

**Minutes of Donegal Local Community Development Committee
Held by web conference 10.00 am on 16th June 2020**

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

Welcome

Clr Martin McDermott, Chairperson, welcomed everyone and thanked the members present for participating in the meeting.

1. Minutes of Previous Meeting

Draft minutes of the LCDDC meeting of 23rd March 2020 were considered with no matters arising.

On the proposal of Clr Marie Therese Gallagher, seconded by Charlene Logue, the amended minutes were adopted.

2. SICAP – Lot 33-2 & 33-3 Budget adjustment for COVID 19 Grant Scheme

Seamus Canning advised members that correspondence had been received on 4th April 2020 from Donegal Local Development Company advising that since the beginning of the COVID 19 crisis the DLDC SICAP Goal 1 team had been liaising with and supporting a large number of community and voluntary organisations in an effort to assist them put a local area crisis community response in place to support the more vulnerable members of their communities.

In carrying out this work they identified a clear need in all communities throughout Donegal for financial support to deliver services locally.

As a result DLDC sought approval from Donegal LCDDC to reallocate part of the SICAP Action Budget 2020 to a COVID 19 – Community Response Fund.

Copies of all documents which would form part of the Community Response Fund process were submitted, reviewed and approved by LCDC Secretariat. DLDC confirmed that they had reviewed the guidance issued by Pobal in relation to SICAP and COVID 19 Emergency and ensured that the reallocation of funds fell within the SICAP Operating Guidelines.

The proposal for both Lot 33-2 and 33-3 SICAP Goal 1 was set out as follows:

- SICAP Goal 1 has budget already ring-fenced for activities (1.1), partner events and initiatives (1.4), and social enterprises (1.5)
- It may be unlikely, that SICAP staff, partners or groups - will be in a position to action any of the planned activities for which budget(s) have been allocated in the existing action plan in 2020
- Should the crisis continue DLDC would have funds that it can't put to use in terms of actions
- Local community groups had current and real needs – in support of the frontline actions which they are already engaged in addressing, within their communities.
- The logic would follow, given the circumstances – that DLDC's action funds, could be re-purposed and put to best use currently as part of a 'COVID19 Community (Emergency) Response Fund'
- That community (emergency) response fund would be for:
 - Engagement: Those groups supporting - engaging existing SICAP target groups through the crisis (1.1)
 - Collaboration: Community based responses to the fund – groups and people (volunteers) working together on actions to respond to the fund (1.4)
 - Social Enterprises: Leading community based responses to the fund (1.5)

DLDC set out details of how the fund would operate as follows:-

- The fund would operate within the existing guideline cap of €1,500 per LCG
- The community response fund would be openly advertised and circulated amongst all community groups
- The Fund would be open on a continuous basis for applicants until the fund is utilised – continuous
- Online application using a simple electronic form and set of questions or by email (simple form)
- Costs should be real, identifiable – and invoiced electronically

DLDC sought approval to re-allocate SICAP Action Budget to the Community Response Fund as follows:

- Lot 33-2 – Donegal Gaeltacht - €8.500
- Lot 33-3 – Central Donegal - €25,000

LCDC Secretariat noted that the use of funding from this fund would be used to deliver SICAP supports under the following actions:-

- 1.1 Engagement
- 1.4 Collaboration
- 1.5 Social Enterprises.

It was further noted that the proposed Fund will operate within the SICAP Programme Requirements for grants for Local Community Groups.

Members were informed that LCDC Secretariat issued approval of the reallocation of the SICAP Action Budget 2020 for Lot 33-2 and 33-3 to Donegal Local Development Company on 16th April 2020. Correspondence had issued to all LCDC Members advising them of the budget reallocation on this date also.

