



Minutes of Virtual Meeting of Sligo Local Community Development Committee

Thursday 25th February 2021 at 9.30a.m.

Community Virtual Meeting Room

PRESENT

Councillor Dara Mulvey (by video)	Local Government Member	Sligo County Council
Councillor Joseph Queenan (by phone)	Local Government Member	Sligo County Council
Mr. Tom Kilfeather (by video)	Local Government /Deputy CE	Sligo County Council
Mr. John Reilly (by video)	Local Government / LEO	Sligo County Council
Ms. Patricia Garland (by phone/video)	State Agency	Sligo/Leitrim/West Cavan HSE
Mr. John Kennedy (by video)	State Agency	Dept. of Employment Affairs & Social Protection
Mr. Peter Egan (by video)	State Agency	Mayo, Sligo, Leitrim ETB
Mr. John Feerick (by video)	Local Development Sector	Sligo LEADER Partnership CLG
Mr. Aidan Doyle (by video)	Business Interests	Sligo Chamber of Commerce
Mr. Michael Kirby (by video)	Environmental Interests	Environment Pillar (PPN)
Dr. Jennifer Van Aswegen (by phone)	Social Inclusion	PPN
Mr. Gerry O'Connor (by video)	Community & Voluntary	PPN
Ms. Kathleen Henry (by phone)	Farming / Agriculture Interests	Farming / Agriculture Pillar

APOLOGIES /ABSENT

Councillor Tom Fox	Local Government Member	Sligo County Council
Mr. Hugh MacConville	Trade Union Interests	Irish Congress of Trade Unions
Ms. Elizabeth King	Social Inclusion	PPN

IN ATTENDANCE

Ms. Dorothy Clarke	LCDC Chief Officer	Sligo County Council
Ms. Aisling Smyth	Administrative Officer	Sligo County Council
Ms. Fiona Gilligan	Staff Officer	Sligo County Council
Ms. Marcella McGarry	Healthy Ireland Co-Ordinator	Sligo County Council
Ms. June Murphy	Programme Manager	Sligo LEADER Partnership CLG
Dr. Robert Hensey (Presentation at Item 4)	Chairperson, Sligo Neolithic Landscapes	
Mr. Pdraig Meehan (Presentation at Item 4)	Sligo Neolithic Landscapes	

Councillor Dara Mulvey, Chairperson welcomed Mr. Peter Egan who is replacing Ms. Mary Brodie as the MSLETB representative on the LCDC.

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No conflict of interest was declared.

2. MINUTES OF MEETING OF 17TH DECEMBER 2020

Minutes of the last meeting held on the 17th December 2020 were proposed by Mr. Michael Kirby seconded by Mr. John Feerick and agreed.

3. MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

4. SLIGO'S BID FOR TENTATIVE LIST OF UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITE STATUS – PRESENTATION FROM SLIGO NEOLITHIC LANDSCAPE GROUP

Ms. Dorothy Clarke introduced this item and advised Members of Sligo's bid for inclusion on the Tentative List of UNESCO World Heritage Site status. Sligo County Council is currently working with the Sligo Neolithic Landscapes group and other key stakeholders to submit an application to Ireland's Tentative List of World Heritage Sites by the 30th June 2021.

Dr. Robert Hensey, Chairperson of Sligo Neolithic Landscapes then gave a presentation to Members. Dr. Hensey advised of concerns over the increased visitor pressure and the deteriorating condition of Sligo's Neolithic passage tombs. Many of these world class monuments are under threat and require long-term management and conservation for the benefit of all and future generations. It was noted that no site can be nominated for World Heritage status without first being placed on Ireland's Tentative List.

The Department is responsible for deciding which sites should be placed on the Tentative List and for submitting any eventual World Heritage nominations to UNESCO.

Dr. Hensey advised of the benefits for Sligo if successful in their bid which include;

- Raise national & international profile
- Sustainable Tourism model
- Management Plan to protect our Neolithic heritage
- Supports & potential funding for farmers and communities.

Councillor Dara Mulvey thanked Dr. Hensey and Mr. Pdraig Meehan for their presentation.

