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partnership

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# LCDP: Programme of Actions

Meath Partnership



2010

## Introduction to the Local and Community Development Programme

At a national level, the Local and Community Development Programme (LCDP) is managed by Pobal on behalf of the Department of Community, Equality and Gaeltacht Affairs. It is the successor programme to both the Local Development Social Inclusion Programme and the Community Development Programme and it forms part of the National Development Plan 2007-2013.

The LCDP allows for the integration of the old Local Development Social Inclusion Programme and the Community Development Programme into one new Programme.

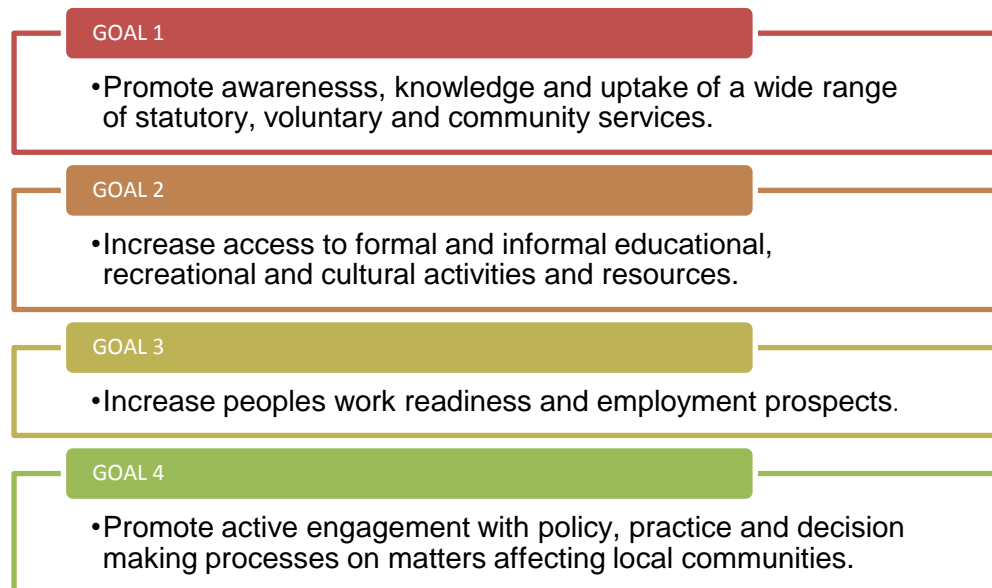
### Programme Aim

National aim of the Programme is to tackle poverty and social exclusion through partnership and constructive engagement between Government, its agencies and people in local communities.

### Communities of Interest and Place

The programme prioritises marginalised people and groups within the most disadvantaged communities, which means that it targets those furthest from access to education, training and employment, and those at highest risk of social exclusion. The programme will continue to work with the target groups/areas and issues as prioritised under the previous programmes based on an updated identification, analysis and demonstration of local need.

### High Level Programme Goals<sup>1</sup>



### Budget for 2010

The allocation to Meath Partnership for the delivery of a county-wide LCDP for 2010 was €334,050. This covers all programme, activity and administration costs.

<sup>1</sup> Set out by the Centre for Effective Services

## The Local and Community Development Programme in County Meath

In 2010, the LCDP Programme in County Meath is delivered in a co-ordinated manner by three organisations notably Meath Partnership, Navan Travellers Workshop and Navan Community Development Programme. This is in line with the Department of Community, Equality and Gaeltacht Affairs policy which seeks to reduce structures locally, enhance integrated delivery and introduce efficiencies thus reducing the burden on voluntary directors.

### LCDP with Meath Partnership

The role and priority of Meath Partnership in relation to the LCDP over the next three years is to develop and implement a series of strategic action plans that embrace the expressed needs of the programme's target groups on a county-wide basis, while remaining relevant and specific at local level.

Research conducted during the technical phase, October to December 2009, clearly highlighted a number of structural and service provision issues that need to be addressed as a matter of priority. From a structural perspective, there are no county-wide strategic action plans addressing the needs of priority target groups of the LCDP. From a service perspective, in many areas essential services for key target groups are non-existent or if present completely under-resourced.

Based on demographic data available and the feedback from initial consultation with stakeholders and target groups, the thematic areas identified below represent the most pressing needs and will be targeted for immediate action.

### GOAL 1: Promote awareness, knowledge and uptake of a wide range of statutory, voluntary and community services

#### Goal Objectives:

- *Raise awareness and knowledge of services in the local community*
- *Develop and sustain strategies and mechanisms for improved access to local services*
- *Develop and sustain strategies and mechanisms to better coordinate local services*

#### Actions

- Working with Older People in County Meath

The type of progressive and inclusive service necessary to address the diverse needs of older people in Meath will be achieved within a well defined strategic framework. Meath Partnership will work with a number of key partners to establish a county-wide network of active retired groups and support the drafting of a county-wide strategy for development and implementation in line with the National Older Persons Strategy which is currently being developed.

- Working with Young People

Following consultation with youth service providers and stakeholders in this sector, Meath Partnership is committed to facilitating the development of an interagency working group with a range of key stakeholders in the area of youth. The aim of this group will be to develop a co-ordinated Youth Strategy for the County for 2011-2013, which will feed into the LCDP Strategic Plan 2011 - 2013.

2010 will see the establishment of a working group to drive the strategic development process and dedicated facilitation resources will be provided to assist the group.

- Youth Training

In collaboration with the North East Regional Drugs Task Force and Meath Community Drug and Alcohol Response, we will deliver the Peer Education Programme to transition year students in schools across County Meath. The project will train over 60 young people in transition year in peer education techniques with an emphasis on issues around young people, drug use and social and personal development. The peer youth educators will then in turn deliver a peer education curriculum to 1<sup>st</sup> year students in their respective schools. This programme has a considerable multiplier effect, creating greater societal awareness about the dangers of drug misuse and equipping young people and other vulnerable groups with the skills and support necessary to make informed choices about their personal and social development.

- Information & Referral Skills Training for Frontline Staff

Based on existing training programmes and modules, we will develop a curriculum for frontline staff in community and voluntary organisations which will support them in their role as information and frontline referral providers to service users. Based on current best practice models, it is our intention that such a programme will be implemented in 2011 and will be widely subscribed to by the range of service providers in the County.

- Community & Voluntary Newsletter

Using the Meath Chronicle as a media for local dissemination, we will develop a supplement for local communities highlighting the services and support available through Meath Partnership. In addition, this supplement will be supported by the production of an in-house quarterly Community & Voluntary Newsletter. Developed as an online e-zine, it will be distributed to a wide range of organisations active in the community and voluntary sector. Every community and voluntary group consulted during the technical phase confirmed that they had access to the required technology and that a regular publication of this nature would provide a significant opportunity to raise awareness among community and voluntary service providers of programmes and services available in the county. The e-zine will also be distributed to all statutory service providers in the county.

- Media Training Workshops

As a capacity building measure, Meath Partnership will provide training support to groups and organisations to benefit from cost-effective digital and social media to promote their services and activities. 5 workshops will be delivered in conjunction with the Training Links Programme. The provision of accurate and appropriate information is a cross-cutting measure under the Programme that addresses many of the needs identified by individual target groups.

## GOAL 2: Increase access to formal and informal educational, recreational and cultural activities and resources

### Goal Objectives:

- *Work with providers to improve access to a wide range of opportunities*
- *Increase awareness and support access to develop opportunities for learning and development*

### Actions

- Access to Success Campaign (rural education access programme)

Meath Partnership will initiate a support campaign to promote entry to higher education as an option for mature adults from rural and urban disadvantaged areas. The campaign will culminate in a Higher Option Educational Fair in November with linkages with the access offices of college and university institutions. Underpinning this process will be a quality advice service for adults interested in entry to 3<sup>rd</sup> level supported by our partners at the Meath Adult Education and Guidance Service.

- FamilyLearningLinks - Family Learning Pilot Project for Lone Parent and Disadvantaged Families

Meath Partnership intends to explore, research and pilot an innovative family learning project with 10 lone parent families /disadvantaged families in order to improve the literacy, language and numeracy skills of parents/carers, improve the ability of parents/carers to help their school-age children, and help children acquire literacy, language and numeracy skills.

