

Sligo Local Community Development Committee

Annual Report for 2019

23rd July 2020



Coiste um Fhorbairt Pobail Áitiúil Shligigh
Sligo Local Community Development
Committee

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Foreword from the Chairpersons of Sligo Local Community Development Committee

The Local Government Reform Act of 2014 bestowed particular responsibility on local government to provide strategic leadership at local level, with the establishment of Local Community Development Committees. LCDCs have responsibility for the planning and oversight of a substantial amount of local development spends on behalf of the State or by other local development agencies and structures and have brought a new collaborative approach which is reflected in the framework set out in the Local Economic Community Planning process.

Fortunately in Sligo there has always been a strong tradition of mutual co-operation between the local government and local development sectors both at an informal and formal level and the establishment of the LCDC has helped cement this partnership.

As Chairperson of the LCDC from April 2017 – July 2019, I wish to acknowledge the commitment of all members of the LCDC and support staff during this period. The input of Members has been crucial in the implementation of the community elements of the Local Economic & Community Plan, the oversight of our main programmes such as the Social Inclusion & Community Activation Programme (SICAP) and the Rural Development Programme (RDP) through the Local Action Group. I took particular pride in the promotion of the work of the LCDC to ensure that its role and function was acknowledged and celebrated in the community.



Cllr Sinéad Maguire, Chairperson Sligo LCDC (April 2017 – July 2019)

As Chairperson from July 2019 – March 2020, I wish to acknowledge the contribution of my predecessor Cllr Sinéad Maguire and the ongoing commitment of all members of the LCDC and support staff during this period. In addition to the main programmes of SICAP and the RDP, Members have had an input into many other funding programmes such as the Peace IV Programme, Healthy Ireland and various grant schemes such as the Community Enhancement Programme and the National Community Weekend. Members have always carried out their role with diligence and integrity. The prospect to promote equality of opportunity through funding programmes is what attracted me to this structure.

On my resignation as LCDC Chairperson in March this year, to take up a post as Member of the European Parliament, I wish to state what an honour it was for me to carry this mantle and follow in the footsteps of my father Seán MacManus who held the inaugural role of chair of Sligo LCDC. Although I now operate on a European stage, as a community person at heart I am optimistic that the LCDC will continue its good work in partnership with local stakeholders and the local community to ensure that Sligo continues to benefit from national and EU resources targeting social inclusion, community and rural development.



Cllr Chris MacManus, Chairperson Sligo LCDC (July 2019 – March 2020)

A Statement by the Chief Officer, Sligo LCDC

The Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) is required to prepare and submit a report to the Local Authority on its activities in the previous year. This report outlines progress in respect of the various LCDC functions over 2019 including a review of progress generally, details of meetings held, implementation of the Local Economic & Community Plan and details of the oversight, management and collaboration in relation to public-funded programmes under the LCDC's remit including the LEADER Programme, the Social Inclusion & Community Activation Programme (SICAP) and Healthy Ireland.

Since the submission of the last report, Sligo LCDC and its sub groups have had a busy and productive year.

Under the strong leadership of both Cllr Sinéad Maguire and later Cllr Chris MacManus as Chairperson, the LCDC continued to embark upon an ambitious work programme which included the oversight many funding programmes.

I wish to acknowledge the co-operation of all the members and partners of the Sligo LCDC and in particular to Mr. Hugh MacConville who is currently Acting Chairperson since April 2020 when the onset of the Covid 19 pandemic changed so much for us all and led to the LCDC holding its first virtual meeting on the 30th April. Albeit we are looking back at 2019 the current situation of the Covid 19 pandemic has been so impactful for the community it must be reflected in this statement as it has led to numerous changes in the way we deliver our programmes, in particular SICAP. The putting in place of the Collaborative Community Response Forum and Call Centre/Help Desk all centered in my Directorate has crossed over all community needs and the positive response from agencies and community groups working together has been overwhelming. I would like to take this opportunity also to acknowledge the work of our colleagues in County Sligo LEADER Partnership CLG who have been supportive and continued to implement the valuable SICAP programme in these difficult times.

Sligo LCDC also acts as the Local Action Group (LAG) for Sligo for the Rural Development Programme 2014 - 2020. The LEADER Programme has added to the already significant role played by the LCDC in the oversight of public funding to bring about improved social, economic and community development of the County. The LEADER programme 2014-2020 is progressing well in Sligo with 129 projects approved at 17th July 2020.

In addition Sligo as a border region county is the beneficiary of funding under the Peace IV Programme. The current Peace IV Programme has been extended to December 2020 with the outbreak of Covid 19 and its impact on programme delivery. Consultations in relation to the Peace Plus programme have commenced with a consultation event held in Sligo on the 9th January 2020. The new programme will be a combination of the Peace programme and INTERREG funding.

The period has been active and successful for the Sligo LCDC and I set out hereunder more detail in relation to this activity and other areas of progress which have continued throughout the Covid 19 pandemic.



Dorothy Clarke, Chief Officer

1. Local Community Development Committee (LCDC)

The Sligo LCDC was formally established by resolution of the local authority on 7th July 2014 for the purposes of developing, coordinating and implementing a coherent and integrated approach to local and community development. The committee is made up of representatives from the local government and local development sectors, public bodies and representatives of social, economic, environmental and community interests.

National policy envisages a central role for local government in the planning and oversight of local and community development programmes while maintaining a key role for local development entities in front line delivery.

Section 128B of the Local Government Act 2001 sets out the **functions** of LCDCs. These functions include—

- in relation to the **Local Economic and Community Plan**, to —
 - prepare and implement the community elements of a 6-year Local Economic and Community Plan (the Plan),
 - review and monitor on an on-going basis the implementation of the community elements of the Plan and, if appropriate, to revise the actions and strategies set to achieve the objectives of the Plan, and
 - consider a draft of the economic elements of the Plan and adopt a statement for consideration of the Council in this regard,
- to coordinate, manage and oversee the implementation of **local and community development programmes** that—
 - may be agreed between Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government and other Government Departments or State bodies,
 - may be sourced through direct application by the LCDC or local authority on the LCDC's behalf (e.g. EU programmes), or
 - may be agreed by the local authority with relevant State agencies or Government Departments.
- to improve the **coordination of public-funded local and community development programmes** and reduce duplication, and to coordinate generally local and community development programmes within the LCDC's operational area, and
- to prepare an **annual report** on the performance of its functions.

