



4.2

Objective - Develop initiatives that support social inclusion amongst groups that are vulnerable to poverty and exclusion

| Actions | Target/Outcomes | Lead Agency | Support Agencies | Timeframe |
|--|---|-------------------|---|------------|
| <p>4.2.1 Support personal action planning processes designed to empower individuals to take control of their personal development and education needs and/or progression routes to sustainable employment</p> | <p>Increase in progression to education and training</p> | <p>SLPCo/LCDC</p> | <p>FRCs, SCC, CYPSC</p> | <p>S-M</p> |
| <p>4.2.2 Ensure the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (2015-2017) and other programmes reach groups that are most vulnerable to poverty and exclusion by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Building the capacity of local community groups to respond to the needs of the disadvantaged communities they represent and work effectively to promote social inclusion and equality › Support communities to develop needs-based responses to issues affecting them and assist them leverage funding from agencies, departments and other funding organisations › Develop capacity building, animation and training measures aimed at communities, individuals and minority groups to foster the spirit of social capital and self-help and encourage community involvement in a broad range of social and economic activities › Ongoing monitoring of programme targets and annual reviewing | <p>Number of disadvantaged groups and individuals accessing support under SICAP and other programmes resulting in stronger communities and better quality of life</p> | <p>SLPCo/LCDC</p> | <p>FRCs, Túsla, DECLG, Pobal, HSE, DSP, MSLETB, SSRP, CYPSC</p> | <p>S-M</p> |
| <p>4.2.3 Delivery of an integrated Age Friendly Plan for the county including the following measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Consultation in relation to the needs of older people working with local groups and agencies › Walkability surveys and improved access to services and amenities › Intergenerational mentoring initiatives › Establishment of a team to implement Sligo's Age Friendly plan › Establishment of an older person's forum in Sligo › Undertake a Pilot Age Friendly project by developing Cranmore as Sligo's first age friendly estate › Enhance Sligo's attractiveness for the more senior tourism market › Roll out Age Friendly business recognition programme | <p>Age Friendly Status for Sligo</p> | <p>SCC</p> | <p>HSE, SLPCo, ETB, Age Friendly Ireland</p> | <p>S-M</p> |



| | Actions | Target/Outcomes | Lead Agency | Support Agencies | Timeframe |
|-------|--|--|---------------|--|-----------|
| 4.2.4 | <p>Addressing the underlying causes of social exclusion for People with Disabilities by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ensuring that People with Disabilities have equal access to mainstream public services and support provided in this plan; that they are supported and facilitated to participate as equal citizens in their own communities and that they are represented and consulted equally in local decision making in line with the National Disability Strategy Implementation Plan and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities ➤ Supporting the work of the Sligo Disability Network ➤ Establishing a youth disability network to ensure collective action in relation to the provision of social and educational supports | <p>Improve quality of life and access to services for people with disabilities</p> <p>Increase participation by PWD in mainstream community services</p> | SLPCo/DFI/SCC | HSE, SLPCo, ETB, SCC, DFI, Community Groups, MSLETB, Foróige, Disability Service Providers, PPN, SSRP, CYPSC | S-M |
| 4.2.5 | Develop networks of support within communities at risk of poverty by supporting young people to effect change in their community in a positive way | Build social capital amongst young people | SLPCo | MSLETB, HSE, Gaisce, Foróige, NCYCS, SSRP, NWRDATF, Túsla | M |
| 4.2.6 | Ensure there is an adequate supply of housing to meet the needs of Sligo's population including those who are unable to meet their housing needs from their own means in line with the County Sligo Housing Strategy as incorporated into the Sligo County Development Plan | Reduction in housing waiting lists | SCC | Focus Ireland, CLUID, Respond, Simon, Sophia and other Voluntary Housing Associations | |
| 4.2.7 | Promote energy efficiency and insulation amongst disadvantaged households | <p>Address fuel poverty</p> <p>Increase in uptake of Warmer Homes programme</p> <p>Increase in number of LA houses with BER rating of C +</p> | SLPCo | SCC, SEAI, Voluntary Housing Associations | M |
| 4.2.8 | Support the inclusion of Travellers by addressing issues in the areas of accommodation, health, education, training, employment, prejudice and discrimination | Improve quality of life and access to services for Travellers | TIG | STSG, SCC, SCCC, MSLETB, LEO, SLPCo, CYPSC | S-M |
| 4.2.9 | Incorporate universal design principles and measures to improve accessibility for people of all abilities into plans for all environmental improvement and enhancement works | Better access for people with disabilities | SCC | Disability groups, Age Friendly, SLPCo | S-M-L |



4.3

Objective - Build and strengthen leadership and capacity in the community sector and increase networking, collaboration and joint planning amongst all organisations

| Actions | Target/Outcomes | Lead Agency | Support Agencies | Timeframe |
|--|---|--------------------|---|------------|
| <p>4.3.1 Develop and support a Framework for Public Participation and support the development of the PPN through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Support for the Secretariat of the PPN › Development and support of thematic linkage groups › Sharing information relevant to the community sector › Ensuring transparency in the election of community representatives › Promoting active citizenship and building capacity in the sector through training, information and resource sharing › Facilitating community participation in policy making › Facilitating the development of the PPN as an independent entity › Organise meetings on specific themes of interest to the community sector and facilitate networking amongst PPN members › Providing information / training to elected members on the role of the PPN › Ensure PPN reaches out to socially excluded groups | <p>Greater civic engagement</p> | <p>SCC</p> | <p>SLPCo, Local organisations</p> | <p>S-M</p> |
| <p>4.3.2 Establishment of Volunteer Community Co-ordinators panels</p> | <p>Improving volunteering opportunities and resources</p> | <p>SVC</p> | <p>SCC, PPN, LCDC</p> | <p>S-M</p> |
| <p>4.3.3 Develop leadership and community capacity through sports</p> | <p>Better inclusion through sports</p> | <p>SSRP</p> | <p>HSE, FRC, SCC, CRP</p> | <p>S-M</p> |
| <p>4.3.4 Investigate the feasibility of developing a community support centre or hub at a central location in Sligo to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Enable community groups and small businesses pool resources and knowledge, as well as availing of practical supports such as desk space, meeting and training facilities and other shared services › Facilitate people to access or learn about online services and involve long-term unemployed, new communities or people with disabilities in the running of community hub | <p>Greater pooling of resources in community sector</p> | <p>SVC / SLPCo</p> | <p>LCDC, PPN, CIC, MABS, Library Services, SLPCo, SIF</p> | <p>S</p> |



| | Actions | Target/Outcomes | Lead Agency | Support Agencies | Timeframe |
|-------|---|---|------------------------|---|-----------|
| 4.3.5 | <p>Establish a county-wide Arts in the Community network to develop arts as a tool to promote social inclusion and wellbeing targeting those who are socially excluded through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Mapping existing arts in the community and determining gaps in community arts provision › Establishing a register of artists working in the community to identify their areas of experience/expertise and continuous professional development needs › Facilitating the sharing of information on new and existing community arts models | <p>Community Arts Network in place</p> <p>Giving expression through the arts to most excluded voices in communities</p> | SLPCo | SCC Arts, The Model, Hawk's Well Theatre, MGS, Youth Theatres, HSE, Foróige | S |
| 4.3.6 | Heighten awareness of the benefits and opportunities of European Citizenship through the delivery and promotion of the Europe Direct Services | Better awareness in communities of European opportunities | Sligo Library Services | PPN, Sligo Chamber of Commerce, LCDC, SCC | S |

