



Coiste um Fhorbairt Pobail Áitiúil
an Chabháin
Cavan Local Community Development
Committee

Cavan Local Community Development Committee

Annual Report 2023

Cavan LCDC Annual Report 2023

Produced by:

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Cavan County Council

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Cavan

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Foreword

Welcome to the 2023 Annual Report of the Cavan Local Community Development Committee (LCDC). The LCDC has primary responsibility for co-ordinating, planning and overseeing local and community development funding and the preparation and review of elements of the Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP). The LCDC also provides oversight and coordination of a number of programmes and funds including the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP), Peace Programme, Community Enhancement Programme (CEP) and the Healthy Ireland initiative. Cavan LCDC delivers the LEADER element of the Rural Development Programme and acts as the Local Action Group (LAG) working in partnership with Cavan County Council as Financial Partner and Cavan County Local Development Company as Implementing Partner. Oversight and co-ordination of the various programmes is supported and augmented by Cavan County Council, Pobal, and the Department of Rural and Community Development.

2023 was another successful year for Cavan LCDC in terms of the LEADER programme, administering Community Enhancement Funding and the delivery of the SICAP programme. A new Healthy Cavan Strategy 2023-2025 was prepared prioritising project outcomes based on local data/need which were identified in collaboration with local stakeholders. The Ukrainian Community Response continued to pose challenges as numbers of Ukrainian Nationals accommodated in the county increased during 2023.

While there were a number of changes in membership of the LCDC during 2023, there continues to be excellent engagement at LCDC meetings by both statutory and non-statutory members. During 2023 a significant body of work was undertaken on the preparation of the new draft Local Economic and Community Plan, the LECP Advisory Steering Group took a lead role in this regard but were supported by the full membership of the LECP.

I would like to express my appreciation to LCDC members for their significant time commitment and the valuable role they play in co-ordinating activity and progressing important areas of work that are crucial to the social and economic development of our county. The diverse range of expertise on the committee has been most valuable during 2023 especially during the LECP preparation process.

Jim Maguire

Chairperson

Cavan Local Community Development Committee

A Statement from the Chief Officer, Cavan LCDC

The Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) under Part 6 of the Local Government Act 2014 (S128B of the Local Government Act 2001) is required to prepare and submit a report to the Local Authority in respect of the various LCDC functions in the previous year. This report includes a review of progress generally, details of meetings held, implementation of the Local Economic & Community Plan and details of the oversight, management and collaboration in relation to public-funded programmes under the LCDC's remit including the LEADER Programme, Peace Programme, the Social Inclusion & Community Activation Programme (SICAP) and Healthy Cavan.

Since the submission of the last report, Cavan LCDC and its subgroups have had a busy and productive year. The Ukrainian crisis is ongoing and has had implications for delivery of the SICAP programme particularly as Cavan is host to a large number of displaced people who are being sent to the county with little or no advanced notice. The Ukrainian Community Response Forum chaired by the Director of Services met every 3 weeks throughout 2023. This interagency forum's purpose is to co-ordinate services and to assist displaced Ukrainians who come to the county, meetings are well attended and member agencies are collaborating and sharing their expertise to assist each other in delivery of a coordinated response.

Rising energy costs and other increases in the cost of living have meant that 2023 has been a difficult year for many citizens and community groups in the county meaning that they require extra supports.

Each member of the LCDC has embraced these challenges and the committee continue to deliver on the commitments for each of the programmes.

The LCDC managed, implemented and collaborated in relation to a number of public funded programmes under its remit including the Community Enhancement Programme. The committee functioned in an effective and professional way throughout the year with members demonstrating an understanding of their role and a commitment to the tasks in hand.

Cavan LCDC's focus for 2023 was primarily on the preparation of the draft LECP as well as the delivery of LEADER and SICAP, in particular ensuring targets were met and spend was progressing.

Cavan County Local Development Company are the Programme Implementer for the current Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme (SICAP) 2018-2023.

Cavan County Local Development have continued to implement the SICAP programme to a very high level. The actions set out in the SICAP 2023 Annual Plan were completed and significant progress was made with both local community groups and individuals.

The SICAP Monitoring sub-committee continued to work constructively in its review and monitoring of the SICAP programme. As this was the last year of the current SICAP programme, procurement had to be carried out for the new SICAP programme 2024-2028 and I wish to acknowledge the SICAP Monitoring sub-committee for their assistance in this regard.

I look forward to 2024 when the draft LECP will be adopted by the Elected Members of Cavan County Council and then the process of its delivery can commence. The draft LECP is a comprehensive document with high level goals, outputs and outcomes that will require collaborative effort from key stakeholders from across different sectors to ensure its successful implementation. Cavan LCDC's oversight role and support for the delivery of the community elements of the plan will be critical.

John Donohoe
Chief Officer
Cavan Local Community Development Committee

Introduction

This annual report presents a description of the activity of Cavan Local Community Development Committee [LCDC] during the period January to December 2023. It incorporates a general overview of the LCDC and specific information including:

- An overview of progress generally including details of meetings held and attendance;
- A report on progress on the development of the new Local Economic and Community Plan.
- A report on the implementation, management and oversight of public-funded programmes under the remit of the LCDC;
- A summary of activity under the programmes for which the LCDC provides oversight coordination; including the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP), Peace Programme and the Healthy Cavan Programme.

Local Community Development Committee (LCDC)

Purpose

The purpose of LCDCs is to bring together local authority members and officials, State agencies and people actively working with local development, community development, and economic, cultural and environmental organisations to implement a joined-up, cross-sectoral approach to local and community development programming.

Background

The Local Government Reform Act 2014 gives legislative effect to the commitments in 'Putting People First', including the establishment of LCDC's in each local authority administrative area, for the purposes of developing, co-ordinating and implementing a coherent and integrated approach to local and community development.

National policy envisages a central role for local government in the planning and oversight of local and community development programmes while maintaining a key role for local development entities in front line delivery.

Section 128B of the Local Government Act 2001 sets out the functions of LCDCs.

These functions include—

- in relation to the Local Economic and Community Plan, to:
 - prepare and implement the community elements of a 6-year Local Economic and Community Plan (the Plan),
 - review and monitor on an on-going basis the implementation of the community elements of the Plan and, if appropriate, to revise the actions and strategies set to achieve the objectives of the Plan, and
 - consider a draft of the economic elements of the Plan and adopt a statement for consideration of the Council in this regard,

- to coordinate, manage and oversee the implementation of local and community development programmes that—
 - may be agreed between Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government and other Government Departments or State bodies,

- may be sourced through direct application by the LCDC or local authority on the LCDC's behalf (e.g. EU programmes), or
 - may be agreed by the local authority with relevant State agencies or Government Departments.
-
- to improve the coordination of public-funded local and community development programmes and reduce duplication, and to coordinate generally local and community development programmes within the LCDC's operational area, and

 - to prepare an annual report on the performance of its functions.