The LCDC, like the Corporate Policy Group (CPG) and the Strategic Policy Committees (SPC), is a committee of the local authority. Unlike the CPG and SPCs, however, the LCDC is independent from the local authority in the performance of its functions. While these functions will be determined by Government from time to time as provided for under Local Government Act, how those functions are carried out and any decisions to be made by the LCDC when carrying out those functions are solely a matter for the LCDC.

This independence is provided for explicitly in sections 49A (2) and 128B (8) of the 2001 Act.

1.1 Dates and attendance at LCDC Meetings

LCDC/LAG meetings took place on the following dates in 2019;

21 st February	18 th April	30 th May	25 th July	19 th September	30 th October	5 th December
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Attendance of Sectors represented on Sligo LCDC at meetings during 2019							
Sector Represented	21st February	18th April	30th May	25th July	19th September	30th October	5th December
Elected Member	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Elected Member	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Elected Member	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No
Local Authority Official	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Local Authority Official	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
State Agency - Dept of Social Protection	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
State Agency - Health Service Executive	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
State Agency - Education & Training Board	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No	No
Local Development Company	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Trade Union	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Business	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Farming	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
PPN - Environment	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
PPN - Community & Voluntary	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes
PPN - Community & Voluntary	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	No
PPN - Social Inclusion	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
PPN - Social Inclusion	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	No

1.2 Sligo LCDC Membership 2019 to date

Name	Sector	Organisation
Cllr. Sinéad Maguire (Chairperson Jan – June 2019)	Local Government	Sligo County Council
Cllr. Séamus Kilgannon (Jan – June 2019)	Local Government	Sligo County Council
Cllr Chris MacManus (Elected Chairperson 25 th July 2019) Resigned March 2020	Local Government	Sligo County Council
Cllr Dara Mulvey (from July 2019)	Local Government	Sligo County Council
Cllr Joe Queenan (from July 2019)	Local Government	Sligo County Council
Cllr Tom Fox (replaced Cllr MacManus June 2020)	Local Government	Sligo County Council
Mr. Ciarán Hayes	Local Government	Sligo County Council
Mr. John Reilly	Local Government / Local Enterprise Office	Sligo County Council
Ms. Mairin Haran (Jan – Sept) Mr. John Kennedy (from Oct 2019)	State Agency	Dept. Of Employment Affairs & Social Protection
Ms. Patricia Garland	State Agency	Sligo/Leitrim/West Cavan HSE
Ms. Mary Brodie	State Agency	Mayo, Sligo, Leitrim ETB
Mr. Chris Gonley (resigned Dec 19) Ms. June Murphy (from Jan 2020)	Local Development Sector	Sligo LEADER Partnership Co.
Mr. Hugh MacConville (Elected Vice Chair 25 th July 2019)	Trade Union Interests	Irish Congress of Trade Unions
Mr. Aidan Doyle	Business Interests	Sligo Chamber of Commerce
Mr. Seán Tempany (Vice Chair – resigned July 2019) Ms. Kathleen Henry (from July 2019)	Farming / Agriculture Interests	Farming / Agriculture Pillar
Mr. Michael Kirby	Environmental Interests	Environment Pillar (PPN)
Ms. Elizabeth King	Community & Voluntary – Social Inclusion	PPN

Mr. Finbarr Filan (Jan – April 2019) Ms. Ann Marie Snee (May – Nov 2019) Mr. Gerald O’Connor (from Dec 2019)	Community & Voluntary	PPN
Dr. Jennifer Van Aswegen	Community & Voluntary – Social Inclusion	PPN
Ms. Jackie Sweeney (Jan 2019 - Feb 2020) Ms. Mary Murphy (from March 2020)	Community & Voluntary	PPN



LCDC in session in the Council Chamber, City Hall – December 2019

2. Local Economic and Community Plan (Community Elements)

2.1 Implementation & Monitoring of the LECP

A primary function of the LCDC under the Local Government Reform Act 2014 is the preparation of the community elements of the Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP).

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*' by;

- The promotion of local and community development.
- The promotion of economic development

The LECP was prepared in a collaborative manner setting out the Policy framework and context, the vision and goals for the duration, and the Action Plan dealing with the 6 key themes.

- Employment and Sustainable Economic Activity
- Education and Training
- Health and Well being
- Social Inclusion, Equality and Poverty,
- Environment and Climate Change
- Collaborative Framework

In order to ensure that the preparation of the economic and community elements of the LECP are co-ordinated, and duplication avoided, (both in terms of effort and engagement with stakeholders) each local authority established an Advisory Steering Group to assist in the preparation, drafting, adoption, and monitoring of the LECP.

Following the formal launch of the Plan in February 2016, a system for updating & monitoring progress of actions in the LECP is ongoing with contact with the lead agencies who submit progress on their LECP actions.

Agencies have the opportunity to make a presentation at meetings of the LCDC to outline generally their role in the overall context of the community and economic development of the county and specifically to make reference to those actions in the Plan that are identified with them as lead agency.

For example in April 2019, Mr. Oran Doherty of IT Sligo presented on the development of a Regional Skills Forum involving industry, economic development agencies and training providers. This was a collaboration between IT Sligo and the Dept of Education and was a specific action outlined in the LECP.

There are a total of 179 individual actions contained in the LECP and each has been assigned a timescale for delivery upon/completion. These are;

- Short Term (delivery in under 1 year)
- Short-Medium Term (for delivery in 1-2 years)
- Medium Term (Delivery between 2 – 4 years)
- Medium-Long Term (Delivery between 4-6 years)
- Long Term (Delivery at approx 6 years)
- Ongoing (beyond the life of the Plan)

Of the 179 actions, 34 & 69 fall into the categories of ‘Short Term’ and ‘Short-Medium Term’ respectively.

The majority of the Actions of a shorter duration have now been completed. As a follow up exercise in 2019, completion templates were issued to those reporting agencies seeking feedback on the process. For example agencies were asked to outline what challenges they faced in delivering the action.

In early 2019, the decision was taken by the Advisory Steering Group to no longer seek updates on a quarterly basis, but to do so annually instead. For Actions of a Medium to Long Term Nature, it was considered that updates would not materially change quarter on quarter but that reporting of an annual nature as opposed to quarterly will result in improved qualitative data.

As a pilot exercise, Agencies with responsibility for delivering ‘Medium Term’ Actions were issued with new styled reporting templates. These are similar in style to the ‘Completion Reports’ that were issued in respect of the Shorter Terms Actions.

The LECP is due for review. Guidance on how this can be undertaken is awaited from the Department. It is understood that the Department will allow flexibility to LCDCs to progress this in the manner most appropriate to local needs. This can be by means of a light touch review or the development of an entire new plan. Sligo is considering linking the process of the development of the new plan with the encompassing document ‘**Sligo One Voice One Vision Towards 2030**’ which has emanated from the EU ‘JASPERS’ engagement.

3. Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP)

The Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) 2018 – 2022 provides funding to tackle poverty and social exclusion at a local level through local engagement and partnerships between disadvantaged individuals, community organisations and public sector agencies.

There are 2 goals under the Programme;

Goal 1: Supporting Communities

To support communities and target groups to engage with relevant stakeholders in identifying and addressing social exclusion and equality issues, developing the capacity of Local Community Groups, and creating more sustainable communities.

Goal 2: Supporting Individuals

To support disadvantaged individuals to improve the quality of their lives through the provision of lifelong learning and labour market supports.

Target groups to be supported under SICAP 2018 - 2022 are as follows;

- Disadvantaged Children and Families
- People living in Disadvantaged Communities
- Disadvantaged Young People (aged 15 – 24)
- People with Disabilities
- Disadvantaged Women
- Roma
- Emerging Needs Group*
- Travellers
- Lone Parents
- The Disengaged from the Labour Market (Economically Inactive)
- Low Income Workers/ Households
- The Unemployed
- New Communities

*Sligo LCDC agreed on the inclusion of ‘**Substance Misusers**’ under the Emerging needs group for 2019.

SICAP is funded by the Department of Rural and Community Development with co-funding from the European Social Fund (ESF) as part of the ESF Programme for Employability, Inclusion and Learning 2014-2020.

The allocated budget for 2019 was **€585,514** with the Programme being implemented by County Sligo LEADER Partnership CLG.

2019 Targets under both SICAP Goals are shown in the following table;

Ref	Key Performance Indicator (KPI)	Annual Target 2019
1.	Total number of local community groups engaged under SICAP	45
2.	Number of Individuals (aged 15 years upwards) assisted under SICAP on a one to one basis	431
3	Individuals under KPI2 living in Disadvantaged areas	18%

3.1 Social Inclusion & SICAP Monitoring Committee

The Social Inclusion & SICAP Monitoring Committee continues to oversee the delivery of SICAP and to monitor implementation progress.

Members of this Committee are as follows;

- Cllr Chris MacManus (Chair)
- Ms. Mairin Haran/Mr. John Kennedy (DEASP rep on LCDC)
- Ms. Elizabeth King (PPN Social Inclusion rep on LCDC)
- Mr. Hugh MacConville (LCDC)
- Dr. Jennifer Van Aswegen (PPN Social Inclusion rep on LCDC)
- Ms. Patricia Garland (HSE Rep on LCDC)
- Ms. Dorothy Clarke (Chief Officer)

The Committee met on the following dates to discuss progress on SICAP in 2019;

13th February
1st May
3rd July
17th October
20th November

As part of the ongoing monitoring of the programme, it was agreed by the Social Inclusion & SICAP Monitoring Committee to visit two SICAP projects per quarter. County Sligo LEADER Partnership CLG suggest projects for verification and suitable dates and a notification is sent to all members of the LCDC allowing members the opportunity to visit projects selected.

In 2019, eight SICAP projects were visited by LCDC Members.



LCDC Members, staff and participants at the Open Gardening project, Sligo Community Gardens 31st May 2019



Members of Sligo LCDC and participants at English Conversation classes in the Avalon Centre, 6th June 2019

3.2 Progress under SICAP 2019

All progress under SICAP is recorded on the Integrated Reporting Information System (IRIS)

In accordance with the Programme Requirements for SICAP, continued funding is subject to positive findings from a mid-year and annual performance review by the LCDC and the Key Performance Indicator (KPI) targets being achieved.

At the 2019 Annual performance review targets under both KPIs (below) were achieved with KPI 2 exceeded and the LCDC approved the 2019 SICAP Annual Performance Review reports at their meeting on the 27th February 2020.

Ref	Key Performance Indicator	Annual Target	Actuals as at 31/12/19 (from IRIS)	% achieved
KPI 1	Number of local community groups supported under SICAP	45	45	100%
KPI 2	Number of Individuals (aged 15 years upwards) supported under SICAP	431	476	110%
	Percentage of Individuals supported under KPI 2 living in disadvantaged areas (156 individuals)	18%	36.19%	

3.3 SICAP 2020

The LCDC formally approved the 2020 Annual Plan for SICAP at their meeting on the 27th February 2020. The Department of Rural and Community Development advised of a 3% budget increase which gives an allocation of €603,079 for Sligo for 2020.

Sligo LCDC agreed on the inclusion of **Economically Vulnerable in need of Up-skilling** under the Emerging needs Target group for 2020.

Targets for 2020 outlined in table below.

Ref	Key Performance Indicator (KPI)	Annual Target 2020
1.	Total number of local community groups engaged under SICAP	45
2.	Number of Individuals (aged 15 years upwards) assisted under SICAP on a one to one basis	431
3	Individuals under KPI2 living in Disadvantaged areas	18%

3.4 Delivery of SICAP during COVID-19

The outbreak of the Covid 19 pandemic has impacted on the delivery of SICAP in 2020 with Local Development Companies having to adapt to meet the challenges faced by imposed restrictions.

The Department of Rural & Community Development and Pobal identified a number of ways in which there is flexibility within SICAP to enable Local Development Companies to deliver responsive measures.

Local Development Companies (LDCs) were advised that clients could be registered over the phone during Covid 19 with face to face meetings to take place once the situation has improved. LDCs were also encouraged to consider using online supports to deliver training and reach out to clients and allocate grants / provide supports to local community groups engaging with vulnerable groups affected by this crisis.

County Sligo LEADER Partnership CLG developed a range of online supports including Positive Mental Health videos featuring mindfulness, make-up tutorials, gardening and cooking tips, Job Ready videos and BTWEA Business Training. Life Long Learning activities are also being delivered online e.g. Arts classes, Creative Writing Initiative and Digital skills tutorials.

