



**Comhairle Contae
Dhún na nGall**
Donegal County Council



**Minutes of Donegal Local Community Development Committee Meeting in County House,
Lifford and online via Teams at 10am on 17th September 2025**

Members in attendance	In person: John McLaughlin – DCC, Joe Boland – PPN, Anne McHugh – ETB, James O'Donnell -ICMSA, Charlene Logue – PPN, and Maire Ui Chomhaill – PPN. Online via Teams: Cllr. Niamh Kennedy – DCC, Brenda Hegarty – LEO, Micheal Mac Giolla Easpaig – Údarás, Maire Ui Mhaolain - Comhar na nOilean, Aengus Kennedy – PPN, Andrew Ward –IDP and Padraig Fingleton – DLDC.
Apologies	Cllr. Martin McDermott – DCC, Cllr. Brian Carr – DCC, EveAnne McCarron - ATU, and Siobhan McLaughlin – PPN. Liam Ward, Director of Service
Chief Officer	Paddy Doherty
Attending	Ciaran Martin, Adrienne Kelly, Charlene Gillespie, Danielle McDevitt and Kathleen Browne

Welcome

Cllr. Niamh Kennedy advised that Cllr. McDermott was unable to attend the meeting, and it was agreed that she would act as Chairperson for the meeting. Cllr. Kennedy welcomed members to the meeting and thanked them for their attendance.

1. Draft minutes of the LCDC meeting of 9th July 2025

The minutes of the previous LCDC Meeting, as circulated with the agenda, were considered by the LCDC.

On the proposal of Charlene Logue, seconded by Padraic Fingleton, the minutes of the LCDC Meeting of 9th July 2025 were adopted with no matters arising.

2. Creeslough Together Initiative

Majella McFadden, Community Links Manager, Creeslough Community Association was in attendance at the meeting to give members a presentation on Creeslough Together Initiative.

Kathleen Browne reminded members that in April 2023, Donegal LCDC undertook to administer funding of €497,000 allocated to the 'Creelough Together Initiative' by the then Department of Community and Rural Development after a request from the Department.

This funding was to be allocated over three years, in three annual payment as follows:

Year 1 - €173,000, Year 2 – €162,000, Year 3 - €162,000

Payments of Year 1 and 2 funding were broken down into two payments, with first payment issued following review and approval of Annual Progress Reports, Impact Case Study and Annual Plans. Payment 2 issued each year following Mid-Year Review.

Kathleen confirmed that the Department had now requested the submission of an Annual Progress Report, Impact Case Study for Year 2 and Annual Plan for Year 3 to be submitted to progress funding for Year 3.

Members were advised that LCDC Administrative Staff conducted a verification visit to Creelough Community Association in August 2025 and found procurement and financial record management to be in order.

Members noted that the Year 2 Budget was agreed based on estimated figures for Year 1 spend submitted by Creelough Together Initiative. The Year 1 underspend was higher than the original estimate. The figure agreed by LCDC for carry forward for Year 2 budget was €33,681, however the actual underspend was €41,010.07. This figure was equally divided for spend over Year 2 and Year 3 resulting in €20,505.04 being carried forward into Year 3.

Members agreed that as this is the final year of the Programme, it is important that expenditure is closely monitored to ensure that there is no underspend at year end. They requested that a mid-year review should be carried out before March 2026 with update on current and projected spend to end Year 3 presented to Members.

It was further agreed that any budget amendments required to achieve full spend must be approved by the LCDC as well as the Board of Creelough Community Association.

Majella McFadden made a presentation to members setting out the work, programmes and projects delivered during Year 2. Majella also set out the actions and goals for Year 3 of the Programme. Her presentation included testimonials from clients who utilised the various supports offered through the programme.

Majella confirmed to members that a lot of the issues arising from the tragedy are only coming to the fore now and outlined the need for the Programme to be extended for a further three years. She requested the LCDC to support this request.

Members congratulated Majella on the work carried out to date and confirmed their support for the request to seek an extension of the Programme for a further 3 years.

On the proposal of Joe Boland, seconded by James O'Donnell, Donegal LCDC approved the submissions of the Annual Progress Report – Year 2, Impact Case Study – Year 2 and Annual Plan – Year 3 for Creelough Together Initiative to Department of Rural and

Community Development and the Gaeltacht. The members also agreed to advise the Department of the need to extend the programme for a further three years.

3. SICAP – Lot 33-1 Donegal Inishowen – Additional Funding for New Arrivals

Kathleen Browne reminded members that an additional allocation of €40,250 was made under the SICAP Programme to Lot 33-1 for New Arrivals.

