Dublin City Local Community Development Committee

L.C.D.C.

Dublin City Local Community Development Committee (LCDC)

Minutes of Meeting held on Thursday 30 October 2014 at 3pm in the Liffey Room, Wood Quay Venue, Civic Offices

**Members in attendance:**

**Public sector representatives:**

1. Cllr Claire Byrne
2. Cllr Daithí Doolan
3. Cllr Paul McAuliffe
4. Cllr Éilis Ryan
5. Brendan Kenny
6. Martina Queally

**Private Sector representatives:**

1. Siân Muldowney, Dublin City Community Forum
2. Marion Kelly, Dublin City Community Forum
3. Godfrey Chimbganda, Dublin City Community Forum
4. Maria Tyrell, Larkin Unemployed Centre
5. Ciaran Reid, Manager, Ballyfermot/Chapelizod Partnership
6. Marian Vickers, Manager, Northside Partnership
7. Darragh O’Connor, Trade Union (SIPTU)
8. David Brennan, Dublin City Business Association
9. Claire Wheeler, Environmental Pillar
10. Mel MacGiobúin, City Drugs Task Forces

**Item 1 Apologies:**

Greg Swift; Cllr Rebecca Moynihan; Mary Mooney; Cllr Ray McAdam

Also in attendance: Bernie Doherty, Chief Officer

Martin McDonagh DCC

Helen O’Leary DCC

Cllr Tina MacVeigh, Observer

The Chairperson welcomed new members to the meeting– Martina Queally, HSE and Mel MacGiobúin, North Inner City Drug and Alcohol Task Force.

**Item 2 Minutes**

The Minutes of meeting dated 25th September 2014 were **agreed.** Proposed by David Brennan and seconded by Darragh O’Connor.

**Item 3 Conflict of Interest**

The Chief Officer asked members to consider the draft undertaking which was circulated. She requested that all members sign it and return it to her and that where members identify any conflict of interest with items on this and future agendas they should declare them. Three members declared a conflict of interest with the SICAP tendering process, namely Sián Muldowney, Marian Vickers and Ciaran Reid.

A discussion took place on the meaning of ‘association’ in the context of the undertaking. The discussion concluded that there are degrees of association and that each individual member should decide if they were subject to a conflict of interest in that regard.

**4. SICAP update**

The Chief Officer gave an up-date on the indicative timeframe for the SICAP process, highlighting that the closing date for receipt of tenders had been changed from 12 December to 19 December. She explained that other key dates remained the same, namely that SICAP contracts will be signed during March 2015 and that the Programme would commence on 01 April 2015.

The Chief Officer then explained that the Dublin City Council Evaluation/Assessment team will receive training from Pobal on SICAP evaluation and that this training would be passed from this Team to the LCDC Evaluation Sub-Committee. She referred to correspondence from Pobal confirming this matter.

The Chief Officer outlined the current budget amount as set by the Department of Environment Community and Local Government for the five SICAP Lots in Dublin City for the nine month period April to December 2015 as being €4,025,367. Based on this, funding for Dublin City for 2015 will amount to a total sum of €5,614,683. LCDP funding for 2014 in Dublin City was €6,357,267 which represents a decrease for 2015 of €742,584. This figure appears to be related to a reduction of €2 Million in the National SICAP fund.

Several members of the Committee expressed serious concern and anger at the disproportionate cut for the Dublin City area compared to the rest of the Country. While it is expected that a rationale for such a cut will be articulated based on indices of deprivation etc such a significant cut in 2015 will have very serious implications for several very worthy Community Projects throughout the City. Indeed it is unavoidable based on such a cut that a number of key Projects will be closed down in 2015.