As part of the Sligo Community Response Forum, Sligo LCDC in conjunction with County Sligo LEADER Partnership CLG (SLPC) introduced a Grant scheme under SICAP to support community groups and organisations directly responding to the COVID-19 emergency within County Sligo.



The Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) 2018-2022 is funded by the Irish Government through the Department of Rural and Community Development and co-funded by the European Social Fund under the Programme for Employability, Inclusion and Learning (PEIL) 2014-2020

4. Rural Development Programme 2014 – 2020 (LEADER Programme)

Sligo LCDC delivers the LEADER element of the Rural Development Programme and acts as the Local Action Group (LAG) working in partnership with Sligo County Council as Financial Partner and County Sligo LEADER Partnership CLG as Implementing Partner.

The Local Development Strategy (LDS) for County Sligo forms the basis against which all project approvals will be measured. The LCDC as LAG has final approval on what projects proceed subject to the recommendation of the Independent Evaluation Committee. The Council acts as lead partner in

administrative and financial matters. Its role will also be to conduct verification checks, make payments to promoters and manage drawdown from the Department and funding to the Implementing Partner.

The LEADER allocation for Sligo 2014-2020 is **€7,655,648**. This allocation is broken down between;

- Preparatory Support for the Local Development Strategy - €15,000
- Administration & Animation Costs - €1,913,912
- Implementation of operations/Projects - €5,726,735.81

The Local Development Strategy (LDS) outlines the three main Project themes that were identified as overarching needs for the county and out of that fall nine sub-themes as follows:

Theme 1	Theme 2	Theme 3
Economic Development, Enterprise Development and Job Creation	Social Inclusion	Rural Environment
Sub Themes	Sub Themes	Sub Themes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Rural Tourism ○ Enterprise Development ○ Rural Towns ○ Broadband 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Basic Services targeted at hard to reach communities ○ Rural Youth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Protection and sustainable use of water resources ○ Local Biodiversity ○ Renewable energy
€2,198,447	€2,956,218	€572,070

An additional budget of €5,373.65 has been approved for Co-Operation projects under the LEADER Programme.



Funded by the Department of Rural and Community Development

4.1 LEADER Application Process



**Since the 1st February 2019, Local Authorities in their role as Lead Financial Partner (LFP), in each LCDC LAG area have been undertaking Article 48 Checks, on projects and claims, with the exception of “In-House” projects delivered directly by the LAG or Implementing Partner (IP) where Pobal will continue to perform Article 48 checks. Pobal will also carry out checks on Monthly administration claims.

The LEADER programme 2014-2020 is progressing well in Sligo with Letters of Offer/Contracts issued to 129 Project promoters with approval to funding in the amount of €4,392,773.59 (at 17th July 2020).

Projects vary from the development of community playgrounds, Walking Tracks and all weather playing facilities to purchase of equipment, marketing and feasibility projects. To date €2,556,964.96 has been paid to promoters in respect of claims submitted on 83 No. projects and funds in the amount of €990,117.13 have been approved by the Department in respect of Administration of the LEADER Programme.



Official opening of the Coolaney Astro pitch and Community Park – 28th October 2019



Launch of the Community Development Strategy for Cloonacool – 23rd August 2019

5. Public Participation Network (PPN)

Local authorities are required to establish PPNs and all community representation on committees of the local authority must be sourced through the PPN.

Sligo Public Participation Network (PPN) was established in September 2014, following statute endorsing the framework for public participation in local government. The Sligo PPN is active and vibrant and offers a valuable opportunity for groups to avail of training and networking to facilitate the community, voluntary and environmental sectors and enable their participation in local decision making.



5.1 Structure of the PPN

The PPN is organised at both County and Municipal District (MD) level and the network is managed by an elected Secretariat made up from individuals representing the 3 PPN Colleges of Social Inclusion, Environment and Community & Voluntary, Borough of Sligo MD, Ballymote/Tubbercurry MD and Sligo Drumcliff MD. There are currently 9 Secretariat members.

The role of the PPN is to facilitate structured input by the community through representation on various local policy making committees such as the Local Community Development Committee, Strategic Policy Committee, Joint Policing Committee and other policy making groups. The PPN also has a strong role to play in capacity building among groups, county networking and promotion of activities and also informing policy development.

The PPN is a very useful structure for information sharing both across the sector and with key organizations and stakeholders the community. The PPN has the capacity to act as a conduit for a large volume of information to be dispatched to community groups, as well as ensuring that community issues are heard at the relevant decision making tables.

The PPN is currently staffed by a part time resource worker and a full time support worker, funded by the Department of Rural and Community Development.

5.2 Activities

- The PPN is working closely with organisations such as Sligo Intercultural Project and Comhairle ná nÓg to try and ensure that the PPN becomes more reflective of the increasingly diverse community in Sligo

- The PPN facilitated Hands For Life training to over 100 of our members
- The Social Inclusion college has published a 'Guide to Plain English' for the public sector to try and ensure that the information reaching the community is easier to understand
- The PPN Heritage Linkage Group held a successful Seminar early in 2019 outlining the key achievement of the group and exploring local archaeology and biodiversity programmes
- The PPN supported Sligo Steetfeast and the National Community Weekend
- The network collaborated with Inclusion Ireland and the Irish Wheelchair Association to host a Disability Hustings to inform potential Elected Members of the key issues facing the disability sector
- The PPN supported our member group Tonaphubble Residents Association, in partnership with Acquired Brain Injury Ireland, to conduct a Walkability Audit of the local area to identify those aspects of the physical environment that were negatively impacting local residents and service users.
- Our AGM was held on 27th November 2019 in the Radisson hotel with approx 175 people in attendance. On the night participants took part in elections, heard about the work of the PPN across 2019, learned about funding opportunities and engaged in our health and wellbeing consultation process.
- On 12th December we held a PPN Meet and Greet for all our elected community representatives as a thank you for all the hard work they do on behalf of the local community.

5.3 Influencing Policy

During 2019, Sligo PPN has fed into and influenced a number of policy areas including; Sligo Disability Implementation Plan, Sligo Strategic Policy Committee Scheme (resulting in the opportunity for environment representatives to sit on all committees with a recognition that the environment crosses all areas of Local Authority work), Sligo Climate Adaptation Plan, the National Volunteering Strategy and the PPN National Structural Review.

