

Sligo Local Community Development Committee (LCDC)

Biennial Report – Activity in 2015 & 2016

1st June 2017



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A Statement by the Chief Officer, Sligo LCDC

In accordance with the Local Government Act 2001, 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. A report was prepared in March 2015 outlining activities and progress for 2014. This report is a biennial report covering the 2 year period of 2015 and 2016. The report outlines progress in respect of the various LCDC functions including a review of progress generally, details of meetings held, details of progress under the community elements of the LECP and details of the implementation, management and collaboration in relation to public-funded programmes under the LCDC's remit.

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

Under the strong leadership of Cllr Seán MacManus as Chairperson, the LCDC embarked upon an ambitious work programme the main focus of which included the extensive research & consultation process during 2015 to identify Sligo's key challenges, opportunities and priorities from both a community and economic perspective. Following this process and in partnership with the Strategic Policy Committee for Planning, Community and Economic Development, Arts and Culture, the Local Economic & Community Plan 2016 – 2021 was prepared, mapping out Sligo County's plan for development over this 6 year period. Sligo County Council approved the Plan in January 2016 and it was formally launched by Cllr MacManus in City Hall on the 12th February 2016.

April 2015 saw the commencement of the Social Inclusion & Community Activation Programme (SICAP), the successor programme to the Local and Community Development Programme (LCDP). Sligo LEADER Partnership Company is the Programme Implementer of SICAP in Sligo and the LCDC has been very efficient in its review and monitoring of the Programme throughout 2015 and 2016.

2015 also saw the commencement of consultation for the LEADER programme with the LCDC being successful in its bid to be 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.

In addition Sligo as a border region county is to benefit from funding under the Peace IV Programme with an indicative budget of €860,866 advised in 2016. At December 2016, communication was ongoing with the Special European Union Programmes Body in relation to the Plan and Programme start date.

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.

Dorothy Clarke
Chief Officer

Foreword from the Chairperson of Sligo Local Community Development Committee

The establishment of LCDCs represented a significant change in terms of the local oversight and strategic management of local and community development programmes. Local Community Development Committees taking primary responsibility for the planning and oversight of local development spends by local authorities on behalf of the State or by other local development agencies and structures has brought a new collaborative approach which is reflected in the framework set out in the Local Economic Community plan.

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 formal establishment of the LCDC has helped cement this partnership.

As Chairperson during the period of review of 2015 and 2016, I wish to state what a privilege it was for me to carry this mantle and I wish acknowledge the contribution and commitment of all members of the LCDC and support staff during the period. The input of Members has been crucial in the development of the community elements of the Local Economic & Community Plan, the oversight of the Social Inclusion & Community Activation Programme and the Rural Development Programme. Members have had an input into many other funding programmes such as the Peace Action Plan in 2016, in consultation with the Peace Partnership committee, and have always carried out their role with diligence and integrity.

Cllr Seán MacManus, Chairperson Sligo LCDC (July 2014 – March 2017)

As I take over as Chair of the Sligo LCDC I do so in the full knowledge of the significant and pivotal role to be played by the committee in the social, community and economic development of Sligo. I am optimistic that the LCDC will continue to 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. This collaboration will go a long way towards achieving the Local Economic & Community Plan's overarching vision for the County as *'An enterprising, inclusive, resilient and environmentally sustainable place which values and celebrates its unique landscape and rich culture and heritage and where the wellbeing of future generations is central to everything we do'*.

The Local Government Reform Act of 2014 bestowed particular responsibility on local government to provide strategic leadership at local level and it is my intention to ensure that this function is delivered upon in a collaborative manner to create the environment to assist Sligo to maximise its opportunities for development.

Cllr Sinéad Maguire, current Chairperson Sligo LCDC

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 Promotion & Branding of LCDCs

To assist in the national and local promotion of Local Community Development Committees and the Local Economic and Community Plans developed by the Committees and Local Authorities, the Local Government Management Agency (LGMA) at National level worked with the Department to develop a brand and communications supports for use by local authorities/ LCDCs in this regard. Individual logos issued to each LCDC in May 2016.



