

**MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITY, CULTURAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC POLICY
COMMITTEE COUNCIL CHAMBER/ZOOM MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 19th February 2024**

Present: Cllr. Vincent Blake (VB), Michael Nicholson (MN), Caroline Fox (CF), Cllr. Anne Ferris (AF), Jenny Sherwin (JS), Marlina Murphy (MM), Irene Sweeney (IS), Mai Quaid (MQ), Máire Halvey (MH), Lynda Stopford (LS), Niamh Wogan (NW), Colm Moules (CM), Sandra Dunne (SD)

Apologies: Cllr. Melanie Corrigan (MC), Síle Stewart (SS), Cllr John Mullen (JM), Aisling Hubbard (AH), Gail Dunne (GD)

In Attendance: Karen Quinn, Sol Royo Erasquin, Lia Reynolds

Cllr. Vincent Blake opened the meeting, welcomed everyone, and gave the list of apologies.

The minutes of the last meeting held on the 11th of December 2023 were adopted. There were no matters arising from these.

Matters discussed:

PPN Presentation (CM) summarised the role of the PPN:

The establishment of PPNs was legislated for in the Local Government Act 2014 “to promote, support and facilitate the local community’s input into decision making by the local authority”. PPN’s are now 10-years old and have grown significantly over the period. In the 10 years Wicklow PPN has:

- Increased membership from 61 member groups to 431 member groups
- Increased our engagement and participation from 23 Reps on 13 committees to 42 Reps on 16 committees.
- Ran over 70 training & information sessions on issues identified as needed for member groups.
- Circulated information on up to 100 funding streams every year.
- Provided information on over 350 local, regional, and national consultations.
- Made over 50 submissions on local, regional, and national plans & strategies.
- Increased our Newsletter circulation from 7 newsletters per year to 38 newsletters per year The Newsletter goes out to 734 people, and we’re told it gets passed on to others. It’s also accessed through our Facebook Page
- Increased our social media coverage from 227 Facebook Likes to 2.4K Followers.
- Submitted over 115 news & information articles that were published in local newspapers and other media publications.
- Preparations are underway to mark the PPNs anniversary at local, regional, and national level.

Wicklow PPN will celebrate the anniversary at their ‘Summer Members’ meeting on 18th May when they will launch their new Strategic Plan.

Project Ireland 2040 Rural Regeneration Programme Updates:

- **CLÁR**

Patricia Carmody (PC) sent her apologies. (MN) gave an update: The Rathdrum Cancer Support (€44,034) and Wicklow Irish Community Rapid Response (€50,000) were awarded funding under the CLÁR Funding Scheme

(Measure 2: Mobility, Cancer Care and Community First Responders Transport). In total, Minister Humphreys announced over €2 million for 37 Vehicles for Mobility, Cancer Care and Community First Responders throughout the Country.

On the 1st of December, Minister Humphreys announced the first round of successful applications. Under Measure 1 of the CLÁR 2023 scheme, for rural sports facilities Knockananna GAA were successful in securing funding of €50,000 toward the cost of resurfacing the car park and a walkway around the pitch, to improve community accessibility.

On 12th January 2024 Minister Humphreys announced a further 152 successful applications under Measure 1 of the CLÁR 2023 scheme. Two County Wicklow projects were amongst the successful applications. Askanagap Community Hall secured funding of €50,000 towards the renovation of the hall and Ballymanus Community Field secured funding of €26,865 to upgrade the lighting at the field.

- **Town and Village Renewal Scheme**

Patricia Carmody (PC) sent her apologies. (MN) gave an update: The closing date for submissions of 'Expressions of Interest' in the Town and Village Renewal Scheme 2023 was on 5th October 2023. The TVRS23 Projects Assessment and Selection Panel, met in Wicklow County Council, on Tuesday 10th October, to determine which projects will be selected by Wicklow County Council for submission to the Department for Rural and Community Development this year.

All 'Expressions of Interest' were assessed based on the eligibility criteria and priorities contained in the 2023 Town and Village Renewal Scheme Outline. The panel selected 5 projects for development into an application for grant funding. These were submitted to DRCD on 10th Nov 2023.

Projects submitted are as follows:

- Wicklow Town Pump Track (Murrough) €225,000
- Kirikee Community Hall, Glenamalur €250,000
- Carnew, Main Street €500,000
- Tinahely Town Centre (Dwyer Square) €250,000
- Lacken Community hall €250,000

Town and Village is a competitive process and Wicklow County Council awaits the announcement of successful applications by Minister Humphreys.

- **Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme**

(CF) provided an update as per report circulated in advance of the meeting. There are two large measure 3 projects which will commence in 2024:

The Roundwood Recreation Area (part VIII CE Report) was submitted. This planning was granted on the 18th December 2023. It is envisaged that these works will commence in quarter two of 2024.

