



An Roinn Dlí agus Cirt
Department of Justice

Drogheda Implementation Plan

1st Biannual Progress Report

January - June 2022



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INTRODUCTION

The Drogheda Scoping Exercise was commissioned by the Minister for Justice in 2020 in response to rising concerns regarding crime and fear of crime in Drogheda. The report, entitled 'Drogheda: Creating a Bridge to a Better Future', was completed by Mr. Vivian Geiran, former director of the Probation Service, and published in January 2021.

The report explored the challenges presenting in the Drogheda catchment area, in addition to local strengths and resources. It also identified measures that could support community safety and chart a path to improved community wellbeing in and around Drogheda.

The recommendations in the report fall under two general headings:

- the need for improved interagency cooperation in the administration and delivery of services in Drogheda, and
- the need to resource services or provide additional services in the area.

Since the publication of the report, the Department of Justice has engaged with relevant Government Departments and Agencies, and Louth County Council to develop an action plan to implement the recommendations contained in the report.

At a local level, the Drogheda Implementation Board is the core driver and co-ordinator of the activities outlined in the Plan, while the Department of Justice provides national oversight to ensure strategic direction, action planning and the delivery of the Drogheda Implementation Plan. Additionally, the recently established Drogheda Implementation Plan High Level Oversight Group, chaired by the Department of Justice, provides further oversight with representatives from all key government departments, the HSE and Tusla.

This review constitutes a status report on those actions up to the end of June 2022. During this period, many positive steps have been taken based on the recommendations of the scoping exercise including:

- Funding has been provided for the Red Door Project, which was identified in the scoping exercise as a vital service for those affected by drug and alcohol use in Drogheda. Across 2021 and 2022 the Department of Justice and the HSE invested €230,000 in this community-based project to assist with staff resourcing. Substantial progress has also been made in supporting the establishment of a needle and syringe exchange programme onsite in the Red Door Project.
- The Community Safety Innovation Fund was launched this year by Minister McEntee, which will result in monies seized from the proceeds of crime being invested back into communities. This fund, with an initial outlay of €2m, will ensure that the success of both the Criminal Assets Bureau (CAB) and An Garda Síochána is reflected in new positive investments in communities like Drogheda, supporting community safety focused projects and organisations that will help to build strong, safe communities.
- The Department of Justice has provided support through Dormant Accounts Funding to assist with the procurement of architectural services for a preliminary site plan for the

Moneymore Community Hub facility. The department also provided funding for the Moneymore Childcare Centre to extend and refurbish their kitchen and dining area, in order to continue providing meals to the 68 children from the area who use their service.

- Additional support, inclusive of the provision of additional teachers, has been allocated by the Department of Education to the three schools identified in the Drogheda Scoping Report, for a fixed term of 5 years. This assists the schools immediately, while also providing them with the necessary stability in resources to develop their capacity to respond to the needs of their students and provide better educational outcomes in the medium and long term.
- The CABLE and Boyne Garda Youth Diversion Projects also received additional Department of Justice funding in 2021 and 2022 to assist them in the delivery of vital services to young people who are at risk of offending. In June 2022 Boyne YDP was allocated almost €75,000 under the Youth Justice Strategy to deliver Early Intervention Supports and Family Supports primarily to Youth Diversion referrals on the Southside of Drogheda. The CABLE Project had previously received funding to deliver these supports on the Northside of the town.

The Drogheda Implementation Plan is a living document that will be updated on a regular basis as new actions or activities emerge. This update outlines the considerable progress that has been achieved to-date but also has a strong focus on the road ahead. Clear actions and timelines regarding the Drogheda Implementation Plan are also included in the Justice Plan 2022, which reflects the Government's commitment to place a special focus on Drogheda.

1. CROSS-AGENCY COORDINATION

1.1	<p>Drogheda Safety & Wellbeing High-Level Oversight Group: Led by (i) Department of Justice and comprising senior representatives of other relevant Departments: (ii) Health; (iii) Housing, Local Government and Heritage; (iv) Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth; (v) Education; (vi) Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science; (vii) Rural and Community Development; (viii) Social Protection; and (ix) Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media. Agency representatives to be invited to meetings as required.</p> <p>Quarterly Meetings to ensure strategic direction and action planning and receive reports on progress on action plan. Once the action plan is agreed, the Oversight Group might be reduced in size.</p>
1.2	<p>Safety and Wellbeing Implementation Board: The core driver and coordinator of change. With an independent chair, small support team (headed by a fulltime coordinator) and own budget (to resource the coordination itself, as well as to provide 'priming' funds to innovative projects and initiatives) – the team to be hosted, resourced supported by Louth Local Authority or Louth Leader Partnership, but located in Drogheda. Other central Government departments and local bodies to provide proportion of the funding for this as agreed).</p> <p>Board comprised of senior ('decision making') representatives from relevant agencies, including, at least: (i) An Garda Síochána; (ii) Probation Service; (iii) Local Authorities; (iv) HSE; (v) TUSLA; (vi) LMETB (vii) LLP; (viii) IYJS/DoJ.</p>
1.3	<p>Four sub-groups/working groups: Policing and Drugs; Family Support, Children, Young People and Education; Employment, Business, Enterprise; Area/Community Development, Arts, Culture and Sport.</p> <p>Sub/working groups to have identified chairs (some could be rotated), representatives from relevant agencies and bodies. All sub-groups to include representatives from relevant bodies in the C+V sector; sub-group (d) to include wider definition of 'community' representatives, on a rotating basis, as required. Sub-group work focus to be on agreed/clear action plans. To report in at appropriate intervals, through identified representatives, to the Implementation Board. The sub-groups could also identify new or added resourcing needs, and prepare business cases for consideration by the implementation.</p>
Current Status	
<p>1.1 Drogheda Safety & Wellbeing High-Level Oversight Group</p> <p>Establishment of the High-Level Oversight Group was progressed by the Department of Justice during the period covered by this report, with the first meeting of the High-Level Oversight Group scheduled for July 2022.</p>	