5.4 Responding to Community Issues

A key objective of Sligo PPN is to use the network to raise issues that are affecting the community sector in the County. Sligo was the first PPN in the country to join the Alliance for Insurance Reform and undertook a national survey to assess the impact of rising insurance premiums on the community and voluntary sector. This research received national media coverage and has been used by the Alliance to lobby for reform.

Something the PPN consistently hears about from our members are the issues of funding applications and the new Charities Governance Code. Our members identify that the requirements and demands in making applications and in complying to governance regulation are taking up all the time of committee volunteers and are impacting on the time that can actually be spent on programme and service delivery. Early this year, Sligo PPN, in partnership with Sligo County Council, Sligo Volunteer Centre, Mayo Sligo Leitrim ETB and Sligo LEADER partnership hosted the county's first Get Funding Ready event, bringing together all key funders in the county in one room and providing community groups with a timetable of funding rounds to

help them plan for making applications. Sligo PPN also commissioned a Sligo based edition of the national Funding Digest on behalf of the community sector and produced a funding best practice guide to support groups in their applications. From a governance perspective Sligo PPN has supported Sligo Volunteer Centre in a webinar series based on the 6 principles of the Governance Code.

5.5 Environmental Planning

Climate Change is a key issue for the Environment College of the PPN and in 2019 they undertook a series of initiatives to both raise the profile and affect change. Some of their activities include;

- The Creation of a Green Festivals Checklist to support festival and event planners to be more environmentally friendly and to be used by Sligo County Council to inform the assessment of funding applications in this category.
- Climate Survey
- The Environment college worked with Sligo Chamber of Commerce and Sligo County Council's Environment Section to create a Green Business Award to be part of the official Sligo Chamber Business Awards
- GLAN Sligo
- Climate Change Seminar 3rd Oct 2019
- Establishment of Environment Interest Group

5.6 Recruiting Community representatives

One of the key processes to happen in 2019 was the election of new representatives to key committees in the county. The role of these representatives is to work on behalf of their local community, ensuring community input is heard at the decision making table and being able to report back to the community with key areas of information on programme and policy development. Reps elected across 2019 include;

- Sligo Sport & Recreation Partnership Board : Joe McDonagh, Mairead Connolly and Geraldine Delorey
- Sligo Independent Evaluation Committee : Sharon Boles
- Sligo Public Arts Steering Committee : Orna McSweeney
- Sligo Joint Policing Committee: Gail McGibbon, Vanessa Clarke, Eugene McCaffrey, David Tuffy, Sheila Leydon, Michael Collins
- Sligo Strategic Policy Committees : SPC1 Housing and Corporate: Alan McMenamin, Pippa Black / SPC2 Environment and Infrastructure: Joan Swift, Sharon Eastwood / SPC3 Planning, Community & Economic Development, Arts & Culture: Corena Ward, Sanja Ivandic, Suzanne Tynan / SPC4 Climate Change: Yvonne Lang, Lisa Moore
- Sligo LCDC: Gerry O'Connor
- PPN Secretariat: Lisa Moore, Paul Tolan, Pat Benson



PPN Secretariat at PPN AGM Nov 2019



Environment Seminar with Professor John Sweeney, October 2019



Heritage Forum February 2019



PPN Meet and Greet December 2019

5.7 Sligo PPN statistics

As at 17th July 2020 there were 398 groups registered with Sligo PPN. 155 of these were from the Borough District of Sligo MD, 153 were from Ballymote – Tubbercurry MD and 90 were from the Sligo – Drumcliff MD.

Of these groups 353 have registered with the Community & Voluntary Pillar, 33 with the Social Inclusion Pillar and 12 with the Environment Pillar.

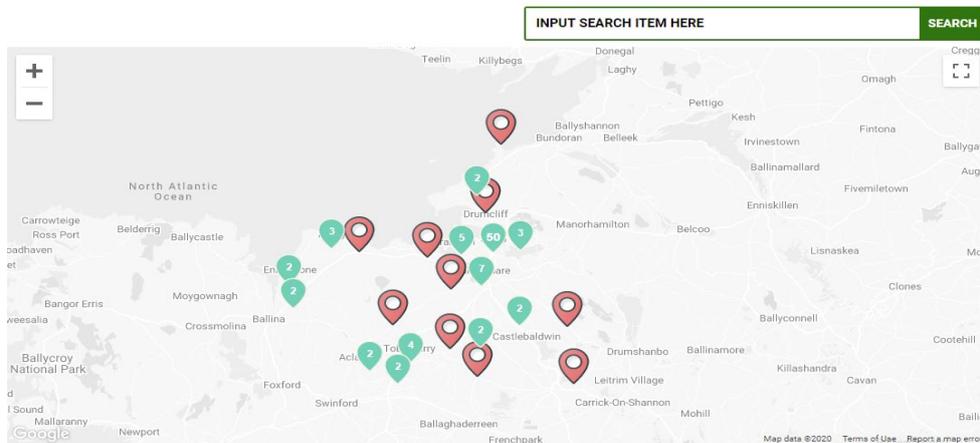
Sligo PPN have also introduced an Affiliated Membership group which allows groups that do not meet the full criteria, to register with the PPN for information purposes, but they are not eligible to take part in any election or voting processes. Sligo PPN has 19 Associate Members.

5.8 Sligo PPN's response during Covid 19

Sligo PPN was a member of the Community Response Forum established in March 2020 and the PPN team updated the PPN website with information on accessing supports and staying safe during the pandemic. Eighty groups registered with the PPN under the COVID-19 response programme with available services mapped on the PPN website. This map was used directly by members of the community and by the COVID-19 Helpline staff in allocating volunteers to callers needing support.

Interactive Map Showing Groups & Individuals In Your Local Area registered with the Community Call

(Use the + and - to drag the map around and to zoom in and out. Click on the pointer in your area to find out further info)



To register your group on the mapping initiative [CLICK HERE](#)

The PPN team worked with County Sligo LEADER Partnership CLG and Sligo Volunteer Centre in developing an Information pack for groups to assist them with tasks such as collecting prescriptions, social distancing and Garda vetting. Sligo PPN also worked with Sligo County Council in ensuring that PPE was allocated to groups most in need.