4.4

Objective - Develop measures to ensure equality, cultural awareness and integration

| | Actions | Target/Outcomes | Lead Agency | Support Agencies | Timeframe |
|-------|---|--|-------------|---|-----------|
| 4.4.1 | Develop and co-ordinate a physical space for information, activities and conversations aimed at boosting cultural inclusion and equality through The Model's Bureau of Radical Accessibility | Better awareness of cultural inclusion | The Model | LCDC | S |
| 4.4.2 | Host themed conferences on social inclusion, community development and equality and develop a mechanism for the sharing of local information | Minimum of 1 social inclusion/community development conference/symposium | PPN, LCDC | LCDC, IT Sligo, MSLETB, HSE, DSP, FRCs, SLPCo | M |
| 4.4.3 | Equality proof all LECPC actions and provide training to key public and community agencies on equality proofing | Ensure plans are checked for equality | LCDC | All Agencies | S |
| 4.4.4 | Support the development of advocacy groups for ethnic minority and refugee communities in Sligo such as Sligo Intercultural Forum and asylum-seeker groups | Improve access to services for minority communities | SLPCo | FRCs, LCDC, HSE | M |
| 4.4.5 | Support the development of the Racist Incident Reporting and Referral Service (system to monitor and respond to racism) | Reduction in number of racist incidents | SIF | FRC, SCC, SLPCo | S |
| 4.4.6 | Promote more inclusion for Traveller families and awareness of Traveller culture and promote positive examples of Traveller accommodation to counteract risk of discrimination in the private rental sector | Reduction in exclusion Awareness of culture | STSG | SCC, TIG, SLPCo | S-M |
| 4.4.7 | Public agencies that interact with the community should appoint a dedicated person to deal with equality issues | Clear point of contact for equality in organisations | LCDC | HSE, SCC, DSP, MSLETB, Túsla, | S-M |



| 4.5 Objective - Improve services and outcomes for children, young people and families | | | | | |
|---|---|--|---------------|--|-----------|
| | Actions | Target/Outcomes | Lead Agency | Support Agencies | Timeframe |
| 4.5.1 | Raise awareness of the need for improved access to quality affordable childcare and early years services and provide information on the range of services available | More resources for affordable childcare Improve access to information | SCCC | LCDC, PPN, SCC, FRCs | S-M |
| 4.5.2 | Provide support for the implementation of the Children and Young Persons' Services Plan to ensure co-ordination, reduce duplication and support better outcomes for children and families | Improved co-ordination of services, better outcomes for children and young people | CYPSC | Túsla, HSE, SCC, SCCC | S |
| 4.5.3 | Provide preventative support for children who have unmet support needs but do not require referral to social work under Children First through the rollout of Meitheal programme | Improved co-ordination of services Early intervention | Túsla | HSE, SCCC, FRCs / Family Support Projects, Lifestart, SSSC | S-M |
| 4.5.4 | Improve access to support services for parents and children by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Creating Child and Family Support Networks (CFSN) in the county, made up of statutory, community and voluntary providers ➤ Informing a commissioning process of how best to utilise the total resources available for children and families | Improve outcomes for children in the most effective, equitable, proportionate and sustainable way CFSN areas will be agreed and Family Support Services delivered as needed | Túsla / CYPSC | Community, Voluntary and Statutory agencies, FRCs, providers of services to children and families | S-M |
| 4.5.5 | To ensure that Sligo is a safe, child-friendly environment committed to the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, where children are confident about their own safety and protected from harm, and children and families are educated about Safe Care | All engineering and planning within the area considers the needs of children and contributes to enhancing their health, safety and protection | CYPSC, | Túsla, HSE, SCCC, SSRP, PPN, Foróige, NCYCS, Voluntary and Community Youth Services, DVAS, Gardaí, SCC | S-M-L |
| 4.5.6 | Establish a new interagency committee on violence against women with participation from the key agencies, which will undertake the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Review evidence from other jurisdictions on what works in responding to and preventing domestic violence through co-ordinated community responses ➤ Develop a common risk assessment framework that identifies high-risk cases and enables prioritisation and identification of appropriate integrated and co-ordinated responses ➤ Provide access to research, meeting space and secretariat for new interagency forum on domestic violence | Better co-ordination of services for families experiencing domestic violence | Túsla | DVAS, Gardaí, Court Services | S-M |



7.5 Theme: Environment and Climate Change

7.5.1 Overview of Environment and Climate Change

The future wellbeing of the inhabitants of Sligo and the vibrancy of the local economy are entirely dependent upon our achieving a sustainable model of living that safeguards and protects our built and natural environment, and our efficient use of natural resources. The Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) provides a historic opportunity for transforming the way we live and work, and how we think about and promote our county.

The natural environment underpins our society and economic development in the county and we are to the fore in promoting our environment for recreational and tourism activities, and as a draw for businesses and employees to the region. However, we must do more than just

promote these assets. We must truly and honestly position Sligo as a county that values its natural resources by implementing and enforcing progressive initiatives that protect and enhance the environment. All parties must work to ensure that our natural assets and heritage are protected not only for public enjoyment but also to foster economic growth, which is increasingly dependent upon these assets, and to do so with a proactive response to the challenges of climate change.



7.5.2 Table of Objectives

Goal 5: We will safeguard our environment for future generations by supporting sustainable economic and community development which ensures that the receiving environment is adequately protected

5

Target: Improve environmental sustainability indicators

INDICATORS:

- Reduce the proportion of household and commercial waste going to landfill
- Increase the proportion of household and commercial waste recycled or composted
- Increase number of green economy enterprises
- Increase take up of energy efficiency and conservation initiatives
- Increase number of Blue Flag beaches to five
- Reduce car dependency
- Increase in number of funded environmental projects in the county
- Increase in number of environmental interest groups in the county, and registered with Sligo PPN
- 100% school participation in Green School Programme

| 5.1 Objective - Promote awareness of and policies supporting environmental sustainability and energy efficiency across all sectors | | | | | |
|--|--|---|---------------|---|-----------|
| | Actions | Target/Outcomes | Lead Agency | Support Agencies | Timeframe |
| 5.1.1 | Investigate the potential of developing a one-stop-shop to improve access to the huge and varied array of environmental, sustainability, energy efficiency, local ecological and geological information and resources that are available throughout the region, subject to Habitats Directive Assessment and Environmental Impact Assessment as appropriate | Improved access to environmental information | IT Sligo/ SCC | An Taisce, PPN Environmental College, IT Sligo, SEAI, Regional Stakeholders | M |
| 5.1.2 | Support various environmental awareness initiatives such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › The Green Schools programmes › Initiatives, publications and public information points on environmental issues › Advice and support to communities on controlling invasive species › Guidance and best practice in relation to maintaining and enhancing habitats › Support to communities in devising and implementing alternative waste strategies to reduce usage and minimise waste to landfill | Improve environmental awareness amongst young people in the community Reduction in waste to landfill | SCC | SEC, MSLETB, An Taisce, PPN Environmental College, IT Sligo | M |
| 5.1.3 | Implement an energy efficiency awareness campaign targeting SMEs, micro-enterprises and agriculture including energy audits | Reduce cost and improve energy efficiency in business and on farms | SEAI | LEO/SCC, EI, IDA, Teagasc, IFA, SLPCo, Sligo Chamber of Commerce | M |
| 5.1.4 | Require applications for community, economic and local development funding to demonstrate the environmental sustainability of the proposed initiatives | Better understanding of environmental impact of initiatives | LCDC | LEO/SCC, EI, IDA Teagasc, IFA, SLPCo, Sligo Chamber of Commerce | M |
| 5.1.5 | Provide training and information to Council members, other policy makers and the wider public to inform them of the importance of environmentally sustainable development | Reduce emissions | SCC | An Taisce, PPN Environmental College, IT Sligo | M |
| 5.1.6 | Develop eco-food initiatives that support local food markets and growers | Develop food producers network | LEO/SCC | Hospitality Sector, SLPCo | S |
| 5.1.7 | Support community participation in heritage matters through the Heritage Forum and Heritage Linkage Group of the PPN | More involvement by communities in heritage policy | SCC | Heritage Groups/PPN | S |



| 5.2 Objective - Enact policies that position Sligo as a leader in sustainable tourism while safeguarding our unique environmental infrastructure, landscape and built and natural heritage (linked to objective 1.7) | | | | | |
|--|--|--|-------------|--|-----------|
| | Actions | Target/Outcomes | Lead Agency | Support Agencies | Timeframe |
| 5.2.1 | To maximise the socio-economic and community benefits of the county's natural and built heritage by resourcing and implementing the County Sligo Heritage Plan and the County Sligo Biodiversity Action Plan | Better management and promotion of Sligo's unique built and natural heritage | SCC | Heritage Forum, SLPCo, LCDC | M-L |
| 5.2.2 | Research and develop Sligo's sustainable tourism product maximising opportunities arising from Sligo's unspoilt landscape and internationally significant heritage sites including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Provide guidance and information as appropriate to ensure that all development is environmentally sustainable and in keeping with accepted best practice to avoid a negative impact on habitats and sensitive landscapes › Research nature-based products on offer in the county and how many experiences are developed and marketed successfully overseas › Research opportunities for a biosphere/geo-park › Development of food trails that combine activities and cultural experiences with sustainability standards and use of local produce | Green tourism hub which promotes local produce | SCC | LEO, SLPCo, Coillte, Environmental organisations, FI, WDC, SSRP, Sligo Tourism, IFI, LCDC, | S-M |
| 5.2.3 | Maximise the tourism opportunities arising out of Sligo's significant marine, river and inland waterways assets subject to Habitats Directive Assessment and EIA as required to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Support access to and use of Sligo's lakes and rivers for sport, recreational and tourism opportunities including measures to avoid any negative environmental impact › Support Sligo's maritime islands both populated and unpopulated to develop their employment, heritage, sporting and cultural opportunities › Explore the feasibility of developing a riverside walk along the north bank of the Garavogue river to Hazelwood Estate › Support the development and promotion of angling at the local level by implementation of the IFI's National Strategy for Angling Development | Increase in tourism footfall | SCC | LEO, SLPCo, Inland Fisheries, FI, WDC, SSRP, Sligo Tourism, IFI, LCDC | M |
| 5.2.4 | Conservation, management, access and interpretation of Sligo's archaeological landscapes at Carrowmore/Knocknarea/Cairns Hill and Carrowkeel subject to Habitats Directive Assessment and EIA as required | Key attractions developed Increase in visitor numbers | SCC | LCDC, CSHF, DAHG, National Museum, OPW, FI, Sligo Tourism and local communities | |