On the proposal of Cllr Maire Therese Gallagher, seconded by Charlene Louge members approved the requested to retrospectively approve the Reallocation of the SICAP Action Budget to the Community Response Fund as follows:-

- Lot 33-2 – Donegal Gaeltacht - €8,500
- Lot 33-3 – Central Donegal - €25,000

3. SICAP Budget Adjustment due to impact of COVID 19

Seamus Canning advised members that Both DLDC and IDP have indicated that due to the impact of COVID 19 on their ability to deliver the SICAP programme as outlined in the 2020 Annual Plans, it has been necessary to make some changes to the budgets to date. It was anticipated that further budgetary changes will be necessary. These changes would be within the existing budget actions and administration budget. Seamus confirmed that the Department of Rural and Community Development and Pobal had confirmed that flexibility would be allowed within the programme spend to adapt to the Covid 19 Pandemic and both PIs have confirmed that they will worked within the guidelines set down in relation to all budget amendments.

Members were informed that details of the budget changes to date will be included in the Mid Year Review and full details of all the changes to the Lot Budgets will be brought before the LCDC at year end for approval.

Shauna McCleanaghan, IDP and Padraic Fingleton, DLDC, confirmed to members that some budget adjustments had already taken place and further adjustments would be required. They assured members that all amendments would be with the budget actions.

Members noted that changes will be necessary to the SICAP Action and Administrative Budgets 2020 for Lots 33-1, 33-2 and 33-3.

4. SICAP Audit Report

Seamus Canning advised members that as part of the administration of the SICAP Programme, Donegal LCDC are required by the Department of Rural & Community Development to complete an Annual Audit of the Programme.

He confirmed that a copy of the Audit Report for SICAP 2018 had been circulated to Members in advance of today's meeting.

Members were informed that the audit was carried out by the Internal Audit section of Donegal County Council in conjunction with staff from the Community & Planning Directorate who engaged with relevant staff from the Inishowen Development Partnership and Donegal Local Development CLG, their help and co-operation is acknowledged and appreciated.

Liam Ward advised that having read the Report he wished to commend all parties involved in and stated that the audit was a very positive endorsement of the administration and delivery of the SICAP Programme.

On the proposal of Paul Hannigan seconded by Niamh Kennedy members are noted and approved the Donegal LCDC SICAP Audit Report 2018.

5. SICAP Amendments to Mid Year Review Process

Seamus Canning advised members that the submission date for Programme Implementers for Lots 33-1, 33-2 and 33-3 for SICAP Mid Year Reviews (for period January-May 2020) were scheduled for 15th June with final approval date for LCDC's set for 30th July.

Seamus confirmed that correspondence had been received from Pobal setting out changes agreed by the Department of Rural and Community Development to the upcoming SICAP mid-year reporting process in the context of COVID-19.

He advised that it was agreed that in light of the current challenges experienced by both LCDCs and LDCs, that the following amendments would be made to the Mid Year Review Process for 2020:-

- The Mid-Year Review process will be replaced by a Mid-Year Check, which will be desk based and will require less reporting than processes completed in the past.
- The timelines for updating of IRIS data and submission of Mid-Year Reports have been extended and the reporting period will now be for 6 months from January 1st 2020 - June 30th 2020 and the submission of Mid-Year Reports will be extended to 14th July 2020.
- The Quarter 3 payments will not be linked to the approval of Mid-Year Reports.
- Local Development Companies will be required to upload on IRIS a signed Lot Cost Charged Report. This must be signed by the LDC Chair or the CEO.
- LDC will be required to complete a brief report providing an update on KPI achievement, the impact COVID-19 has had on this (if any) and their expectations on achieving KPI targets by year end. It will also give them an opportunity to articulate the likely impact on spend and identify any supports your LDC needs as a result of COVID-19.

- The Lot Summary Report is not required to be uploaded on IRIS for the Mid-Year Check. The relevant information relating to KPI achievement will be included in the Mid-Year Update template.
- It is not a requirement for LDC's to update the mid-year Action Progress Report for each action on IRIS. This is optional at this point. However, they are encouraged to do so, if possible, as it will be required retrospectively by year-end.
- The deadline to have all Financial and Monitoring reports checked and the stage moved to "Approved" on IRIS is Friday 11st September.

Members were informed that there would be no requirement for the LCDC to formally approve the Mid Year Check and in lieu of formal LCDC approval, the Chief Officer will sign off on the Mid Year Check for each Lot. Seamus confirmed that an update on the Mid Year Checks will be brought to the members at the September LCDC Meeting.