1.2: Drogheda Implementation Board

The Safety and Wellbeing Implementation Board, generally referred to as the Drogheda Implementation Board, was established in late October 2021 and meets monthly. Full board membership is available to view on their dedicated website at:

www.droghedaimplementationboard.ie/about/board-membership/

A number of key procedural guidelines have been agreed including terms of reference for the Board and subgroups; confidentiality; conflict of interest; and communications strategy.

Monthly updates on Board meetings are publicly available and can be viewed at:

www.droghedaimplementationboard.ie/reports/.

The Department of Justice secured €150,000 in 2021 and €250,000 in 2022 through Dormant Accounts Funding (DAF) to support the establishment and running of the Drogheda Implementation Board. In addition to providing staffing and administration costs for the Board, approximately €170,000 of this budget has been allocated towards actions 3.1 (Red Door Project) and 4.1 (Moneymore Community Hub Facility) of the Plan to date. The balance of the budget will be allocated towards delivery of actions, in particular innovative initiatives identified through the subgroup structures.

LMETB is providing hosting and administration supports to the Board, including employment of a full-time Coordinator. This Coordinator has been in position since December 2021.

1.3: Subgroups of the Board

Four subgroups of the Board have been established which reflect the recommendation contained in the Drogheda Scoping Report:

- Policing and Drugs;
- Family Support, Children, Young People and Education;
- Employment, Business, Enterprise;
- Area/Community Development, Arts, Culture and Sport.

Subgroup membership is available to view here

www.droghedaimplementationboard.ie/about/subgroups/.

The Board plays a strategic oversight role in relation to the delivery of the Plan whilst subgroups work on specific actions. To that end the Board has mapped actions from the Implementation Plan to subgroups which are being progressed.

<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Body</i>
Department of Justice (DoJ) to coordinate implementation of actions in line with timelines set out in this document and to produce six monthly progress reports	Ongoing	DoJ

Louth and Meath Education and Training Board (LMETB) to host local Drogheda Implementation Board comprised of local representatives of relevant agencies and bodies	Ongoing	LMETB
Recruitment of Coordinator to support local Drogheda Implementation Board	Complete	LMETB
DoJ to provide funding for single staff resource to support Drogheda Implementation Board. Funds secured via Dormant Accounts for 2022.	Complete	DoJ
Submission to be made to Dormant Accounts Fund for 2023 funding.	Q3 2022	DoJ

2. ADDRESSING CRIME

2.1	For those involved at a very serious or “senior” level in the drugs trade and related organised crime in the area, the current approach by AGS of targeting and disrupting their activities to be continued and resourced accordingly.	
Current Status		
<p>The Drugs Unit attached to Drogheda Garda station continues to make a significant number of detections and arrests for a range of Drugs Related Offences. In 2021 there were 87 Detections for Sale and Supply of Drugs, 183 Detections for Simple Possession of Drugs for Personal Use, 6 Detections for Cultivation/Manufacture of Drugs and in excess of 1000 searches conducted – including searches of premises, vehicles, and persons.</p> <p>This is on a par with, if not above, the busiest Garda Districts in the country. In addition, An Garda Síochána continue to proactively target the finances and other assets of all persons involved in the sale and supply of drugs. Gardaí in Drogheda will continue to work closely with other agencies and Garda units, both on a local and national level, in targeting those involved in the sale and supply of controlled substances.</p> <p>This successful operational and strategic approach has proven very successful and will continue to be fully resourced and supported.</p>		
Next Steps		Responsible Body
The strategy outlined above will continue in relation to the seizure of illegal drugs and assets. This strategy is directly linked with Operation Stratus which continues to deal with serious organised criminality in Drogheda		AGS

2.2	Implement as a matter of urgency an intensive wraparound service for vulnerable children and young people exposed to and involved in organised crime group, as well as their families, with a view to facilitating their disengagement from such criminal networks.
Current Status	
<p>The Greentown Project trial sites are progressing in two locations in the State to develop approaches to wrap around support for vulnerable children. The learnings from these trials will inform the deployment of services in areas where children and young people are exposed to and involved in organised crime groups, as well as their families, with a view to facilitating their disengagement from such criminal networks. The very effective cross agency collaborative work that is taking place has assisted a number of young people to date to receive the necessary training to enable them to gain employment which will help them to break the link with, and dependency on, the criminal networks.</p> <p>Extern is an all island social justice charity supporting children, young people, individuals and families to overcome their challenges, empower positive change and support the family unit. Representatives of Extern were invited to the May meeting of the Policing and Drugs Subgroup of the Drogheda Implementation Board and presented on an intensive family support pilot which they are delivering in the Drogheda area. This pilot is funded by the Department of Justice. Extern has also been engaging in the Youth Service Network Meetings facilitated by the Drogheda Implementation Board Coordinator and Louth LEADER Partnership.</p>	

