

CHAPTER 10 THE GAELTACHT, CULTURE, SPORT & RECREATION

10.1 BACKGROUND

County Donegal with a rich and varied cultural identity has the largest and most vibrant Gaeltacht in the Country. The County also has a strong literary, a unique musical and clearly defined dance and crafts base, which have formed an intrinsic part of the Donegal identity for many years.

The importance of developing the County's cultural infrastructure has seen recent developments in the Arts with substantial investment in library, museum, theatre and Arts infrastructure. The importance of Culture in all its guises in supporting both local need and in assisting in Economic Development, is recognised and will be supported and encouraged by the Council as far as possible. The whole area of culture is a key component of An Straitéis and is seen as a key resource for the County and its population.

10.2 GAELTACHT

BACKGROUND

IRISH LANGUAGE

The Irish language is a key ingredient of the Country's living heritage and must be protected. Donegal contains the largest Gaeltacht in the Country and it is therefore essential that the Irish Language is promoted and protected as the first language in Gaeltacht areas. The Development Plan contains policies required to protect and promote the language and culture of our Gaeltacht areas. It is recognised that the language is under threat from a variety of sources which requires strong policies at National, Regional and Local level if the decline is to be reversed. The Development Plan supports the language and cultural heritage through a range of policies to improve the quality of life in Gaeltacht areas by facilitating employment creation, supporting the provision of adequate educational, social and community facilities, enhancing accessibility, strengthening existing settlements, conserving the unique cultural identity and protecting the language through appropriate land use policies. Evidence is clear that the Donegal Gaeltacht is rich in song, heritage, folklore and traditions with a very strong sense of its own identity and uniqueness which has over the years been reflected in the many forms of artistic expression which have attracted widespread acclaim and support both nationally and internationally. The Irish Language has been one of the key resources which enabled this to happen and there is considerable potential to further develop the language as an economic resource.

THE GAELTACHT & THE ISLANDS

Donegal's Gaeltacht is the largest in the Country, occupying almost one third of the land space in Donegal. The Gaeltacht maintains a unique social, cultural and linguistic heritage. Language is the uniquely defining feature of this area.

The Gaeltacht area stretches along the north coast of the County from Fanad Head across to Downings and Carrigart. From Termon, in through the Derryveagh mountains towards Falcarragh, Gortahork and Gweedore. The Gaeltacht then extends along by the Rosses, into the centre of Donegal from Gwebarra Bay to the Bluestack Mountains, south of the County by Ardara to the parishes of Kilcar, Carrick and Glencolumbkille.¹

¹ Source; An Strateis 2001

Off the coast of Donegal lie the most geographically remote and peripheral regions of the County. There are 6 inhabited islands off the coast of Donegal: Aranmore, Tory, Inishboffin, Inishfree Upper, Island Roy and Gola. These islands support a total population of 711 inhabitants and are of great social, economic and environmental interest and cultural value to the State.

The Gaeltacht has a number of extraordinary cultural resources including its vibrant oral tradition, dance, music, painting, sculpture and drama. Unfortunately the transmission of this knowledge from generation to generation is in decline and some valuable traditions are being lost. The language and culture of the Gaeltacht is a unique and precious inheritance, which is a national aim to protect and preserve, strengthened by the Planning and Development Act 2000², which requires that a Development Plan shall include objectives for the protection of the linguistic and cultural heritage of the Gaeltacht, including the promotion of Irish as the community language, where there is a Gaeltacht area in the area of the Development Plan. The Regional Planning Guidelines also set out a number of key recommendations to support the development of the Gaeltacht including the promotion of the Irish language and culture. It was not the intention of the planning legislation to radically extend the purpose of the planning system, nor the powers of the Council as the Planning Authority. Rather it was the intention to clearly permit and place a duty on the Council to have specific regard to the needs of Gaeltacht areas when implementing the Planning Legislation and to use the legislation to support the language and culture of these areas through the implementation of landuse and other planning policies and processes. The Gaeltacht is also facing a range of challenges in terms of its cultural viability and sustainability as a unique cultural entity. It is intended to seek to work with relevant opportunities to address these challenges.