The LCDC, like the Corporate Policy Group (CPG) and the Strategic Policy Committees (SPC), is a committee of the local authority. Unlike the CPG and SPCs, however, the LCDC is independent from the local authority in the performance of its functions. While these functions will be determined by Government from time to time as provided for under Local Government Act, how those functions are carried out and any decisions to be made by the LCDC when carrying out those functions are solely a matter for the LCDC. This independence is provided for explicitly in sections 49A (2) and 128B (8) of the 2001 Act.

Structure and membership

The Cavan LCDC is a 17 member committee. Membership is drawn from different sectors, following guidelines issued by the Department of Housing, Community, Planning and Local Government. Membership (at 31st December 2023) as follows:

Name	Sector/Organisation Represented	
Mr Brendan Jennings	Cavan County Council	Statutory
Cllr T.P O'Reilly	Elected Representative	Statutory
Cllr Aiden Fitzpatrick	Elected Representative	Statutory
Cllr Clifford Kelly	Elected Representative	Statutory
Dr Fiona McGrath	Cavan Monaghan ETB	Statutory
Mr Conor Craven	Local Enterprise Office	Statutory
Ms Carmel Denning	Department of Social Protection	Statutory
Ms Ruth Woods	Health Service Executive	Statutory
Mr Jim Maguire	Breffni Integrated Ltd	Non Statutory
Mr Barry Kavanagh	PPN Environmental Interests	Non Statutory
Ms Gayathri Devi Soman	PPN Social Inclusion Interests	Non Statutory
Ms Beth McEntee	PPN Community & Voluntary	Non Statutory
Ms Aisling Traynor	PPN Youth Interests	Non Statutory
Ms Maryam Temile	PPN Women's Interests	Non Statutory
Ms Frances O'Neill ²	Older Persons Interests	Non Statutory
Ms Catherine McCollum	Agricultural & Farming Interests	Non Statutory
Ms Connie Whelan	Cootehill Chamber	Non Statutory

1. Ms Frances O'Neill is representing Disability Interests for 2 years in the rotating seat, replacing Ms Marisa Goldstone who vacated the Older Persons Interests seat at the July 2023 LCDC meeting.

Roles on the Committee (at 31st December 2023):

Mr Brendan Jennings, Director of Services, Cavan County was Chair of the LCDC until September 2023, Mr Jim Maguire was elected Chair in September 2023.

Mr Jim Maguire was Vice Chair of the LCDC until September 2023, Ms Connie Whelan was elected Vice Chair in September 2023.

Mr John Donohoe, Senior Executive Officer, Community, Enterprise & Tourism is Chief Officer to the LCDC.

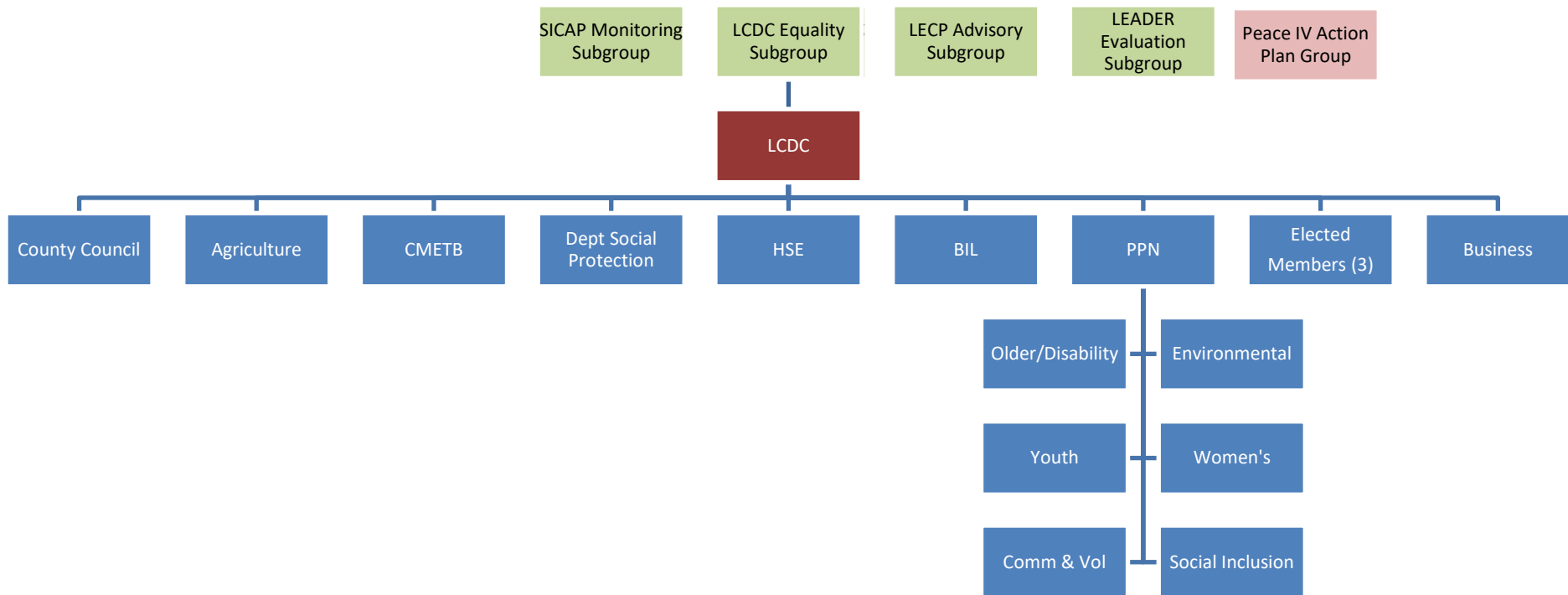


Figure 1 Structure and Composition of Cavan LCDC

Subgroups

The Cavan LCDC operates a number of subgroups:

- SICAP Monitoring Subgroup
- LEADER Programme Subgroup
- LCDC Equality Group
- Peace IV Small Grants Evaluation Group
- Healthy Cavan Subcommittee

There is also a separate LEADER Independent Evaluation Committee that assesses grant applications.

Gender Balance

Guidelines for LCDCs state that every effort should be made to ensure an equitable gender balance among the local authority members on the LCDC, as well as across the broader LCDC membership. At 31st December 2023, there were 10 women and 7 men on the Cavan LCDC, giving a gender balance of 59% female and 41% male.