Sligo PPN is currently working on a research proposal with IT Sligo to capture the economic value on the role of the Community & Voluntary sector during the COVID-19 crisis. It is hoped that this research will gain recognition for the C&V sector.



Mr. Chris Davis of Calry Active Retirement Association & Ms. Sandra Moran of Calry / St. Joseph's GAA club, Just 2 of 80 + community groups in signed up to support the Community Forum and Help desk response. Also included in photo is Mr. Jude Mannion

6. Peace IV Programme

In its role as the oversight body for the Sligo PEACE IV Programme, Sligo LCDC established the PEACE IV Sub Committee in 2016. The PEACE IV Programme is an initiative of the EU and promotes peace building activities in Northern Ireland and the border counties of Ireland. The Programme is administered by the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB). The Sligo Programme which is being implemented by Sligo County Council is valued at €969,000 and operates across the following three themes:

- **Children and Young People**
- **Shared Spaces & Services**
- **Building Positive Relations**

Implementation of the Programme commenced in September 2017 and is due for completion in December 2020.



6.1 Thematic Areas

Children and Young People

Under this theme which engages children and young people up to the age of 24 years old, the Sligo Programme was given a target of 223 participants, 10% of which were to be from the Protestant faith tradition.

Five projects were delivered under the Children and Young Peoples theme:

1. Capacity & Inclusion through Sport - Outdoor Activity Summer Camps
2. Capacity & Inclusion through Music
3. Inclusion & Diversity Programme
4. Conflict to Community Activism
5. Youth Citizenship & Leadership

The first project to be completed was the Outdoor Activity Summer Camps in 2018. During 2019 the remaining four projects under this theme were delivered and completed. The Capacity & Inclusion through Music Project featured cross border performances of a musical piece created by participating young people in both Sligo and Enniskillen.



Participants at the Sligo performance of "Tales & Harmony" April 2019

The Youth Citizenship & Leadership Programme provided young people with the opportunity to learn about the importance of developing and maintaining good community relations. The Inclusion & Diversity Programme provided staff in childcare facilities throughout County Sligo with training and supports to deliver interventions to help promote integration to children from 3 – 12 years. Conflict to Community Activism gave participants the opportunity to learn more about the history of The Troubles through a series of talks from guest speakers, discussions and a study visit to Derry.

The above projects collectively engaged 283 participants and met the 10% Protestant faith tradition requirement.

Shares Spaces and Services

Under this theme, a public space in the form of a cantilever structure is being developed in Stephen Street Car Park and will extend out over the River Garvogue. Construction works commenced on site in June 2020 and are due for completion by August/September 2020.



Visual representation of the Shared Space being developed at Stephen Street Car Park

Building Positive Relations

This theme included the Community Placemaking Programme which involved community representatives recommending activities and events grounded in the ethos of Peace to animate the Shared Space being developed at Stephen Street Car Park.



Participants in the Community Placemaking Project

The Heaney Yeats Literary Project included cross border contact with participants from Mid Ulster District Council area, with the Sligo focus being on the development of content for six signs to be installed at locations throughout the County that are synonymous with W.B. Yeats. The Heritage Programme involved lectures, workshops, cross border exchanges and site visits enabling participants to gain a better understanding of their shared heritage. In addition, a Small Grants Programme has supported the following five community initiatives:

1. Foróige - Digital History Project
2. Lest Sligo Forgets – WW1 Memorial Garden & Armistice Day Event
3. Northside Community Partnership – Sligo Mediation
4. Sligo Rovers – Showgrounds Outdoor Museum
5. Yeats Society – The Great Poetry Wall of Sligo

6.2 PEACE IV Sub Committee

Implementation of the PEACE IV Programme is being monitored by the PEACE IV Sub Committee which is a subcommittee of the LCDC.

Members of the PEACE IV Sub Committee are as follows:

Name	Representation (LCDC nominee)
Cllr Chris MacManus (replaced Cllr. Sinéad Maguire July 2019 & resigned March 2020)	LCDC Chairperson
Mr. Hugh MacConville (Acting LCDC Chairperson since March 2020)	Social Partner – Irish Congress of Trade Unions
Ms. Sharon Boles	Public Participation Network (PPN) Social Inclusion College
Mr. Michael Kirby	Public Participation Network (PPN) Environment College
Mr. Gerry O'Connor	Public Participation Network (PPN) Community & Voluntary
Ms. June Murphy	County Sligo LEADER Partnership CLG.
Mr. Chris MacManus	Tús Nua
Mr. Trevor Sweetman	Youth Officer Mayo Sligo Leitrim Education Training Board
Sgt Angela Cummins	An Garda Síochána
Mr. David Simpson	Minority Faiths

7. Healthy Ireland Fund

2019 witnessed the roll out of a further round of funding under the Healthy Ireland Programme. This latest tranche (Round 3) differs from earlier rounds, in that it spans a 2 year period (July 2019 – June 2021) in contrast to the 1 year period with the initial 2 rounds. The allocation available to Sligo LCDC for this round is just over €246,000.

Similar to previous rounds, this allocation will support the roll out of a number of initiatives and programmes by partner agencies of the LCDC. For the purposes of the Healthy Ireland Fund, these are defined as 'Actions' and those supported under this round are;

- 'Ways to Wellness & Social Prescribing'. A range of programmes by Sligo LEADER Partnership and Sligo FRC aimed at hard to reach target groups such as older persons, migrants & disadvantaged communities
- 'We're Breast Feeding Friendly Sligo'. An initiative by Lifestart Sligo to normalise and encourage higher rates of breastfeeding
- 'Stronger for Longer'. A physical fitness programmes aimed at the over 55's and led out by Sligo Sports & Recreation Partnership.
- 'Glór Shlighigh' An intergenerational Choir being established by Sligo Arts Service.

However, this latest round also provides for a small grants scheme aimed at local community groups and a fund to promote the Healthy Ireland message to the wider community through marketing & promotion. The Department also provided a contribution towards the salary costs of a co-ordinator who will oversee the entire programme.