2.3	Continue – and increase, where appropriate – resourcing (e.g., staff, training, minibus/es) to the two Youth Diversion Projects (CABLE and BOYNE GYDPs), to facilitate their work.
Current Status	
<p>Youth Diversion Projects (CABLE and BOYNE) are funded directly by the Department of Justice on two-year renewable funding agreements. CABLE and BOYNE community based Youth Workers work with local Juvenile Liaison Officers to deliver services to young people who have been cautioned, and young people deemed at risk of offending. This work is now captured as part of the partnership approach to service delivery in the new Youth Justice Strategy 2021-2027.</p> <p>In 2021 the Department of Justice provided €530,000 in funding to the two projects including additional funding of €25,000 for BOYNE and €66,000 for CABLE for the purchase of mini-buses.</p> <p>In June 2022 Boyne Youth Diversion Project was allocated almost €75,000 under the Youth Justice Strategy to deliver Early Intervention Supports and Family Supports primarily to Youth Diversion referrals on the Southside of Drogheda. The CABLE Project had received funding in a previous round to deliver these supports on the Northside of the town.</p>	

<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Body</i>
Engagement with CABLE and BOYNE projects regarding any additional needs. This objective has been achieved however engagement will remain ongoing.	Complete	Department of Justice

2.4	Ensure continuing/strengthening of community policing – particularly in the town centre and suburban areas.	
Current Status		
<p>There has been a significant change in the Community Policing Unit in Drogheda which at the start of 2022 was increased to a strength of 1 Sergeant and 16 Gardaí. These 16 Gardaí have been assigned to dedicated sectors within communities and interest groups in both urban and rural locations. The unit will be known as the Drogheda Community Policing Team. The details of sectors will be advised on the Garda Website, on the Louth Garda Facebook Page and shared with public representatives and interest groups. Any queries/requests to this unit can be addressed to Drogheda.Community@garda.ie.</p> <p>There is a clear vision for this unit to include responsibility for dedicated sectors, delivery of schools programmes, high visibility foot and pedal cycle patrols, targeting of hot-spots, engaging with elderly, neighbourhood groups, text alert groups and dealing with a range of issues that impact on the communities within the town of Drogheda. This unit will have a significant role in addressing and delivering the goals of the Drogheda Implementation Plan</p>		
Next Steps	Timeline	Responsible Body
Roll-out of the Community Policing Framework to the Louth Division	Complete	AGS
To increase the profile and effectiveness of this new look Community Policing Team and achieve strategic and community orientated policing objectives.	Ongoing	AGS

2.5	Consider the implementation of a Joint Agency Response to Crime (JARC) project in the Drogheda area.
2.10	Explore ways in which the timeliness of criminal justice responses to offending and offenders can be improved where possible.
Current Status	
A new oversight and governance structure for offender management has been established by the Department of Justice in order to coordinate and align offender management programmes, including SORAM (Sex Offender Risk Assessment and Management), JARC (Joint Agency Response to Crime), Intimate Partner Violence, Complex Prisoner Releases and Life Sentence Prisoners.	

<p>The current priorities for this new governance mechanism include developing and embedding the new reporting structures, developing a medium-term vision for multi-agency offender management and streamlining approaches to programme delivery.</p> <p>During 2021, significant progress was made on the evaluation of the existing JARC programmes. The results of these evaluations, expected in 2022, will inform decisions on the expansion of JARC to the Drogheda catchment area.</p>		
<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Body</i>
Any decision to roll out JARC to additional locations will be made by the Offender Management Governance and Strategy Group in the context of the outcome of ongoing programme evaluations. Evaluations into the JARC regional programmes are currently ongoing and are expected to be completed in Q3 2022.	Q4 2022	Offender Management Governance and Strategy Group (Chaired by DoJ, Membership includes IPS, AGS and Probation Service)

2.6	Allocate additional Probation Service resources (1-2 probation officers, as well as community service and community-based organisations, where and as needed) immediately to the Louth team, to allow adequate focus on and resourcing of responses to drug-related offending, young people involved in crime and related projects, as well as in the event of any expansion of the JARC programme, youth justice, community service and restorative justice programmes.		
Current Status			
<p>Probation Service resources on the Louth Team, which includes the Drogheda catchment area, were increased in January 2021.</p> <p>The Probation Service continues to review resources on the Louth Team in order to respond to offending behaviour and relevant initiatives operating in the area. There are likely to be resource implications to facilitate the delivery of specific actions within the Drogheda Implementation Plan, such as the continuation and sustainability of the Drug Court. This action is being progressed by the Policing and Drugs Subgroup of the Drogheda Implementation Board which is chaired by the Probation Service representative on the Drogheda Implementation Board. In addition, there are a high number of Circuit Court referrals in the Drogheda area which will also require consideration in terms of Probation Service resources.</p> <p>The Probation Service moved into new accommodation in Dyer Street, Drogheda town centre in Q3 2021. The office is within easy access of the Courts and also very accessible for Service Users.</p>			
Next Steps		Timeline	Responsible Body
Probation Service resources to be kept under review		Ongoing	Probation Service

