

**Miontuairiscí ó Chruinniú an Choiste um Fhorbairt Pobail Áitiúil na Gaillimhe a tionóladh ar 27ú Aibreán 2021, ag 4.30 p.m.**

Minutes of Galway County Local Community Development Committee held on 27<sup>th</sup> April 2021, at 4.30 p.m.

**Present:**

Cllr. Noel Thomas, LA Member (Chairperson)	Public
Cllr. Padraig Mac An Iomaire, LA Member	Public
Kevin Kelly, Interim Chief Executive	Public
Breda Fox, Head of Local Enterprise	Public
Donal Walsh, GRETB	Public
Terry Keenan, FORUM Connemara Ltd (Vice-Chairperson)	Community
Máire Uí Mhaoláin, Comhar na nOileán Teo	Community
Margaret Sheehan, PPN Environment	Community
Dan Dowling, PPN Community	Community
Kathleen Aspel Mortimer, PPN Social Inclusion	Community
Martin Ward, PPN Social Inclusion	Community
Seán Ó Coistealbha, PPN Community	Community

**Apologies:**

Regina Higgins, Dept. Social Protection	Public
Kenny Deery, Galway Chamber	Public
Cllr. Karey McHugh Farag, LA Member	Public
Michael Keady, HSE West	Public
Ruairi O'Neill, Údarás na Gaeltachta	Public
Tom Turley, IFA	Community
Steve Dolan, Galway Rural Development	Community

**Also in Attendance:**

Kieran Coyne, Mary McGann, Linda Potter, Rita Tansey, Galway County Council.

Presenters: Rosa Ni Cheallaigh, Molly Whelehan, Maria Coyne Twomey – Comhairle na nÓg  
 Emmet Major – Planet Youth Project.  
 Sara Ní Chuirreáin GRETB Youth Officer.  
 James Applegate GRD Youth Worker.

N. Thomas welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted the apologies received from those unable to attend. He stated that in accordance with the Agenda, this was a special meeting to discuss the topic of "Youth" and the meeting would commence with a number of presentations and he introduced the speakers.

## **1 Cur i láthair ó Chomhairle na nÓg agus GRETB ar chláir agus ar thionscadail reatha óige** **Presentation from Comhairle na óg and GRETB on current youth programmes and projects**

Rosa Ni Cheallaigh and Molly Whelehan from the Comhairle nÓg County Committee gave a presentation to the members on “Understanding the mental wellbeing of Young people in Galway” with survey details, results and recommendations. The summary covered students ranging in ages from 12 years to 19 years across the County in order to better understand the mental wellbeing of second level students and to see how supports for young people in Galway could be improved. The recommendations of the survey indicated that more work needs to be done on reducing the stigma surrounding mental health, improving mental health supports within schools, and a Community Mental Health Campaign to increase young people’s awareness of the various youth mental health services available across County Galway. In particular, Rosa Ni Cheallaigh said that more training for teachers within school settings is required, and increased funding for youth counselling services in communities. She stressed that communal spaces are very important for young people especially in the Connemara region and felt this is a big issue for younger people especially in the wintertime where there is no place for them to meet.

Emmet Major from GRETB gave a presentation on the Planet Youth project in the Western Region. He informed the members that surveys were carried out over 51 secondary schools covering topics such as substance use, mental health, how Covid affected their lives, sleep, physical activity, etc. These findings will be used to identify risk and protective factors, and create supports for families, schools and communities. The Planet Youth primary prevention model is aimed at the provision of data-informed interventions to enable young people to be happier, more active, healthier and more connected with their families and communities in order to achieve their full potential.

S. Ni Chuirreáin spoke about GRETB youth funded services. She said that the programme is non-formal education designed to enhance the personal and social development of young people through their voluntary participation and that youth work providers are primarily community based and work with young people between the ages of 10 to 24. She added that the function of the GRETB related to funding for staff and volunteer led youth groups and also to submit returns/information back to the Department. They also conduct an area profile and needs analysis of young people and support youth work providers. S. Ni Chuirreáin highlighted the areas covered within Galway City & County for GRETB funded staff led youth projects and her presentation concluded with a video highlighting their work with youth groups in Athenry.

N. Thomas thanked all involved for their wonderful informative presentations and stressed the importance of the work they are involved in. He stated that the surveys highlighted the level and seriousness of mental health issues being experienced by young people and raised questions about the adequacy of services to cater for demand and the urgency of need. N. Thomas also stated that the findings raised the issue of youth facilities and the need for spaces where youth can come together and meet for social or recreational purposes.

S. Ó Coistealbha thanked all involved in the presentations and said that it was the most enjoyable meeting of the LCDC he had experienced. He said that the voice of young people is very important in the Gaeltacht areas and pointed out that youth services in Galway are under-funded when compared to those of Donegal or Kerry. He also stressed that Youth Services should not be penalised for under-spends during the COVID-19 pandemic and there should be clawback enforced by the Department during these times.