Ms. Kathleen Henry raised concerns in relation to consultation with the Farming community and extended an invitation to Sligo Neolithic Landscapes group to meet with Farmers and the local community. Ms. Henry expressed her disappointment that this matter was on national media before consultation had taken place.

Ms. Clarke advised that RTÉ had approached the Council about the Bid and that it is the intention of Sligo County Council and Sligo Neolithic Landscapes group to make presentations to all farmers. Time and date to be agreed with the IFA and other farming organisations.

Ms. Clarke confirmed that if the bid is successful, extensive consultations will take place and asked for patience in this regard as it is only the beginning of a long process.

5. SICAP

a) 2020 Annual Performance Review – for Approval

i. Reports uploaded by SLPC

- Signed Lot Cost Charged Report
- Lot Summary Report
- 2020 Annual Progress Report

ii. LCDC Checklist including Pobal's Feedback & breakdown of Individuals Caseload by Target Group

iii. Recommendation of the Social Inclusion & SICAP Monitoring Committee

b) Annual Plan for 2021 – For approval

c) Correspondence

- i. Just published Annual Report on Intra-EU labour mobility – DRCD email 12.1.21
- ii. Pobal email 28.1.21 re SICAP FAQs version 1.9
- iii. Pobal Feedback on the 2020 Case Study (12.2.21)
- iv. Covid Stakeholder Communication – Pobal email 22.2.21
- v. AONTAS Adult Learners' Festival Involvement Request 2021 – DRCD email 23.2.21

d) Verification/Site visits (Virtual) – Q1 2021

a) (i) Reports pertaining to the **2020 Annual Performance Review** were circulated in advance of the meeting. Ms. Aisling Smyth advised of review carried out by LCDC support staff in January. Sligo LEADER submitted required reports listed above as part of this review. It was noted that Ms. June Murphy prepared a summary of the 2020 Annual Progress report which was forwarded to Members on the 23rd February. Ms. Murphy then briefed Members on progress during 2020.

(ii) Ms. Smyth briefly outlined the **LCDC Checklist report** which incorporates feedback from Pobal. The Checklist report covers all aspects of the review including achievement of targets under SICAP Goals with both annual targets exceeded at 31st December 2020, breakdown of Target Groups supported and comparison with National figures and adherence to Budget parameters. Financial reports are also included in the Checklist report with rationale provided by Sligo LEADER Partnership in areas of under/over spend on Actions. It was noted that all spend is compliant with Programme Requirements for SICAP.

Ms. Smyth also advised of positive feedback from Pobal's Report including their feedback on the 2020 Case study *Sligo Food Run, A Collaborative Success Story*, describing it as a strong case study with potential for sharing good practice in how provision of food support led to engagement with the most vulnerable families.

(iii) **Report of Recommendation of the Social Inclusion & SICAP Monitoring Committee** was circulated in advance of the meeting. Ms. Smyth advised that the Social Inclusion & SICAP Monitoring Committee met on the 22nd February to consider the 2020 Annual Performance review. Members acknowledged the work of Sligo LEADER Partnership and the LCDC support staff in delivering and managing SICAP during a very challenging year. Following their meeting the Committee made a recommendation to the LCDC that the 2020 Review be approved.

Formal approval of the LCDC to the 2020 Annual Performance Review for SICAP was proposed by Mr Gerry O'Connor, seconded by Ms. Kathleen Henry and agreed.

b) In relation to the **2021 Annual Plan**, Ms. Aisling Smyth advised that the draft Plan was circulated at the December meeting of the LCDC with opportunity for Members to provide feedback/comment. Since then the LCDC support staff and Pobal have carried out a review with the updated report circulated to Members in advance of this meeting. Ms. June Murphy prepared a summary report of the 2021 Plan and briefly outlined proposed actions under SICAP Goals.

Formal approval of the LCDC to the 2021 Annual Plan for SICAP was proposed by Mr John Kennedy MacConville, seconded by Councillor Dara Mulvey and agreed.

c) **Correspondence** listed under the SICAP item was circulated in advance of the meeting. Ms. Aisling Smyth outlined correspondence which was noted by Members.

d) With regards **Verification/Site visits (Virtual) for Quarter 1 of 2021** it was noted that unfortunately due to Covid restrictions it was not possible to carry out verification/site visits for the last few months. Ms. Smyth advised Members of a suggestion by the Internal Auditor to re-commence verifications virtually. This was agreed by the Social Inclusion & SICAP Monitoring Committee at their meeting on 22nd February. Ms. June Murphy suggested the following for Q1 Virtual verifications;

- 11th March - Bird Watching talks via zoom
- 16th March - QQI Level 4 Online Community Mentoring and Advocacy Training –Communications Module with SIPTU

Email to issue to Members shortly with zoom links to issue to those who confirm attendance.

6. UPDATE ON HEALTHY IRELAND PROGRAMME & COMMUNITY RESILIENCE FUND

A report outlining the update on the Healthy Ireland Programme was circulated to Members in advance of the meeting. Ms. Marcella McGarry briefed Members on this report and advised of updates since the December meeting of the LCDC, which include ongoing liaison with Pobal and Project leads. Ms. McGarry advised that Level 5 restrictions imposed in January 2021 had led to some projects and planned activities being paused with plans to resume at a later date when restrictions are eased. Despite this curtailment, projects which can be delivered virtually are progressing and the community has been able to benefit from activities as outlined in report.

Members were advised that Pobal and the Department of Health have agreed to extend the delivery timeframe of Healthy Ireland Round 3 funded activity from 30th June 2021 to 31st December 2021 in light of the impact of Covid 19 on programme delivery.

With regards the Community Mental Health Action: *A Community Solution to Mental Health and Wellbeing*, Ms. McGarry advised that this action was led by the Centre for independent Living (CIL) CLG in partnership with the HSE Service Reform Unit. Its focus was to conduct a scoping and feasibility study to inform the establishment of a fully inclusive wellness hub in Sligo with outreach across the entire county. The project fund was €32,019, however due to the impact of Covid 19, CIL have advised that it will not be possible to deliver on the development of services for a Wellness Hub within the time frame of the Community Mental Health Fund. The funding for this element of the project is €23,019. The Healthy Sligo Team have discussed options for alternative use of the €23,019 budget with Pobal, in particular a project working with schools to address the health and wellbeing of young people and their parents.

Ms. McGarry advised that Pobal are open to this proposal and have requested further information. The Social Inclusion & SICAP Committee is also supportive of developing this action further.

In relation to the Community Mental Health Small Grants, Ms. McGarry advised that there are currently three projects out of ten that have progressed since November 2020, one of which - the Eastern Harps Healthy Club Project received coverage on RTE Six One News on the 13th February.

With regards the promotion of the Governments Keep Well Campaign (National and Local), Ms. McGarry advised that the Healthy Sligo Team continue to promote the Government's Keep Well Campaign at a local level by promoting initiatives that are in-keeping with the campaign messages through the Councils website and social media handles. The Keep Well campaign is also promoted through the actions of the Healthy Sligo Plan and through the actions set out in the Community Resilience Plan.

At the December meeting of the LCDC, Members were advised of an allocation of €67,225 for Sligo under the Community Resilience Fund, to activate and deliver on key actions under the themes of **"Your County"**, **"Staying Connected"** and **"Switching off and being creative"**.

The Sligo Plan was developed by the Healthy Sligo Co-ordinator in collaboration with members of the Covid Community Response Forum and sets out 16 practical, collaborative actions to be delivered by June 2021. Projects include the Virtual Christmas Tree (promoted in December 2020), Virtual Cook Along for older People, Live at 3, Acorn Pad Programme for Nursing Homes and the development of a suite of videos to demonstrate community resilience in action in Sligo.

7. UPDATE ON PPN

Report circulated to Members in advance of the meeting. Mr. Michael Kirby briefed Members on PPN activity since the December meeting of the LCDC and advised of ongoing work in relation to the completion of the Wellbeing statement for the County. The deadline for completion of the Wellbeing statement has been extended due to Covid 19.