2.7	In spite of the constraints of Proceeds of Crime legislation, explore how to demonstrate to local communities in a visible and practical way that money and other resources seized from organised criminals is, in effect, used to provide funding for community and other services.	
Current Status		
<p>In April 2021 the Minister for Justice and the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform agreed in principle to establish a new fund to support community safety which would reflect the successes of An Garda Síochána and the Criminal Assets Bureau in disrupting criminal activity and seizing proceeds of crime by providing additional funding for investment in community safety projects.</p> <p>The establishment of a Community Safety Innovation Fund was announced in Budget 2022. This fund will have an initial outlay of €2 million, but this is expected to grow. The application criteria for the fund was finalised by the Department of Justice in February 2022 and the fund was launched in April 2022. The call for applications for the Fund ran from 6 April until 8 June 2022 and grants will range from €20,000 to €150,000. It is expected that applicants will be informed of the outcome of their applications in Q3 2022 with funds to successful submissions disbursed shortly thereafter.</p>		
<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Body</i>
Funding to be confirmed through the estimates process	Complete	DoJ/DPER
Application Criteria for Community Safety Innovation Fund Agreed	Complete	DoJ
Community Safety Innovation Fund Launched	Complete	DoJ
Applications for funding reviewed and applicants informed of decision. Funding issued to all successful applicants.	Q3 2022	DOJ

2.8	Explore the provision of appropriate multi-disciplinary responses (including out-of-hours) to incidents (e.g., with mental health components or factors, such as suicidal or self-harming behaviour) currently managed by ‘frontline’ AGS members
Current Status	
<p>In July 2020, a project focusing on the implementation of Divisional Crisis Intervention Teams (CIT) commenced under A Policing Service for Our Future (APSFF). The aim of the project is to explore multi-agency intervention teams, which will be a collaboration between An Garda Síochána and mental health professionals in order to provide a rapid and integrated response to persons with mental health issues.</p> <p>Any updates relating to this action are currently dependent on the outcome of the ‘Crisis Intervention Teams’ pilot in Limerick, in addition to potential financial and resource</p>	

<p>constraints. The pilot in Limerick will run over an eighteen (18) month period following which it will be evaluated and a review conducted.</p> <p>It was agreed by the Policing and Drugs Subgroup of the Drogheda Implementation Board that they would review this action in Q3-Q4 2022 with a view to identifying potential local Drogheda responses.</p>		
<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Body</i>
Continued evaluation and assessment of the CIT Project	Q3 2022	AGS

2.9	Explore how to address the previously raised and discussed issue of the impact of the county boundaries of Louth and Meath, and the corresponding delineation between Garda Districts/Divisions, specifically in relation to the policing of the Laytown-Bettystown area of East Meath.	
Current Status		
<p>The Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH) is developing proposals to improve co-operation and municipal governance for sizeable urban areas that significantly extend beyond county boundaries. This will involve establishing a formal structure whereby the relevant local authorities will work together to plan for development in a way that best serves the interests of the residents and businesses in the form of Statutory Urban Area Committees.</p> <p>Two meetings of Drogheda Borough and Laytown/Bettystown public representatives have been held this year on 26th January 2022 and 26th May 2022. Items discussed included Tourism, Proposed Projects and Works for the area of Drogheda and East Meath, Local Area Plans, Environmental Awareness Coordination, and Garda cross boundary responsibilities and activities.</p> <p>An Garda Síochána stakeholder meetings are underway in advance of definitive boundaries being confirmed under the new Garda Operating Model.</p>		
Next Steps	Timeline	Responsible Body
Legislative proposals to be brought by D/HLGH on Statutory Urban Area Committees	Ongoing	D/HLGH

2.10	Explore ways in which the timeliness of criminal justice responses to offending and offenders can be improved where possible
This recommendation has been grouped with recommendation 2.5 above.	

2.11	Explore the practicality of implementing the Community Crime Impact Assessment (CCIA) process in Drogheda	
4.8	Build on previous initiatives to increase community capacity for responding to violent critical incidents at local level.	
Current Status		
<p>CCIA is an instrument intended to give due weight to the experience of a community living with drug-related criminality and anti-social behaviour. CCIAAs are part of the National Drug Strategy ‘Reducing Harm Supporting Recovery’ 2017-2025. Strategic Action 4.1.40 aims to “measure the impact of drug related crime and wider public nuisance issues on communities” by: “developing and piloting a Community Impact Assessment Tool in order to measure the impact of drug-related crime and wider public nuisance issues on communities”.</p> <p>Citywide Drugs Crisis Campaign, who developed the CCIA tool, presented to the Drogheda Implementation Board and Department of Justice team members in June 2022. The Board is now exploring the practicality of implementing the tool in Drogheda.</p>		
Next Steps	Timeline	Responsible Body
Drogheda Implementation Board to engage with City Wide, An Garda Síochána and the Department of Health (DoH) in relation to exploring the practicality of implementing the Community Crime Impact Assessment in Drogheda	Q3 2022	Drogheda Implementation Board/ DoH/AGS