Male	Female
Cavan County Council	Cavan Monaghan ETB
Cavan County Local Development	Department of Social Protection
Cavan PPN/Environmental interests	Cavan PPN/Youth interests
Elected member	Cavan PPN/Women's interests
Elected member	Cavan PPN/Community & Voluntary
Elected member	Agricultural & Farming Interests
Local Enterprise Office	Cootehill Chamber
	Cavan PPN Disability Interests
	Cavan PPN/Social Inclusion

LCDC/LAG Support staff

Director of Service	Mr Brendan Jennings
Chief Officer	Mr John Donohoe
Administrative Officer	Ms Deirdre Donnelly
Assistant Staff Officer	Ms Siobhan Morgan
Sláintecare Healthy Communities	
Development Officer	Ms Sinead Tormey
Healthy Cavan Co-ordinator	Mr Steven Ormsby
LEADER Co-ordinator	Ms Deborah Leahy
PEACE Co-ordinator	Ms Jane Crudden
Clerical Officer	Vacant

Activity During 2023

The principal work of the committee in 2023 was to manage a number of funding programmes, while working on preparing the new local economic and community plan. In addition to this, the committee sought to enhance co-ordination by inviting parties to LCDC meetings to give presentations.

Number of meetings and meeting dates:

Cavan LCDC held 7 meetings in 2023. LCDC Meetings took place on the following dates:

1. 23rd February 2023
2. 27th March 2023
3. 17th May 2023
4. 19th June 2023
5. 20th July 2023
6. 25th September 2023
7. 26th October 2023

Attendance at LCDC meetings

Records of attendance are monitored on a regular basis. Cavan LCDC recorded good attendance during the year.

The LCDC complies with the transparency code of the Public Lobbying Act 2015. This requires the publication of the agenda and minutes of committee meetings on the Cavan County Council website. The website also details membership and terms of reference of the committee.

Members are requested to sign Declarations of Interest/Code of Conduct forms, these are updated when necessary.

Presentations made to the LCDC

During 2023, presentations to the Cavan LCDC included:

February 2023	Healthy Ireland Fund 2023-2025 Local Strategy and 2023 Action Plan – Presentation by Mr Steven Ormsby.
March 2023	LECP Update – Presentation by Chief Officer Mr John Donohoe.
May 2023	Update on Healthy Cavan Funding and Proposed Activity for 2023 – Presentation by Mr Steven Ormsby.
June 2023	LECP update – Presentation by Mr Liam Mannix, Mr Daniel Stairs & Mr Niall Conway, Consultants with KPMG Future Analytics
July 2023	Cavan County Council – ‘Development of the County’s Climate Action Plan’ Presentation from Ms Brona Keating, Climate Action Co-Ordinator.
September 2023	Feasibility Study for the Management of Aquatic Invasive Alien Species in County Cavan’ – Presentation by Ms Joanne Hayes
October 2023	LECP Update - Presentation by Mr Liam Mannix from KPMG Future Analytics

Local Economic and Community Plan (Community Elements)

A primary function of the LCDC under the Local Government Reform Act 2014 is the preparation and delivery of the community elements of the Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP).

The previous Cavan LECP Community Plan had four goals:

Goal 9: We will support the ongoing development of safe, active and empowered communities

Goal 10: We will focus on developing the health and wellbeing of our communities

Goal 11: We will promote social inclusion and address disadvantage

Goal 12 We will protect our natural resources/heritage and promote culturally rich communities

Implementation & Monitoring of the LECP

While the term of the previous LECP has now passed and the new LECP has yet to be finalised there continued to be notable achievements in 2023 with regard to community.

- SICAP targets were surpassed with 44 Local Community Groups (Target 36 LCG's) and 524 individuals (Target 405) receiving supports.
- A multi-disciplinary Architect-led design team have been appointed to deliver the Abbeylands Phase 1 project, which is currently at detailed design stage. Initial site investigation works are expected to commence onsite in Q1 2024. A further enabling works contract will follow, and subject to Department approval of the final business case, it is expected that the main construction works will commence in late Q4 2024 / Q1 2025.
- Cavan County Council collaborated with Cavan County Local Development to continue support for the seven Sustainable Energy Communities in the County as they developed, implemented and progressed their energy masterplans. A new Sustainable Energy Community – St Ann's Green Group in Bailieborough carried out an energy survey with businesses in the town to establish potential for developing an energy masterplan and implementing energy saving measures.

- In 2023 Cavan Library Service encouraged Irish speakers to read books in the Irish language and to discuss them further within the monthly Reading Group held in Johnston Central Library. Club Leabhar an Chabháin was supported by the provision of a quality As Gaeilge book stock.
- Cavan Library Service continued to implement its Right to Read literacy programme in 2023 with initiatives such as Spring into Storytime, Summer Stars Reading Programme, Children's Book Festival and Family Time at Your Library. The *First 5 My Little Library Book Bag*, funded by Dormant Accounts Funding, presented a library bag containing a selection of free books and information, available in English and in Irish, for all children starting primary school in September 2023.
- A further literacy initiative funded under Dormant Accounts Funding saw the introduction of a special *First 5 Little Book at Bedtime* storybook in English and Irish which was distributed free to all children of 4 years and under and were available through all library branches.
- As of 31st December 2023, all funding under the LEADER 2014-2022 Programme had commitments amounting to a total of € 9,458,293.42 for projects across the three themes of the programme which included the Food, Transitional and Co-Operation Programmes that were allocated funding under this Programme.
- In 2023 the LEADER Programme 2023-2027 was launched with an allocation for County Cavan of €6,400,000. The Local Action Group (LAG) submitted a Local Development Strategy in July 2023 which was approved in November 2023. Cavan Local Development Committee will implement the Leader Programme 2023-2027 in conjunction with Cavan Local Development Company as Implementing Partner and Cavan County Council as the Lead Financial Partner. A funding agreement will be signed in early 2024.

- Cavan/Monaghan Youth Work Ireland secured a two-year contract for 2022 & 2023 to deliver Cavan Comhairle na nOg and associated activities on behalf of Cavan County Council. The Comhairle 2023 AGM was held on 23rd November 2023 in the Cavan Crystal Hotel. The AGM provided the opportunity for new members to join Comhairle for the 2023/24 term where the Comhairle members will focus on topics of importance to young people locally. The topic chosen by the members for 2024 is substance abuse and the effects of same.
- In 2023 Cavan County Council was awarded funding of €285,126.00 for the Community Support Fund under the Community Enhancement Programme. The Community Support Fund supported 86 groups, particularly in disadvantaged areas with their non-pay running costs e.g. energy costs or other non-pay operating costs e.g. rental/lease costs, insurance bills. Groups also used the funding to carry out necessary repairs and improvements to their facilities and purchase equipment.
- An assessment panel from the PEACEPLUS partnership was nominated and the process began to identify the area's most in need to include in the bid for the PEACEPLUS co-designed action plan. The action plan was presented to the PEACEPLUS partnership for approval and ultimately to the LCDC and approved on Monday 25th September 2023. It was then submitted to SEUPB on 29th September 2023. The PEACEPLUS budget allocation for Cavan is €4,334,408
- Cavan Sports Partnership launched an Urban Outdoor Adventure Initiative Bailieborough(UAOI), which is a project funded through Sport Ireland and Dormant Accounts. The aim of the initiative is to increase access to outdoor spaces, support greater opportunities for the community of Bailieborough to be active in the outdoors and subsequently positively impact community health and wellbeing.
- A Pop Up Pool set up in Cootehill has given various groups in the community the opportunity to swim, for example; school children, older adults, early school leavers, minority groups and children with additional needs.