- After-school programmes and youth activities promoting identity and cultural diversity

Meath Partnership, in conjunction with the FAI development team, will lead out the inaugural Meath Culture Cup project; a sporting and cultural event for young people representing different cultures and ethnicity drawn from youth organisations across Meath. Meath Partnership will further develop this concept in 2011 and plan to make the Culture Cup an annual event to promote identity and cultural diversity amongst young people in the county.

- Fáilte Isteach

Working with the Third Age Centre and Meath Volunteer Centre, we will facilitate the expansion of the Fáilte Isteach initiative into identified communities throughout the County. Fáilte Isteach is a community led project with volunteers welcoming new migrants through conversational English classes. It is a unique project which utilises the skills, talents and expertise of volunteers and harnesses their desire to contribute positively to society.

- Community in Action Training

Building on the positive progress achieved through the Training Links Programme, Meath Partnership continue to bring together community and voluntary organisations for training purposes across Meath and proactively deepen the community training network to address the training needs of member organisations. Priority action in 2010 will focus on identifying the training needs and delivering a series of seminars on topical issues. Training may focus on areas such as committee skills, fundraising and funding, charities legislation, volunteer management, PR and marketing, facilitation skills and IT.

- The SHED Project for Older Men

Consultation with older people groups and services providers in the health, recreation and social sectors cite that engagement with older men in community-based activities is problematic and limited in many instances. Meath Partnership is working with Age & Opportunity and the Third Age Centre in Summerhill to establish a Get Vocal Initiative targeting older men, particularly those living alone and isolated in rural and urban communities. The Shed project will provide flexible drop-in spaces for older men in two pilot locations in county Meath. Monies secured through the Get Vocal Initiative will see the employment of a full-time advocacy officer for older men in County Meath.

### GOAL 3: Increase in people's work readiness and employment prospects

#### Goal Objectives:

- *Develop and sustain a range of services to support, prepare, and assist people to enter the labour market.*
- *Develop and sustain strategies with local enterprises to increase local employment prospects*
- *Develop and sustain strategies to increase local self employment prospects*

#### Actions

- Mentoring and Advocacy Service

Based on evidence formulated through the MITE Programme, the focus of this pilot is to address the needs of jobseekers that have not been able to get the required level of support from existing service providers operating throughout Meath. The Mentoring and Advocacy Service will primarily target jobseekers who are either not 'job ready' and therefore not sufficiently prepared to engage with or avail of the jobs club programme, or jobseekers who are not capable of engaging in a group setting; need one-to-one supports; and need to work on issues like self-confidence, self-awareness or personal motivation. Meath Partnership is currently seeking additional funding to expand this action as sufficient staff costs and resources are not provided for under this programme.

- Jobseeker Profiling and Tracking

In line with the Mentoring and Advocacy Service, we will develop a profiling system to classify jobseekers using its services to ensure that those who have a greater probability of becoming long-term unemployed receive intensive interventions at an earlier stage through our mentoring and advocacy service. It will also help track outcomes of the interventions and supports provided.

- Signposts Project

Working with the interagency group for the unemployed, we will provide a clear and simple information resource for people who are unemployed to navigate the range of options and services available to them. The resource will take the form of a client road map. It will be available in leaflet format and also accessible through Meath Partnerships' website.

- Career Guidance for Young People and Early School Leavers

The current economic downturn has seen many of our young people aged 16 -23 become unemployed, the type of employment in which they engaged, extractive construction and manufacturing, is not going to offer a sustainable future to these people therefore opportunities to learn a new skill and plan for the future will be addressed through this initiative. Under the Grundtvig Measure of the EU Lifelong Learning Programme Meath Partnership is leading the GuideMe Project which has examined the potential of providing online multi-media career guidance to the low-skilled workers and unemployed. Under the LCDP programme Meath Partnership will work with agencies, particularly Meath VEC to build on this model and empower young people to make informed decisions on their future.

- Low-income Farmers Advice and Guidance

This action will be developed under the guidance of a Smallholders working group. It is envisaged that a series of advisory, information and training services will be piloted with the target group through a collaboration of resources to be provided by relevant stakeholders such as Teagasc, IFA, DSFA and the Rural Social Scheme.