GOAL

The Council aims to maintain and develop the Gaeltacht as a vibrant and sustainable community wherein the Irish language and culture can flourish.

10.3 CLASSIFICATION OF GAELTACHT AREAS AND SUB-AREAS.³

The Gaeltacht areas within the County are unique and it would be inappropriate to have one policy approach to the entire Gaeltacht in present circumstances. Accordingly, the policy approach proposed hereunder recognises the special characteristics of the Donegal Gaeltacht and of its sub-areas.

While the geographical delimitation of the Donegal Gaeltacht areas is clear, what is not clear is the classification of such areas and the extent to which specific policies and approaches might apply to the different areas. In order to deal with the various type of Gaeltacht it will be necessary that the Gaeltacht areas be distinguished from each other and that approaches appropriate to each area be identified. It will be necessary to identify the classification of such areas and that they be related to the extent of the Irish Language and Culture within the areas at present and that policy outcomes appropriate to each type of area should also be considered, as these will set the basis on which impacts and policies will be based.

The following examples of the typology of Gaeltacht areas is one approach which could be considered and teased out through the preparation of Local Area Plans under the Planning Act.

² Section 10 (2)

³ Draft NASC Planning in Gaeltacht Areas Guidelines

| Category | Example | Category | Goals |
|----------|---------------|--|--|
| 1 (a) | Gaoth Dobhair | Those areas where Irish is the language most used in the social, cultural and economic life of the community. | That the use of the Irish language would continue as the primary language in the community. That greater proportions of the community would develop the capacity to use the Irish language. That an increasing number of people would use the Irish language in their daily lives. That the culture of the area would be protected and preserved. |
| 1(b) | Na Dunaibh | Those areas where substantial development has been taking place and where there has been an influx of a non-Irish speaking population. | That greater proportions of the community would develop the capacity to use the Irish language. That an increasing number of people would use the Irish language in their daily lives. That the culture of the area would be protected and preserved. |
| 1(c) | Gaeltacht Lar | Those areas where Irish is used to a substantial extent in the social, cultural and economic life of the community. | That greater proportions of the community would develop the capacity to use the Irish language. That an increasing number of people would use the Irish language in their daily lives. That the culture of the area would be protected and preserved. |

INDICATORS

In order to record the current status of the language and culture within the Gaeltacht and its sub-areas, it will be necessary to establish a comprehensive set of indicators which are robust over time and can provide measures both of the current status of the language and culture within the Gaeltacht and the factors that will impact on this status in the future.

It is acknowledged that the development of indicators will require the application of a certain amount of resources to the process and it is also acknowledged that this may prove difficult initially. It is suggested, however, that once good databases and systems have been developed the process will not prove to be unduly onerous.

It is also suggested that these methods should be put in place in consultation with An Roinn Gnóthaí Pobail, Tuaithe agus Gaeltachta and Udaras Na Gaeltachta and potential developers and that the baseline data be made available for a fee to developers that would be required to carry out Language Impact Assessments. This would have the advantages of helping to defray the cost and to provide an agreed and common baseline on which such impacts could be based.

Until the typologies are worked out and indicators firmly established it would be unwise at this stage to proceed in general on the basis of widespread use of Language Impact Assessments or the insertion of planning language conditions. Accordingly, it is proposed to protect the linguistic and cultural heritage of the Donegal Gaeltacht including the promotion of Irish as the community language, through innovative policy proposals to be developed in conjunction with the relevant statutory bodies and the local communities in each area by preparing Local Area Plans (LAPs) for all the distinctive Gaeltacht areas within County Donegal. It is, however, recognised that the preparation of such plans will take time. Accordingly having regard to the development pressures in the Gaeltacht areas, a priority list of LAPs will be drawn up by the Council. Pending the adoption of such LAPs the following policy proposals will be pursued by the Council through this Plan. The policies will apply to the whole County where appropriate.