During an impassioned and animated discussion the following key points were made:

1. The cut made in funding is disproportionate to Dublin City compared to the rest of the State where overall funding was cut by €2 million. The large population of Dublin City and the high levels of deprivation support this argument.
2. The cuts to LCDP / SICAP funding represent a cut on top of cuts, an average of 40% from previous cuts, increasing the severity of the impact.
3. The timeframe to act is tight. The budget proposals are due to be confirmed on 07 November, making consolidated action a matter of extreme urgency.
4. The LCDC is tasked with overseeing the Programme but it cannot deliver services with such substantial cuts. LCDC has been asked to come together to make things better in the city, this will not happen with these cuts.
5. The decision to make the cut to funding was taken centrally with no opportunity for the LCDC to make representations on the decision.
6. Although the LCDC was not party to the rationale for the decision and therefore has no understanding of why it has been taken, the LCDC is now subject to that decision and has the responsibility for passing the cuts to services and the impact on the community. There is a comparison to be drawn with similar occurrences in the youth sector and the drugs sector where funding was cut when the CDYSB and Drugs Task Forces had no in-put into the debate and were expected to implement cuts. In both of those cases, the funding cuts severely impacted projects and services and the same will happen in this instance.
7. Putting People First was a positive document which sought enhanced community engagement and participation in decision making but this process has not followed those principles. Communities and their representatives are actually being pushed further and further out.
8. The cut represents an entirely inefficient use of resources in which the most vulnerable will be hit the hardest; this is a false economy as the repercussions for the closure of projects and services will, aside from damaging communities and neighbourhoods, actually cost the Exchequer more in the longer term.
9. The ‘nuclear option’ of walking away from the process was discussed. Individual members are free to pursue a reversal to the cuts via a public campaign or direct communication with the Minister.

**Actions agreed:**

1. The following motion was passed

*The Dublin City LCDC is aggrieved to hear of the proposed reduction of over €742,000 in funding of community development in the city. The 11.75% cut (on top of an average 40% cut in previous funding to the sector) will have a significant impact on the viability of projects and the delivery of and access to critical services for those communities that are most vulnerable in our city. We call for a full reversal of this reduction and restoration in the proposed funding for the city.*

1. Send letter to the Minister for Environment, Community and Local Government expressing very serious concern at the reduction in funding for Dublin City and the seeking of an urgent reversal of the cut.

**Item 5 PPN up-date**

The Chief Officer gave an up-date on the Public Participation Network (PPN) - 385 groups have registered to date under the following ‘electoral colleges’:

Community and Voluntary – 202

Social Inclusion – 150

Environment – 33

The Environmental Pillar is to validate the groups under Environment. The Department of Environment, Community and Local Government is liaising with the PPN National Reference Group in relation to national criteria for membership of the Social Inclusion and Community and Voluntary Electoral Colleges.

The next step in the process is to hold a Plenary Meeting of all groups registered so as to elect a Secretariat for the three electoral colleges.

A discussion took place on the importance of engaging groups to participate in the new process, in particular groups and communities at the margins of current decision-making structures.

**Actions agreed:**

1. DCC will explore the idea of a technology solution to keeping groups engaged and to facilitate interaction between meetings.
2. A working group of members of the LCDC would be set up in the new year (2015) tasked with identifying key areas and target groups and ways of supporting participation in the PPN.

**Item 6 Standing Orders**

The Chief Officer referred members to the amendment to the Standing Orders related to members placing items on the agenda.

It was proposed that a further amendment to the standing Orders would be made “That an annual review of the standing orders would be undertaken”

**Agreed.**

**Item 7 Employment and Enterprise Report**

Deferred.

**Item 8 Correspondence**

The Chief Officer briefly outlined the correspondence received since the last meeting.

**Actions agreed:**

1. DCC to circulate the submission made by Pavee Point in relation to the Local Economic and Community Plan.
2. DCC to send the names and contact details of each member of the LCDC to the National Women’s Council of Ireland who will invite members directly to participate in a workshop on incorporating a gender perspective into the functions of the LCDC.

**AOB**

The Chief Officer clarified that a quorum to hold a meeting is 11 but that decision making can take place with less people once the public / private balance is maintained at 49:51.

The next meeting of the LCDC was tentatively scheduled for Thursday 27 November (TBC).

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Daithí Doolan Bernie Doherty Chairperson Chief Officer

Date: Date: