

Minutes of Clare Local Community Development Committee meeting (LCDC) on Thursday, 8th February 2018 at 11.00 a.m. in Training Room, Level 0, Áras Contae an Chláir, New Road, Ennis, Co. Clare.

In Attendance:

Mr. Andrew Dundas
Cllr. Bill Chambers
Cllr. Johnny Flynn
Cllr. Mike McKee
Cllr. Richard Nagle
Ms. Margaret Slattery
Ms. Dóirin Graham
Ms. Mary O'Donoghue
Mr. Paul Patton
Mr. Jim Lynch
Ms. Esther Connellan
Mr. Christy Leyden
Mr. Dermot Hayes
Ms. Helen Downes

Organisation:

Agricultural Farmers Sector (Chairperson)
Elected Member
Elected Member
Elected Member
Elected Member
Youth Sector
Clare Local Development Company
Social Inclusion Interests
Education & Training Board
Department of Social Protection
HSE
Community & Voluntary Interests
Social Inclusion
Employers/Business

Ms. Monica Meehan
Mr. Michael Neylon
Ms. Deirdre Power
Ms. Siobhán Brennan

Chief Officer
Rural Development
Rural Development
Rural Development

Apologies

Mr. Pat Dowling
Mr. Cillian Murphy
Mr. Martin McKeown
Mr. Padraic McElwee

Chief Executive
Community & Voluntary Interests
Environment Interests
Head of Enterprise

1. Minutes of LCDC meeting held on the 6th December 2017 and matters arising.

A. Dundas welcomed everybody to the meeting. He referred to the minutes of the meeting of the 6th December 2017 and any matters arising from them. As there were no matters arising, the minutes were proposed by Cllr. B. Chambers and seconded by M. O'Donoghue.

2. Consideration of the SICAP End of Year Report 2017 & Recommendations.

M. Meehan referred to the End of the Year report for the SICAP Programme and the requirement for approval by the LCDC. She referred to the report which was circulated.

She advised that the SICAP sub-committee met on the 29th January 2018 to discuss the report and to make recommendations. She confirmed that excellent progress had been made in the delivery of the programme over the last three years and she complimented CLDC on the work they had done. She acknowledged the work which was undertaken in order to ensure that targets were met and that budgets were adhered to. The sub-committee members are P. Patton, M. Slattery, J. Lynch and M. O'Donoghue.

D. Hayes also acknowledged the good work that has been done and felt that no significant changes had occurred in terms of the most hard to reach groups i.e. people with disabilities and the homeless. A discussion took place regarding the difficulties people with disabilities and people who are homeless face when applying for courses, jobs, etc.

J. Lynch informed the meeting that the Department of Social Protection is in ongoing contact with Clare County Council regarding the homeless issue. He advised of the importance of ensuring good communication particularly so that people with disabilities will be aware of what is available to them if they wish to return to further education or to the work place. He also referred to a stakeholder meeting which will be taking place in the Strand Hotel, Limerick on the 13th February 2018.

C. Leyden enquired if progress is being made in providing services to the hard to reach and felt that these issues needed to be quantified i.e. how many people are homeless and how many are living with a disability in County Clare. He felt that if there was a base figure that work could be done to reduce the numbers.

D. Graham explained that it was very difficult to get a base line figure and that when they were compiling the tender for SICAP they used some data from the CSO. CLDC can say how many they are working with each year but that only happens if the person makes themselves known and interventions take place. J. Lynch agreed with D. Graham that getting accurate information was difficult. Cllr. J Flynn told the meeting that a very informative booklet had been put together for the LEADER programme and asked if an infomatic could be produced for SICAP results. D. Graham advised that this could be done.

C. Leyden said that we need to start defending the SICAP programme and be able to go back to the communities with facts and figures showing that it is working and that people are benefiting from it. D. Graham said there would be more time spent trying to target people in areas of disadvantage and while work is being done results may not be seen quickly enough as more interventions are needed and that other services may also be required.

H. Downes told the meeting that there are a number of job opportunities in the Shannon Region at the present time and that a number of companies are looking to increase their workforce. They are running a programme with St. Patrick's Comprehensive School in Shannon and promoting job opportunities and requirements in terms of qualifications/training.

The members agreed that there are opportunities out there however certain sectors may have a difficulty in getting to where the jobs are as there is a lack of transport options and their skill levels may not be what the companies require. H. Downes said that companies are now willing to give training to people who are joining the work force for the first time or are returning to work after a break and that this training is ongoing over a 2 to 3 year period.

M. Slattery pointed out that some young people are work ready and some are not. She also pointed out that when working with National data you have to be careful as there are many families/disadvantaged living in areas which are categorised as areas of advantage. She also expressed an interest in linking with the Chamber regarding these initiatives. Cllr. J Flynn asked would the companies consider making short videos to show what opportunities they have and upload them to YouTube so that younger people can see what jobs are out there for them and perhaps companies like Molex, Zimmer, Atlantic Aviation would consider undertaking road shows for promotion purposes.

P. Patton explained that there are three unemployment black spots in Clare (population greater than 200 people with a 27% or more unemployment rate). Ennis, Shannon and Kilrush are the main towns in Clare where this is occurring. He told the group that there are funding opportunities available to help projects in these areas but they need to be innovative and concentrate on those people who are closest to the labour market. He felt that the LCDC members need to work together to develop innovative projects and that a business case should be submitted. There is a March deadline for this process. He also advised that the total fund is €3m and felt that the Kilrush project (funded under the RAPID Programme) could be enhanced. Cllr. J. Flynn proposed that a working group be established and that a priority category should be those closest to the labour market.

M. O'Donoghue referred to West Clare and raised a concern regarding the lack of jobs locally. M. Slattery felt that the lack of transport is a major issue. P. Paul confirmed that the ETB is working to find a solution regarding the transport concern and is currently examining it in Kilrush. He also advised the meeting that the ETB is enhancing its facility at Clonroad to include a training kitchen.

It was then proposed that the SICAP end of year report be approved. This was proposed by Cllr. B. Chambers and seconded by M. O'Donoghue.

3. Local Economic & Community Plan Monitoring

M. Meehan referred to the LECP which was adopted by the Council in April 2016 and published in May 2016. She recalled that each action within the LECP has an identified lead organisation and that the Community Implementation Team as established by the LCDC has met a number of times to fulfil its monitoring role. She advised that some actions are progressing but not to the extent required and that lead organisations have a responsibility to ensure that progress on the delivery of actions needs to be recorded. She confirmed that a mid term review on the delivery of the LECP will need to be undertaken this year and that it is vital that lead organisations actively engage in the implementation process. She referred to the CRM which was designed specifically to aid lead organisations to record progress and that there was a need to use it.

D. Power gave a presentation to the members on the CRM and progress on monitoring the LECP. She went of the agencies that had been introduced to the system and who are now inputting the data which is required, agencies which have been contacted and where further information is awaited and the agencies which have yet to engage. She then went through each target and what actions had been reported on by the agencies involved.

M. Neylon thanked D. Power and the agencies that had contributed to the report. He felt that the presentation highlighted the difficulties that exist for reporting information when a number of agencies are involved in an action and also requested that agencies commit to the process. He informed the meeting that it is hoped that by mid 2018 there would be updated data on the base lines for Jobless Household.

It is hoped that a survey would be carried out on jobless households in Clare and in that regard it would be useful if each agency could consider what information is vital for this survey. In some cases there could be 5-6 agencies working with one family and each one not knowing what the other is doing. The survey would look at the areas of disadvantage and target 500-600 houses to see which are jobless households and this in turn would allow for the agencies to see what would be the best intervention to suit each individual family/person to get them back into the work force.

Cllr. J Flynn suggested that the survey be put on a website so people could reply online. C. Leyden enquired as to how it would be undertaken and M. Neylon advised that it would be done house to house randomly. P. Patton suggested that a business case be submitted to him for partial funding towards the cost of this work.

M. Meehan said that the Department will be requesting updates on the delivery of the LECP actions and it is necessary that all information that is needed is inputted by the agencies so the correct figures etc are presented.

D. Graham asked would it be possible to do a review of the LECP as some changes need to be made on a number of targets as there is difficulty in getting some information. If a review was carried out it would mean that information would be more readily available. M. Neylon advised that there were around 20 targets that need to be reviewed. He stated that at the start of the process all agencies were very ambitious with the targets and while he realises that changes are desirable the ambition needs to remain.

C. Leyden stated that the LCDC needs to show what has been done but also what it can do. He feels that the meeting was a very positive one.

M. Meehan summarised the points as follows:

- Lead agencies to take ownership of the CRM, input data and update as necessary
- Action plans to be updated and finalised for 2018
- An independent evaluation of progress will be done by year end
- Action q4.1 to be progressed
- There will be a report on performance to date for the next meeting

4. Annual Report 2017

M. Meehan referred to the 2017 Annual Report which was circulated to the members. She confirmed that the role of the LCDC is to adopt the report on activity for 2017 and thereafter it would be submitted to the full Council for noting. The report was approved on the proposal of M. Slattery and seconded by C. Leyden.

5. AOB

The minutes of the meetings of the Community Implementation Team dated 1st and 21st November 2016 and the 20th November 2017 were proposed by M. Slattery and seconded by C. Leyden.

She referred to the recent call for submissions under the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies.


It was agreed that a set of principles would be developed and circulated to the NPF sub-committee for comment and that a submission would be made from the LCDC.

A Dundas thanked everyone for their attendance and re-iterated that it is vital that all members attend the meetings going forward.

The next meeting is scheduled to take place on Wednesday 16th May 2018 at 3.00pm in the Training Room, Áras Contae an Chláir.

With no other business the meeting concluded.

Signed:



Chairperson



Chief Officer