She confirmed that IDP had completed an update to their Lot 33-1 Annual Plan 2025 allocating additional funding spend to 2025 Budget as set out below:

	Original	New	Additional
Total Budget	€103,091.00	€143,341.00	€40,250.00
Total Administration	€16,736.50	€24,786.47	€8,050.00
Total Action	€86,354.50	€118,554.53	€32,200.00
Administration Costs	€16,736.50	€24,786.47	€8,050.00
Admin costs as percentage of Annual Budget	16.23%	17.29%	↑1.06%
Total Financial/Pro Fee/Staff Training Other	0	0	
Total Indirect Salary	€9,751.93	€9,754.03	€2.10
Total Office/Administration/Establishment	€6,984.54	€15,032.44	€8,047.9
Total Travel & Subsistence	0	0	0
Goal 1 Action Costs New Arrivals	€56,462.30	€68,325.46	€11,863.19
Goal 1 Actions Costs as percentage of total action costs	65.38%	57.63%	↓7.75%
Goal 1 Non Salary Costs	0	0	0
Goal 1 Direct Salary Costs	€56,462.30	€68,325.46	€11,863.19
G2 Action Costs New Arrivals	€29,892.30	€50,229.07	€20,336.81
G2 Action costs as a percentage of total action costs	34.62%	42.37%	↑7.75%
Goal 2 Non-Salary Costs	0	€15,777.96	€15,777.96
Goal 2 Direct Salary Costs	€29,892.30	€34,451.11	€4,558.85

Donegal LCDC noted the amended SICAP New Arrivals Budget 2025 for Lot 33-1 Donegal Inishowen and that IDP had updated their SICAP Annual Plan on the IRIS System to reflect the additional funding and had included an updated narrative on how elements of the additional funding will be spent under Goal 2 Action 6 Lifelong Learning and Action 10 Soft Skills and Wellbeing.

4. Mid-Year Progress Report for Community Development Programme

Ciaran Martin advised members that the LCDC were required to complete and submit a Mid-Year Progress Report for the Community Development Programme being delivered by Donegal Intercultural Platform.

He confirmed that the review had been satisfactorily completed and that no issues arose in relation to adherence to CDP Objectives or adherence to the programme budget.

Ciaran advised that overall, very positive work was taking place, with Donegal Intercultural Platform becoming one of the “go to” Migrant organisations in the country. He confirmed that staff had been trained or were currently in education for Community Work and that the group had partnered strategically with other groups in the community. At midyear, over 2000 people had dropped in and approx. 800 of these are unique individuals. He advised that running costs were higher than original budget but reflective of cost of living crisis and confirmed that they may need to be reviewed in 2026 if the figures continue to rise significantly.

The LCDC acknowledged the continued work being planned and delivered at local level in the county by the staff and volunteers of the Donegal Intercultural Platform. They noted that primarily, the DIP acts as a focal point and safe space for New communities and this important role has continued and expanded across the duration of the Community Development Programme. The success of this core service is demonstrated in the large number of drop in callers to the office to date this year. They agreed that the location of the offices in the heart of Letterkenny is key to this and the DIPs open door policy ensures those new to the community can avail of supports and services.

Members were informed that the continued support and partnership with the LAIT services within the Donegal County Council was also crucial in terms of targeted support across the county as a whole and the LCDC acknowledge the value of this work.

The LCDC thanked the DIP for their engagement with them and their presentation to members earlier in the year which updated and informed members on their work towards implementing and advocating for inclusion of BME needs in the public sector in all public institutions in Donegal through their collaboration on the Think Equality Donegal. Their support and advocacy for affirmative action in securing a BME and a Traveller/Roma seat on the PPN secretariat and their recommended policy & practice changes in the Health and Youth Work/Sports sectors was also acknowledged.

Members welcomed the DIPs role as a voice for the BME concerns and issues on various bodies including the Local Authority Integration Team, CYPSC, the PPN, the Community, Cultural and Gaeltacht SPC and elsewhere.

The LCDC also confirmed that the drive to build the capacity of members either through English classes (with 420 average attendance per week) or more formal education and training was also of huge importance in terms of supporting the next group of leaders in the BME community.

Padraic Fingleton requested that a copy of the Progress and Work Programme be shared with Local Development Companies to avoid duplication. Ciaran confirmed that Donegal LCDC could not share this documentation but LDC's could request a copy directly from Donegal Intercultural Platform.

On the proposal of Brenda Hegarty, seconded by James O'Donnell, members approved the Mid-Year Progress Report for the Community Development Programme.

5. Next Meeting

The next meeting of Donegal LCDC is scheduled for 15th October and members agreed that the meeting would commence at the earlier time of 9.30 am.

This concluded the business of the meeting.