Chief Officer of Sligo LCDC, Ms. Dorothy Clarke and Chairperson, Cllr Chris Mac Manus signing the Grant Agreement for Round 3 of the Healthy Ireland Fund in December 2019

8. Funding Opportunities

8.1 Community Enhancement Programme

On foot of the success of the 2018 Programme which saw over 120 Community Groups in Sligo share in approximately €260,000 of small capital grant aid, the Dept of Rural & Community Development again made provision for this very welcome scheme to run again in 2019. The allocation available to Sligo LCDC for 2019 was €144,555. Whilst disappointing that the overall allocation nationally was lower than that of 2018, nonetheless the earlier launch date of April 2019 was very welcome and allowed for more engagement with prospective applicants and community groups.

Through this, Sligo LCDC was able to strengthen the principle of ring-fencing up to 30% of the funds available towards small grass roots groups with grants of up to €1,000. Consequently, in 2019 more groups were successfully approved for this level of grant than had been the case in 2018.

A total of 63 Groups applying to the main scheme received funding. After allowing for the ring-fencing of small sums referred to above, the average grant award was just over €3,000. This too, was an improvement on the outcomes with the 2018 scheme.

An example of groups supported is the case of Enniscrone Kilglass FC. This group were able to install some seating in a new spectator stand, dedicated to the memory of founding committee members who passed away during the year.



Another example was Grange & Armada Development Association who painted murals on Gable End walls in the village. These depict Spanish Galleons of the type that were shipwrecked at Streedagh in 1588



8.2 National Community Weekend ('The Big Hello')

In early 2019, the Minister for Rural and Community Development, Mr. Michael Ring T.D announced the launch of National Community Weekend – 'The Big Hello'. This was to be held for the first time on the May Bank Holiday weekend.

Speaking at the announcement, Minister Ring said: '**National Community Weekend is a celebration of the great spirit of community that exists throughout the country and an effort to facilitate people who share communities to get together, get to know each other and deepen the sense of community in their area**'. Funding of €10,000 made available to each of the 31 Local Community Development Committees to be allocated in the form of small grants to support local events.

In an effort to attract applications that would be complimentary to key agendas of Sligo LCDC and of scale, the decision was taken to set the grant range for between €300 and up to €1,000.

With this in mind, events that clearly demonstrate a link towards furthering key priorities such as; celebrating diversity and integration, promoting health & wellbeing, promoting the 'Age Friendly' concept, promoting the Irish language and reaching out to-the Sligo 'Diaspora' were encouraged.

Over a dozen local events were supported. One example was Achonry Mullinabreena Community Enhancement Group who hosted a 'folklore collection' day at the old Carrowmore National School. A big attraction on the day was the Sam Maguire Cup.



Another example was an event hosted by the Nazareth Villagers Residents Association, entitled a 'New Community in the Making'



The success of the National Community Weekend events supported by Sligo LCDC has animated and encouraged many of the groups to build upon these ties and relationships and a number of similar such events have subsequently being supported through other funding streams provided by Sligo County Council such as the Community & Voluntary Scheme.

9. The Economic Agenda

In addition to the extensive Community agenda which the LCDC oversees the committee has an ongoing interest in the economic development of Sligo in particular through its main vision document the Local Economic & Community Plan 2016 - 2021. Therefore the LCDC would have received numerous

presentations and updates on funding opportunities and strategies throughout the year to keep itself informed on progress in this regard such as the update on the National Planning Framework/ Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy consultation process.

9.1 Sligo Economic Forum

Under Action 1.1.1 of the Local Economic & Community Plan 2016 – 2021 the Sligo Economic Forum was set up in 2017 for the purposes of:

- Planning strategically and directing the economic vision for Sligo
- Collectively promoting Sligo in all its facets
- Sharing information and best practice

The Sligo Economic Forum (SEF) has met consistently throughout 2018 and 2019 and consists of representation from Sligo County Council officials and members, LEO, Enterprise Ireland, IDA Ireland, Chamber of Commerce, IT Sligo, Fáilte Ireland, St. Angela's College, BID, and representatives from the Business and Farming sectors. The Chair of the SEF is Mr. Aaron Forde formerly of Aurivo Co-Op Society Ltd.

Its considerations to date has focused on the National Planning Framework (NPF), Housing supply, the proposed Regional Spatial and Economic strategies (RSEs), the new Urban and Rural Regeneration Development Funds, Enterprising Town applications, the Branding and promotion of Sligo, the development of a long term vision and strategy for Sligo entitled *Sligo: One Voice, One vision – towards 2030* which is developing in conjunction with the EU JASPERS initiative.

The Forum, in conjunction with the Council, in commissioning the overarching Brand for Sligo enables us to ensure a single agreed strong branding message across all major stakeholders. The implementation of the Brand strategy and the rolling out of the sligo.ie portal and social media tools all took place in 2019.

The task referenced above, of developing the strategic plan, in conjunction with JASPERS, will include an economic, social and spatial plan for Sligo which will be centred on a number of key smart principals across sustainable development, information technology, climate change and social inclusion.



Members of the Sligo Economic Forum at the pre-launch Ambassador Training in relation to the new branding for Sligo which took place at St Angela's College, Sligo, in Oct 2019

9.2 Atlantic Economic Corridor (AEC)



The work of the AEC to date has focused on two primary projects; the mapping of Enterprise Space along the AEC and the development of an Enterprise Hubs Strategy. The AEC team has also developed a high quality newsletter circulated on a quarterly basis.

Officers in the 10 local authorities have carried out surveys of available space in a pilot town in each county. Following these surveys, 277 enterprise spaces were identified which include large scale offices, industrial warehouses, greenfield and brownfield development and strategic sites. These details, currently being fed into a user app, provide users with information vital to decision making, re-purposing and development of enterprise stock and to be able to inform strategic town planning.

The Enterprise Hubs project aims to build a comprehensive profile of enterprise hubs operating along the Atlantic Economic Corridor, with over 100 hubs now identified. The next steps will see the development of an over-arching strategy to support and co-ordinate the development of these hubs into a collaborative network. This will involve the classification of hubs into relevant categories, the provision of solutions to challenges that many hubs face and the development of agreed quality standards for the hubs network.

Future Projects

In the months ahead, the AEC will launch a new strategy and the Department of Community and Rural Development have outlined that 5 primary projects will be identified for development within that strategy.

Proposed projects should identify with one of the following 5 key areas:

- Renewable Energy
- Agri-Tech
- Enterprise Facilities
- Telecoms Infrastructure
- Transport Infrastructure

Hubs Outreach Scheme

The Western Development Commission announced an investment of €300,000 for enterprise hubs along the Atlantic Economic Corridor to help them implement measures to reopen in compliance with public health guidelines as the economy recovers from the impact of COVID-19.