| 5.3 Objective - Increase the local environmentally sustainable production, supply and use of alternative sources of energy | | | | | |
|--|--|--|---------------------------|---|-----------|
| | Actions | Target/Outcomes | Lead Agency | Support Agencies | Timeframe |
| 5.3.1 | <p>Support the development of biomass production in County Sligo:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Raise awareness amongst land/forest owners and rural communities of the farm diversification and rural enterprise opportunities for biomass production and supply ➤ Provide training (e.g. growing, harvesting, hauling, processing and selling) and business development support to producers ➤ Investigate the potential of a wood growers' co-operative in Sligo building on existing models in neighbouring counties | Increase in biomass | SLPCo/ Teagasc/ WDC | Teagasc, Coillte, Western Forestry Co-op, LCDC, SCC, Farming Organisations, WDC, SEAI | M |
| 5.3.2 | Promote the use of bioenergy fuels as sustainable, renewable and carbon neutral, and advance local expertise in the installation, operation and conversion of bioenergy fuels to energy | Increase take up in biofuels resulting in decrease in greenhouse gas emissions | SCC | SLPCo, Teagasc, Farming Organisations, WDC, SEAI, Western Forestry Co-op | M |
| 5.3.3 | Increase the capacity of the Renewable Energy and Sustainable Technology SME sector to engage in Research and Innovation activities that will lead to innovative product, process and service development | <p>Increase competitiveness</p> <p>Strengthen the economic fabric of the region by maintaining and creating employment</p> | IT Sligo / CREST | South West College Dumfries and Galloway College Cavan Innovation and Technology Institute, LEO/SCC | M |
| 5.3.4 | Ensure that sectors seeking to develop alternative sources of energy, such as the biomass, wind and wave, are supported in key policy documents such as the County Development Plan, to ensure that its potential to deliver on economic, social and environmental sustainability objectives is optimised | Facilitation through strategic planning | SCC | Teagasc, SLPCo, Farming Organisations, WDC, SEAI | S |



| 5.4 Objective - Support community involvement and participation in sustainable environmental initiatives | | | | | |
|--|---|--|-------------|---|-----------|
| | Actions | Target/Outcomes | Lead Agency | Support Agencies | Timeframe |
| 5.4.1 | Develop a sustainability framework/ index to capture all existing and proposed sustainability actions and a sustainability barometer to measure progress and impact of actions | Clear measurement of progress | IT Sligo | SCC, SEAI | M |
| 5.4.2 | Support the work of Tidy Towns, Green Schools and Clean Coasts groups and other implementing environmental initiatives | Greater environmental awareness | SCC | Tidy Towns, Green Coasts Group, PPN Environmental Pillar | S-M-L |
| 5.4.3 | Facilitate networking and sharing of information amongst environmental groups through the Public Participation Network | Greater civic participation in environmental issues and policy making | PPN | SCC | S |
| 5.4.4 | Develop a county-wide action plan for energy efficiency to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Investigating the potential of developing an Energy Agency for Sligo, which will conduct research, provide information and assist businesses and communities access funding and support for energy efficiency ➤ Training for policy and decision makers on sustainability ➤ Support for community based sustainable energy projects | Evidence-based approach to energy efficiency planning. Better supports for communities and businesses to reduce cost of energy | SCC | IT Sligo, SLPCo, SEAI, LCDC, Sligo Chamber of Commerce, LCDC, PPN | L |
| 5.4.5 | Promote the achieving of environmentally sustainable practices accreditation e.g. Eco-label, EMS, ISO | Improved take up of sustainable practices | LEO/SCC | Sligo Chamber of Commerce, EI, IDA, SEAI | M |
| 5.4.6 | Improve the energy efficiency of residential housing stock by promoting and maximising the take up of SEAI initiatives such as Better Energy Home Grants or Better Energy Community Grants | Greater take up of grant | SLPCo | SEAI, SCC, PPN | S-M-L |



7.6 Theme: Collaborative Framework

7.6.1 Overview of collaborative framework

The Local Economic and Community Plan is, in essence, a framework for collective action with the ultimate aim of improving quality of life for all in County Sligo. The traditional approach in this country has been for agencies and groups to work in silos, focused solely on their specific task or sectoral area, with little consideration or cognizance of the bigger picture, unless operationally necessary. The value of the Local Economic and Community Plan is that it challenges everyone to look at the bigger picture – at how we would like to see our county develop and asks what each of us can do to deliver on achieving this vision.

Collaboration amongst all stakeholders – including agencies, politicians, businesses, workers, farmers and communities – is essential, not only to ensure Sligo maximises opportunities for development but also to ensure that the resources available are used to maximum effect. Over the course of the consultation process a clear need was identified for a more structured and committed approach to collaboration. It has been included as a key theme and priority goal as it is critical that this plan is underpinned with specific actions to support on-going collective action. Such actions include the



sharing of resources and knowledge and the facilitation of events or initiatives that bring people together to look at the bigger picture and examine critically how effectively the county is progressing toward its agreed goals. This is also important as it creates a dynamic space for the generation and development of ideas as new opportunities arise.



7.6.2 Table of Objectives

Goal 6: We will create a framework for joint working through strategic planning, sharing of services and resources, evidence-based research and a clear commitment amongst all sectors to collaborative action

Target: Improve collaboration amongst all sectors

INDICATORS:

- Increase interagency working and local, regional, national and transnational partnerships
- Number of agencies participating in collaborative strategic planning/research events
- Number of agencies signed up to a Collaborative Charter

6.1

Objective - Develop a central portal for socio-economic research and data collection to support policy development in relation to economic and community planning and to maximise funding opportunities available to the county

| Actions | Target/ Outcomes | Lead Agency | Support Agencies | Timeframe |
|--|---------------------------|----------------|---|-----------|
| 6.1.1 Share learning and research in relation to community and economic development in the county through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The ongoing review, collation and updating of socio-economic data on the county ➤ The organisation of events to facilitate the sharing of learning | Shared research resources | IT Sligo/ LCDC | All public and community organisations, business sector | S-M-L |
| 6.1.2 Bring together all local organisations to review Sligo's progress in terms of economic, social, education, health and sustainable development | Annual conferences | LCDC | All public and community organisations, business sector | S-M-L |