Mr. Kirby advised of a meeting of the National Advisory Group on the 11th February where the focus was on the review of LCDCs and LECs and the role of PPNs, national PPN Structural reviews and the Climate Conversations process with the Dept of the Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC). Sligo's PPN Resource Worker, Ms. Sarah Wetherald has been nominated to sit on the national oversight committee for the national PPN structural review and also the tender panel for the upcoming national communications strategy.

Mr. Kirby also advised of the recent launch of the research document by Social Justice Ireland "Delivering Deliberative Democracy – the roles of PPNs in Local Government Decision Making". Sligo PPN is involved in national research across the PPN to get a sense of the experiences of PPN reps on SPCs and other committees.

It was noted that Sligo PPN is one of ten PPNs selected to host upcoming Community Conversations consultation in partnership with the DECC for the upcoming National Climate Action Plan.

Members were also advised of upcoming election to elect a PPN rep to the LCDC following the recent resignation of Ms. Mary Murphy.

Mr. Kirby advised that the PPN have been notified by the NWRDATF that they will no longer be using the PPN structure for the election of community representatives to the Taskforce.

8. ROUND 2 OF THE COVID19 EMERGENCY FUND GRANT SCHEME

Report circulated to Members in advance of the meeting. Ms. Aisling Smyth advised Members of the Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD) announcement in December 2020 of a further €1.7 million being provided by the Government to support community and voluntary groups to deal with the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. It was noted that this funding is in addition to the initial €2.5 million provided in April 2020 which had been managed by way of a targeted call to groups participating in the 'Community Call'.

Ms. Smyth advised that this additional round of funding was to be administered via an open call for applications similarly to the Community Enhancement Programme (CEP) with the allocation to be approved by the Local Community Development Committees (LCDCs) in each Local Authority area. The allocation to Sligo LCDC is €44,543; however in addition to this the DRCD advised that the unallocated balance of €13,229 from the initial round be combined to the new allocation thereby increasing the overall budget for Sligo to **€57,772**.

Ms. Smyth further advised that the parameters of the scheme as set down by the Department were quite broad in that the grants under this fund can assist local community and voluntary groups to adapt their services and operations to fit the new COVID-19 reality or to become more involved in the Government's 'Keep Well' campaign.

Similar to the CEP Scheme, there were 2 categories of award for which applicants could apply

- Ring-fenced sums of up to €1,000
- Grants in excess of €1,001

A total of 65 applications were received by the closing date of 12th February. All applications were assessed for compatibility with the guidelines as set out by the DRCD and scored accordingly.

57 Applications were recommended for funding and were listed on Appendix 1 of report circulated.

As one of the applications recommended for funding was from Easkey Community Council for PPE and its Meals and Wheels Programme, Ms. Smyth reminded Members of correspondence circulated at the December meeting of the LCDC in relation to Easkey Community Council and a resolution passed by Sligo County Council. Members had been advised that the letter applies to funding from Sligo County Council's own resources and it is a matter for the LCDC to decide on applications for funding under the LEADER Programme or other funding sources.

In light of this Councillor Dara Mulvey and Councillor Joe Queenan abstained from decision to recommend funding.

Mr. Tom Kilfeather, Deputy CE also abstained, however he re-iterated that the decision with regards approval of funding is a matter for the LCDC.

Ms. Patricia Garland abstained as she is a director on one of the groups recommended for funding.

Proposal to approve allocation of funding to 57 groups as per breakdown provided was proposed by Mr. Michael Kirby, seconded by Mr. John Kennedy and agreed.

9. UPDATE ON PEACE IV PROGRAMME

Report circulated to Members in advance of the meeting. Ms. Aisling Smyth briefed Members on this report and advised that all Peace IV funded activity and expenditure culminated on 31st December 2020. Ms. Smyth advised that the launch of the Lest Sligo Forgets World War 1 Commemoration Monument will take place at a later date. This launch may take place virtually. It was noted that works to the Cantilever project were completed in December 2020.