The Sugarloaf Repair Scheme (part VIII) submissions have been received. A CE Report is to follow in February which will be submitted to the members of Bray Municipal District.

- **Community Enhancement Programme**

(MH) gave an update as per her report: 171 projects were successful in receiving funding through the 2022 Community Support Fund (under the Community Enhancement Programme). The total allocation for Wicklow was €308,834 including ring-fenced funding for Women's Sheds of €3,088.00.

Payment of the funding to the successful applicants is almost complete. The status is as follows:

Number of groups awarded a grant: 171

Number of grants paid as of 12th February 2024: 169 (Approx €306,334)

Number of grants currently being processed for payment: 1

Number of grants awaiting further information from recipient: 1

- **Community Awards Scheme**

(MH) Over 270 local groups and organisations were awarded grants by Wicklow County Council as part of the Community Awards Scheme 2023. This is an increase of almost 21 per cent on the number of grants awarded in 2022. The notification letters were sent out in early June. The payment process began shortly afterwards, and the status is as follows:

Number of groups awarded a grant: 274

Number of grants paid as of 12th February 2024: 266 (Approx €75,450)

Number of grants awaiting further information from recipient: 8

Please be advised that the 2024 Community Awards Scheme is due to be advertised in the week commencing 11th March 2024.

- **Community Recognition Fund**

(CF) gave an update as per her report - We've been awarded €1.6 million for community projects. Currently there are 7 projects in the progression stage, with completion dates estimated in quarter three 2024. For example: The Bray Community Centre is just about to commence works. The Baltinglass Community Park – works are needed on the Riverside walking path, new playground and MUGA refurbishment. The Bray Parish Centre needs internal works such as electrical upgrade, painting, and fittings. Wicklow Town Placemaking Project - refurbishment of assembly hall (total area 2,000 sq ft).

Strategy Updates:

- **Greenway Strategy**

(CF) There has been progress with the Blessington Greenway ACON Consultants in relation to project work. The An Bord Pleanála services have been updated and the deadline of 29th January was met. At the moment the projects sit with the board, and they are awaiting a decision from them.

- **Play & Recreation Strategy - Playgrounds**

(MH) Inspections in respect of playgrounds, MUGAs (multi use games areas) and outdoor gyms, skate parks and Astro pitches were completed by RoSPA in January 2023. The reports have been received by Wicklow County Council and forwarded to the Municipal Districts for consideration and appropriate action to be taken, where required.

Works have been carried out by Municipal District staff based on the findings of the inspections in Blessington, Dunlavin and Grangecon. The balance of works is due to be addressed in the coming months, and tenders for works have been sought. 90% of works are complete at present in Arklow MD, with all repairs in Seaview Avenue gym having been recently completed.

In Wicklow MD, works identified by the 2023 RoSPA Inspection Reports have been completed at both The Murrough (excluding gym and skate park which have not been looked at yet), and Newtownmountkennedy Playground.

- **Leisure Centres**

(CF) gave an update as per her report: Both Coral Leisure swimming pools in Arklow and Wicklow have had work completed to upgrade their facilities. In Arklow, the doors have been fixed and in Wicklow, they have received funding to upgrade the changing rooms.

- **Disability & Inclusion Strategy**

Patricia Carmody (PC) sent her apologies. (MN) gave an update: Wicklow's first Disability and Inclusion Strategy has been launched, with Wicklow County Council's Disability and Inclusion Steering Committee (DISC). They're working towards the development of the strategy since it was established in 2020. The strategy outlines how Wicklow County Council and its partners intend to make the services they provide equitable and accessible to all. It aims to ensure that persons with a disability have an equal opportunity to pursue their ambitions, realise their potential and live fulfilling lives. Individual actions are aligned to the United Nations Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities throughout the document.

- **Arts Strategy**

(JS) Wicklow County Arts Office announced the 10 recipients of the 11th edition of the Strategic Projects Award Scheme 2024. This scheme was open to a diverse range of applicants, including artists, national resource organizations, individual curators, and artist collectives. This year's scheme featured two funding streams and welcomed participants from various arts disciplines and was funded by the Arts Council and Creative Ireland.

- **Creative Ireland Strategy**

(JS) Under the Artist Coaching and Mentoring, six West Wicklow artists and creative practitioners were selected in December 2023 to participate in the coaching and mentoring development programme. The programme is due to commence early February 2024 and will be facilitated by coaching specialists Paula Phelan and Katherine Zeserson over a nine-week period.

Creative Places Baltinglass: Sitting Room Session #2: 'Home'

Creative Places Baltinglass and local musician and producer Mark Caplice are delighted to present a night of original music featuring three exciting artists coming together to share their songs and stories in a night of original music in Horan's in Baltinglass.