The Council shall seek to prepare Local Area Plans (LAPs) for all the distinctive Gaeltacht areas in the County. Such plans will be resourced on a multi-annual basis in conjunction with An Roinn Gnóthaí Pobail, Tuaithe agus Gaeltachta and Udaras Na Gaeltachta.

The Council recognises the distinctiveness of Gaeltacht areas and seeks to support and encourage artists, arts organisations and infrastructural developments within the context of arts and culture development for the Gaeltacht in this region. There is a extensive range of matters that are to be considered in the context of culture and arts for the Gaeltacht region. These include:

- Formal and informal language
- Place names
- Literature
- Infrastructural Development
- Architecture
- Arts/Crafts
- Dance/Music/Traditions
- Employment Creation

10.4 POLICIES & PROPOSALS

In order to preserve and protect the Gaeltacht, whilst allowing it to develop, the Council shall pursue the following policies:

POLICY GCSR 1:

Promote artistic excellence and innovation, support the work of artists, art organisations and artists working in the Gaelic language and in traditional arts, bring International Arts to the County and develop international audiences for Donegal artists and arts projects, and support multi-cultural initiatives, by:

- Plan and work towards the provision of the infrastructure, physical and human, that is needed for all forms of contemporary and traditional arts.
- Work in partnership with all interested agencies groups to ensure the continuing development of the area.
- Explore any new opportunities which will benefit the region in terms of economic, social and cultural development.

POLICY GCSR 2:

Prepare a series of Local Area Plans for the protection of the distinctive areas in the Gaeltacht to examine the wide range of local issues including the linguistic and

cultural elements of significance. The Council shall prepare a LAP on a pilot basis for the areas making up the parishes of Glencolumbkille and Kilcar.

POLICY GCSR 3:

Where any proposed multiple residential development within or close to the Gaeltacht area materially affects the linguistic and cultural heritage of the Gaeltacht, including the promotion of Irish as the community language, the applicant shall be required to assess their impact on the protection of the language and culture through the submission of a Language Impact Assessment. The Language Impact Assessment will form a material factor in the consideration of any planning proposal. It will be the policy of the Council that where a significant impact is demonstrated, steps to mitigate such an impact will have to be proposed by the applicant. The Council will attach where appropriate language conditions on multiple residential developments to ensure that the objectives set out in the plan for the Gaeltacht are achieved. At present, language conditions are being imposed on multiple residential developments.

POLICY GCSR 4:

Ensure that building design and construction is of a high quality and reflects the elements of the tradition of the area. New development should not detract from the traditional buildings and structures in the area that form part of the cultural heritage.

POLICY GCSR 5:

Ensure that on a Countywide basis **all commercial and business buildings contain signage in the Irish language** of an area, size and prominence that is at least equal to the area, size and prominence of signs provided in other languages. Signage in the Irish Language only will be encouraged.

POLICY GCSR 6:

Ensure that the provision of all signage by Public Authorities and Public Bodies contain signage in the Irish language, of an area, size and prominence that is at least equal to the area, size and prominence of signs provided in other languages. Signage in the Irish Language only will be encouraged. The Council will also comply with all regulations in relation to signage which may be made by the Minister of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs under the Official Language Act, 2003.

POLICY GCSR 7:

Ensure that in the Gaeltacht, all road directional and place-name signs are provided in the Irish language only.

POLICY GCSR 8:

Ensure that projects that are supported by the Council in the Gaeltacht must demonstrate that they have proposals for the promotion and conservation of the Irish language and culture incorporated into the project.

POLICY GCSR 9:

Ensure that projects that are supported by the Council outside the Gaeltacht will be encouraged to have regard to the conservation of the Irish language and culture.