- Cavan Sports Partnership's Multi Sport programme was delivered in 61 primary schools with 5,800 students provided with an opportunity to try a range of new sports.
- Cavan Sports Partnership organised seven inclusive summer camps for children with a disability covering activities such as basketball, rugby, taekwondo and outdoor activities and twelve different types of activities were provided through the Active Adult 50+ programme with over 730 participants
- Cavan Age Friendly Alliance and the Older People's Council Executive Committee met regularly during 2023. Weekly Drop in Information sessions continued and an Information Roadshow took place in Cavan in October 2023. A 'Think Ahead' workshop was delivered in July 2023 in association with the Irish Hospice Foundation. Funding was secured from Creative Ireland and Older People worked with Drama Facilitator Maura Williamson to write and perform 'Ages & Stages' in the Townhall, Cavan in November 2023.
- Cavan Age Friendly worked with the Resource Officer for Suicide Prevention and an Garda Síochána to organise a 'Wellbeing Event' for vulnerable and isolated older people which took place in the Lavey Inn in May 2023 during National Community Engagement Week. The initiative won the award in the Safety and Security category of the National Age Friendly Recognition awards held in November 2023.
- The Drug and Alcohol Forum continued to meet and has amalgamated with Monaghan Drug and Alcohol Forum for a pilot period of one year to work together to deliver the action plan which was prepared by Cavan Drug & Alcohol Forum in 2022. The 'Prevention and Education' subgroup of the Forum organised a training event aimed at post primary school principals, vice-principals and guidance counsellors which took place in the Hotel Kilmore in December 2023. Speakers included An Garda Síochána, Professor Mary Cannon who gave a presentation on Planet Youth research, Paula Leonard from Alcohol Forum Ireland and Susan Donegan from the new youth mental health service You thrive.

- The Planet Youth project is continuing. The second round of surveys took place in Cavan and Monaghan in September/October 2023 with preliminary data expected back from Planet Youth in Iceland in early 2024. After school activities are continuing throughout the county with facilitators offering no cost activities in school premises after school to provide positive engagement opportunities and prosocial activities for students. Healthy Cavan provided funding of €7,200 to CMETB towards after school activities.
- Work is ongoing in the implementation of the Connecting for Life Cavan Monaghan Suicide Prevention Plan 2022 -2024. The Social Inclusion Officer and Healthy Cavan Co-ordinator were members of a working group that designed 'Wellbeing Boards' which will be located throughout the county. The purpose of the boards is to raise awareness of the mental health and wellbeing supports available to everyone within County Cavan, promoting awareness of the 'Five Ways to Wellbeing', which are evidence-based actions that can be included into everyday lives to improve wellbeing. The project is being led by Mental Health Ireland and is being supported by CYPSC, Healthy Cavan, Social Inclusion Cavan County Council, Cavan Sports Partnership, the HSE and the GAA. The first 'Wellbeing Boards' were launched in Kingspan Breffni at an event on 4th July 2023 with a further board launched in Johnston Central Library in Cavan Town on 12th September 2023
- The Ukrainian Community Response Forum which was formed following the outbreak of war in Ukraine continued to meet every 3 weeks. The Forum is co-ordinated by the Community & Enterprise department in Cavan County Council with membership from a wide range of agencies including Cavan County Local Development, HSE, CMETB, An Garda Síochána, Local Link, Department of Social Protection, Citizens Information, TUSLA and Cavan County Childcare Committee. The purpose of the Forum is to co-ordinate services and to assist displaced Ukrainian People who are being accommodated in the county.

Preparation of a New Local Economic and Community Plan

The Department of Rural and Community Development issued guidelines to support the development and implementation of effective Local Economic and Community Plans(LECPs).

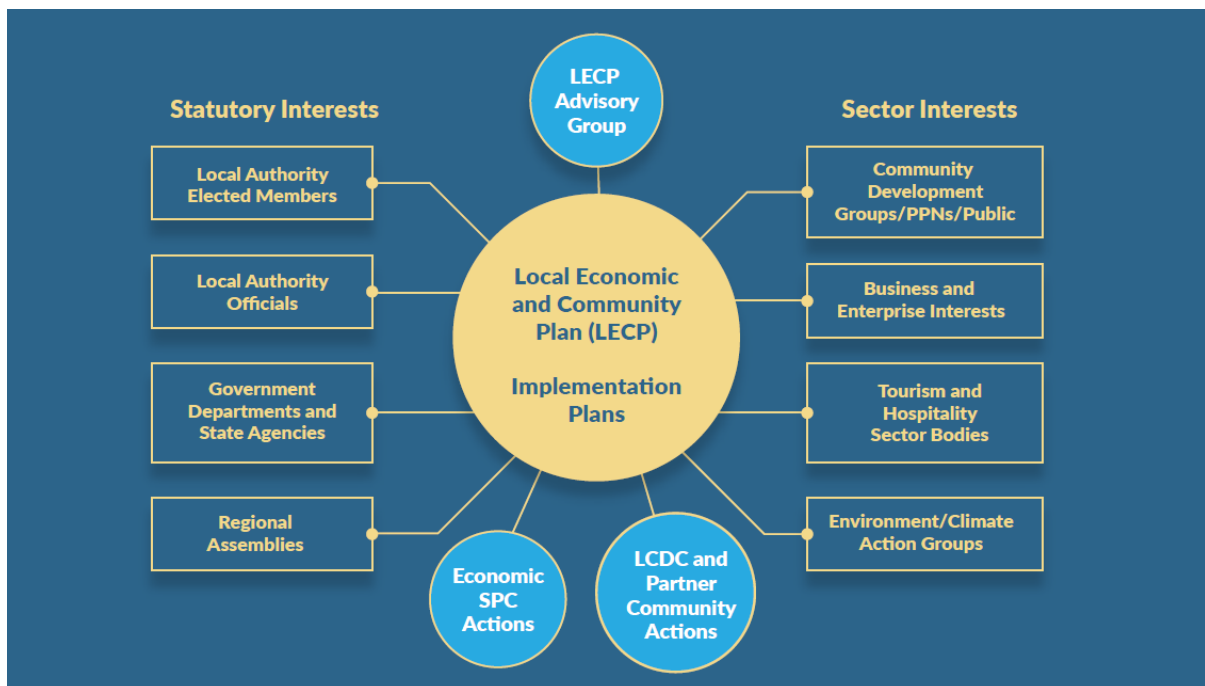
The primary aim of the LECP is to set out, for a six-year period, the objectives and actions needed to promote and support the economic development and the local and community development of the county, both by the Local Authority directly and in partnership with other economic and community stakeholders.

The plan will consist of two elements:

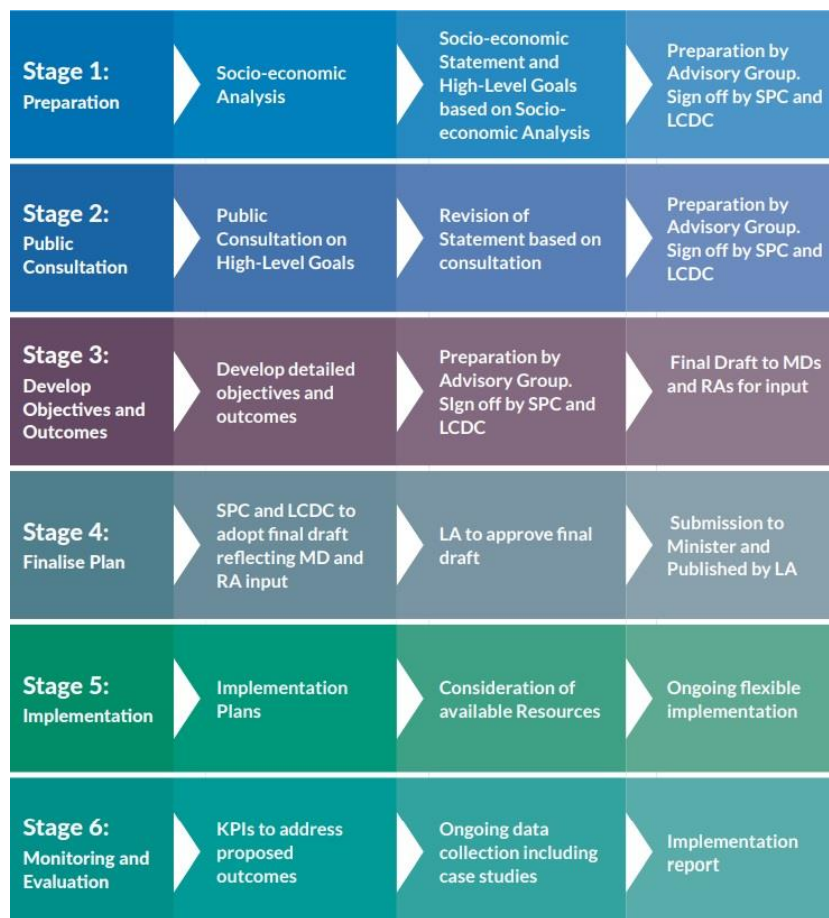
- A local economic element
- A community element

As set out in the guidelines the LCDC will prepare and adopt the community element of the plan. Work commenced on the process in 2022 and continued in 2023.

The diagram below outlines the interactions between the various stakeholders involved in the preparation, implementation and evaluation of the LECP.



The guidelines set out a 6 stage process for the development of the new LECP as illustrated in the diagram below:



In 2022 an Advisory Steering Group was established to oversee and develop the new 6 year Local Economic and Community Plan. Two members of the LCDC were selected to sit on this group. Consultants KPMG Future Analytics were appointed to facilitate and undertake the development of a framework Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) and an initial two-year Implementation Plan for County Cavan. The consultants met regularly with both the LECP Advisory Group and the LCDC members during the preparation of the draft LECP.

By December 2022 the draft Socio Economic Statement and draft high-level goals had been prepared and presented to the LCDC members for their review.

During 2023 there was extensive public consultation with communities across county Cavan, Elected Members, the private sector, education and training providers,

government agencies and other key stakeholders. This included in person community sessions in each Municipal District, written submissions on the draft Socio Economic Statement, online surveys, workshops and key stakeholder interviews. Following the conclusion of the initial round of intensive consultation the draft high level goals were revised.

Then the objectives, actions and outcomes for the six year period were developed. These elements were developed from the findings of the analysis of data and the consultation process. There was also a second round of consultation with key stakeholders to aid the creation of the Implementation Plan. Prioritised actions were selected and these form part of a detailed two-year Implementation Plan that identifies action owners and key performance indicators to assist with monitoring and evaluation. Proposed action owners/enabling agencies were further consulted to ensure buy in and alignment of views and ambition.

The draft plan fully aligns with and supports existing strategies at the local, regional and national level. The high level goals, objectives, outcomes and actions were proofed in consultation with key stakeholders to ensure that they reflected and addressed cross-cutting priorities of sustainability, equality, poverty, rurality, age and disability as outlined in the LECP guidelines.

Following approval of the objectives, outcomes and actions, input from the Regional Assembly and Municipal Districts was sought and incorporated into the draft LECP. A Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening report and Appropriate Assessment Screening were also conducted following completion of the draft plan.

At the end of 2023 work on the preparation of the LECP is currently at Stage 4 of the 6 stage process with the plan expected to be adopted by the Elected Members of Cavan County Council at a council meeting in early 2024.

SICAP Programme

The Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme (SICAP) is a key intervention for the harder to reach groups. Delivery is overseen and managed by Cavan LCDC. SICAP aims to address poverty, long term unemployment and social exclusion through local engagement and partnerships between disadvantaged individuals, community organisations and public sector agencies.



SICAP Monitoring Sub-Committee

The SICAP Monitoring Sub-Committee continues to oversee the delivery of SICAP and to monitor implementation progress. Members of this Committee are as follows;

Mr Terry Hyland	Cavan County Local Development Company
Ms Carmel Denning	Department of Employment Affairs & Social Protection
Ms Maryam Temile	PPN Women's Issues
Ms Deirdre Donnelly	LCDC Administrative Officer & Social Inclusion Officer
Mr John Donohoe	Chief Officer, LCDC
Mr Conor Craven	Head of Enterprise, Local Enterprise Office Cavan
Cllr T.P O'Reilly	Elected member
Cllr Clifford Kelly	Elected member

SICAP Plan and Achievements 2023

The total budget for SICAP in Cavan in 2023 was €1,241,461. This included additional funding of €334,415 for Ukrainian Supports being provided under the SICAP programme. The programme is **co-funded by the Irish Government, through the Department of Rural and Community Development, and the European Social Fund Plus under the Employment, Inclusion, Skills and Training (EIST) Programme 2021 -2027.** The Programme Implementer, Cavan County Local Development Company achieved both its two key performance indicators (KPI's) for 2023 and ensured that the programme and services were delivered within the financial parameters approved by the LCDC.