1.2 Dates and attendance at LCDC Meetings

LCDC meetings took place on the following dates in 2015 and 2016;

2015	4th Feb 2015	26th March 2015	7th May 2015	2nd July 2015	30th July 2015	10th Sept 2015	28th Oct 2015	1st Dec 2015
2016	4th Feb 2016	14th April 2016	2nd June 2016	28th July 2016	22nd Sept 2016	24th Nov 2016		

Attendance of Sectors represented on Sligo LCDC at meetings during 2015 and 2016 is tabulated on Pages 6 and 7

Attendance at LCDC Meetings in 2015

Sector Represented	4th Feb	26th March	7th May	2nd July	30th July	10th Sept	28th Oct	1st Dec
Elected Member	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Elected Member	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Elected Member	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Local Authority Official	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
Local Authority Official	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No
State Agency – Dept of Social Protection	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
State Agency - HSE	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
State Agency – Education & Training Board	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Local Dev Company	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Trade Union	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Business	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Farming	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
PPN - Environment	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
PPN - Community & Voluntary	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
PPN - Community & Voluntary	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No
PPN - Social Inclusion	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
PPN - Social Inclusion	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No

Attendance at LCDC Meetings in 2016

Sector Represented	4th Feb	14th April	2nd June	28th July	22nd Sept	24th Nov
Elected Member	yes	yes	yes	yes	No	yes
Elected Member	yes	yes	No	No	yes	No
Elected Member	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Local Authority Official	yes	yes	yes	No	No	yes
Local Authority Official	yes	yes	No	yes	yes	No
State Agency - DSP	yes	No	No	yes	No	No
State Agency - Health Service Executive	yes	yes	No	No	yes	No
State Agency - Education & Training Board	yes	yes	No	yes	yes	No
Local Dev Company	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Trade Union	No	No	yes	yes	yes	yes
Business	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Farming	No	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
PPN - Environment	yes	yes	No	yes	yes	No
PPN - Community & Voluntary	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
PPN - Community & Voluntary	yes	yes	yes	yes	No	No
PPN - Social Inclusion	No	No	yes	No	No	No
PPN - Social Inclusion	No	yes	yes	No	No	yes

1.3 LCDC Membership in 2015

Name	Sector	Organisation
Cllr. Seán MacManus (Chair)	Local Government	Sligo County Council
Cllr. Sinéad Maguire	Local Government	Sligo County Council
Cllr. Séamus Kilgannon	Local Government	Sligo County Council
Mr. Ciarán Hayes	Local Government	Sligo County Council
Mr. John Reilly	Local Government / Local Enterprise Office	Sligo County Council
Mr. Kieran O'Dwyer	State Agency	Dept. of Social Protection
Mr. Frank Morrison	State Agency	Sligo/Leitrim/West Cavan HSE
Mr. Michael Burke	State Agency	Mayo, Sligo, Leitrim ETB
Mr. Chris Gonley	Local Development Sector	Sligo LEADER Partnership Co. Ltd
Mr. Hugh MacConville	Trade Union Interests	Irish Congress of Trade Unions
Mr. Paul Keyes	Business Interests	Sligo Chamber of Commerce
Mr. Sean Tempany (Vice Chair)	Farming / Agriculture Interests	Farming / Agriculture Pillar
Mr. Michael Kirby	Environmental Interests	Environment Pillar (PPN)
Ms. Bernadette Maughan	Community & Voluntary – Social Inclusion	PPN
Mr. Gerry O'Connor	Community & Voluntary	PPN
Ms. Sharon Boles	Community & Voluntary – Social Inclusion	PPN
Ms. Jackie Sweeney	Community & Voluntary	PPN

Noted Changes to LCDC Membership in 2015 as follows;

- 5No. PPN Representatives above were elected onto Sligo LCDC in February 2015
- Mr. Frank Morrison replaced Mr. Damien McCallion as HSE Representative in February 2015

1.4 LCDC Membership in 2016

Name	Sector	Organisation
Cllr. Seán MacManus (Chair)	Local Government	Sligo County Council
Cllr. Sinéad Maguire	Local Government	Sligo County Council
Cllr. Séamus Kilgannon	Local Government	Sligo County Council
Mr. Ciarán Hayes	Local Government	Sligo County Council
Mr. John Reilly	Local Government / Local Enterprise Office	Sligo County Council
Mr. Kieran O'Dwyer	State Agency	Dept. of Social Protection
Mr. Frank Morrison	State Agency	Sligo/Leitrim/West Cavan HSE
Ms. Mary Brodie	State Agency	Mayo, Sligo, Leitrim ETB
Mr. Chris Gonley	Local Development Sector	Sligo LEADER Partnership Co.
Mr. Hugh MacConville	Trade Union Interests	Irish Congress of Trade Unions
Mr. Des Faul	Business Interests	Sligo Chamber of Commerce
Mr. Seán Tempany (Vice Chair)	Farming / Agriculture Interests	Farming / Agriculture Pillar
Mr. Michael Kirby	Environmental Interests	Environment Pillar (PPN)
Ms. Bernadette Maughan	Community & Voluntary – Social Inclusion	PPN
Mr. Gerry O'Connor	Community & Voluntary	PPN
Ms. Sharon Boles	Community & Voluntary – Social Inclusion	PPN
Ms. Jackie Sweeney	Community & Voluntary	PPN

Noted Changes to LCDC Membership in 2016 as follows;

- Ms. Mary Brodie replaced Mr. Michael Burke as the ETB representative in March 2016
- Mr. Des Faul replaced Mr. Paul Keyes as the Business Pillar representative in November 2016

2. Local Economic and Community Plan (Community Elements)

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;

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

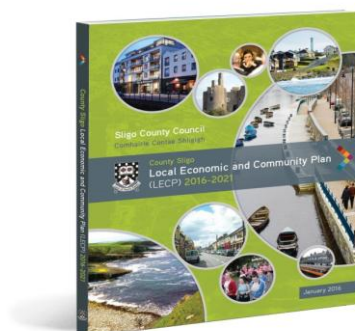
2.1 LECP Development and Consultation Process 2015

In Spring 2015, Sligo County Council and Sligo LCDC brought together 350 local stakeholders with a role in economic and/or community development to participate in a series of workshops in relation to the following themes;

- Employment and Economic Activity,
- Social Inclusion, Equality and Poverty,
- Health and Wellbeing,
- Education and Training,
- Environment & Climate Change

A wide range of groups were represented at the workshops including representatives from local government, local development, statutory, community and voluntary, business, tourism, farming and trade union sectors.

A draft of the Community elements of the Plan was agreed by the LCDC in July 2015 and was then integrated with the economic element prepared by the SPC with responsibility for Economic Development. This integrated report was put on public display between the 11th August and the 8th September 2015. This was the second period of public consultation in relation to the Plan. 21 submissions were received during this period and the Plan was amended following consideration of these submissions.



In October 2015 a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Appropriate Assessment (AA) of the LECP was conducted by Sligo County Council.

2.2 Resolutions of Elected Members to the making of the Plan

Resolutions adopting a statement of support on the draft Local Economic and Community Plan 2015-2021 for consideration by Sligo County Council, in accordance with the legislative requirements, were agreed by Members of Sligo Municipal District at their meeting on 16th November 2015 and by Members of Ballymote-Tobercurry Municipal District at their meeting on 21st December 2015.

A statement of support was adopted by the Northern & Western Regional Assembly at their meeting on the 11th December, 2015.

The final draft Plan together with supporting statements was considered by the full Council at their meeting on the 11th January 2016 and a Resolution was passed, to make the Sligo Local Economic & Community Plan 2015 - 2021.

2.3 Formal Launch of LECP

The Sligo Local Economic & Community Plan was formally launched by Cllr. Seán MacManus, Chair of the LCDC on the 12th February 2016 with a large and successful event in City Hall. Those in attendance included Elected Members of Sligo County Council, Members of Sligo LCDC and SPC for Economic Development, Members of the Oireachtas, Management Team and staff of Sligo County Council and representatives of local community, enterprise and business interests.



Formal Launch of Sligo LECP, Council Chamber, City Hall, Quay Street, Sligo (12.2.16)

Minister Simon Coveney, T.D., Minister for Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government, officially launched the first round of the six-year Local Economic and Community Plans, on Tuesday 20th September 2016, at the National Ploughing Championships, in Screggan, Tullamore, Co. Offaly. Ms. Dorothy Clarke, Chief Officer and Cllr Séamus Kilgannon represented Sligo LCDC at the national launch.