On the proposal of Charlene Logue, seconded by Micheal MacGiolla Easbuig, noted the changes to the SICAP Mid Year Review Process for 2020 and approve the sign off on the Mid Year Checks for Lots 33-1, 33-2 and 33-3 by Paddy Doherty, Chief Officer, in lieu of formal approval by the LCDC.

6. SICAP – CASE STUDIES 2020

Seamus Canning advised members that the Local Development Companies are required to submit the 2020 Case Studies by 4th October 2020.

The three core themes for Case Studies are:-

1. Engagement Strategies with SICAP Target Groups/Communities
2. Collaboration
3. Goal One or Two Projects

Pobal recommend that the LCDC and LDC should mutually agree one theme for each Lot for the annual Case Study before the end of June 2020.

Members were informed that the following Case Study proposals have been submitted by IDP & DLDC respectively

Case Study Lot 33-1 Theme: Goal 1 Project– Social Enterprise Supports

Case Study Title:

Growing the Social Economy in Inishowen

Background:

Focusing on the Inishowen Social Economy and the established network of members under Inishowen Social Economy Network (ISEN) Inishowen Development Partnership will tell the story of the membership, where the network has come from and the social impacts that have been underpinned by supports under SICAP. The case study will be in line with the Case Study Guidelines 2020 07052020

Case Study Lot 33-2 2020 - Theme : Collaboration

Case Study Title: 'Tacú le Gaoth Dobhair' COVID 19 Response Initiative

Background:

At the onset on COVID 19 local community organisations & volunteers immediately mobilised to put supports and services in place to protect the most vulnerable members of their community, particularly those cocooning and self-isolating.

In the Gweedore area 4 community organisations immediately came together to work collaboratively to provide supports and the case study for Lot 33-2 2020 will feature this collaboration. The organisations involved are as follows:

- Ionad Naomh Padraig- Mary Coyle,
- Coiste Forbartha Dhún Lúiche – Padraig Ó Gallchóir,
- Coiste Forbartha Cnoc Fola - Treasa Ní Ghallchóir
- Comharchumann Forbartha Ghaoth Dobhair – Cathal Ó Gallchóir.
- DLDC – Mary McFadden & Margaret Larkin

The SICAP team have, and continue to work closely with 'Tacú le Gaoth Dobhair' to ensure that the most vulnerable members of the community continue to stay safe and supported.

Case Study Lot 33-3 2020 - Theme : Goal 1 or Goal 2 Projects

Case Study Title: 'Are You Connected'. Concentrating on Goal 2 - Individual Client Caseloads.

Background:

Everyone's life has been impacted by the COVID-19 Pandemic. People have had to find new ways to communicate, work, training, socialise, do exercise, shop etc. Because of the severe restrictions in place now and for the foreseeable future the internet has become more and more important as all the above supports are currently being delivered on the internet necessitating the use of computers, tablets or smart phones. DLDC are concerned that existing and potential new clients who are not using the internet / have no access to it are being left behind. In the spirit of social inclusion they feel strongly that they need to explore this situation.

With this in mind they have decided to complete a survey to try and help them identify possible solutions to assist this cohort of people. They intend collating the information gathered to try and identify what if any supports can put in place to try and address this barrier. DLDC advise they will use some of the underspend budget that has occurred in the last two months to put possible identified supports in place.

On the proposal of Micheal MacGiolla Easbuig, seconded by Charlene Logue, the LCDC agreed the themes for the SICAP Annual Case Studies 2020 as follows:-

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|-----------|---|
| Lot 33-1 | Goal 1 Project – Social Enterprise Supports |
| Lot 33-2 | Collaboration - Tacú le Gaoth Dobhair' COVID 19 Response Initiative |
| Lot 33-3. | Goal 1 or Goal 2 Project - 'Are You Connected'. Concentrating on Goal 2 - Individual Client Caseloads |

7. Date of Next Meeting

Clr Martin McDermott advised members that the next meeting was scheduled for 21st April 2020 at 10.00 am. Paddy Doherty confirmed that members would be contacted closer to the meeting date in relation to the format of the meeting in light of restrictions due to Covid 19 pandemic.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