The investment will be made by the Department of Rural and Community Development as part of the Atlantic Economic Corridor Enterprise Hub Network project. Funding of up to €5,000 will be provided in grant aid to successful applicants to support them in reopening their facilities and putting in place the necessary measures to ensure social distancing guidelines are adhered to.

9.3 Urban Regeneration and Development Fund & Rural Regeneration and Development Fund

The Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF), was announced on 9th July 2018 as part of *Project Ireland 2040*, to support the compact growth and sustainable development of Ireland's five cities and other

large urban centres in line with the objectives of the National Planning Framework (NPF) and National Development Plan (NDP).

In addition, the Government committed to providing an additional €1b for a new Rural Regeneration and Development Fund over the period 2019 to 2027. The Fund will be administered by the Department of Rural and Community Development and will provide investment to support rural renewal for suitable projects in towns and villages with a population of less than 10,000, and outlying areas.

Sligo submitted numerous applications to this fund and benefited there from as per below:

At end of 2019 the following approvals have been received for applications made to the URDF and RRDF funding schemes.

Urban Regeneration Development Fund:

URDF Category A:

Name of Project	Amount of Funding Awarded
Eastern Garavogue Bridge and Approach Roads Scheme	€3,300,000
O'Connell Street Enhancement	€1,236,000
Sligo Cultural Plaza	€750,000
Total:	€5,286,000

URDF Category B:

Name of Project	Amount of Funding Awarded
Sligo Public Realm	Amount TBC

Rural Regeneration Development Fund:

RRDF Category 1:

Name of Project	Amount of Funding Awarded
Yeats Trail	€500,000
National Centre of Excellence for Surfing, Strandhill	€615,752
Total:	€1,115,752

Over 2019 additional projects were being developed to build on above and to prepare for the next round of applications which was to come in 2020. Under the URDF opportunity this included Phase 2 of the Sligo City Public Realm Plan, the development of a new Cultural Quarter at Connaughton Rd and Stephen St, the Cranmore Regeneration Community centre proposal and the Regeneration of the Sligo Gaol Complex.

Under the RRDF stream the Tubbercurry Town Centre Regeneration project was been developed.

9.4 Tourism Strategy

Work continues in progressing the outputs of the County Sligo Tourism Strategy 2018-2023. The focus of this work in 2019 was the development of a draft Festival and Events strategy to enhance the suite of

supports available to festivals in County Sligo. The aim of the strategy is to identify 5-7 primary festivals with the capability of developing to increase attendance figures and grow as an attraction of scale. Plans were in place to present this strategy to the SPC and Sligo County Council in Q2 of 2020. The Covid 19 crisis hindered these developments and work continues on developing the strategy further until such time as it can be fully considered and launched.

Work is also continuing on major capital projects that will enhance the tourism offering in county Sligo. These projects include the Yeats Trail, the Strandhill Surf Centre and the Coolaney Mountain Bike Centre. These significant capital investments will provide County Sligo with the necessary tourism infrastructure to attract visitors, increase dwell time and increase bed nights, all of which will have a sustainable economic impact on Sligo's tourism economy.



9.5 Diaspora Strategy

The Council has developed a Diaspora strategy launched in 2019 to set out how the Council in collaboration with the LCDC and other partners link, liaise and collaborate with the wider Sligo family who do not live in the county. It is developed under the themes of Economic and job creation, Arts, Heritage and Culture and Sport and Community.

One of the key areas of development outlined in the County Sligo Diaspora Strategy is to develop an annual event celebrating Sligo's unique heritage and encouraging the Sligo Diaspora to reconnect with their roots. This event would be a celebration of all things Sligo, featuring key note speakers who would speak to the newly developed messaging of the Sligo brand. These pillars focus on what Sligo has to offer as a world class place in which to live, invest and visit. Plans had been underway to develop an event that would coincide and collaborate with other festivals. Unfortunately like many other projects these plans were also hindered by the current crisis, however, plans will be progressed to host the event in 2021.



Launch of the Diaspora Strategy for Sligo on 1st May 2019 which took place in City, Hall Sligo, and at which Cllr Martin Baker, as Cathaoirleach,

Ciarán Hayes, Chief Executive, Sligo GAA County Board Chair Brendan Leonard and County Board Chair Martin Enright, shared their opinions on the significance of the Sligo Diaspora.

10. Impact of Covid – 19

The global outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic has had a profound effect on our society. Following the Government's announcement on St. Patrick's Day, Local Authorities were tasked with leading out on the Emergency response. A Forum, chaired by the Chief Executive and with representatives from all relevant local stakeholders was established with the purpose of leading the co-ordination of COVID-19 community supports. A Help-line was also put in place and went live on the 31st March 2020.

During the period of lockdown when schools and many businesses were forced to shut down and the elderly and most vulnerable people in our communities were cocooning, the community and voluntary sector proved to be invaluable in their commitment to the local community response. The extraordinary commitment and dedication of those involved in delivering essential services to individuals, communities and businesses in our community is acknowledged.

The work of the LCDC continued during this difficult time when Covid 19 impacted on the programmes under the remit of the Committee. The first virtual meeting of the LCDC took place on the 30th April 2020.



Virtual meeting of the LCDC in session – April 2020



Some Members of the COVID 19 Community Forum



The Community Support Help desk in operation at City Hall, Margaret McConnell with some members of staff operating the desk, Martin McAndrew, Suzanne Siberry and Jude Mannion.



Community & Economic Development Staff – Virtual meeting



The Sligo Food Initiative of the Community Response Forum, coordinated by Sligo LEADER Partnership CLG in conjunction with Civil Defence and local businesses, delivering food packages to families most in need during this pandemic

11. Conclusion

The LCDC has achieved another successful year in 2019 and continues with its work programme. While it has many aspects of work to consider, the fundamental function it carries out is ensuring collaboration and planning of services and funding at local level. This is ensured by effective contribution to and oversight of the local economic and community planning process and constructive attendance and debate at its meetings and sub-committees. The LCDC looks forward to future changes, challenges and successes for Sligo in the years ahead in building on its promises to be a world class place to live, invest or visit.