2.12	Explore the implementation of a 'See It. Say It' scheme in Drogheda, in relation to anti-social behaviour.
Current Status	
<p>There has been a significant increase in requests across the country for community engagement systems, with text monitoring, text alerts and apps being recommended by different groups. AGS ICT has looked at suitable solutions to deal with the demand.</p> <p>AGS ICT and Community Policing teams have been working with their provider to progress the delivery of two services. The first service is to receive text messages from members of the public (similar to See Something, Say Something), where An Garda Síochána will have an advertised short text number (50311 - non-emergency number) and members of the public can text a message, which will be routed to the relevant control room and acted upon. The second service is for Community Alerts, where a granular system is being tested, that will allow messages to be sent out by the different levels of Garda Community Policing teams, from the local level, station, division, etc.</p> <p>The 'See Something, Say Something' scheme is currently under evaluation by AGS with a view to rolling it out initially at selected locations. A report on this evaluation will be provided at the next update.</p>	

<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Body</i>
Presentation by key members of AGS senior management and Kerry Division to Drogheda Implementation Board	Q3 2022	AGS

2.13	Continue to provide training and awareness raising in relation to the impact and implications of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) for all relevant bodies in Drogheda.
Current Status	
<p>The Youth Justice Strategy 2021-2027 provides a developmental framework for further ongoing enhancement of youth justice services. The strategy outlines approaches to the effects of trauma and disadvantage, including in interagency work, in strengthening Garda policies on engagement with young people, and pursuing specialised training support for front line personnel who engage with young people. Implementation of the Strategy is being supported by cross-agency governance and oversight structures, a dedicated research partnership with the University of Limerick (REPPP project), and a Youth Justice Advisory Group made up of community, professional and academic experts with a broad range of relevant experience including in relation to the impact of trauma and adverse childhood events.</p> <p>The “Louth Community Resilience Network” is a collaborative initiative between TUSLA Prevention Partnership and Family support (PPFS), Louth CYPSC and Louth LEADER Partnership’s ABC Programme (Genesis). The aim of this network is to increase awareness of the impact of early childhood trauma and the delivery of trauma informed practice, and to form a collaborative response to building more resilient communities within County Louth. Louth LEADER Partnership’s ABC Programme worked with both Louth CYPSC and Tusla Child and Family Support Networks to procure a series of Trauma Informed Practice accredited and independently evaluated training events through ‘What Works’ Dormant Accounts Funding. The aim of this programme of training events is to increase the knowledge base amongst a wide range of practitioners across County Louth, including Drogheda. This was match funded by Tusla to facilitate attendance by groups in East Meath and ensure a consistency of approach across the Drogheda/East Meath area.</p> <p>Training delivery consisted of half day sessions on Tier 1 ABC of Trauma for service managers and other staff members; and full day Tier 2 ABC of Trauma training for frontline staff who may deal with the issues of early childhood trauma on a day to day basis. In total, 127 practitioners attended training in January 2022, with up to 75% of these serving the Drogheda area and including representatives from 5 primary schools, 10 community & voluntary sector organisations, school completion programme staff, Tusla staff, HSE staff, pre-schools and Louth LEADER Partnership team members. The Tusla and Genesis teams are working collaboratively with the Drogheda Implementation Board structures and applying for further What Works funding to build on this initial phase and develop a plan for building a community resilience network with a trauma informed approach in the local area.</p>	

<p>A large contingent of Drogheda based practitioners travelled to Belfast in June 2022 to attend the Trauma Summit featuring over 40 world renowned trauma experts as speakers. These attendees included members of An Garda Síochána, Tusla, school staff and local community and voluntary sector organisations. A number of potential partnerships and initiatives are being explored as a follow on to this event.</p>		
<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Body</i>
DoJ to work with partners to deliver on the Youth Justice Strategy 2021-2027 objectives which relate to the effects of trauma and disadvantage on young people.	Ongoing in line with the objectives of the Youth Justice Strategy 2021-2027	DoJ working with DCEDIY, local authority, community and local development and other expert and community partners
Increase Louth Community Resilience Network membership and formalise plan for building community resilience.	Ongoing	Louth LEADER Partnership, Louth CYPSC, TUSLA

3. DRUG USE

3.1	<p>The Red Door project should receive urgent additional funding for the provision of drugs outreach work (as a particular priority), counselling, family support, client progression pathways, Court-related and prisoner support and additional harm reduction services in the Drogheda area. Specifically, €150,000 additional for a full year, should be allocated to the Red Door, for provision of these additional services</p>
Current Status	
<p>In the immediate term additional resources have been allocated through the Department of Justice and the HSE to The Red Door Project to facilitate the employment of a Drug Court Worker, part-time administrator, Social Worker and Project Worker until 31st December 2022. Across 2021 and 2022 this represents an investment of €230,000 in staffing resources to provide additional services in the Drogheda area.</p> <p>The priority for the HSE is to ensure that an even spread of drug & alcohol prevention and treatment support services is available to service users and families across the Louth/Meath area in line with evidence-based need. The Red Door Project is included in an independent evaluation of community and voluntary drug and alcohol services, commissioned by the North East Regional Drug and Alcohol Task Force (NERDATF) in February 2022. The conclusions and recommendations of this report, alongside the HSE review of Addiction Services in Louth & Meath, CHO and the NERDATF four year Strategic Plan 2022 – 2025, all outlined in more detail in action 3.4, will inform the development of a roadmap for drug & alcohol service provision across the Louth/Meath area.</p>	