Pictured above from left to right, Cllr Seamus Kilgannon and Minister Coveney holding the Sligo Local Economic & Community Plan with Director of Services, Dorothy Clarke, at the launch of the Local Economic Community Plans at the Ploughing Championships, September 2016

2.4 Implementation & Monitoring of the LECP

In accordance with Department Guidelines, the LCDC at their meeting on 26th March 2015 established an Advisory Steering Group to assist in the preparation, drafting, adoption and monitoring of the LECP.

The Advisory Steering Group is made up of:

- Nominees from the Local Community Development Committee - Mr. Chris Gonley, Mr. Hugh MacConville and Ms. Sharon Boles
- Nominees from the Strategic Policy Committee - Mr. Paul Keyes, Cllr. Sinéad Maguire
- Cllr Sean MacManus (Chair SPC/Chair LCDC) and Ms. Dorothy Clarke (Chief Officer/DOS SPC 3)
- Mr. John Reilly and Ms. Siofra Kilcullen/Ms. Margaret McConnell (Nominees of Chief Officer).

A system for updating & monitoring progress of actions in the LECP was agreed and all lead agencies submit progress on their LECP actions on a quarterly basis. Progress is updated to the LCDC by the Chief Officer at each meeting of the LCDC.

A number of agencies have also taken 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. Agencies who presented at meetings in 2016 are as follows;

1. MSLETB – 14th April 2016
2. Sligo County Childcare Committee – 2nd June 2016
3. Dept of Social Protection – 28th July 2016
4. HSE – 22nd September 2016
5. Sligo County Council – 24th November 2016

3. Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP)

SICAP is a national programme which aims to tackle poverty and social exclusion through local engagement and partnership between disadvantaged individuals, community organisations and public sector agencies. It has three core programme goals: community development, education and training and employment. The aim of SICAP is to ***reduce poverty; promote social inclusion and equality through local, regional and national engagement and collaboration.***

Target groups to be supported under SICAP are as follows;

- Children and Families from Disadvantaged Areas – Changed to **Disadvantaged Children & families** under V1.6 OF Programme Requirements (Aug 2016)
- Lone Parents
- New Communities (including Refugees/Asylum Seekers)
- People living in Disadvantaged Communities
- People with Disabilities
- Roma
- The Unemployed (including those not on the Live Register)
- Low income Workers/Households – new group added in V 1.5 (Feb 2016)
- Travellers
- Young Unemployed People living in Disadvantaged areas
- NEETS (Young people aged 15 – 24 who are not in employment, education or training)

The Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government is the lead funding agency for SICAP with technical support provided by Pobal.

Following a procurement process in 2014, Sligo Local Community Development Committee awarded the contract to deliver SICAP at a local level to Sligo LEADER Partnership Co (SLPCo). The SICAP Funding agreement between Sligo LCDC, Sligo County Council and County Sligo LEADER Partnership Company was signed on 26th March 2015 and the Programme commenced on the 1st April 2015. The allocated budget for SICAP for 2015 was €439,136 (1/4/15 – 31/12/15)

3.1 SICAP Monitoring Committee

The LCDC established a SICAP Monitoring Committee at their meeting on 30th July 2015 to oversee the delivery of SICAP on behalf of the county based on the agreed Annual Plan and to monitor implementation progress. The following members were nominated to sit on this Committee;

- Mr. Kieran O'Dwyer
- Ms. Bernadette Maughan
- Mr. Hugh MacConville
- Cllr Sinead Maguire (to act as substitute)

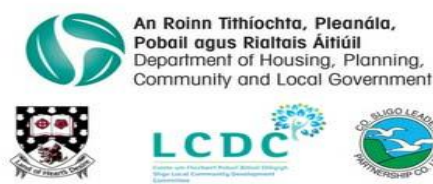
3.2 Progress under SICAP

Pobal set annual targets under a series of Headline Indicators and the Programme Implementer's performance is measured against these targets which are closely monitored by the SICAP Committee. All progress under SICAP is recorded on the Integrated Reporting Information System (IRIS)

In accordance with the Programme Requirements for SICAP, the Programme undergoes two reviews each year (mid-year and end –year). Quarterly Payments to the Programme Implementer is dependent on their performance against targets set.