In lieu of a traditional closing event which is not possible due to current Covid19 restrictions, Ms. Smyth advised that a video showcasing the projects, activities and achievements of the Peace IV Programme has been produced. The video features contributions from beneficiaries and stakeholders including the Chairperson of LCDC, Chief Officer, and inputs from distinguished guests including Heather Humphreys TD, Minister for Rural and Community Development, Northern Ireland's First Minister Arlene Foster, Deputy First Minister Michelle O'Neill and Gina McIntyre, Chief Executive of the SEUPB.

Members acknowledged that the Peace IV Programme has been a success.

Ms. Smyth advised that the Peace Plus programme is due to commence next year and more information will be presented to the LCDC as the Programme develops.

10. UPDATE ON SLIGO: ONE VOICE ONE VISION - TOWARDS 2030

Ms. Dorothy Clarke gave a verbal update and advised that the preparation of the Local Economic & Community Plan (LECP) will commence in 2021 as part of the Sligo 2030 planning process. It was noted that the Sligo 2030 Plan is to be an overarching countywide Strategic Framework to guide the development of all of County Sligo over next 10 years. The Strategy will be based on the principles of smart sustainable development, economic and environmental sustainability, and be climate action focussed.

Ms. Clarke advised that work is ongoing with the Economic Forum. Sligo LCDC will be responsible for the preparation of the community elements of the LECP with the economic elements being prepared by the SPC for Economic Development in consultation with the Economic Forum.

Both elements will be merged in the overarching document.

Ms. Clarke further advised of guidelines which are to issue from the Department of Rural & Community Development.

In relation to the Procurement process, Ms. Clarke advised of 2 Tenders received by the 11th December closing date with the successful tenderer being KPMG. Acceptance of the contract is awaited from KPMG with expected commencement date in late March 2021.

A schedule for the consultation process will be discussed with KPMG. Ms. Clarke advised that the LCDC, SPC and the Economic Forum together with other agencies will be involved in the consultation.

The new Plan is expected to be completed by December 2021.

11. CORRESPONDENCE

- a) **LCDC Training Needs Assessment Process – DRCD email 1.2.21**
- b) **Proposal For a New Business In Sligo City – Dan Cannon, CEO Busk-It music – email 2.2.21**

Ms. Aisling Smyth outlined correspondence as above which was noted by Members.

Ms. Dorothy Clarke advised that the Department of Rural & Community Development is working with Pobal to design and implement a training needs assessment process with LCDCs in the context of the Local Economic and Community Plan. Pobal are to contact LCDCs to assess training requirements.

In relation to the proposal from Busk-It music for a new business in Sligo, Ms. Smyth advised that Mr. Dan Cannon's email has been referred to the LEO and Sligo LEADER Partnership for consideration.

12. DATE FOR NEXT LCDC/LAG MEETING – THURSDAY 15TH APRIL 2021

Members agreed to hold the next meetings of the LCDC/LAG on the 15th April 2021.

13. AOB

Mr. Peter Egan (new MSLETB rep) mentioned ongoing work with other ETBs in the establishment of new Future Reading Skills centres, one of which will be in Sligo. A range of courses will be developed including Employer and Employee up-skilling. Mr. Egan is willing to give an update report on progress at a future meeting of the LCDC.

It was noted that Covid has displaced many workers with 700,000 now on the live register. Mr. Egan advised that there appears to be a void with regards knowledge and supports available. The ETB are working with those who have lost their jobs during Covid. Work is ongoing with the Grow Remote initiative and Sligo Generational Apprenticeships.

Mr. Michael Kirby mentioned the volume of reports and emails circulated in advance of the LCDC and LAG meetings and asked if possible if this process could be reviewed. Ms. Clarke agreed with Mr. Kirby and advised that this will be considered.

It was noted that there were a lot of reports pertaining to the SICAP item at this meeting as the 2020 Annual Performance review and the 2021 Annual report had to be formally approved by the LCDC.

Meeting concluded at 11.10a.m.

Signed: _____
Chairperson

Date: _____