POLICY GCSR 10:

Ensure that any contractors employed by the Council in the Gaeltacht must have regard to the culture and heritage of the area.

POLICY GCSR 11:

Facilitate the provision of facilities for the teaching of the Irish language, culture and traditions.

POLICY GCSR 12:

Facilitate the provision of housing for those who use the Irish language as their primary means of communication, by housing associations and similar organisations.

POLICY GCSR 13:

Support Údarás na Gaeltachta and An Roinn Gnóthaí Pobail, Tuaithe agus Gaeltachta in their respective development roles.

POLICY GCSR 14:

The Donegal Gaeltacht has a unique settlement pattern which has contributed to the social economic and cultural well-being of the population. The Council will continue to facilitate this unique settlement pattern, thereby protecting this valuable resource.

POLICY GCSR 15:

Review the Council's Scheme of Letting Priorities for the allocation of both social and affordable houses within one year of adoption of the Plan to consider if any amendments are necessary to ensure the protection of the linguistic and cultural heritage of the Gaeltacht

10.5 CULTURE

GOAL

The aim of the Council's Cultural Development Policy is to contribute to sustaining and enriching the quality of life for all of the people of Donegal. The Culture of the County, in its different facets, is recognised as a valuable resource for community, economic and social purposes.

OBJECTIVES

- Work towards integrated development where the economy, the environment, cultural life etc. are all considered together, and where artistic and cultural activity is accepted as a vital part of everyday life.
- Play a major part in encouraging the positive and creative use of recreation and leisure time, and provide the infrastructure for this purpose.
- Foster, and provide the means for lifelong learning and self-development at each stage of education.
- Ensure an understanding and appreciation of arts, culture and heritage is an intrinsic part of the educational system and continuing education.
- Safeguard the cultural heritage of the County.
- Foster and promote cross-culture understanding and activity and continue to seek opportunities for strengthening cross-border cultural links.
- Investigate and pursue all potential areas for sustainable employment creation in this sector.

- Plan and work towards the provision of the infrastructure, physical and human that is needed for libraries, museums, archives and for all forms of contemporary and traditional arts.

10.6 LIBRARIES

The Council has established a Countywide library network, with the Central Library at the core, with 8 community libraries and 8 branch libraries throughout the County. A cross-border mobile library serves the east of the County with stops at Newtowncunningham, Manorcunningham, Drumoghill, Porthall, St. Johnston, Carrigans, Muff, Bridgend, Burt, Killea and Burnfoot; this service is run in association with the Western Education and Library Board, in Northern Ireland.

The Council adopted Library Development Programmes in 1985, 1995 and 2001. The new strategic plan will cover the period 2005-2009. By the end of the millennium a modern library and information service had been established across the County and the profile of the service raised, which has resulted in a solid basis for future development of the network.

The library network is headed by the Central Library, based in Letterkenny, which has the largest collection of books, pamphlets, newspapers, and microfilm relating to the history of Donegal. The library has given special attention to two sectors in its expenditure on materials- Children's stock and Donegal studies.

In addition to the lending services a range of other services are available including Children's Services, Internet, E-library services, Reference and Information Services, Donegal studies and an Audio- Visual Resource. The Central library is the County's main resource for children's and adult lending and for local studies and research. Community libraries are located in Bunrana, Bundoran, Carndonagh, Gweedore, The Rosses, Lifford, Milford and Ramelton. Branch Libraries are located in Ballyshannon, Ballybofey, Clonmany, Donegal Town, Glenties, Killybegs, Moville and Raphoe.

The Council seeks to meet the need for general education, information and recreation, to support the quest for knowledge, and to meet the public's interest in reading and the arts, by providing a modern library and information service. By doing so, it aims to enrich the lives and increase the social and cultural opportunities for every member of society.

