

**Miontuairiscí ó Chruinniú an Choiste um Fhorbairt Pobail Áitiúil na Gaillimhe  
a tionóladh ar 14ú Meitheamh 2023, ag 10.30 a.m.**

Minutes of Galway County Local Community Development Committee  
held on 14<sup>th</sup> June 2023, at 10.30 a.m.

Boardroom, Galway County Council Centrepont Offices

**Present:**

Cllr. Noel Thomas, LA Member (Chairperson)	Public
Cllr. Gabe Cronnelly, LA Member	Public
Cllr. Pdraig Mac An Iomaire, LA Member	Public
Liam Conneally, Chief Executive	Public
Sean O'Coisdealbha, Udaras na Gaeltachta	Public
Anne Mitchell, IFA	Community
Gerard Costello, PPN Community	Community
Jen Fisher, PPN Environment	Community
Kevin Gavin, PPN Social Inclusion	Community
Máire Uí Mhaoláin, Comhar na nOileán Teo	Community
Peter Gohery, PPN Social Inclusion	Community
Steve Dolan, Galway Rural Development	Community
Terry Keenan, FORUM Connemara Ltd (Vice-Chairperson)	Community

**Apologies:**

Donal Walsh, GRETB	Public
Kenny Deery, Galway Chamber	Community
Mairin Ni Chonghaile, PPN Community	Community
Michael Keady, HSE West	Public
Regina Higgins, Department of Social Protection	Public
Valerie Kelly, Local Enterprise Office	Public

**Also in Attendance:**

K Coyne Chief Officer, M McGann, Galway County Council

N. Thomas welcomed everyone to the meeting and extended a specific welcome to Kieran Coyne who has taken over the role of Chief Officer from Alan Farrell and acknowledged the assistance and support by A. Farrell over recent years to the LCDC. N. Thomas also noted the apologies received for the meeting.

**1. Miontuairiscí ó chruinniú an Choiste um Fhorbairt Pobail Áitiúil (LCDC) a tionóladh ar an 21ú Feabhra 2023**

Minutes of Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) held on 21<sup>st</sup> February 2023

N. Thomas asked if there were any matters arising from the Minutes of the previous meeting and none were declared.

On the **PROPOSAL** of S. Dolan, **SECONDED** by M. Uí Mhaoláin, the Minutes of the Meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> February 2023, were **APPROVED**.

## 2. Dearbhú Coinbhleachta Leasa

### Declaration of Conflict of Interest

K. Coyne read out to the meeting the definition of a “Conflict of Interest” in accordance with the Conflict-of-Interest Policy as follows:

*“A conflict of interest can be defined as a set of circumstances that creates a risk that professional judgement or actions regarding a primary interest will be unduly influenced by a secondary interest.” In the case of the LCDC, a conflict of interest could arise where a member’s role to further work of the LCDC is, or could potentially be, unduly influenced by a secondary employment or business interest which could benefit the secondary interest and be in conflict – or in potential conflict – with the business of the LCDC.*

K. Coyne read out to the meeting the requirements regarding declaring a Conflict of Interest in accordance with Clause 4.3 of the Standing Orders:

*“Each member should declare at each meeting of the LCDC any interest they have in –*

- An application for funding or other support for decision by the LCDC*
- Any initiative taken by the LCDC*
- Any contract (service level agreement) or proposed contract that the member, or a personal connected with the member may be directly or indirectly involved, or*
- Any matter from which the member, or anyone connected with the member, might benefit directly or indirectly from as a member of the LCDC*

*And any such interests shall be recorded in the minutes.”*

In response to queries raised by the LCDC Members, it was clarified that the Declaration of Interest related to Item No. 4 on the Agenda regarding SICAP, and anyone who may have a personal, professional, or pecuniary interest in the decision-making process regarding the number of Lots for SICAP 2024-2028. It was further clarified that it did not relate to Item No. 3 on the Agenda as the LCDC had already agreed to devolve the decision-making on the Community Support Fund / Community Enhancement Programme to the Funding Evaluation Sub-Committee.

The following LCDC Members declared a conflict of interest in Item No. 4 on the Agenda:

- Anne Mitchell, Máire Uí Mhaoláin, Steve Dolan, Terry Keenan

## 3. Céadú: An Ciste Tacaíochta Pobail faoin gClár Feabhsúcháin Pobail

### Approvals: Community Support Fund under the Community Enhancement Programme

M. McGann confirmed that the total amount for allocation under the Fund was €300,432 and confirmed that 274 applications had been received, with the total funding amount requested resulting in the Fund being heavily over-subscribed. Therefore, a stringent assessment process was undertaken in conjunction with the Funding Evaluation Committee and:

- 15 applications were deemed ineligible under the terms and conditions of the scheme
- 49% of the Fund was allocated towards running and energy costs with priority being given to groups who did not have recourse to other Energy Support Schemes
- 51% of the Fund was allocated towards small-scale capital grants with 50% of these being small-scale grants towards equipment for small grassroots groups which was in line with the ethos of the funding scheme. The remaining capital grants were aimed

at improving facilities and amenities which addressed disadvantage or would have a widespread social benefit in the community.

- A total of 193 applications were successful in receiving funding and 66 were unsuccessful.

M. McGann confirmed that the Sub-Committee recommendations were forwarded to the Department of Rural and Community Development and all funding notifications were now finalised, and all grants for running costs were paid at this stage to assist groups with increased energy costs and other operating expenses. In response to a query from J. Fisher on the prevalence of Insurance Costs as a grant item for community groups, a discussion took place regarding the rising costs of insurance and the difficulties for community groups in this regard.

N. Thomas thanked the staff and the Funding Evaluation Sub-Committee for their work on the applications under the Fund and noted that while these grants were small, they were of immense benefit to groups at grassroots level.