K. Kelly said that he was very impressed with all the presentations and it was great to see young people getting involved in this very important subject. He suggested that there were learnings for the LCDC from this meeting regarding issues to be addressed in the formulation of the LECP Plan and also in developing more integrated and participative conversations around other areas and topics.

D. Walsh added his thanks for the impressive presentations and agreed that it is important to try to get the youth involved in the communities and felt that this should be included in the LECP Plan.

T. Keenan asked the Comhairle na nÓg representatives where they felt the blockages or disengagement were for young people at community level and in response Rosa Ni Cheallaigh said that teenagers from 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> year in schools are more “hands on” with local projects but the 16 year to 18 year olds drop away as they get older as they see themselves moving out of the area and are then less likely to get involved in the community. Molly Whelehan agreed that urbanisation is a big issue with the youth with a desire to move out of smaller towns and into the big cities, and also there is a lack of knowledge about how to get involved in community events and suggested there is a need for more advertisement and communication on this issue. P. Mac An Iomaire said that in his experience youth find it hard to join groups in the communities and we need to try to find ways to make them more welcome.

J. Applegate said that the presentations were very interesting and that the representations of the young people opinions are crucial. He feels that integrated services for the youth is the way forward and that our aim for the future working with the youth should be preventative rather than reactive.

The Presenters on the various youth topics then left the meeting.

A general discussion took place between the LCDC Members on how to address the issues raised with agreed outcomes as follows:

- **LECP:** it will be vital to consult with youth when developing a new LECP to ensure that issues raised were represented as policy objectives moving forward.
- **Funding Schemes:** the issues raised about mental health awareness and the need for youth spaces and facilities in communities need to be further developed and addressed in a targeted manner through available funding schemes. M. McGann outlined that national and local research has highlighted the lack of recreation and social outlets for youth at community level and it is important that the voice of youth is included in the development of Community Plans so that this issue is addressed.
- **Representation of Youth:** The Members agreed that it was important the voice of youth be heard and represented as fully as possible. K. Coyne suggested that Comhairle na nÓg also present to the Children and Young Persons Services Committee (CYPSC) as many of these issues are also relevant to this Forum. In response to a suggestion for a youth representative on the LCDC, M. McGann confirmed that it was not possible to add a new member to the Committee as the membership was governed by Departmental guidelines, however, the appropriateness of the current membership was a matter to be addressed as part of the next review by the Chief Officer and Chairperson, in conjunction with the Corporate Policy Group of the Council.

**2 Miontuairiscí ó chruinniú an Choiste um Fhorbairt Pobail Áitiúil a tionóladh ar 16ú Márta 2021**  
**Minutes of Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) held on 16<sup>th</sup> March 2021**

N. Thomas asked if there were any matters arising from the Minutes of the previous meeting and none were declared. On the **PROPOSAL** of D. Dowling, **SECONDED** by K. Aspel Mortimer, the Minutes of the Meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> March were **APPROVED**.

**3 Dáta don chéad chruinniú eile**  
**Date of next meeting**

Date of next meeting was confirmed for Tuesday, 13<sup>th</sup> July, at 9.30am.

**4 Aon ghnó eile**  
**Any other business**

N. Thomas noted that the Training Needs Survey which was issued by the Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD) was circulated to all the members and reminded the members that it was very important that the survey be completed.

M. McGann shared details of the original Steering Group for the first round of the Refugee Resettlement Programme and advised that the Council are now re-establishing this Steering Group to oversee the second round of a Refugee Resettlement Programme for County Galway. It was proposed to integrate this Steering Group with the Intercultural Forum Working Group and we would be in contact with the relevant agencies to confirm membership in the coming weeks.

T. Keenan acknowledged that this was K. Kelly's last LCDC Meeting before taking up the post of Chief Executive with Mayo County Council and wished him well in his new role and thanked him for his contribution and commitment to the LCDC which was echoed by the other LCDC members.

N. Thomas acknowledged that this was the last LCDC Meeting which the PPN representatives would be attending before their term of office expired and thanked them for their respective contributions and excellent attendance rate at meetings over the last few years. K. Coyne also added his thanks and appreciation to the PPN representatives for their inputs and work as part of the Committee and Sub-Committees. D. Dowling stated that he enjoyed his time as part of the LCDC committee and wish K. Kelly the very best in his new role.

K. Coyne informed the members that the LECP guidelines should be available for review at the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of this year.

The meeting then concluded.

Noel Thomas  
Cllr. N. Thomas, Chairperson

Kiern Coyne  
K. Coyne, Chief Officer

Date: 29/9/2021

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