



To: Each Member of the Galway City Local Community Development Committee (LCDC)

Re: LECP Advisory Steering Group - Galway City Local Economic and Community Plan

6th December 2021

A Chairde,

As you will be aware new guidelines on the development of Local Economic and Community Plans (LECP) launched mid November 2021 by the Minister for Rural and Community Development, Heather Humphreys TD, and Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, Darragh O'Brien TD. The guidelines provide an outline of the process to be carried out in order to develop a fully integrated LECP at a local level. The guidelines are issued under section 66B of Local Government Reform Act 2014 and are therefore statutory in nature and provided to support all aspects of the LECP process including ongoing implementation, monitoring and evaluation. While the guidelines provide the basic framework for the LECP, they also recognise that each local authority area is different and will require different interventions to support their development. In this context, the guidelines aim to support a more flexible approach to LECP development and implementation.

As members will be aware 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 relevant local authority area, both by the local authority directly and in partnership with other economic and community development stakeholders.

The Act requires that the economic elements of the LECP be developed by the local authority/ SPC for Economic, Community and Cultural Development SPC (66B(5)(b)) while the Local Community Development Committees (LCDCs) develop the community elements of the LECP (66B(5)(c)). After completing the process outlined in the Act regarding both Economic and Community elements (66C) an integrated plan will be presented to the Council for approval (66C(4)(a)).

Integration between economic and community elements is primarily likely to arise in relation to the overall process and shared information base, as well as for particular target areas such as jobs, skills and labour market access. Where direct integration is not appropriate, it will be necessary to ensure adequate co-ordination between the two elements and this will be the primary function of the LECP Advisory Group. As outlined in the Departmental guidelines, a preliminary (pre-preparation) step is the establishment of an appropriately constituted Advisory Steering Group.

LECP Advisory Steering Group

Under section 66C of the Local Government Reform Act each local authority is required to have regard to the need to integrate the economic and community elements of the LECP. In order to ensure that the preparation of the economic and community elements of the LECP are co-ordinated, and duplication (both in terms of effort and engagement with stakeholders) is avoided, it is recommended

that each local authority establish an Advisory Steering Group to assist in the preparation, drafting, adoption, implementation and monitoring of the LECP.

The Advisory Steering Group will focus on practical arrangements for the smooth preparation of an integrated Plan, from determining its scope through to final adoption. In addition, the group should have a role in supporting the Implementation Plan process to ensure that these plans are integrated and in line with the High-Level Goals and Sustainable Objectives outlined in the framework LECP. Size, membership and work methodologies should reflect these roles, recognising also that the local authority and LCDC have statutory duties in this regard. In undertaking this work, the Advisory Steering Group may also seek inputs from other sources, referred to in Part 2 of the new LECP Guidelines and other bodies and agencies involved in the delivery of the Implementation Plan actions. Once the LECP has been made and published, it will be the role of the Advisory Steering Group to advise and assist on its implementation and monitoring arrangements through the Implementation Plan process.

As noted in the Departmental guidelines a structure for the Advisory Steering Group as outlined should include:

- at least one member of the LCDC;
- at least one member of the SPC for Economic, Community and Cultural Development SPC;
- the Chief Officer (or a nominee) of the LCDC;
- the Director of Service supporting the SPC for Economic, Community and Cultural Development SPC or a nominee;
- and subject to avoiding unwieldy size, any person that both the SPC and LCDC consider likely to make a significant contribution. This may include senior personnel from relevant public and private sector organisations, individuals with entrepreneurial expertise, expertise that can practically consider potential synergies between economic and community elements, third level institutions, members of the relevant Regional Enterprise Plan Steering Committee or other relevant interests.

The Advisory Steering Group should reflect the balance of public/private interests required as part of the decision-making processes and full consideration should be given to the representation of the private sector (including community and voluntary sector) on the Advisory Steering Group.

LECP Framework Role

The specific role of the Advisory Steering Group will be to advise and assist on:

- the development of the socio-economic statement setting out the High-Level Goals for the area;
- the arrangement and management of an inclusive consultation process for the development of the economic elements and the community elements of the framework LECP based on the High-Level Goals in the socio-economic statement, and the additional consultations identified for the community element;
- the particular areas of activity to be covered respectively by the economic elements and the community elements of the LECP, as well as areas of complementary and co-ordinated activity, taking account of the need to reduce duplication and unnecessary overlap and to maximise the use of available resources;
- the integration of both the economic and community elements into a single, coherent Framework LECP;
- ensuring that, there is clarity as to where responsibility rests for leading/coordinating for each action detailed in the Implementation Plan;
- ensuring the LECP is consistent with the relevant statutory City/County Development Plan; and ensuring the LECP is consistent with any Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) or, as appropriate, National Planning Framework or other national policy, that may apply.

Implementation Plan Role

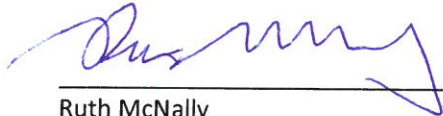
The specific role and functions of the Advisory Steering Group in the context of the development of the Implementation Plans will be to advise and assist on:

- engagement with the LCDC, SPC and other relevant agencies and organisations on an ongoing basis;
- the actions to be included in the Implementation Plan;
- ensuring an integrated approach to the implementation of both economic and community actions outlined in the implementation plans; and
- ensuring clarity as to where responsibility rests for leading/coordinating on actions.

At this stage I request and invite the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) to nominate **two members of the LCDC onto the Advisory Steering Group**, noting the request to reflect the balance of public/private interests and gender balance required as part of the decision-making processes.

It is intended that the LECP Advisory Steering Group, once established will convene during January / February 2022 and thereafter to discuss and agree practical arrangements in line with the specific role(s) as outlined above, including a timeline for the preparation of an integrated Local Economic and Community Plan for Galway City.

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Ruth McNally

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