At the 2015 End-year review both Key Performance Indicators (below) were exceeded and the LCDC approved 2015 SICAP end year reports and the 2016 Annual Plan at their meeting 4th February 2016. A similar budget was allocated for SICAP in 2016 with an amount of €585,514 advised. Progress under Key Performance Indicators at 2016 End-year review is shown below also. The LCDC approved the 2016 End-year review for SICAP at their meeting 26th January 2017.

Ref	Headline Indicator	Annual Target 2015	Actuals At 31.12.15	Annual Target 2016	Actuals At 31.12.16
1.	Total number of disadvantaged individuals (15 years upwards) engaged under SICAP on a one-to-one basis (KPI)	594	654	719	797
2.	Number of local community groups assisted under SICAP (KPI)	31	44	55	55



The Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) 2015-2017 is funded by the Irish Government and co-funded by the European Social Fund and includes a special allocation under the Youth Employment Initiative.

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

In March 2015 the Department issued calls for expression from any groups that can show broad local and community participation and wishes to be considered as a Local Action Group (LAG) for the delivery of LEADER Programme in their respective areas. LEADER is a key funding pillar within the national Rural Development Programme (RDP). LEADER in Ireland is programmed under Priority 6 of the RDP – Promoting social inclusion, poverty reduction and economic development in rural areas.

Sligo LCDC was successful in its Expression of Interest to deliver the LEADER element of the Rural Development Programme and will act as the Local Action Group (LAG) working in partnership with Sligo County Council as Financial Partner and Sligo LEADER Partnership Company as Implementing Partner.

The Local Development Strategy (LDS) for County Sligo was drafted and agreed by the LCDC and was approved by the Department Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs in March 2016 and forms the basis against which all project approvals will be measured.

The Contract between the Department and the above parties was signed in July 2016 and the Service Level Agreement between the LCDC, SCC and SLPCo Ltd to deliver the programme in line with the LDS was signed on 22nd September 2016. The LCDC as LAG will have final approval on what projects proceed subject to the recommendation of the Independent Evaluation Committee which was established in November 2016. The Council will act 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**. Thematic areas for funding include;

1. Rural Economic Development/Enterprise Development Job creation

- Rural Tourism
- Enterprise development
- Broad band
- Rural Towns

2. Social Inclusion through building community capacity, training and animation

- Basic Services for hard to reach communities
- Rural Youth

3. Rural Environment

- Sustainable use of water resources
- Protection & improvement of local bio-diversity
- Development of Renewable Energy



Pictured above are members of Sligo LCDC, Sligo Leader Partnership Company and staff of the Council at the signing of the Service Level Agreement for the implementation of the Leader Programme in September 2016