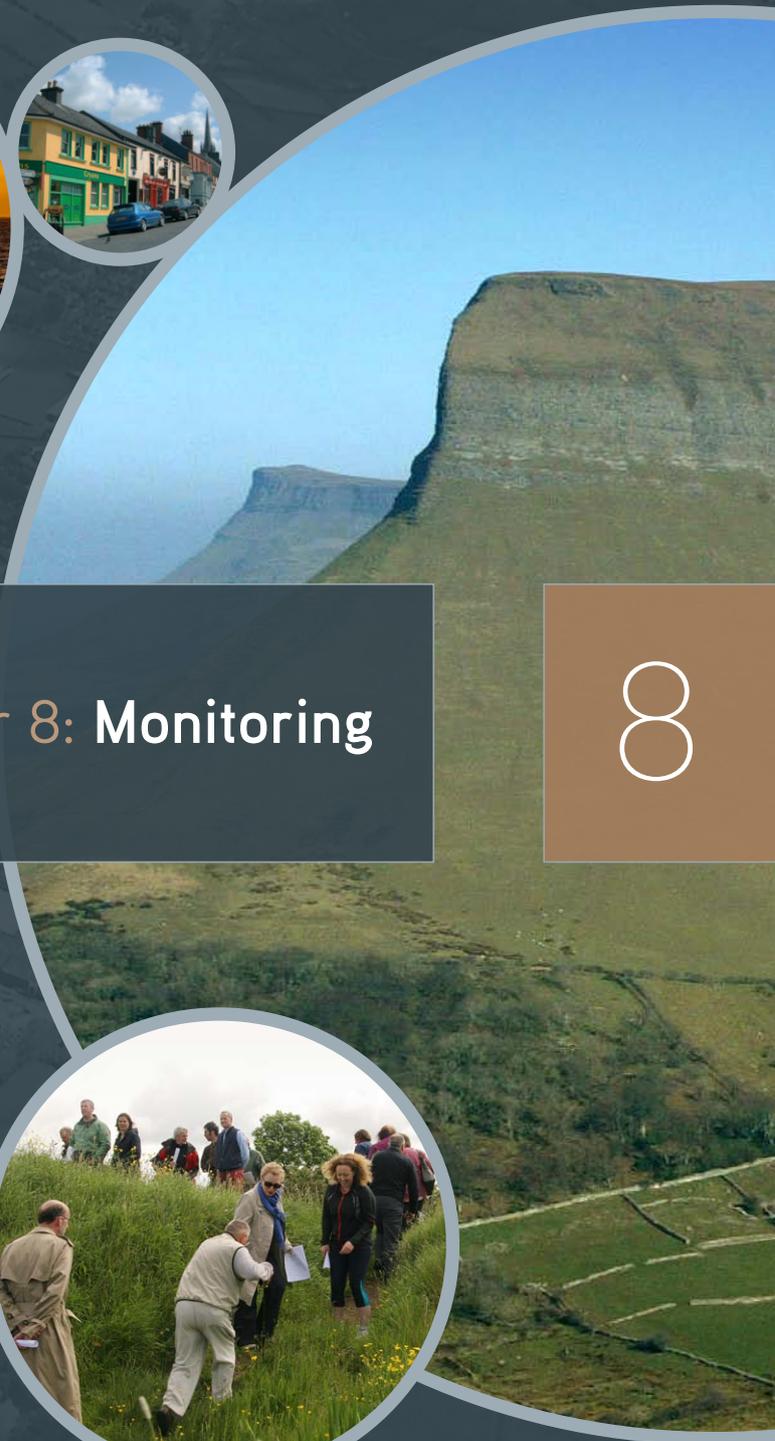


6.2

Objective - Identify areas for collaborative action in relation to training, development and strategic planning

| Actions | Target/ Outcomes | Lead Agency | Support Agencies | Timeframe |
|---|---|-------------|--|-----------|
| 6.2.1 Work with local organisations to provide training in relation to accessing funding for community and economic development initiatives | Improve capacity and take up of EU and national funding initiatives | LCDC | All public and community organisations, business sector | S |
| 6.2.2 Create a Collaborative Charter for Sustainable Economic and Community Development, that articulates and demonstrates the collective commitment of all to work together, in the interests of County Sligo which will identify indicators to monitor effective networking and collaborative initiatives | Number of organisations signed up to collaborative charter | LCDC | All public organisations and community organisations, business sector | S |
| 6.2.3 Explore the potential of regional, cross-border and transnational partnerships to advance local economic and community development | Number of partnerships | LCDC/ SCC | NWRA, LCC, MCC, DCC, RCC and other local, regional, national and international organisations | S-M-L |





➤ Chapter 8: Monitoring

8



Chapter 8: Monitoring



8.1 Advisory Steering Group

The Advisory Steering Group established to prepare the plan will be responsible for driving the monitoring of the plan's implementation.

The Advisory Steering Group is made up of:

- Nominees from the Local Community Development Committee
- Nominees from the Strategic Policy Committee
- Chief Officer of Sligo LCDC
- Director of Services with responsibility for Economic Development

(Membership of the Advisory Steering Group is set out in Appendix E)

The Advisory Steering Group will:

- meet a minimum of four times per year to review progress of the plan
- report to the LCDC and the SPC on progress
- identify key priorities on an annual basis
- invite all lead and support agencies to report on the progress of individual actions
- ensure that the plan is revised in the context of the new Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies due for completion in 2016
- ensure that the plan is revised in the context of the new County Development Plan for Sligo 2017-2022
- facilitate an annual symposium inviting all key stakeholders involved in local economic and community development to discuss the progress of the LECP in relation to the key objectives

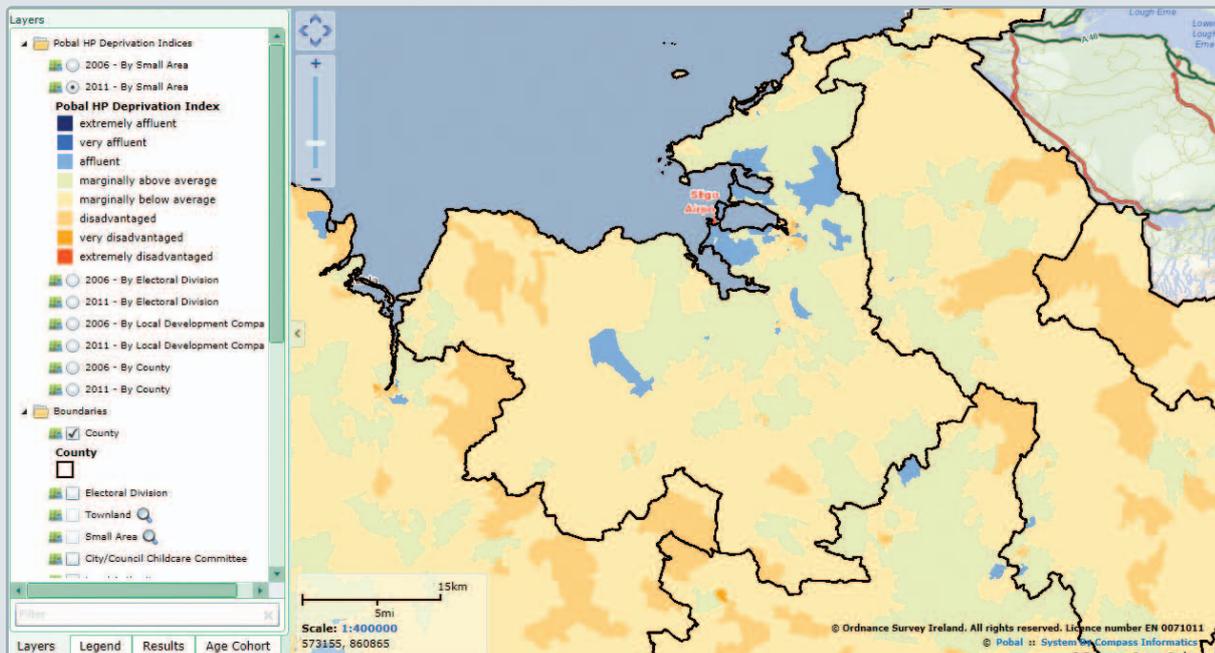
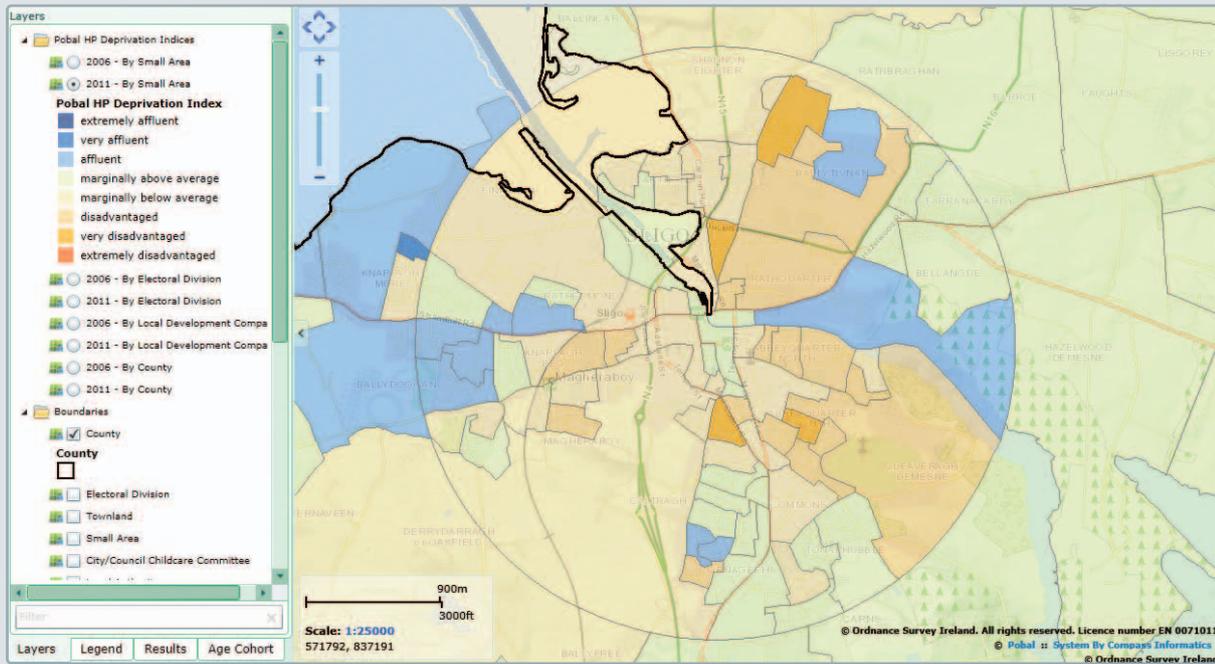


Appendices



A. Sligo Deprivation/Affluence Maps 2011

These maps illustrate the geographical areas of the City and County of Sligo with the highest levels of disadvantage or affluence, with red/orange indicating disadvantage to green/blue indicating areas above average to affluent. The black line denotes the county boundary. (For further information on geographically concentrated affluence/deprivation please see the HP Pobal Deprivation index maps at www.pobal.ie). The first map is of Sligo City and the second of the County.



B. Role and Function of the LCDC

Section 36 of the Local Government Reform Act 2014 provides for the establishment of a Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) by resolution of the local authority for the purposes of:

‘developing, co-ordinating and implementing a coherent and integrated approach to local and community development’ (S.36 LG Reform Act 2014)’

It will have primary responsibility for the planning and oversight of local development spend by local authorities on behalf of the state or by other local development agencies and structures. It will be responsible for:

- a. Ensuring an integrated approach to local and community development services
- b. Driving meaningful citizens’ engagement in scoping, planning and evaluating local and community development programmes
- c. Ensuring more efficient administration of local and community programmes, matching needs with resources, and achieving value for money in relation to the delivery and governance of programmes
- d. Enhancing the links between practice and policy by focusing on feedback and learning
- e. Exploring opportunities for additional funding resources for the area, whether exchequer, private or other resources

The functions of the LCDC are outlined under Section 128 (A) of the Local Government Reform Act 2014:

- a. Prepare the ‘community elements’ of the six-year LECP
- b. Implement or arrange for the implementation of the LECP
- c. Review the ‘community elements’ of the plan at least once over the six-year period and amend as considered necessary
- d. Monitor and review implementation of the community elements and revise actions and strategies as appropriate
- e. Co-ordinate the management and oversee the implementation of the programmes that have been approved either by the local authority or by agreement between the LCDC and other public bodies
- f. Ensure effectiveness, co-ordination, consistency and the avoidance of duplication between publicly-funded local and community development programmes
- g. Optimise resources for the benefit of local communities and improve the efficiency with which publicly-funded local and community development resources are used
- h. Consider and adopt a statement in respect of the economic elements of the plan to be prepared by the local authorities
- i. Prepare an annual report on the performance of its duties.



C. Members of Sligo Local Community Development Committee (LCDC)

| Name | Organisation |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Cllr. Seán MacManus (Chair) | Sligo County Council |
| Cllr. Sinéad Maguire | Sligo County Council |
| Cllr. Seamus Kilgannon | Sligo County Council |
| Mr. Ciarán Hayes (CE) | Sligo County Council |
| Mr. John Reilly | Local Enterprise Office |
| Mr. Kieran O'Dwyer | Department of Social Protection |
| Mr. Frank Morrison | Sligo/Leitrim/West Cavan HSE |
| Mr. Michael Burke | Mayo, Sligo, Leitrim ETB |
| Mr. Chris Gonley | Sligo LEADER Partnership Co. Ltd |
| Mr. Hugh MacConville | ICTU |
| Mr. Paul Keyes | Sligo Chamber of Commerce |
| Mr. Seán Tempany (Vice Chair) | Farming / Agriculture Interests |
| Mr. Michael Kirby | PPN - Environment Pillar |
| Ms. Bernadette Maughan | PPN - Social Inclusion |
| Ms. Sharon Boles | PPN - Social Inclusion |
| Mr. Gerald O'Connor | PPN - Community and Voluntary |
| Ms. Jackie Sweeney | PPN - Community and Voluntary |

D. Members of Sligo County Council Strategic Policy Committee (SPC) for Planning, Community and Economic Development, Arts and Culture

| Name | Organisation |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Cllr. Seán MacManus (Chair) | Sligo County Council |
| Cllr. Sinéad Maguire | Sligo County Council |
| Cllr. Seamus Kilgannon | Sligo County Council |
| Cllr. Hubert Keaney | Sligo County Council |
| Cllr. Marie Casserly | Sligo County Council |
| Cllr. Tom MacSharry | Sligo County Council |
| Cllr. Paul Taylor | Sligo County Council |
| Cllr. Rosaleen O'Grady | Sligo County Council |
| Mr. Anthony McCormack | Trade Union - SIPTU |
| Mr. Paul Keyes | Business / Employer Interests |
| Mr. Gerard Queenan | Farming / Agriculture Interests |
| Ms. Sue Mahon | PPN - Community and Voluntary |
| Ms. Rosaleen Doonan | PPN - Social Inclusion |

E. Members of the Advisory Steering Group for the preparation of LECP

| | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Cllr. Seán MacManus (Chair) | Chair SPC/Chair LCDC |
| Ms. Dorothy Clarke | Chief Officer/Director of Services SPC 3 |
| Mr. Chris Gonley | LCDC |
| Mr. Hugh MacConville | LCDC |
| Ms. Sharon Boles | LCDC |
| Mr. Paul Keyes | SPC |
| Cllr. Sinéad Maguire | SPC |
| Mr. John Reilly | nominee of Chief Officer |
| Ms. Margaret McConnell | nominee of Chief Officer |



H. Proofing Measures

Consideration has been given to assessing the impact of this plan on a number of horizontal priorities including sustainability, equality, poverty, rurality, age, disability and the environment and natural habitats. In order to integrate the process of proofing into the development of the LECP, a number of strategic, analytic, process-driven and participative measures were taken. These include:

Strategic measures:

1. Sustainability, equality, human rights, diversity and inclusion are reflected in vision statements for the county. The issue of social inclusion, poverty and equality was identified as a high-level priority for Sligo and a key theme for the plan
2. Environment and climate change was identified at an early stage as a high-level priority for Sligo and a key high-level priority theme for the plan.
2. Representatives of groups who experience high levels of social exclusion and poverty and/or are engaged in environmental activities were invited to participate in the workshops to develop specific objectives and actions under each theme. Groups represented at workshops included representatives of the Travelling community, new communities, people with disabilities, farming organisations, Age Friendly Alliance, community groups from disadvantaged urban and rural areas, trade unions, environmental groups and other civic society groups.

Analytic/Research measures:

1. Data has been collated in relation to 'communities of interest' in Sligo vulnerable to poverty and exclusion, to inform evidence-based planning and to provide a baseline for monitoring and implementation of the objectives of the plan
2. Local environmental indicators have been collated to inform evidence-based planning and provide a baseline for the monitoring and implementation of the objectives of the plan
3. A series of multi-agency thematic workshops were organised in relation to employment and economic activity, social inclusion and poverty, education and training, environment and climate change and health and wellbeing.
3. SEA (Strategic Environmental Assessment) and AA (Appropriate Assessment)/ Habitats Directive Assessment screening - The plan took account of the SEA Directive and Article 6 of the Habitats Directive and ensures compliance as appropriate. A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Appropriate Assessment (AA) were carried out by Sligo County Council to ensure that the LECP "screened out" under both the Strategic Environmental Assessment and Appropriate Assessment.

Participation in decision making:

Representatives of the Environment College and Social Inclusion Colleges of the Public Participation Network (PPN) have representation on the LCDC. PPN representatives also sit on the Advisory Steering Group for the LECP and the SPC for Planning, Community and Economic Development, Arts and Culture. PPN representatives have been particularly proactive in shaping and framing the LECP. The draft plan was circulated widely and amended following consideration of submissions.

Process related measures:

1. A number of cross-cutting themes in the form of prompt questions were integrated into the process for development of objectives and actions under each thematic area. Amongst these were Sustainable Development, Community Development, Rural Development, Cultural Development and Inclusion and Life-Cycle Planning. A matrix was devised to ensure that consideration was given to these themes (and a number of other cross-cutting considerations) in the development of objectives and actions.



I. Comparative Socio-Economic Indicators

| Population Indicators | Sligo | State |
|---|---------------|-----------------|
| Population (2011) | 65,393 | 4,588,252 |
| % Population Change 2006-2011 | +7.4% | +8.2% |
| Percentage of population living in rural areas | 62% | 38% |
| Percentage of population aged 66+ | 13.8% | 12.1% |
| Percentage of Population aged 0-14 | 20% | 21.3% |
| Age Vibrancy ⁶ | 33.8% | 33.1% |
| Age Dependency ⁷ | 51% | 49% |
| Projected Population 2020 ⁸ (RPG) | 76,000 | n/a |
| Population density (number of person per square kilometre) | 35 | 67 |
| Birth rate per 1000 population (2012) | 15.1 | 15.8 |
| Employment Indicators | Sligo | State |
| Total at work/(as % of total population) (CSO 2011) ⁹ | 25,434 (39%) | 1,807,360 (39%) |
| Labour Force Participation Rate (CSO 2011) ¹⁰ | 59% | 61.9% |
| Unemployment rate (CSO 2011) | 18.1% | 19% |
| Total No. on Live Register May 2015 (DSP) ¹¹ | 4,511 | 345,633 |
| No. on Live Register (Under 25) May 2015 (as % of total on Live Register) | 648 (14.4%) | 47,086 (13.6%) |
| No. on Activation Schemes (2013) | 1,503 | n/a |
| No. employed in Retail and Wholesale (as % of total at work) (2011) | 3,528 (14%) | 213,034(14.3%) |
| No. employed in Agriculture (as % of total at work) (2011) | 1,770 (7%) | 85,342 (5.7%) |
| No. employed in Manufacturing (as % of total at work) (2011) | 3,047 (12%) | 147,506 (9.9%) |
| No. employed in Public Sector (education, health, admin, social) | 9,318 (36.6%) | 25.9% |
| No. employed in Creative Industries (WDC) | 1,265 (4.2%) | n/a* |

* n/a -Not available

⁶ (Population age 0-14 and 66+ as a percentage of total population)

⁷ (Population age 0-14 and 66+ as a percentage of the working age population -15-65)

⁸ This figure is extracted from the Regional Planning Guidelines (2010-22). However the latest CSO population estimates in 2013 would indicate a much slower rate of growth than envisaged in 2010 and it is likely that the population in 2020 will be closer to 72,000.

⁹ The CSO employment/labour force/ unemployment relates to the **population 15 Years & Over. Department of Social Protection figures relate to population aged 18 and over**

¹⁰ The labour force participation rate is calculated by expressing the labour force (i.e. those at work, looking for first regular job and unemployed) as a percentage of the total aged 15 years and over.

¹¹ The Live register is specifically not designed to measure unemployment. It is primarily an administrative count. However, one of its main uses/purposes is as a short-term trend indicator of Unemployment.



| Economic Indicators | Sligo | State |
|---|-----------------------|----------------|
| Disposable Income (2013) | €18,211 | €19,055 |
| Childcare Costs 2015 (one child per week) | €160 p.w. | €165 p.w. |
| Average monthly rent 2015 | €583 | €794 |
| › Percentage change in weekly rent between 2006 and 2011 census | -8.5% | -7.6% |
| Tourism Revenue (2013 Source FI) | €83m Total | n/a |
| › Revenue from Overseas visitors | 44m | |
| › Revenue from Domestic visitors | 40m | |
| Agriculture (Source IFA County Profiles) | | |
| › Output (estimated) | €89m | n/a |
| › Farm size | 26.3 ha | |
| › No Farms | 4,395 | |
| › Land area farmed | 115,450 ha | |
| › Farm Income | €21.7m | |
| › Direct payments | €41m | |
| Aquaculture Output (source IFA County profile) | €1m | n/a |
| Forestry Output | €2.4m | n/a |
| Area of land under private forestry | 9,586 ha | 737,000 ha |
| Commercial Vacancy Rates (Q2 2014) – (Highest in Country) | 16% | 12.6% |
| Percentage of people employed in agency assisted enterprise (i.e. support by Enterprise Ireland or IDA) ¹² | 15.3% (3,882) | 19.3% |
| No. of IDA supported companies in Sligo/Numbers employed | 22 /2000 | n/a |
| No. of Enterprise Ireland supported companies in Sligo/Numbers employed | 54/1900 ¹³ | n/a |
| Percentage of enterprises with 0-10 employees (2012) | 91.3% | 90.6% |
| The no. of full-time equivalent jobs created with financial assistance from the LEO in 2014 | 73 | 4,012 |
| Social Indicators | Sligo | State |
| Traveller Population ¹⁴ – Rate per 1000 of population 2011 /persons (CSO) | 6.5 (428) | 6.4 (29,573) |
| Non Irish-nationals as a percentage of the total population | 9.9% | 12% |
| Persons with a disability as percentage of total population (persons) | 14% (9,248) | 13% (595,335) |
| Unpaid carers as a percentage of the total population (persons) | 4.8% (3,140) | 4.1% (187,112) |
| Relative Deprivation Score 2011 | -0.17 | 0.24 |
| Change in Absolute Deprivation between 2006 and 2011 | -6.7 | -6.5 |

* n/a –Not available

¹² Figures from Western Development Commission study Trends in Agency-assisted Employment in the Western Region -2015 (figures relate to 2013). It excludes businesses supported by the Local Enterprise Office

¹³ Data on numbers employed in companies supported by Enterprise Ireland is estimated based on profile of companies supported.

¹⁴ Note: The Traveller Census conducted by Sligo Traveller Support Group (STSG) in 2013 indicates that the Traveller Population of Sligo is higher than the CSO figures (i.e. 537 Travellers)



| Social Indicators (continued) | Sligo | State |
|--|--------------|-----------------|
| Ranking of affluence amongst local authority Areas 2006 | 13th | n/a |
| Ranking of affluence amongst local authority Areas 2011 | 12th | n/a |
| Total No. of Small Area Populations- SAPs ¹⁵ classified as | 307 | 18,488 |
| ‣ Extremely Affluent | 0 (0%) | 30 (0.2%) |
| ‣ Very Affluent | 1 (0%) | 472 (2.6%) |
| ‣ Affluent | 33 (11%) | 2,411 (13%) |
| ‣ Marginally Above Average | 115 (37%) | 6,234 (33.7%) |
| ‣ Marginally below Average | 123 (40%) | 6,483 (35.1%) |
| ‣ Disadvantaged | 31 (10%) | 2,408 (13%) |
| ‣ Very disadvantaged | 4 (1%) | 448 (2.4%) |
| ‣ Extremely disadvantaged | 0 (0%) | 2 (0) |
| <i>Source (HP Pobal Deprivation Index)</i> | | |
| Lone parent families | 10.1% | 10.9% |
| Average number of children per family | 1.4 | 1.4 |
| Percentage of schools and youth groups involved in the Youth Council / Comhairle na nÓg Scheme, Rol, 2012 | 50 | 57.8 |
| Overall number of community groups registered with the Sligo Public Participation Network (PPN) | 354 | |
| ‣ Number of social inclusion groups registered with the PPN | - 41 | |
| ‣ Number of sports groups registered with the PPN | - 66 | |
| Percentage of population involved in voluntary activities (CSO 2006) ¹⁶ | 23% | 21% |
| Recorded crime offences 2014 (Sligo Leitrim Garda Division) | 6,488 (3%) | 223,860 |
| Education indicators | Sligo | State |
| % of population 15 and over with primary education only | 16.6% | 15% |
| % of population between 15 and 64 that have a third level education (Labour Market Quality) | 30% | 24.4% |
| Average percentage of primary school children per school who are absent from school for 20 days or more in the school year, Rol 2010/11 | 10.9 | 10.6 |
| Average percentage of post-primary school children per school who are absent from school for 20 days or more in the school year, Rol 2010/11 | 17.8% | 18.4% |
| No. of people speaking languages other than English or Irish (2011) | 5,346 (8.2%) | 514,068 (11.2%) |
| No. of people with difficulty speaking English (not well/not at all) (2011) | 883 (1.4%) | 89,561 (2%) |
| Percentage of the population who can speak Irish / speak Irish on a daily basis outside education | 40% / 1% | 41.1% / 1.7% |
| Total 30-34 year olds with third level education | 38.7% | 48% |

* n/a –Not available

¹⁵ (i.e. Census clusters of between 100-400 people)