A total of €160,000 (recurring funding) has been allocated by the Drugs Policy Unit, Department of Health under the Community Services Enhancement Fund to support the development of new services in the area and a process on the allocation of funding and tendering for same is being developed.		
<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Body</i>
Additional funding agreed and allocated to the Red Door Project from earmarked dormant accounts and HSE funding	Complete	Department of Justice/Department of Health/HSE
Further engagement on additional resourcing needs following completion of HSE regional resourcing review	Complete	DoJ/DoH/HSE
DoJ, DoH and HSE to consider the issue of sustainability of funding to ensure a medium to long-term plan is in place for service delivery	Ongoing	DoJ/HSE/DoH

3.2	Explore the possibility of utilising the Red Door facility as more of a ‘one-stop-shop’ for drug treatment and related services.	
<p>Discussions have taken place between HSE, NERDATF and The Red Door Project regarding potential for cross referrals, interagency working and premises being made available for use as the need arises.</p> <p>The HSE, North East Regional Drug and Alcohol Task Force and The Red Door Project have also engaged in collaborative initiatives such as the establishment of a needle and syringe exchange programme to operate from the Red Door Project as outlined in action 3.7.</p>		
Next Steps	Timeline	Responsible Body
HSE, North Eastern Regional Drugs Task Force (NERDTF), Red Door and the Probation Service to engage on how services can be developed and to eliminate overlapping or duplication of services; examine potential to step up the engagement with Social Work and Probation with the aim of considering the use of Red Door facility as a “one-stop-shop”	Ongoing	HSE, NE-RDTF, Probation Service, DoJ

3.3	Review the State funding (approximately €7,500 p.a.) provided to the Family Addiction Network (FASN) – providing family support, especially in the context of drug-related intimidation work and wider family support for addiction-related issues.
Current Status	
<p>Additional once off funding was allocated by the HSE Midlands Louth Meath Community Healthcare Organisation (CHO) area to FASN in May 2022. The allocation of €9,635 will go towards the provision of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 Step Model training, facilitation group work skills training & key working training. • Training to strengthen the FASN GDPR compliance • Printing and launch of the FASN Strategic Roadmap <p>As noted in action 3.1 the priority for the HSE is to ensure that an even spread of drug & alcohol prevention and treatment support services is available to service users and families across the Louth/Meath area in line with evidence-based need. The FASN is included in an independent evaluation of community and voluntary drug and alcohol services, commissioned by the North East Regional Drug and Alcohol Task Force (NERDATF) in February 2022. The conclusions and recommendations of this report, alongside the HSE review of Addiction Services in Louth & Meath and the NERDATF four year Strategic Plan 2022 – 2025, all outlined in more detail in action 3.4, will inform the development of a roadmap for drug & alcohol service provision across the Louth/Meath area.</p> <p>The HSE Midlands Louth Meath CHO area has allocated €125,000 on a recurring basis for the provision of family support services in the Louth/Meath area. This consists of two posts, a Family Support Coordinator and a Family Support Worker. Following a HSE procurement process the provision of a family support service has been contracted out by the HSE to a Section 39 organisation. It is anticipated that both roles will commence in Q3 2022. Both workers will operate across Louth/Meath and have a base and strong presence in the Drogheda area.</p>	
<i>Next Steps</i>	
HSE to engage with FASN on funding proposal submission.	<div>Timeline</div> <div>Ongoing</div> <div>Responsible Body</div> <div>HSE</div>

3.4	Commission/carry out an urgent review of the organisation of drugs (statutory and community and voluntary) services in the Drogheda area, similar in focus – but perhaps on a smaller scale – to the Service Review of the Dundalk Addiction Services (2015) carried out by the HSE, with a view to ensuring improved effectiveness and efficiency as a matter of urgency.
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Current Status		
<p>The HSE review of Addiction Services in Louth and Meath, CHO 8 was completed in June 2021. The HSE Senior Management Team is working through the recommendations and continue to progress work with all related disciplines across the Louth/Meath area.</p> <p>This HSE review did not include a review of the Section 39 organisations funded by the North East Regional Drug and Alcohol Task Force (NERDATF). The task force subsequently commissioned an external evaluation of such funded services which commenced in mid-March 2022. The evaluation consists of desktop review and extensive consultation with key stakeholders, funded services and the NERDATF committee and subcommittees. It is anticipated that an initial draft report will be presented to NERDATF in Q3 2022.</p> <p>This evaluation process will also inform a four-year strategic plan for the NERDATF currently under development. Included in the development of this plan will be a detailed profile of drug and alcohol use in the catchment area, emerging trends, comprehensive needs/gap analysis of substance use support services, profile and analysis of available funding streams and whether they currently meet the needs of the area.</p>		
<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Body</i>
Consultants appointed and review commenced	Complete	HSE
Consultants to meet with service providers in HSE, Taskforce and community and voluntary groups in Meath and Louth (staff and service users)	Ongoing	HSE
Evaluation completed	Q3 2022	HSE