5. Public Participation Network (PPN)

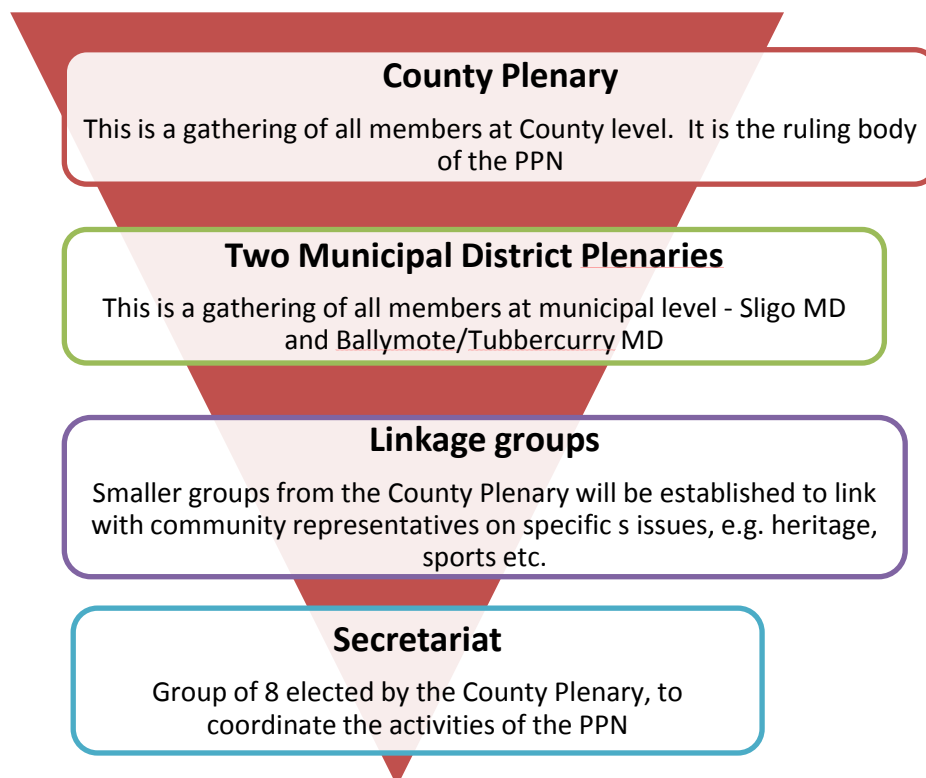
In September 2013 the Government established the Working Group on Citizens Engagement in Local Government to make recommendations on more extensive and diverse input by citizens into the decision making at local government level. The Report of the Working Group, published on 28th February 2014, recommended the establishment of a number of new structures to facilitate community engagement in local decision-making. In particular they proposed the establishment of a **Public Participation Network (PPN)** in each local authority area to enable the public take an active formal role in relevant policy making and oversight committees of the local authority.

Following the commencement of section 46 of Local Government Reform Act 2014 on 1st June, local authorities were 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, as part of the framework for public participation in local government. It facilitates the community, voluntary and environmental sectors to participate in local decision making and it has a statutory basis in the Local Government Reform Act 2014 (Section 46).

5.1 Structure of the PPN

The PPN is organised at both County and Municipal District level and will have a number of linkage groups on specific. The following diagram illustrated the structure in Sligo



The role of the PPN is to facilitate structured input by community and voluntary groups, social inclusion groups and environmental groups through representation on various local policy making committees such as the Local Community Development Committee, Strategic Policy Committee, Sligo Peace and Reconciliation Partnership and other policy making groups.

5.2 Plenary Meetings

Plenary meetings were held on the following dates in 2015 and 2016;

12th February 2015, 2nd December 2015

4th May 2016 and 10th May 2016 (Funding Seminars in Tubbercurry & Sligo respectively)

29th September 2016

At the plenary meeting in February 2015 the PPN elected representatives to a number of local policy making committees. 46 candidates sought a total of 12 seats for Sligo County Council's Strategic Policy Committees and the Sligo Local Community Development Committee. This meeting was attended by over 70 community groups / representatives from all over County Sligo.

The plenary was addressed by the Chair of the LCDC, Cllr Sean MacManus who emphasised the importance of the role of the Public Participation Network in relation to the work of the LCDC and the development of Sligo's six year plan for Local Economic and Community Development.

5.3 PPN Secretariat & Policy Support Worker

The PPN Secretariat held regular meetings throughout 2015 and 2016 to discuss the running of the PPN. Secretariat Members are as follows;

At December 2015

David Tuffy, Marcella Mc Garry, Jennifer Van Aswegen, Gerry O Connor, Susan Mahon, Elizabeth King (Elizabeth replaced Joe Watters who resigned his seat in November 2015), Michael Bell and Michael Kirby

At December 2016

David Tuffy, Albert Higgins (replaced Marcella McGarry in November 2016), Jennifer Van Aswegen, Gerry O Connor, Vanessa Clarke (replaced Susan Mahon in November 2016), Elizabeth King, Michael Bell and Michael Kirby

A Policy Support Worker commenced work in July 2015 to assist the PPN team in carrying out facilitation work, research and development, mentoring, capacity building, communications and evaluation. A PPN Constitution and Representatives Charter and Travel & Subsistence Policy were agreed and adopted in 2016.