POLICIES AND PROPOSALS

In order to continue the development of the library infrastructure, the Council shall pursue the following policies:

POLICY GCSR 16:

- Strengthen the role of the library as a resource for:
 - (1) Children and Young People.
 - (2) Learning and Information
 - (3) Culture and the Imagination
 - (4) Community and Sectoral Interest Groups
- Continue developing, enhancing and expanding the Library network
- Develop the Library Service, including the physical infrastructure, to meet or exceed national and international standards.
- Implement local, national and international developments in ICT for the benefit of library users.

- Develop the IT network in the libraries and extend the functions available
- To encourage greater participation throughout the County of the library services.
- To assist in sustaining and developing local communities, by providing a range of information and tools, necessary to enhance the local area and by creating a social focal point within the community.
- Develop library and information services to rural and isolated areas by forming strategic partnerships with community groups, agencies and other service providers.

POLICY GCSR 17:

To ensure that everyone in the County has access to a library, the Council shall seek to develop the following projects in order of priority:

- Donegal Town Community Library
- County Library Administrative Centre
- Ballybofey/Stranorlar Community Library

The second tranche of priority projects are:

- Ballyshannon Community Library
- Leabharlann Phobail Chloich Cheann Fola
- Killybegs Community Library
- Glenties Community Library

The Central Library will occupy three floors once the new Regional Arts Centre is complete. This will allow existing services to be greatly enhanced.

10.7 ARTS

An unprecedented growth has occurred in the development of the Arts sector in Donegal in recent years. The development of the Arts has been encouraged and supported by the Council through a broad range of initiatives in partnership with the Arts Council, Government Departments and other bodies. To date a number of large scale projects have been completed including the development/upgrading of a number of venues including Letterkenny Arts Centre, An Grianan Theatre, Letterkenny and The Abbey Centre in Ballyshannon. A range of smaller scale facilities have also been developed across the County, many as a result of Community Development Initiatives. Overall there are over 30 Arts Workspaces located throughout the County. The Arts Council's Auditoria report identified south and west Co. Donegal as an area of poor infrastructure for the performing arts.

In conjunction with the development of these major infrastructural projects, the Council has supported a range of Policy initiatives to encourage the Arts to be viewed as an integral part of all forms of development. The Arts are viewed by the Council as an integral part of its overall obligation towards the equitable social, cultural and economic development of the County. Through its County Arts Service, the Council operates a range of initiatives to stimulate and support the development of Arts in the County. Amongst those are the Touring Arts Programme, support for Cross Border Arts Initiatives and the Countywide Programme of collaborative community arts projects. The success of the Letterkenny Arts Centre led the Council to develop a new Regional Cultural Centre in Letterkenny, that is due to commence construction in 2005 and to be completed in late 2006.

At present there are a number of capital projects awaiting funding or being developed. These include:

- Regional Culture Centre Letterkenny
- Cultural Centre Gaoth Dobhair.
- Teach Cathal Uí Shearcaigh

GOAL

The Council seeks to enrich the lives of its people by developing the Arts to a standard which meet the public's needs, by developing a suitable arts infrastructure, by developing a County wide service and also by working in partnership with, community and statutory groups and individuals.

POLICIES AND PROPOSALS

The County Council shall aim to:

POLICY GCSR 18:

Create a greater awareness of the Arts throughout the County and encourage greater public participation throughout all age groups in the Arts sector, by promoting and supporting the work of those engaged in the Arts, both Artists and Arts Organisations, in order to promote both traditional and contemporary Arts, in order to develop international audiences for Donegal artists, and arts projects, and support multi-cultural initiatives.