3.5	Reinstate/continue the local Drug Court, with appropriate funding and other resourcing and formally evaluate its operation over a period of say one to two years, before deciding on its longer-term future.
Current Status	
<p>The local Drug Court is operational, with a Drugs Court Case Worker based in the Red Door Project and resourced through Dormant Accounts Funding secured for the delivery of the Drogheda Report Implementation Plan. This is still operating as a pilot and the Probation Services representative on the Policing and Drugs Subgroup has been assigned lead responsibility for reviewing the sustainability of this resource. This representative has engaged with local legal professionals and courts service management who all provide very positive feedback on the initiative. It has also been verified that a statutory instrument is not required to place the Drug Court on a more permanent footing. A report is currently being compiled for the Justice Forum including testimonials from a variety of stakeholders.</p> <p>The Department of Justice will continue to fund the Drugs Court Case Worker, currently located in The Red Door Project.</p> <p>Future HSE funding for this initiative will be considered in line with detail as set out in 3.1 above.</p>	

<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Body</i>
Develop business case for specific Dugs Court Case Worker role situated within Red Door Project	Complete	DoJ/Probation Service
Provision of second year of funding for Drugs Court Worker and part-time Administrator	Q3 2022	DoJ
HSE to consider funding for a Drugs and Alcohol Project Worker as part of review of services	Ongoing	HSE
DoJ to formally evaluate the operation of the Drugs Court over one year with a decision reached regarding its longer-term future	2023	DoJ/Probation Service

3.6	Agencies working in the substance use field in Drogheda should look at practical ways of improving interagency cooperation, including the identification and implementation of appropriate gateways to treatment and progression routes for service users, as well as reducing or eliminating overlaps and duplication, providing joint (cross-agency) training, developing shared language and even greater cooperation on assessment and intervention methods.
Current Status	
<p>While positive cooperative relationships are in place currently between agencies working in the substance use field in Drogheda, a number of interagency initiatives are being explored by members of the Policing and Drugs Subgroup.</p> <p>The allocation a Social Worker post in particular to the Red Door Project has been instrumental in improving referral and support pathways for service users, not least with Tusla, as it has opened up a ‘fast-track’ referral service. The Red Door Social Worker staff member is now sitting on key multidisciplinary working groups such as the Foster Care Committee and referrals are now being received directly from Our Lady of Lourdes and the Drogheda Department of Psychiatry for social work supports within the Red Door Project.</p> <p>A Clinical Lead for Addiction Services was appointed to the HSE Midlands Louth/Meath Community Healthcare Organisation (CHO) area in January 2022. The HSE Clinical Quality & Safety Committee (CQSC) for addiction services in this CHO area was established in Q2 2022 and is chaired by the HSE Clinical Lead. Sub-committee structures will be established which will include Community and Voluntary sector members of the North East Regional Drug and Alcohol Task Force (NERDATF) in addition to other members of regional Drug and Alcohol Task Forces.</p> <p>The HSE Midlands Louth/Meath CHO area and NERDATF are working to further strengthen interagency collaboration and co-operation. The conclusions and recommendations arising from both the NERDATF evaluation & strategic plan development will further inform and support this collaborative work.</p>	

In addition, NERDATF plans to organise refresher training for all relevant staff on the National Drug Rehabilitation Framework (NDRF) model in Q4 2022.		
<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Body</i>
The National Drug Rehabilitation Framework (NDRF) eLearning module has been completed and will be available shortly on HSE and (ICT issues currently affecting the launch of the training). This 90 minute module will be available to HSE and HSE funded services	Complete	The HSE National Social Inclusion Office
“Pilot comprehensive care plan evaluation outcome to be implemented.” The pilot assessment and care plan project is led by the HSE National Social Inclusion Office. Evaluation of the pilot sites has been delayed due to COVID-19 priorities and the HSE cyber-attack. The evaluation will be commissioned in Q2/Q3 2022.	Q3 2022	The HSE National Social Inclusion Office

3.7	Ensure full implementation of all appropriate harm reduction measures, as mandated by the National Drugs Strategy, including Needle and Syringe Programmes (NSP) and Naloxone, in Drogheda.
Current Status	
<p>The Drogheda Implementation Board Policing and Drugs Subgroup supports interagency collaboration and is the appropriate forum to progress the relevant actions in line with the National Drugs Strategy.</p> <p>The HSE is currently liaising with The Red Door Project to support the establishment of a needle & syringe exchange programme on-site at the project premises in Drogheda. The following has been agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Merchants Quay Ireland to provide needle and syringe exchange training/refresher training to the Red Door Project staff team, funded by the HSE. - The HSE has agreed to allocate funding to the Red Door Project to cover insurance costs associated with the provision of the needle and syringe exchange programme. - The HSE will fund and organise the supply of relevant needle & syringe exchange equipment i.e. needles, water, foil, crack pipes etc. <p>In June 2022 a meeting between Merchants Quay Ireland Senior Management, HSE & the Red Door Project took place in the Red Door premises in Drogheda to progress all actions above and discussions are ongoing.</p> <p>The HSE has secured funding to support the employment of two posts (1.6 Whole Time Equivalent) – Drug & Alcohol Workers. These posts will operate across the Louth/Meath area. The workers will support the provision of a mobile needle & syringe exchange programme, harm reduction, key working and interagency care planning. A vehicle has been</p>	