On the **PROPOSAL** of T. Keenan, **SECONDED** by S. Dolan, allocations under the Community Support Fund were **APPROVED**.

#### **4. SICAP 2024-2028: plé agus cinneadh ar “Mhír/Mhíreanna” molta** SICAP 2024-2028: discussion and decision on proposed “Lot(s)”

K. Coyne again brought to the attention of the LCDC Members the requirements of the Standing Orders, in particular, Clause 4.4 which requires “any member who has actual knowledge that s/he, or a connected person, has a *pecuniary or other beneficial interest in a matter arising at an LCDC Meeting... must disclose that interest, withdraw from the meeting for so long as the matter is discussed and take no part in the discussion or consideration of the matter and cannot vote.*”

N. Thomas stated that he was a member of the LCDC in 2014 when the first decision on Lots for SICAP was made, and it was his opinion that many members of the Committee were unhappy with the decision reached at that time, due to the limited information feeding into the decision-making process. In the interest of fairness and transparency, it was his opinion as Chairperson that all members of the LCDC should have a full understanding of the programme. To facilitate this, he was making a proposal that the Standing Orders be suspended for a duration to allow those members with a declared conflict of interest to make a brief statement regarding the purpose and role of SICAP. In response to queries, he further clarified that only those with no conflict of interest would proceed to vote, and as his proposal was outside the Standing Orders, it would require agreement of all LCDC Members rather than a majority vote. Following a request for input by the Chief Officer, K. Coyne clarified that it was only possible to confirm that the procedures set out in the Standing Orders were there to comply with all legal and confidentiality requirements in processes, and this additional proposal by the Chairperson was a matter for the LCDC Members to approve, however, he would caution that if input was allowed in the form of a statement, that it would not proceed to a full discussion on the matter by the individuals

concerned. Cllr. G. Cronnelly seconded the proposal to allow a statement by the individuals concerned and all LCDC Members confirmed their agreement to the proposal, with the Chairperson confirming that the statements would be invited from the individuals in alphabetical order. The representatives of Local Development Companies, i.e., Máire Uí Mhaólaín, Terry Keenan and Steve Dolan, all spoke briefly regarding the SICAP Programme, social inclusion, and community engagement issues. No further discussion took place regarding the content of these statements.

N. Thomas clarified at this stage of the meeting that as the decision which was the subject matter of this agenda item was part of an ongoing public procurement process, all remaining members would be required to complete the decision-making process in accordance with the Standing Orders and compliance with all legal and confidentiality requirements. Therefore, the full LCDC Membership would not be reconvened, and it was agreed to consider Agenda Items No. 5 & 6 at this stage of the meeting.

At 11.40 a.m., the LCDC Members who had earlier declared a conflict of interest left the meeting - Anne Mitchell, Máire Uí Mhaólaín, Terry Keenan and Steve Dolan.

Jen Fisher also left the meeting at 11.37 a.m. (due to a prior engagement).

Remaining in the Boardroom at this stage were:

- LCDC Members Cllr. Noel Thomas, Cllr. Pdraig Mac An Iomaire, Cllr. Gabe Cronnelly, Liam Conneally, Sean O'Coistealbha, Peter Gohery, Kevin Gavin, Gerard Costello.
- Kieran Coyne Chief Officer and Mary McGann, LCDC Support Officer.

At this stage, the Chief Officer reiterated that the subject matter of agenda item no. 4 was an ongoing public procurement process, and it was vital that any decisions regarding boundary changes or other criteria which could potentially bestow a competitive advantage to any tenderer remains confidential. Therefore, all remaining LCDC Members were required to complete a Declaration of Confidentiality and a Conflict-of-Interest Form, and both staff members also completed the Declaration of Confidentiality Form.

M. McGann then proceeded to go through the Briefing Paper which had issued to the LCDC Members and outlined key deprivation and social exclusion data from the Pobal HP Deprivation Index and Census 2016.

Following discussion of the Briefing Paper and SICAP procurement processes, the remaining Members agreed that they were ready to proceed to a vote. As the composition of the remaining members was 5 public sector and 3 private sector, K. Coyne advised that in accordance with Clause 3.7 of the Standing Orders, it would be necessary to draw lots to identify the 3 public sector members to remove themselves from the Boardroom.

Following the drawing of Lots, the following members left the room:

- Cllr. Gabe Cronnelly, Cllr. Pdraic Mac An Iomaire, Liam Conneally.

The remaining members proceeded to a vote which was 3 in favour of 3 Lots and 2 in favour of 2 Lots. The Chairperson and Chief Officer confirmed the outcome of the vote was for 3 Lots and following confirmation with the members, the legally defined boundaries of these Lots as:

1. East Galway – Municipal Districts of Athenry-Oranmore, Ballinasloe, Loughrea, Tuam
2. West Galway – Conamara Municipal District (excluding Galway Islands)
3. Galway Islands – Inis Mór, Inis Meain, Inis Oirr, Inishbofin

The 3 public sector members who had left the room returned and were notified of the result of the vote. The Chief Officer again reminded all involved of the need for ongoing confidentiality regarding the decision, and that the declaration of confidentiality remained in place until Stage 2 of the procurement process commenced.

Cllr. N. Thomas thanked all the Members for their active participation in the discussions and the meeting ended.

#### **5. Dáta don chéad chruinniú eile**

Date for next meeting

The date for the next meeting was agreed for Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> July at 4.30 p.m. via Microsoft Teams.

#### **6 Aon ghnó eile**

Any other business

No other business was declared.

The meeting then concluded.

Noll Thomas  
Clr. N. Thomas, Chairperson

Date: 25/7/23

Kium Coyne  
K. Coyne, A/Chief Officer

Date: 25/7/23