POLICY GCSR 19:

To ensure that everyone in the County has access to the Arts, the Council shall:

- Further develop the County Arts Service in conjunction with other agencies, by developing structures for arts provision at a local level, the touring arts programme, arts grants and bursaries, arts infrastructure, the public art programme and arts festivals;
- Further develop Letterkenny Arts Centre/Regional Cultural Centre as a regionally significant artistic and cultural resource.
- Further develop Donegal County Council's Public Art Programme

10.8 MUSEUMS

Donegal County Museum is located in Letterkenny and is operated under the auspices of the Council and the Letterkenny Town Council. The building itself was once part of the Letterkenny workhouse, which was established for the relief of the poor during the Great Famine of 1845-1850. Substantial work has been carried out on the building and renovation work was completed by 1999. The function of the Museum is to collect, preserve, record, communicate and display the material evidence and associated information of the heritage of Donegal. The County Museums Service also monitors the welfare of the archaeological and historical sites in the County. The Museum has over 8,000 artefacts dating from prehistoric times to the present century and hosts a range of temporary exhibitions and associated events.

Dispersed throughout the County are a number of important community-run museums and heritage centres, which reflect local aspects of Donegal's unique and varied history.

GOAL

The Council seeks to preserve the inheritance of the people of Donegal for present and future generations by collecting, recording, preserving, communicating and displaying for the use and enjoyment of the widest possible audience, the material evidence and associated information of the County's heritage. By doing so it aims to enrich the lives and sense of identity of every person in the County.

POLICIES AND PROPOSALS

POLICY GCSR 20:

In order to strengthen and enhance the functions of Donegal County Museum, the Council shall, where possible:

- Examine opportunities for funding the expansion of the existing museum building.
- Provide for the further development of the Museum building to be equipped with state of the art facilities, and information and communication technologies.
- Ensure that the Museum, its collections and associated information are made more accessible to the public, both general and specialist.
- Promote a wider appreciation and understanding of the unique heritage of Donegal.
- Ensure the continued preservation of the County's material heritage

10.9 ARCHIVES SERVICE

Prior to 1999, archives were made available to the public via the Library Service. The Archives Service was established in 1999 in Lifford and has continued to develop since, in terms of preservation, access, acquisitions and outreach. The County Archives' Collection includes material from the Council, Rural District Councils, the Town Councils, Grand Jury, Boards of Guardian, Railways and Primary Schools. The County Archives has also acquired a number of private collections relating to Donegal history and culture, the most significant of which is the papers of the renowned Irish speaking poet, Cathal Ó Searcaigh. Archives can be in the form of maps, plans, sketches, letters, photographs, legal documents, files, minutes, literary works and reports.

POLICY GCSR 21:

It is the policy of the Council to promote the Lifford Archive Service and to support its future expansion and improvement.

GOAL

The Council seeks to preserve the inheritance of the people of Donegal for present and future generations by preserving, acquiring and making accessible the documented heritage of the County. By doing so it aims to enrich the lives and sense of identity of every person in the County.

POLICIES AND PROPOSALS

POLICY GCSR 22:

To achieve this purpose the Council shall:

Continue to ensure the preservation of its archives to the highest standard possible by the following actions:

- Continue to seek funding for the further growth of the Archives Service and the development of a purpose built Archives Centre;
- Facilitate and generate a greater demand for access to the County's archives, through continued acquisition of relevant archives and provision of research facilities of the highest standard, thus maximising the use of archives for social, political, historical, economic and cultural research;
- Create and develop awareness of the importance and relevance of archives for our national and local heritage, through cross-sectoral co-operation, particularly in the area of education.

10.10 SPORTS & RECREATION

BACKGROUND

Donegal is well known for its involvement in a number of sporting activities and the high level of interest displayed in sporting activities in the County. Sport and

recreation are essentially about people and communities and can play a vital role in developing community pride. Over the years, sporting organisations and volunteers formed the backbone of sport in Donegal. Sporting infrastructure within Donegal has improved immensely in recent years and a number of major facilities and attractions are located throughout the County.

Within Donegal sport and recreation have a vital role to play in the development of the County both socially and economically. There are a number of beneficial impacts directly relating to the development of this sector including positive impacts on health and the surrounding area, a focus for community activity and potential economic benefits for the area.

