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**Minutes of Donegal Local Community Development Committee**

**Held by web conference 11am on 20th January 2021**

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| **Members** | Clr Niamh Kennedy (Chair), John McLaughlin, Clr Maire Therese Gallagher, Michael MacGiolla Easbuig, Anne McHugh, Michael Tunney, Shauna McClenaghan, Padraic Fingleton, Aengus Kennedy, Kathleen Bonner, James O Donnell, Charlene Logue and Seamus Bonner |
| **Apologies** | Paul Hannigan, Anne McAteer, Liam McElhinney, Seamus Bonner & Joe Boland |
| **Chief Officer** | Paddy Doherty |
| **Attending** | Liam Ward, Seamus Canning, Adrienne Kelly, Claire McCallan and Kathleen Browne |

**Welcome**

Clr Niamh Kennedy, Chairperson, welcomed everyone and thanked the members present for participating in the meeting.

1. **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

Draft minutes of the LCDC meeting of 16th December 2020 were considered with no matters arising.

On the proposal of James O Donnell, seconded by Padraic Fingleton, the minutes were adopted.

1. **Funding Report**

Paddy Doherty presented a report providing a breakdown of all funding awarded by the LCDC for the following funding Programmes in 2020:

Town & Village Renewal Scheme

CLAR

ORIS

COVID 19 Emergency Fund

Community Enhancement Programme

LEADER

Development Fund Initiative

Healthy Ireland Fund

A breakdown of the number and amount of grants awarded by Municipal District was included in the report. Paddy confirmed to members that 441 groups in total received funding in 2020 with 136 new groups awarded funding. Paddy Doherty also made a presentation to members of a heat map of the geographical location of all funding awards in 2020.

Members welcomed the report and the detailed heat map in particular. Clr Maire Therese Gallagher suggested that the mapping be used when developing future programmes to identify where groups are active and strong and to identify areas where additional supports need to be given. Members requested a copy of the presentation to share with their various bodies. Michael Tunney stated that caution should be taken if the report was to be released to Community Groups to ensure that information contained in the report is not taken out of context

Liam Ward commended the work in producing the detailed report and presentation. He acknowledged the work of the Implementing Partners and staff of Community Development in delivering the LEADER Programme to such an extensive geographical area in the county. He acknowledged the concerns raised by Michael Tunney and confirmed that a context for the figures included in the presentation was required.

Paddy Doherty confirmed to members that a similar presentation for the five years of the LEADER Programme was being developed and would be presented to members at the February Meeting. Aengus Kennedy requested that a breakdown of the category of Leader Funding awarded could be included in the presentation. Paddy confirmed that they would try to include that detail in the presentation.

Padraic Fingleton welcomed the report and felt it evidenced the work of the Community led groups and the support provided by the Local Development Companies to allow them to become active, sustainable communities.

1. **COVID 19 Emergency Fund**

Seamus Canning advised members that Minister Heather Humphreys, Department of Rural and Community Development, had announced additional funding of €1.7m nationally under the COVID 19 Emergency Fund to support community and voluntary groups to deal with COVID 19. Donegal LCDC have been allocated €68,130 for award to Community and Voluntary groups. He confirmed that this would bring the total allocated to Donegal under the scheme to €149,880.

Seamus advised that it was recommended that these awards should be directed as follows:-

(1) To assist groups to adapt their services and operations to fit the new COVID-19 reality. Examples of measures supported could be adapting premises to allow for social distancing; offering on-line activities; providing social supports and friendly calls by phone etc.

(2) To help animate community groups to enable them to become more involved in the Government's 'Keep Well' campaign. It will seek to assist their participation in the campaign, in particular with the three themes: staying connected, switching off and being creative, and minding your mood.

Members were advised that the Department request that a closing date of no later than 28th February 2021 should be set for applications for funding and all awards must be drawn down by 31st July 2021. Seamus confirmed that draft Application Form and Guidelines had circulated to members in advance of the meeting and that the LCDC could add additional criteria for the selection process if they so wish.

Seamus advised that the Covid Emergency Fund 2020 regulations issued state that it is not necessary for a group/organisation to be registered for Tax in order to apply for funding. However, for Revenue purposes Donegal County Council require groups to supply a Tax Registration/PPS Number before they can receive payment. It is also proposed to amend the regulations to confirm to applicants that the Second Round of COVID 19 Emergency Fund is a recoupment fund, i.e. an organisation must first spend from its own resources on the project and claim reimbursement for these payments from the Council.

On the proposal of Clr Maire Therese Gallagher, seconded by Anne McHugh members agreed to amend the guidelines to adhere to the payment guidelines set down by Donegal County Council and to confirm to applicants that the fund is a recoupment fund.

Seamus further advised that the Department guidelines state that the Closing date for Covid Emergency Fund can be set by the LCDC with a date no later than 28th February 2021.

On the proposal of Clr Maire Therese Gallagher, seconded by Anne McHugh, the LCDC members agreed to set the deadline for receipt of applications to the Covid Emergency Fund for 3pm on Friday, 19th February 2021.

Members considered the how the grant awards should be expended and on the proposal of Clr Maire Therese Gallagher, seconded by Anne McHugh, the LCDC agreed that monies be divided between equally between each of the 5 MDs with a minimum of 30% of the monies awarded in small grants of up to €1,000.

1. **Healthy Ireland – Keep Well Campaign Update**

Seamus Canning provided an update to members on the progress on the Healthy Donegal Keep Well Campaign.

He advised members that under the Your County theme local actions were to be delivered with Age Friendly Co-ordinators and delivery of actions under the Keep Well Campaign.

During the COVID 19 Pandemic our Nursing homes were one of the areas that were most affected by the virus. In order to protect the older residents in the homes, all visits from family members and friends had to stop. The Donegal Age Friendly Programme in partnership with Transition Year Students from a school in each Municipal District delivered a specially designed, Winter Ready Pack along with a personalised card to approximately 5000 older people in long term residential care/Nursing Homes in Donegal.

Members were advised that under the Switching Off & Being Creative Theme creative initiatives with assistance from Creative Ireland were to be delivered.

Seamus advised members that Community radio plays a vital role in the communications of a county and generates a sense of connection, engagement and belonging with not only the mainstream public but especially the rural, vulnerable and harder to reach population. Healthy Donegal community broadcasts facilitated local people in engaging with the broader community and, in this way, counteract isolation and generate a sense of belonging. A ‘Keep Well’ Community Christmas Concert was broadcast simultaneously by Highland Radio, Ocean FM and on the Healthy Donegal YouTube channel on Sunday 20th December 2020 after 7 o’clock. Radio na Gaeltachta also broadcast excerpts of the concert during Christmas week, all of which aimed to alleviate loneliness and get older people involved with family, friends or the wider community by enjoying a shared experience together-apart. This concert was also uploaded onto You Tube.

Kathleen Bonner and Clr Niamh Kennedy both acknowledged the great response throughout the community to the Concert.

Seamus advised members that a major benefit of social media promotion is the ability to reach and extend your audience. Members were advised that social media is a targeted method of communicating your message to your audience. This allows Healthy Donegal to advertise to people by age, interests, behaviour, and location.

He advised members that alongside the webpage, Healthy Donegal is promoted by way of Instagram, Twitter, Facebook and YouTube – all of which have links to the national Healthy Ireland accounts and continually promote and include all key messages and campaigns in relation to Covid19 and other national Dept of Health campaigns.

Members were informed that Healthy Donegal continues to grow a strong social media following and has a combined following of approximately 1000 accounts. Seamus advised that in the last 28 days through Facebook posts Healthy Donegal had a promoted reach of over 33,375 people, through Instagram posts an organic reach of 1,388 and through Twitter posts we’ve earned an impressive 26.8k impressions. With the ‘Keep Well’ Community Christmas Concert promotion earning 8,882 impressions on Facebook, 12,054 impressions on Twitter and 1,248 viewings on YouTube with viewers from Ireland, the United Kingdom, Germany and Canada.

Seamus Canning confirmed that the actions under the Community Resilience Fund will continue to run until 31st March 2021.

1. **Presentation from CYPSC**

Liam Ward advised that he was a member of the Donegal Children and Young Peoples Services Committee. He informed members that they were currently developing their plan for the next period. He confirmed that this Plan would be completed in the first quarter of 2021. CYPSC were seeking permission from the LCDC to make a presentation of their Plan to them at the April LCDC Meeting. Liam confirmed that the Local Economic Community Plan was due for review and advised that the CYPSC plan could inform elements of the LECP and its objectives.

On the proposal of Clr Maire Therese Gallagher, seconded by Shauna McClenaghan, members agreed to invite CYPSC to make a presentation on their new Plan at the April LCDC Meeting.

1. **Schedule of Meetings**

Members agreed the Schedule of Meetings for 2021 as follows:-

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| **Month** | **Date** | **Day** | **Time** |
| January | 20/01/2021 | Wednesday | 11.00 am |
| February | 23/02/2021 | Tuesday | 10.00 am |
| March | 23/03/2021 | Tuesday | 02.00 pm |
| April | 20/04/2021 | Tuesday | 10.00 am |
| May | 18/05/2021 | Tuesday | 10.00 am |
| June | 22/06/2021 | Tuesday | 10.00 am |
| July | 20/07/2021 | Tuesday | 10.00 am |
| September | 21/09/2021 | Tuesday | 02.00 pm |
| October | 19/10/2021 | Tuesday | 10.00 am |
| November | 16/11/2021 | Tuesday | 10.00 am |
| December | 14/12/2021 | Tuesday | 10.00 am |

This concluded the business of the meeting.