5.4 Publicity & Promotion

Sligo PPN continues to publish a very informative and successful monthly e-bulletin and is also active on Facebook and Twitter with updates on www.sligoppn.com

The first bi-annual e- zine was circulated to all PPN members in July 2016. The purpose of the e-zine is to keep members up to date with the work of PPN representatives on the various committees.



5.5 Sligo PPN statistics at December 2016

At December 2016, there were 386 groups registered with Sligo PPN. Of these 259 are from the Sligo MD and 127 from the Ballymote /Tubbercurry MD. Of those groups 330 have registered with the Community & Voluntary College, 43 with the Social Inclusion College and 13 with the Environmental College.

The PPN is represented on 9 committees in Co. Sligo through 29 representatives, i.e. 3 Strategic Policy Committees, Co Sligo Heritage Forum, Joint Policing Committee, North West Regional Drug & Alcohol Taskforce, Sligo Sport and Recreation Partnership, Sligo County Council Disability Consultative Committee and the Independent Evaluation Committee.

6. Peace IV Programme

Sligo is to benefit from the PEACE IV programme along with the other 5 counties in the Border Region i.e., Leitrim, Cavan Donegal, Louth and Monaghan. The indicative budget allocated to Sligo is €860,866. The Plan will operate for a minimum 2 year period.

Programmes in the following areas will be delivered as part of the Local PEACE Action Plan, to be implemented by Sligo County Council/LCDC Peace partnership:

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

At the LCDC meetings on the 14th April and 2nd June 2016, a PEACE subcommittee was established to consider the bulk of the operational work involved. This group then report and recommend to the LCDC who are responsible for considering and approving the Peace Action plan in an integrated manner in accordance with the recommendation of Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB) and the Department.

Members of the Peace IV sub-committee are as follows;

- Cllr Seán MacManus (Elected Member)
- Mr. Chris Gonley, Sligo LEADER Partnership Co
- Mr. Hugh McConville, Trade Union
- Mr. Gerry O Connor, PPN, C&V
- Mr. Michael Kirby PPN, Environment
- Ms. Sharon Boles, PPN, Social Inclusion & Childcare

Membership of the Committee was later extended to include;

- Mr. Chris MacManus (Tús Nua)
- Mr. Trevor Sweetman (Youth)
- Mr. David Simpson (Minority Faiths)
- Sgt Philip Maree (An Garda Síochána)

The Chief Officer Ms. Dorothy Clarke also attends meetings of the Peace IV Subcommittee.

At the LCDC meeting on the 22nd September 2016 a resolution was passed that the LCDC agree and adopt the PEACE IV Plan for submission to the SEUPB by 23rd September, 2016.

At December 2016, communication was ongoing with the Special European Union Programmes Body in relation to progression with the Plan and Programme start date.

7. Peace Impact Programme

The Council under the aegis of the LCDC made an application on 23rd December 2015 to the International Fund for Ireland for funding for a Community Development Programme for Caltragh and Ballytivnan areas. This application was successful in securing funding in the amount of €102,288 for a Project Co-ordinator to work with both communities to develop and liaise with other agencies to ensure provision of pre-employment training; literacy programmes; homework clubs, family counselling courses, tenancy support initiatives, youth projects, health promotions initiatives and cross border exchanges, all intended to lead to improved social inclusion, assist with capacity building of the two communities, and provide support to areas of deprivation already prioritised through SICAP. A letter of offer issued 29th March 2016 and was accepted by the LCDC in April 2016. Recruitment process commenced to appoint a Co-ordinator and it is hoped to have someone in place by early 2017.

8. Funding Opportunities

8.1 Rural Economic Development Zone (REDZ)

At the LCDC meeting in March 2015, Ms. Dorothy Clarke, Chief Officer advised of a submission made to the Minister for Rural Affairs, Ann Phelan in relation to a proposal that the Municipal District of Ballymote/Tobercurry incorporating the rural towns of Tobercurry, Ballymote and Enniscrone be designated as a pilot area under the new REDZ scheme when this becomes government policy and is implemented at a local level. The REDZ form part of recommendations in the recent CEDRA report and the aim of a REDZ is to encourage and stimulate economic activity in smaller towns (population of 1500 approx) who have suffered drastically from job losses during the economic recession.