A number of Government Agencies are involved with the development and enhancement of sporting activities in Donegal including the Council, Donegal Vocational Educational Committee and the Health Services Executive, North Western Area. The formation of the Donegal Sports Partnership under the auspices of Donegal County Development Board has provided the County with an association that will coordinate the development and promotion of sport and recreation in the County and will lead to cohesive development of the sector with an emphasis on access for all of the community.

GOAL

The Council aims to promote the development of recreation and leisure throughout the County in a focused approach in order to promote and protect the natural resources of the County as a recreation resource.

POLICIES AND PROPOSALS

POLICY GCSR 23:

The Council shall continue to work in partnership with interested bodies in order to adopt a co-ordinated approach to sport and recreation development throughout the County in the form of a Strategy for Sport in the County. In order to promote this the Council shall:

- (1) Participate in the Donegal Local Sports Partnership
- (2) Facilitate Sports facilities having regard to the local cultural needs and the conservation of the natural and built environment.
- (3) Safeguard sports facilities and amenities of value to the community.
- (4) Continue to provide funding to the community and voluntary sector for the development of local services at grass roots level.
- (5) Continue to enhance and expand existing facilities including the development of marine leisure, swimming pools, walking routes, etc.
- (6) Encourage a wider participation in the sports sector in order to promote a healthier society and encourage the participation of all age groups in the sports sector.
- (7) Ensure that adequate play and recreation facilities are put in place through new housing development and other means where appropriate.
- (8) Facilitate the development of a Centre of Excellence for Sport and Recreation in Ballybofey/Stranorlar.

- (9) The Council will actively encourage and seek to facilitate the development of integrated cycle routes throughout the County in association with Sustrans and other agencies.

10.11 EDUCATION PROVISION

BACKGROUND

Section 10(2) (1) of the Planning & Development Act 2000-2004 requires that a Development Plan should include objectives for 'the provision or facilitation of the provision of services for the community including in particular schools, crèches and other education and childcare facilities. The emphasis in the Planning Act is on childcare and educational facilities and includes services such as pre-schools, Irish language playgroups, day care services, crèches, playgroups, childminding, after school groups, primary, secondary and special need schools. The Childcare Strategy approved by the Council in October 2002 and reproduced in Appendix B of the Plan sets the scene for planning policy in regard to this topic.

In regard to school provision the Development Plan must ensure that adequate land is reserved to meet the need for new or expansion of existing schools and colleges at all levels in accordance with the requirements of the Educational Authorities, in this case the Department of Education and Science. Up to present the Development Plans for the main urban areas in Letterkenny, Buncrana and Bundoran and the wide ranging LAP programme has dealt with site specific issues in regard to urbanised generated educational needs, but it is the policy of the Council to:

POLICIES AND PROPOSALS

POLICY GCSR NO. 24:

Make provision for new educational facilities or extensions to existing facilities, sufficient in their extent, quality and distribution, to meet the needs of the population in terms of education at different age groups and levels.

10.12 HEALTH SERVICES

BACKGROUND

Health Services are comprised in general terms of services that address the needs of public health promotion and primary care, the needs of children, older people, disability services, mental health, acute services and ambulance provision/services.

In this regard the Council will have regard to:

- The National Health Strategy
- The National Childrens Strategy and any emerging strategies, policies and programmes arising from the Health Services Executive, North Western Area, during the lifespan of the Development Plan.

POLICIES AND PROPOSALS

It is the policy of the Council to support the following range of uses, in liaison with the Health Service Executive, North Western Area, in suitable locations.

- Community hospitals and nursing units.
- Health centres, social centres and day care centres for the older person.
- Childcare and family support services.
- Medical centres for the delivering of primary care.
- Community mental health services.

County Donegal Development Plan 2006-2012 (as varied)

- Nursing Homes. During the lifespan of the Development Plan further policy development on the location and siting of nursing home facilities may be explored.