¹⁶ There was no question on voluntary activity included in the 2011 CSO

| Household Indicators | Sligo | State |
|---|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| Total households (CSO 2011) | 24,428 | 1,649,408 |
| All households having at least one motor car | 20,232 (82.8%) | 1,359,686 (82.4%) |
| All households not having a motor car | 4,196 (17%) | 289,722 (17.6%) |
| No. of people aged 15 and over who travel to work or school in ½hr or less | 67.5% | 55.9% |
| Vacancy in Housing ratio | 22% | 15% |
| Percentage of houses rented from local authority | 8% | 7.9 % |
| Percentage rented from private landlord | 17% | 17.5 % |
| Percentage households with loan or mortgage | 31% | 41.9 % |
| Percentage of households with a PC | 67.6% | 72.7% |
| Percentage of households with a broadband connection | 58.5% | 63.8% |
| Number of persons approved for SCC Social housing support (11 Jan 2016) | 1,077 | n/a |
| Average income for Social Housing Tenant in Sligo 2015 | €234 per week | n/a |
| Health Indicators | Sligo | State |
| Percentage of population that considers their health 'good' or 'very good'(CSO 2011) | 86.1% | 88.3% |
| Percentage of population with a disability (PWD) | 14% | 13% |
| Persons with a Disability with a difficulty going outside home alone | 32.7% | 28.3% |
| Infant mortality Rate (CSO 2010) per 100,000 | 3.2 | 3.6 |
| Live birth per females under 20 (per 1000) | 9.8 | 12.3 |
| Breastfeeding rates at times of discharge | 33.1% | 46.6% |
| Psychiatric in-patient admission rate (standardised per 100,000) | 492.4 | 413.9 |
| Suicide Rate (standardised per 100,000) | 9.5 | 11.1 |
| Deliberate Self Harm 2012 (Rate per 100,000) ➤ Males/ Females | 209/160 | 195/228 |
| Treatment for problem alcohol use ¹⁷ (standardised per 100,000) 3rd highest in country | 287.6 | 157 |
| Percentage of people who are obese, RoI 2007 | 15.9 | 14.4 |
| Male incidence of malignant prostate cancer (Standardised Rates 2011) | 211.2 | 158.7 |
| Female incidence of malignant melanoma (Standardised Rates 2011) | 29 | 19.6 |
| Rate of admissions to hospital for circulatory diseases per 100,000 2013 | 7,413.7 | 4,495.6 |
| Directly age and gender standardised rate per 100,000 of emergency admissions to hospital for asthma and diabetes, 2013 | 1,308.7 | 907.7 |
| Immunisation uptake (MMR1) | 94 | 93 |
| Proportion of persons covered by medical cards per 1000 | 448 (Sligo/ Leitrim) | 406 |
| Life Expectancy ➤ Males/Females | (Border Region) 77/ 81.7 | 78.6/83 |

* n/a –Not available

¹⁷ National Drug Treatment Reporting System 2012)


| Environment indicators | Sligo | State |
|---|--------------|---------------|
| Blue Flag Beaches / Green Coast Awards | 1 /4 | 76 /54 |
| Renewable Energy Capacity - Existing Wind Energy mws | 49.15mw | 1,751 mw |
| Percentage of children aged 5-12 who walk or cycle to school | 16% | 25.8% |
| Household Waste (2014) Source Sligo County Council | | |
| ‣ % going to landfill (increase/decrease 2009-2014) | 65% (+11.8%) | n/a |
| ‣ % recycled (increase/decrease 2009-2014) | 32% (-12%) | n/a |
| ‣ % organic (increase/decrease 2009-2014) | 2.7% (+.36%) | n/a |
| Commercial Waste (2014) | | |
| ‣ % going to landfill (increase/decrease 2009-2014) | 70% (-19%) | n/a |
| ‣ % recycled (increase/decrease 2009-2014) | 24.7% (+14%) | n/a |
| ‣ % organic (increase/decrease 2009-2014) | 5.2% (+5.2%) | n/a |
| Heating/energy | | |
| ‣ households with oil fired central heating | 15,332 (65%) | 711,330 (43%) |
| ‣ households with natural gas | 601 (2%) | 550,215 (33%) |
| ‣ households with wood pellets | 353 (1%) | 21,395 (1%) |
| No. of schools participating in Environmental Initiatives | 100% | 92% |
| Households by type of Waste Water Treatment Facility (CSO 2011) | | |
| ‣ Public Scheme | 50% | 66% |
| ‣ Individual Septic Tank | 42% | 27% |
| Housing Units by type of Water Supply CSO 2011 | | |
| ‣ Public mains | 68.6% | 75.6% |
| ‣ Local authority group scheme | 15.8% | 8.8% |
| ‣ Private group scheme | 5.4% | 2.8% |
| ‣ Other private source | 6.4% | 9.8% |
| ‣ No piped water | 0.1% | 0.1% |
| ‣ Not stated | 3.7% | 2.0% |
| Percentage of the population served by public water supplies (EPA) | 82% | 82.% |
| Drinking Water Quality in Public Water Schemes (EPA) | | |
| ‣ Microbiological compliance 2012 | 100% | n/a |
| ‣ Chemical compliance 2012 | 98.6% | 99.3% |
| ‣ No. of boil water notices 2012 | 2 | 47 |
| Number of voluntary groups engaged in environmental activities registered with the Sligo Public Participation Network | | |
| ‣ Groups engaged in conservation/ecological activities | 12 | n/a |
| ‣ Tidy Towns Groups | 12 | n/a |
| ‣ Residents Associations | 47 | n/a |
| ‣ Heritage Groups | 19 | n/a |

* n/a –Not available



J. Matrix of priority and cross-cutting themes

| | HIGH LEVEL GOALS | Employment and Economic Activity | Education, Training and Skills | Social Inclusion, Equality and Poverty | Climate Change and Environment | Health and Wellbeing |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|---|---|--|------------------------------------|
| | <i>HIGH LEVEL TARGETS</i> | <i>Increase in employment</i> | <i>Increase in educational attainment rates</i> | <i>Decrease in poverty</i> | <i>Reduction in greenhouse emissions</i> | <i>Increase in life expectancy</i> |
| CROSS CUTTING OBJECTIVES | Promoting Sligo | | | | | |
| | Tourism Development | | | | | |
| | Enterprise & Job Creation | | | | | |
| | Community & Rural Development | | | | | |
| | Culture & Inclusion | | | | | |
| | Life-cycle Planning | | | | | |
| | Sustainable Development | | | | | |
| | Infrastructure & Spatial Planning | | | | | |



K. Abbreviations

| | | | |
|-----------------|---|----------------|--|
| ASG | Advisory Steering Group | LECP | Local Economic and Community Plan |
| BIC | Business Innovation Centre | LEO | Local Enterprise Office |
| BIDS | Business Improvement District Sligo | MCC | Mayo County Council |
| CAILM | Communities Against Illegal Lending of Money | MD | Municipal District |
| CAMHS | Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services | MGS | Music Generation Sligo |
| CCE | Comhaltas Ceoltoirí Éireann | MHI | Mental Health Ireland |
| CDO | Community Development Objective | MSLETB | Mayo Sligo Leitrim Education Training Board |
| CDP | County Development Plan | NCYCS | North Connaught Youth and Community Service |
| CEDRA | Commission for the Economic Development of Rural Areas | NEPS | National Educational Psychological Service |
| CREST | Centre for Renewable Energy and Sustainable Technology | NRA | National Roads Authority |
| CRP | Cranmore Regeneration Project | NSS | National Spatial Strategy |
| CSHF | County Sligo Heritage Forum | NTA | National Transport Authority |
| CSO | Central Statistics Office | NWRA | Northern and Western Regional Assembly |
| CYPSC | Children and Young Persons Services Committee | NWRDATF | North West Regional Drug and Alcohol Task Force |
| DAHG | Department of Arts, Heritage and Gaeltacht | OECD | Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development |
| DCC | Donegal County Council | PPN | Public Participation Network |
| DECLG | Department of Environment, Community and Local Government | PWD | People with Disabilities |
| DES | Department of Education and Science | RA | Regional Assembly |
| DFI | Disability Federation of Ireland | RCC | Roscommon County Council |
| DSP | Department of Social Protection | RDP | Rural Development Programme |
| DTTS | Department of Tourism, Transport and Sport | REDZ | Rural Economic Development Zones |
| DVAS | Domestic Violence Advocacy Service | RHP | Resource House Project |
| EI | Enterprise Ireland | RoI | Republic of Ireland |
| EPA | Environmental Protection Agency | RPA | Railway Procurement Agency |
| ERDF | European Rural Development Fund | RPG | Regional Planning Guidelines |
| FDI | Foreign Direct Investment | RSES | Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies |
| FRC | Family Resource Centre | SCC | Sligo County Council |
| HEA | Higher Education Authority | SCCC | Sligo County Childcare Committee |
| HSE | Health Service Executive | SEAI | Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland |
| HYLS | Home Youth Liaison Service | SEC | Sligo Education Centre |
| ICT | Information Communication Technology | SEDO | Sustainable Economic Development Objective |
| IDA | Industrial Development Agency | SICAP | Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme |
| IFA | Irish Farmers Association | SIF | Sligo Intercultural Forum |
| IFI | Inland Fisheries Ireland | SLPCo | Sligo Leader Partnership Company |
| IT SLIGO | Institute of Technology Sligo | SMEs | Small and Medium-sized Enterprises |
| ITSSU | IT Sligo Student Union | SPC | Strategic Policy Committee |
| IW | Irish Water | SSRP | Sligo Sport and Recreation Partnership |
| JPC | Joint Policing Committee | SSSC | Sligo Social Services Council |
| LA | Local Authority | STSG | Sligo Traveller Support Group |
| LAG | Local Action Group | SVC | Sligo Volunteer Centre |
| LCC | Leitrim County Council | SVP | St Vincent de Paul |
| LCCC | Leitrim County Childcare Committee | TCU | Transport Co-ordination Unit |
| LCDC | Local Community Development Committee | TIG | Traveller Interagency Group |
| LDS | Local Development Strategy | TII | Transport Infrastructure Ireland |
| | | WDC | Western Development Commission |

L. Acknowledgements

Listed hereunder are the many organisations who made a contribution to the drafting of the LECP. In addition many individuals on their own behalf made a contribution. Sligo County Council would like to acknowledge all these efforts. We place a high value on all those contributions in whatever form they took and wish to offer a huge thank you to all those individuals and organisations who took the time and had the interest to contribute.

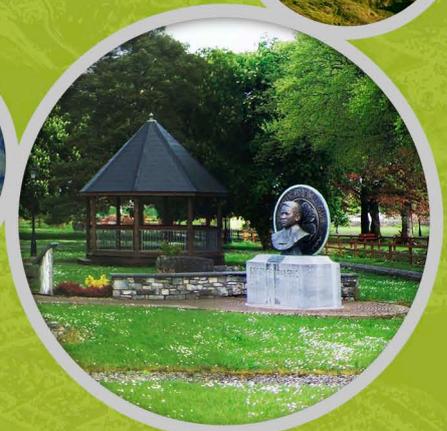
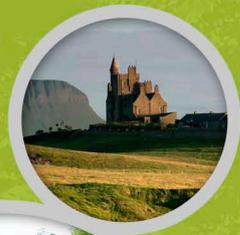
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|----|---|----|---|
| 1 | Abbeyquarter Men's Group | 38 | IDA |
| 2 | Age Friendly Ireland & the formative Sligo Age Friendly Alliance | 39 | Inland Fisheries Ireland |
| 3 | An Taisce | 40 | Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU) |
| 4 | Area 4 Art Studios | 41 | IT Sligo |
| 5 | Association for Nordic/Irish Traditional Working Boats and Maritime Heritage Exchange | 42 | IT Sligo - Access Officer |
| 6 | AVA Systems | 43 | IT Sligo - Applied Archaeology |
| 7 | Birdwatch Ireland | 44 | IT Sligo - Business & Social Sciences |
| 8 | Blue Raincoat Theatre Company | 45 | IT Sligo - Environmental Science Department |
| 9 | Business in Communities | 46 | IT Sligo - Registrar |
| 10 | Children & Young People's Services Committee | 47 | Joe McDonnell Drive Residents Association |
| 11 | Clean Coast Group | 48 | Keenaghan Research & Communications |
| 12 | Collooney Allotments | 49 | Kids Own Publishing Partnership |
| 13 | Collooney Tidy Towns | 50 | LCDC |
| 14 | Collooney Village Re-development Ltd. | 51 | Lifestart |
| 15 | Communities Against Illegal Lending of Money (CAILM) | 52 | Local Enterprise Office |
| 16 | County Sligo Racecourse | 53 | Local Link Sligo Leitrim Roscommon |
| 17 | Cranmore Community Co-op | 54 | Mayo Sligo Leitrim Education Training Board |
| 18 | Cranmore Regeneration Project Office | 55 | Moygara Castle Research Project |
| 19 | Department of the Environment, Community & Local Government | 56 | Muintir na Tíre; Community Alert; Lend a Hand |
| 20 | Department of Social Protection | 57 | Mullaghmore Active Development Group |
| 21 | Department of Social Protection - Intreo Centre | 58 | Mullaghmore Residents & Heritage Association |
| 22 | Disability Federation of Ireland | 59 | Music Generation Sligo |
| 23 | Domestic Violence Advocacy Service | 60 | North Sligo Community |
| 24 | Easkey Community Council | 61 | North West Hospice |
| 25 | Ecotourism Ireland | 62 | North West Regional Drug & Alcohol Task Force |
| 26 | EirGrid | 63 | North West Sea Kayaking Association |
| 27 | Enterprise Ireland | 64 | Northern & Western Regional Assembly |
| 28 | Focus Ireland | 65 | Pavee Point |
| 29 | Foróige | 66 | PPN |
| 30 | Gaisce - (Youth Consultation) | 67 | Real Tubber FC |
| 31 | Grange & Armada Development Association | 68 | Rennafix Group |
| 32 | HSE | 69 | Rowantree Gardens Association |
| 33 | HSE - Health Promotion & Improvement; Health & Wellbeing Division | 70 | Sabona Community Productions & Loch Bo Films |
| 34 | HSE - Mental Health Promotion | 71 | SIPTU - (Health Division) |
| 35 | HSE - Primary Care | 72 | Sligo Arts Service - Artist Panel |
| 36 | HSE - Sligo/Leitrim/West Cavan | 73 | Sligo Business Improvement District |
| 37 | HSE - West | 74 | Sligo Chamber of Commerce & Industry |
| | | 75 | Sligo Community Gardens |
| | | 76 | Sligo County Childcare Committee |
| | | 77 | Sligo County Community Forum |

L. Acknowledgements (continued)

| | | | |
|-----|--|-----|--|
| 78 | Sligo County Council | 102 | Sligo Northside Community Partnership Ltd. |
| 79 | Sligo County Council - Architects Office | 103 | Sligo Orpheus Choir |
| 80 | Sligo County Council - Arts Office | 104 | Sligo Regeneration Independent Community Liaison |
| 81 | Sligo County Council - Community & Economic Development | 105 | Sligo Samaritans |
| 82 | Sligo County Council - Cranmore Regeneration Office | 106 | Sligo Sport & Recreation Partnership |
| 83 | Sligo County Council - Environmental Services | 107 | Sligo Tourism Ltd. |
| 84 | Sligo County Council - Heritage Office | 108 | Sligo Traveller Support Group |
| 85 | Sligo County Council - Housing Department | 109 | Sligo Volunteer Centre |
| 86 | Sligo County Council - Infrastructure (Piers & Harbours) | 110 | SÓ Sligo Food Festival |
| 87 | Sligo County Council - Infrastructure (Roads & Transportation) | 111 | Social Inclusion Pillar of PPN |
| 88 | Sligo County Council - Planning Department | 112 | South Sligo Athletics Club |
| 89 | Sligo County Council - River Basin Management Plans | 113 | South Sligo Community Park Ltd. |
| 90 | Sligo County Council - Sligo Library | 114 | St. Angela's College |
| 91 | Sligo Cycles | 115 | Strategic Policy Committee 2 |
| 92 | Sligo Family Resource Centre | 116 | Strategic Policy Committee 3 |
| 93 | Sligo Field Club | 117 | Sustainable Energy Ireland |
| 94 | Sligo GAA | 118 | Swell Sligo |
| 95 | Sligo IFA | 119 | Teagasc |
| 96 | Sligo Intercultural Forum | 120 | The Carers Association |
| 97 | Sligo International Choral Festival | 121 | The Model |
| 98 | Sligo Leader Partnership Company | 122 | Transition Sligo |
| 99 | Sligo Leader Partnership Company - Rural Development Programme | 123 | Tubbercurry Family Resource Centre |
| 100 | Sligo Live | 124 | West on Track |
| 101 | Sligo North West Airport Co. Plc. | 125 | Western Development Commission |
| | | 126 | Yeats Interpretive Centre Steering Group & Founder Group |







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