Actions were successfully implemented helping Local Community Groups with capacity building, promoting engagement, building stronger communities and promoting participation and collaboration. The SICAP programme also supported individuals, in personal development and well-being, provided lifelong learning opportunities, supports for those seeking employment as well as and self-employment opportunities.

There are 2 goals under the Programme;

Goal 1: Supporting Communities -

To support communities and target groups to engage with relevant stakeholders in identifying and addressing social exclusion and equality issues, developing the capacity of Local Community Groups, and creating more sustainable communities.

Goal 2: Supporting Individuals -

To support disadvantaged individuals to improve the quality of their lives through the provision of lifelong learning and labour market supports. Target groups to be supported under SICAP 2018 - 2023 are as follows;

- Disadvantaged Children and Families
- People living in Disadvantaged Communities
- Disadvantaged Young People (aged 15 – 24)
- People with Disabilities
- Disadvantaged Women
- Roma
- Emerging Needs Group*
- Travellers
- Lone Parents
- The Disengaged from the Labour Market (Economically Inactive)
- Low Income Workers/ Households
- The Unemployed
- New Communities

*Cavan LCDC agreed on the inclusion of ‘People experiencing Domestic Violence’ under the Emerging needs group for 2023.

At an end of year, Cavan County Local Development Company had reached KPI targets for 2023 as detailed in the following table:

	Annual Target 2023	Actuals Target achieved	Percentage achievement
Number of local community groups assisted under SICAP (KPI 1)	36	44	122%
Total number of disadvantaged individuals (15 years old & upwards) engaged under SICAP on a one-to-one basis (KPI 2)	405	524	129%
Achievement of % KPI from Disadvantaged areas	18%		40%

SICAP Case Study 2023

The case study submitted by the LDC in 2023 focused on ‘Social Farming in Cavan’ and highlighted engagement strategies used with SICAP Target Groups/Communities.

The case study is in video format and explains the concept and implementation of a ‘Social Farming’ model in the county supported by SICAP. This initiative offers people who are socially, physically, mentally or intellectually disadvantaged, the

opportunity to spend time on a family farm (there are 9 farms taking part in the initiative) in a healthy, supportive and inclusive environment.

The video showcases participant's inclusion and participation in farm life which benefits their personal skills, wellbeing and capabilities. Each participant's experience is tailored to their individual preferences and current national policies in health and social care are used as a guide on each social farm. Each farm received training and set up grants prior to taking part.

The video was very well produced and has strong potential for sharing good practice across the SICAP Programme

Delivery of SICAP during 2023

The Local Development Company (LDC) clearly documented the needs facing all beneficiary types in 2023 in their Annual Plan Report. There is a strong emphasis on collaboration throughout the report in terms of the delivery of the Annual Plan.

The LDC has made meaningful progress against the Priority Statements in 2023 in the areas of New Communities, a focus on those living in Social and Economic Isolation, and Health & Well-being.

A number of items of note within the report are as follows:

- The LDC supported the establishment of five new women's sheds to combat social isolation experienced by individuals many of whom were struggling to rejoin society following the COVID lockdowns.
- Free English conversational classes were provided through the Failte Isteach project in Ballyjamesduff, Cavan, Cootehill, Swanlinbar, Virginia, Belturbet and Ballinagh with 30 tutors serving over 150 students. Small group sessions are delivered in elementary, beginners, intermediate and advanced English.
- A polytunnel was funded for Ballinagh Community Enterprise Association and a community garden was developed and planted for Spring 2024. Raised beds, rockeries and bird boxes were created.
- Mentoring and administrative support was provided for Belturbet Community Development Association to develop a community allotments project.

- Tierquin Creche & Community Centre – the LDC secured a rent free lease from Cavan County Council to develop a disused community centre in O'Raghallaigh Park in Cavan Town. Funding was secured from the Community Recognition Fund to renovate the building for childcare. The LDC and Cavan PPN are working with local residents to develop a plan for utilising the centre for community activities during evenings and weekends.
- SICAP funded the employment of 3 full time Ukrainian Support workers who provide translation services and assist SICAP workers to provide immediate support to newly arrived Ukrainian Nationals in accessing healthcare, social welfare, school enrolments and advocacy, advice and guidance.
- The LDC secured premises for the Ukrainian Cultural Centre in February 2023 – the centre located in Bridge Street, Cavan Town offers an array of supports including IT and education, a Ukrainian school, Dance classes, a Ukrainian Counsellor, language classes and a grief café.
- There are currently 48 Cultural Champions with 33 different languages who have been trained in Level 6 Advocacy. The Cultural Champions provide translation and cultural understanding to the HSE, an Garda Síochána, TUSLA as well as advocacy support to people from new communities.
- SICAP has been instrumental in engaging people with disabilities through an art project which has helped them in working towards their health and personal development goals. Clients are working towards a public exhibition in 2024.
- SICAP has been working closely with second level schools to identify students from disadvantaged backgrounds who need more support with their leaving cert studies through funding their participation with 'Jump a Grade' an online grinds provider.
- SICAP funded and partnered with CMETB to deliver 'Skills for Work' computer classes for farm families and others in West Cavan. Classes took place in Belturbet, Bawnboy and Glangevlin with a total of 20 people participating, and gave farm families with limited or no computer skills the opportunity to upskill, including specific teaching on online farm accounts and herd registration.
- On behalf of the HSE Sláintecare Healthy Communities Programme, the LDC were contracted to co-ordinate and deliver the 'Healthy Food Made Easy' the

'We Can Quit' community programme and the 'Parenting Plus' Programme. Healthy Food Made Easy (HFME) programme provides a fun and informative cookery course that helps people to change to a healthy diet, plan meals on a budget and make easy to cook meals. With the support of SICAP the LDC coordinated the delivery of 14 HFME programmes during 2023 and 2 We Can Quit Smoking Programmes.

Challenges identified in the Delivery of SICAP during 2023:

Many of the Local Community Groups supported under SICAP have a low level of capacity to self-organise, particularly in disadvantaged areas. This makes the support required for these groups more labour intensive. Committees lack skills in bookkeeping, committee skills; governance and literacy.

Support in this regard has been given to LCGs, however, it needs to be acknowledged that these groups need significantly more support to survive and thrive and to continue to provide the valuable role they play in their communities.

The challenges posed by the delivery of the response under SICAP to newly arrived Ukrainian Nationals is continuing. Cavan is now home to a large number of Ukrainian people who have been displaced by the outbreak of war and their needs are many and varied.



“The Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) is co-funded by the Irish Government, through the Department of Rural and Community Development, and the European Social Fund Plus under the Employment, Inclusion, Skills and Training (EIST) Programme 2021 -2027.”

“Tá an Clár um Chuimsiú Sóisialta agus Gníomhachtú Pobail (SICAP) cómhaoinithe ag Rialtas na hÉireann, tríd an Roinn Forbartha Tuaithe agus Pobail, agus Ciste Sóisialta na hEorpa Plus faoin gClár Fostaíochta, Cuimsiú, Scileanna agus Oiliúna (EIST) 2021 -2027.”

PEACE Programmes

PEACEPLUS

An assessment panel from the PEACEPLUS partnership was nominated and the process began to identify the areas most in need to include in the bid for the PEACEPLUS co-designed action plan.

Following the decision by the assessment panel the action plan was presented to the PEACEPLUS partnership for approval and ultimately to the LCDC and approved on Monday 25th September 2023.

The PEACEPLUS co-designed action plan was submitted to SEUPB on 29th September 2023 and is still waiting approval and a letter of offer being issued to Cavan County Council.

The co design process is new and enabled and empowered the local community and the PEACEPLUS partnership to self-determine and design priority projects on a cross community basis, which will result in improved, shared and inclusive local services, facilities and spaces and make a significant and lasting contribution to peace and reconciliation.

The co designed action plan will enable the partnership, led by Cavan County Council, to establish and invest in key actions, which will make a significant and lasting contribution to peace and reconciliation in the region.

Cavan County Council held a number of public meetings, developed an online survey and met with a number of focus groups to ensure meaningful participation was afforded to all the citizens of Cavan to participate in the co-design process.

Public meetings & focus groups

Location	Date	Time	Participants
Cavan Town	16 th February	Morning	6
Cavan Town	16 th February	Evening	6
Cavan Town	16 th February	Afternoon	12 -Councillors
<u>Ballyjamesduff</u>	20 th February	Evening	15
Cavan Town	22 nd February	Morning	10 - 4c's MC group
Cavan Town	22 nd February	Afternoon	32 – CCC staff
Cavan Town	22 nd February	Afternoon	13 – Older peoples council
Cavan Town	22 nd February	Afternoon	23 - Stakeholders
Cavan Town	22 nd February	Afternoon	5 – Comhairle <u>na nOg</u>
Cootehill	22 nd February	Evening	18

Public meetings & focus groups completed

Location	Date	Time	Participants
Telephone conversation	9 th March	Morning	1 – Local link
Telephone conversation	9 th March	Afternoon	1 – <u>Citizens</u> information
Telephone conversation	10 th March	Afternoon	1 – Teach Oscail
Zoom	13 th March	Morning	9 - LDC
Teams	14 th March	Morning	6 - Disability network
Zoom	14 th March	Afternoon	7 - Traveller Focus group

The results from the online survey and first Co-Design Process

Replies from MD's

Municipal District

● Cavan - Belturbet	112
● Bailieborough - Cootehill	43
● Ballyjamesduff	45



The PEACEPLUS budget allocation for Cavan is €4,334,408. The following themes are included in the proposed PEACEPLUS action plan:

Theme 1: Community Regeneration and Transformation: (capital projects) X6 project proposals

Theme 2: Thriving and Peaceful Communities: X12 project proposals

Theme 3: Celebrating Cultures and Diversity X9 project proposals

LEADER Programme

The Local Community Development Committee acts as the Local Action Group [LAG] for the LEADER Programme 2014-2022. The LAG met a total of 5 times over the course of the year with meetings held in person with the option to connect remotely for those who could not attend the venue.

As of 31st December 2023, all funding under the 2014-2022 Programme had commitments amounting to a total of € 9,458,293.42 for projects across the three themes of the programme which included the Food, Transitional and Co-Operation Programmes that were allocated funding under this Programme.

In 2023 the Leader Programme 2023-2027 was launched, and the Cavan Region was allocated €6,400,000. The Local Action Group (LAG) submitted a Local Development Strategy in July 2023. The Department approved this strategy in November 2023 for Cavan Local Development Committee to implement the next Leader Programme 2023-2027 in conjunction with Cavan Local Development Company as Implementing Partner and Cavan County Council as the Lead Financial Partner. A funding agreement will be signed in early January 2024.

An example of a project completed in 2023 is outlined below:

Manor Hill Home Bakey Ltd was allocated funding of €106,617.50 to buy a semi - automated pie line in order to increase production by approx. 80% over the next three years (photograph overleaf)



Manor Hill Bakery Ltd

Healthy Ireland Fund

Healthy Cavan



Healthy Ireland Fund (HIF) Round 4 is underway and runs from 2023-2025. The approach is evidence based and outcome led. A HI Local Strategy (HIFLS) 2023-2025 is in place, to prioritise project outcomes based on local data/need in collaboration with local stakeholders.

Two focussed outcome indicators for Cavan were agreed by local stakeholders:

- 1) Increase in % of adults & Children meeting Physical Activity Guidelines.
- 2) Decrease in prevalence of age standardised heavy episodic drinking.

All initiatives/actions over the course of Round 4 will be directed towards these outcomes.



Healthy Ireland Round 4 – Healthy Cavan funded initiatives in 2023.

- **Ukrainian Physical Health Initiatives** - Funding of €4,300 was provided to CCLD. Initiatives delivered included: Summer Tennis Camp; Summer Multi-sports activity camps; Swimming lessons and Forest Cycling activities at Killykeen.
- **Cavan Sports Partnership led Physical Activity** - Funding of €15,050 was provided to Cavan Sports Partnership (CSP). The funding helped to support a wide range of initiatives which included: GAA All-stars programme; Mother & Toddler Aerobics; Summer Inclusion programme (schools with Autism units); Salary contribution to new County badminton coach; Cycling programmes; Zumba for Women; Learn to swim sessions for Teenagers; Migrants and Swimmin Women programme.
- **Provision of Activator Poles for hire to community from our Public Libraries** – Funding of €4,000 was provided to Cavan County Library Service. Activator Poles are now available to hire from a number of public libraries and the service will work closely with CSP staff to organise demonstrations and walking sessions.