- Human Resource Solutions

Through our Human Resource Solutions service we will introduce workforce development strategies promoting employee training and development and work-life balance to facilitate workforce adaptability. Local employers will be encouraged to engage in lifelong learning to improve enterprise sustainability and improve employee job security.

- Business Options

We will develop and pilot the Business Options Training Programme - a specially designed training course targeting low-entry business start up clients. The programme will offer participants the opportunity to explore self employment as an option and address common fears and concerns about starting a new business. The programme will enable participants to define their business proposal and begin to develop a business plan. Through linkages with DSFA, it is intended that participants successful in pursuing self-employment as a route out of unemployment would access further supports such as the Start Your Own Business FETAC Programme and the Back to Work Enterprise Allowance Scheme.

- Young Entrepreneurs Programme

Working with and through the Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship, we will deliver a highly innovative and effective young entrepreneurship programme that has been successfully initiated in several other parts of the Country. Pre development work to promote County Meath as a location for a NFTE programme will commence in 2010 with a view to introducing the curriculum to selected County Meath schools in 2011.

## GOAL 4: Promote engagement with policy, practice, and decision making processes on matters affecting local communities

### Goal Objectives:

- *Promote dialogue between funders, providers and local communities*
- *Develop and sustain opportunities for communities of place and interest to identify issues and voice concerns*

### Actions

- Community Consultative Platforms

With the introduction of the new Local Community Development Programme in county Meath, we are anxious to speak to individuals and community groups to gain a deeper understanding of local needs, challenges and pressures currently been experienced by those living and working in the county. As with the *Tapping Local Knowledge* consultation process which we completed in 2007 in 46 locations across Meath, dialogue at local level is vital to ensure that our services and programmes continue to meet the real needs of the County's population. The current recession has dramatically changed the social and economic landscape in Meath over a short period of time and many of the priorities identified in 2007 may have changed; it is for this reason that we will continue to engage at local level with individuals and community organisations throughout the year.

In consultation with local steering committees, local development plans will be formulated to deepen direct engagement and dialogue with communities and target groups on a collective interagency basis or a single agency/provider basis as required.

- Job Creation and Training Interagency Sub Committee

Meath Partnership will work with partner agencies and groups to develop a community-based supported employment infrastructure in County Meath to address the current geographical deficit of related service provision and provide essential core and complementary services to enhance the statutory response to the deteriorating unemployment situation in the County. This model will provide innovative thinking on the continuum of job maintenance; job creation; re-training and up-skilling.

- Interagency Working

Meath Partnership has developed capacity in the area of interagency working; has first-hand knowledge and experience of the challenges and difficulties that exist in leading on an interagency initiative whilst also learning valuable lessons in how to identify and address issues and put solutions in place to overcome them. We have strong strategic working relationships with state agencies particularly FAS, DSFA and County Meath VEC and we have progressed to develop and implement a number of collaborative actions and projects in the training and education environment.

We will continue to actively participate and influence the following structures and networks over the year notably: County Development Board, CDB Executive Committee, SIM Group, SIM Group Executive Committee, Training Links Network, Traveller Interagency Strategy Group, Meath County Childcare Committee, Meath Education and Training Forum, and Meath Economic Forum.

- Support the establishment of the Meath Intercultural Network

Working in close collaboration with Cultur, Meath Partnership will actively support the establishment of the Meath Intercultural Network working with community and voluntary organisations and state agencies to identify opportunities to collaborate for the development of a multi-cultural Meath.

- Jigsaw Project

Meath Partnership will support the Jigsaw Project through active participation on its steering committee and working groups. Jigsaw is a community-based system of care that supports young people, aged 12-25, to achieve better mental health and wellbeing. Jigsaw represents a new approach to youth mental health that puts the needs and energies of young people and the wider local community at the heart of thinking and planning.

- Social Inclusion Week May and October 2010

Social Inclusion Week in both May and October have been identified as a critical events in the calendar during 2010 to enable the county as a whole to demonstrate and highlight the grassroots work taking place. Meath Partnership will actively engage in the roll-out of Social Inclusion Week in May 2010. For the week in October, Meath Partnership has been designated as a co-ordinating body for activities at county level and will work with and assist all organisations interested in promoting and showcasing their activities during this week.