In September 2015, Sligo County Council was approved an allocation of €150,000 in funding from the Department of Environment, Community & Local Government under the Rural Economic Development Zone (REDZ) Pilot Initiative which was matched by a local contribution of in excess of €50,000.

This funding enabled the roll-out of the Tubbercurry REDZ Programme which was administered by the Tubbercurry REDZ Steering Group involving representation from Tubbercurry Chamber of Commerce, Tidy Towns, Old Fair Day, St. Bridgid's Hall Drama, Aurivo Co-operative Society Ltd. and Sligo County Council. The REDZ project was launched in June 2016 at *An Chroí – South Sligo Enterprise Centre* by Minister Heather Humphreys, Minister for Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs.

8.2 Town & Village Renewal Scheme

The Minister for Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, Heather Humphreys TD, announced in August 2016 that €10 million will be made available to Local Authorities in 2016 to support the regeneration of rural towns and villages across Ireland. The Scheme will assist in implementing the actions proposed in the CEDRA (Commission for Economic Development in Rural Areas) Report.

The central aim of the scheme is to support the revitalisation of towns and villages in order to improve the living and working environment of their communities and increase their potential to support increased economic activity and job creation into the future. The type of projects to be funded under this initiative is primarily a matter for the Local Authorities to identify in consultation with the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) and in partnership with local business and communities.

Sligo County Council, in line with all other local authorities, received an allocation of €380,000 and the following towns were included in this Scheme;

Ballymote/Tubbercurry MD:	Tubbercurry and Enniscrone
Sligo MD:	Ballisodare and Grange

At their meeting on 22nd September 2016, the LCDC considered the proposal for the implementation of this round of funding for the Town & Village Renewal Scheme 2016 and endorsed the projects proposed for town/villages above.

9. European Volunteering Capital (EVC) 2017 – Sligo

At the November 2016 meeting of Sligo LCDC, Members were advised of Sligo's designation as the European Volunteering Capital 2017 after a successful joint bid by Sligo County Council and Sligo Volunteer Centre. This is an enormous achievement for Sligo to be selected for this designation, to host a European Capital event which has National and International significance. The competition itself was established in 2014 by the European Volunteer Centre based in Brussels, the purpose of which is to promote and develop volunteering at local and regional level. The awarded municipality is chosen from candidate municipality bids (8 candidates for 2017) by an international jury. Previous winners are Barcelona (2014); Lisbon (2015) and London (2016).

The preparation of a programme of events for 2017 commencing with the Launch on 27th January 2017 was ongoing at the end of December 2016 with a Steering Committee in place consisting of officials of the Council, officials of the Volunteer centre, representatives of the Volunteer board, St. Angela's College, Marian Harkin, MEP, Fáilte Ireland, and others as required from time to time, to work or advise on certain

aspects of the work programme which consists of a year long, largely volunteer-led calendar of events for County Sligo. This will feature recognising the Voluntary contribution across a range of community activity.

The aims of European Volunteering Capital 2017 in Sligo include:

- recognising the culture of volunteering and community spirit in Sligo and in Ireland;
- creating pride among volunteers of the value of their contribution to enhancing the quality of life of those in the community and combating social inclusion;
- showcasing, promoting and celebrating volunteerism in the wider community;
- exploring the development of a formalised Sligo diaspora initiative from the raised profile of this European designation as a potential legacy of the celebration
- leveraging regional and national support for the EVC. The uniqueness of Sligo’s successful EVC bid was the ability to involve all levels, ages of local society and both urban and rural communities in the year-long celebration
- showcasing Sligo, its natural beauty, culture, sport, arts, music, community spirit, enhanced by volunteers
- maximise Economic benefits that can be derived from the designation.

10. Conclusion

The LCDC has achieved two successful years in the years reviewed and continues with its work programme. While the LCDC has many aspects of work to consider the fundamental and underlying function it carries out is in the overseeing and monitoring of the LECP, a framework for collaborative action with the ultimate aim of improving quality of life for all who live, work and visit our county.

The LCDC stands for collaboration and encourages all agencies, politicians, communities and public and private interests to work together to ensure that Sligo maximises its opportunity for development.