- **Planet Youth Project Support in Secondary Schools** – Funding of €7,200 was provided to CMETB. This funding supported the provision of facilitators to undertake sport/physical activity sessions in local secondary schools.
- **Teach Oscail Physical Activity initiatives** - Funding of €5,796.93 was provided to Teach Oscail. There were a number of initiatives included addressing increased physical activity and alcohol awareness including; Parent & Toddler Zumba workshops; Games/physical activity packs provided to 100 local families to take home and enjoy with children. Bike Safely programme delivered for disadvantaged young adults and supported a youth resilience programme during the summer months, based on healthy attitudes towards masculinity.
- **Cavan Youthreach Walking initiative** - Funding of €1,735.53 was provided to Cavan Youthreach. This funding provided Pedometers and bespoke T-Shirts for young people taking part in the 'Million steps for Yanna' initiative which was a collaborative walking programme with the local Gardaí Community Engagement Unit. Ran over 6 weeks culminating in final 5k walk and celebration event in Nov 2023.
- **Annalee Athletics Club** – Funding of €1,400 was provided to support the 2023 Run with Catherina held in May 2023.
- **2023 Cavan Kayakarun** – Funding of €1,000 was provided towards a bespoke Cycling Jersey for all Kayakarun competitors. This jersey carried an important road safety message on the back.
- **MQI CAMDAS** – Funding of €2,500 was provided for the development of social and therapeutic garden facilities where participants recovering from addiction can tend to hens and grow produce.
- **Monaghan Cavan Youth Substance Support (MaCYSS)** –Funding of €35,000 was provided to Alcohol Forum (MaCYSS) towards initiatives that tackle alcohol addiction and increase awareness of harms. Initiatives to date include: Large scale Alcohol Awareness campaign on I-Radio in Nov/Dec 2023. 4 key calendar events/information sessions held in St Aiden's (Parents/student open evening); Breffni College Open Day; CMETB Student open evening; CMETB Educators open event. Planning has taken place to work with Northeastern Regional Drugs and Alcohol Task Force to deliver

sessions for the Planet Youth Programme and young person support programme in 2024.



The Healthy Ireland Fund supported by the Department of Health, the Department of Children and Youth Affairs.

Sláintecare Healthy Communities Programme (SCHP)

An official launch of the Sláintecare Healthy Communities Programme took place in January 2023 by Minister Humphries.

Seed Funding 2022/2023

- The sum of €75,000 “**Seed Money**” was made available to support the delivery of the Programme in 2022/2023. The Local Development Officer engaged with the communities within the Programme Area and, where appropriate, local NGO’s and other groups who are active within the communities in working to address the wider determinants of health, to identify how the Seed Money may best be used in relation to the delivery of the Programme. The following is a breakdown of the seed fund:
 - Tullacmongan Playground: Upgrading of Playground and new sensory equipment - €40,000.
 - Leisure centre bowling green / Shanette: Provide services (electrical, water and waste) to existing clubhouse at bowling green so that community groups can use the facilities for health and wellbeing Programmes - €10,000.
 - Cootehill Community Hub: Install and equip kitchen on ground floor for healthy eating programmes and general use for community groups who use the space - €16,744.
 - Cavan Library Services: Contribution towards the purchase of portable Magic Table 360 projector and subscription to the Happiness Programme to deliver an interactive service to those with cognitive impairment in the library environment.
 - Develop a collection of Ukrainian language eBooks, and audiobooks for adults and children to support their recreational, educational, and information needs - €8,256.

- A promotional video for SHCP in conjunction with the HSE was completed for the official launch of the Programme.
- A further €75,000 funding will be available in 2023 to support the health and wellbeing projects that tackle the social determinants of health in targeted communities.

All actions from Seed Funding 2022/2023 have been completed.

Round 2 Seed Sunding for 2023/2024

- A further €75,000 ‘Seed Money’ was made available in round 2 and the following projects are currently being rolled out by the Local Development Officer in conjunction with communities and local organisations.
 - Planet Youth Increased Leisure Time Initiative: A new Pilot Scheme to be rolled out in the Sláintecare Healthy Communities targeted communities (Cavan town, Bailieborough, Belturbet, Ballyjamesduff and Cootehill. Provide increased leisure time opportunities for young people in their local communities in safe, healthy spaces - €25,000.
 - Kilnavara Playground: Upgrade existing playground in Kilnavara and make safe for children to use - €15,000.
 - Kingspan Breffni Sensory Room Equipment: To provide Sensory room equipment to cater for the additional needs of families who attend events in Kingspan Breffni - €5,000
 - Handball Wall at Tullacmongan Family Resource Centre: Erect a handball wall beside the Tullacmongan Resource Centre for use for the children living in the estates surrounding the centre - €10,000.
 - Sensory Zone Belturbet Library Cavan Library - €5,000.
 - Fairview Community Garden: Gallows Hill, Cavan Works to be carried out to include ESB connection, Sewerage connection and installation of security cameras - €15,000.

Community Enhancement Programme

The Community Enhancement Programme (CEP) provides funding to community groups across Ireland to enhance facilities in disadvantaged areas. The CEP is funded by the Department of Rural and Community Development and administered by the Local Community Development Committees in each Local Authority area. The LCDC administer this funding locally to ensure funding is targeted appropriately towards addressing disadvantage in the areas that need it most.

In 2023 Cavan County Council was awarded funding of €285,126.00 for the Community Support Fund under the Community Enhancement Programme. The Community Support Fund supported groups, particularly in disadvantaged areas with their non-pay running costs for example energy costs (electricity costs, refuse charges, heating charges) or other non-pay operating costs for example rental/lease costs, insurance bills.

Groups also used the funding to carry out necessary repairs and improvements to their facilities, purchase equipment such as tables and chairs, tools and signage, laptops and printers, lawnmowers, canopies and training equipment etc.

The 2023 Communities Support Programme saw 86 Community Groups in Cavan share in grant aid.

Activity to Improve Co-ordination

Regular meetings are held between the Chief Officer and other organisations such as Cavan County Local Development Company and Cavan Public Participation Network. Local authority staff meet with SEUPB in relation to the Peace Programme(s) as and when required. Organisations are invited to present to the LCDC on activities to enhance input from other members and improve co-ordination.

Promotion of the LCDC

The support staff to the LCDC use social media and links with statutory and non statutory stakeholders to promote programmes, grant schemes and initiatives. The LCDC is given recognition where possible in purchasing promotional collateral for display at events, ensuring the presence of LCDC/LAG members at LEADER

launches, site visits to projects, and using all opportunities afforded through the PPN and other Council networks to profile the work of the LCDC.

Conclusion

While the LCDC has many aspects of work to consider, the fundamental function it carries out is ensuring collaboration and planning of services and funding at local level. This is ensured by effective contribution to and oversight of the local economic and community planning process and members' good attendance and constructive debate at its meetings and sub-committees. Despite ongoing challenges due to the impact of the Ukrainian Community Response Cavan LCDC successfully continued with its work programme during 2023. The LCDC looks forward to future changes, challenges and successes for Cavan in the years ahead and particularly to implementing the new LECP.

Priorities for 2024 are the final adoption of the new LECP, delivery of the new SICAP Programme 2024-2028, the new PEACEPLUS programme, continuing to deliver funding opportunities to local communities and successfully delivering the adapted Healthy Cavan and Healthy Communities programmes.

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