This event will be taking place on Friday, 23rd February at 7pm. Padraig McGrath and Amy Barrett will blend their music styles and experiences to create what's certain to be an incredible night of music themed by 'home'. Each artist will share a story about what 'Home' means to them, and sing a song that reminds them of that. This event is free, but booking is essential.

- **Library Strategy**

(MB) Our libraries are fully engaged for The 'Ireland Reads' 2024 campaign. It runs for 3 weeks, leading to Ireland Reads Day on February 24th. This year the campaign tagline is 'Get Lost in a Good Book' and it's all about books, book recommendations and library events.

There are 11 book clubs affiliated to Greystones Library, and all of these will be participating in the recommended reads poll. Blessington Library have a 'Baby' book and 'tummy time' facilitated by Twinkle Kids, it promises to be a fun and engaging session with songs, stories, movement, and rhymes. A fantastic way to introduce our youngest members to the joy of story time at your local library. Ballywaltrim Library have children's author Alan Nolan visiting on Friday 16th February, and he will read from his forthcoming new book.

The Arts Office in collaboration with Screen Wicklow have identified that artists and film makers in County Wicklow would benefit from being able to access a specific annual Film Bursary. Following an initial stakeholder meeting in December 2023, the Arts Office has commissioned research by Brian O'Regan of Arts Leaders Association to examine the sector in Wicklow and collate a case study from existing film funding mechanisms offered by local authorities nationally and propose a plan featuring funding strategies reflecting the needs of the film community in Wicklow. This research will be supported by the work already undertaken as part of County Wicklow Screen Sector Development Strategy 2022 – 2026. The Arts Office is looking

forward to collaborating with John Powderly and his team on the delivery of this project. This research will be part funded by Creative Ireland.

Wicklow Sports & Recreation Partnership Updates

- **Wicklow Sports & Recreation Partnership**

(AH) gave an update as per her report: Under the Club Development Grants, the Wicklow Sports & Recreation Partnership have opened the 2024 Club Development Small Grant Scheme. The maximum amount available to each club is €1,500. The closing date is 20th March.

Katie Taylor Bursary

(AH) The Katie Taylor Bursary for third level students is open for applications with a closing date of 12th Feb.

Women in Sport (WIS) week is taking place March 4th– 10th. Wicklow Activities will include:

- HER Moves Teenage Kickboxing
- Adult Kickboxing
- Coaching Teenage Girls Workshop
- Online Workshop 'Physical Activity & Female Physiology online
- Walk 'n Talk programme in Tinahely and Bray

- **Healthy Ireland & Healthy Wicklow**

(AH) HSE Seed Funding - Chronic Condition Programmes:

(AH) The Strength & Balance Programme is aimed at people who are keen to falling and struggle with balance and mobility. This is taking place on a Tuesday morning(s) at 11am in Shoreline Leisure Greystones, delivered by two Shoreline Leisure staff.

Aqua Aerobics for People with Chronic Pain:

The Aqua Aerobic for People with Chronic Pain is aimed at people with chronic pain such as: arthritis or back pain. This programme is taking place on Monday mornings at 12pm in Shoreline Leisure, Bray with a staff member delivering.

Upcoming Programmes include Aqua Aerobics for People with Parkinsons – starting Tuesday 12th March at 11am in Druids Glen Hotel and Phase 4 Cardiac Rehabilitation (referral only) – starting in March in Shoreline Leisure, Bray (start date TBC).

Update on the Local Authority Integration Team (LAIT):

- (MC) As directed by the LGMA, the team have been working to compile the Directory of Services for the county. This work is ongoing and therefore work will be added on a continual basis. Also in development is a GIS map to support the delivery of integration supports across the county. This map will be layered with a broad range of services and facilities covering the themes of education, employment, health, recreation and amenity, community supports etc.

We have started a SWOT analysis in order to identify gaps and challenges in the sector, as well as systems that are working well and could possibly be replicated or further supported by the LAIT. Broadly speaking, the common themes to date are transport, access to childcare, pathways to employment, and mental health needs.

The team are expecting to directly work with clients and to take the form of outreach support clinics in IPAS centres, and provision of information and advice. Some questions remain as what extent they'll have towards capacity and/or the go ahead from DCEDIY to provide intensive case management to individuals. We currently have 1,273 people living in 6 IPAS accommodation centres across the county. 302 of these are children U18.

Cllr Vincent Blake thanked everyone for attending the meeting and advised that the next meeting will take place sometime in June 2024.

Signed:

Caroline Winstanley

Date:

23rd October '24

Cllr. Caroline Winstanley
Chairperson.