<p>made available by the HSE to support the provision of the needle and syringe exchange programme.</p> <p>The HSE will further liaise with the HSE Clinical Lead re the roll out of a Naloxone Programme in the Louth/Meath area.</p>		
<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Body</i>
Outreach drug/alcohol project worker assigned, manager in place, funding allocated by HSE. NSP project began on 11 May operating 3 days per week.	Complete	HSE
€50,000 allocated for needle exchange from HSE yearly	Ongoing	HSE
<i>Further Steps Necessary for Delivery</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Body</i>
Vacant Outreach Worker post to be clarified pending outcome of review	Ongoing	HSE

3.8	Explore and implement the most appropriate way of ensuring a best-practice response to drug using clients with identified dual (drugs and mental health issues) diagnosis. This could include interagency co-location of staff and joint training		
Current Status			
<p>The HSE organised a webinar which provided an update on the National Clinical Programme for Comorbid Mental Illness and Substance Misuse (Dual Diagnosis). This event was held on the 5th April 2022 and the presentation was delivered by the National Programme Manager. HSE staff from the Midlands Louth Meath Community Healthcare Organisation (CHO8) area, North East Regional Drug and Alcohol Task Force (NERDATF) and funded services were in attendance.</p> <p>Currently three pilot sites are rolling out the National Programme. After that pilot phase there may be potential for the HSE Midlands Louth/Meath to apply for the National Programme to be rolled out in CHO8. If that opportunity arises a business case will be developed and submitted accordingly.</p> <p>NERDATF continues to support interagency collaboration with Mental Health Services and Addiction Support Services through the NERDATF Treatment & Rehabilitation Sub Committee. Through this forum discussions are held to clarify the range of services supports available to include referral and working towards a shared care approach. Gaps and blocks are also reviewed through this forum.</p>			
Current Status			
Ongoing activities around information exchange, joint training, development of common tools and appropriate care pathways	<table> <tr> <td>Ongoing</td> <td>HSE</td> </tr> </table>	Ongoing	HSE
Ongoing	HSE		

<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Body</i>
Clinical programme being developed and rolled out.	2023	HSE
Inter-agency work to be carried out through Slaintecare on dual diagnosis to ensure a uniform and sustainable response nation-wide.	2023	HSE
Review of roll-out of dual diagnosis to be carried out.	2023	HSE

3.9	Provide further interagency training workshops on responding to drug-related intimidation for relevant staff in statutory agencies as well as those in the community and voluntary sector.
Current Status	
<p>There is a nominated AGS Inspector in the Louth Division with responsibility for this portfolio, who works closely with a number of agencies in dealing with victims and families of drug related intimidation.</p> <p>A Drug Related Intimidation Reporting Programme (DRIRP) awareness session was delivered by the North East Regional Drug Task Force in partnership with AGS and the Family Addiction Support Network on the 8th December 2021. This session was attended by a variety of statutory agencies and community and voluntary sector organisations including representatives from 6 organisations operating in the Drogheda area. Discussions are ongoing regarding rolling out further awareness sessions.</p> <p>The Policing and Drugs Subgroup has identified that staff in the education sector do not feel confident handling issues relating to drug related intimidation and need more support in dealing with drug related issues within school populations. It was agreed that the 'interagency' element needs to be extended to education settings and perhaps go beyond drug related intimidation. An information and awareness event was organised by the subgroup in May 2022 for staff in the education sector to enhance their ability to respond to such issues and connect them with services available in the area. Presentations were given by An Garda Síochána, the HSE Substance Use Service for Teens (SUST) and the North East Drug and Alcohol Task Force (NERDATF). Statutory and community services also hosted information stands at the event and space was provided for networking between school staff and services. There were almost 100 attendees at the event with 19 school/education providers represented. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive with a follow up event being planned for Q3 2022.</p> <p>The National Drug Related Intimidation and Violence Engagement (DRIVE) project lead has been appointed, with a work plan under development currently by the Drive Oversight Committee (DOC). The NERDATF is liaising with Louth County Council to discuss the DRIVE project with the Joint Policing Committee with a view to including this initiative in their work plan and to co-ordinate on the need to develop interagency processes to roll-out the project in the North East. NERDATF plans to roll out awareness sessions for the programme in Q3 and</p>	

Q4 2022. As a key action in the DRIVE framework, NERDATF is working to identify a DRIVE Lead for the North East Area and continues to liaise with relevant stakeholders in this regard.

The Local Community Safety Partnership structure is currently being rolled out in three pilot sites (Longford County, Waterford City and County and Dublin North Inner City). The expansion of the Local Community Safety Partnership structure to include Drogheda would greatly support the further rollout of the DRIVE framework.

The three pilot Local Community Safety Partnerships will conclude in Q3 2023. During this time, the pilots are subject to a robust evaluation which will conclude in Q4 2023 and will inform a national roll out of the Local Community Safety Partnership model across all local authority areas.

<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Body</i>
Interagency training workshops to recommence. In the meantime, Family Addiction Support Network and AGS are providing support.	Q3 2022	NE-RDTF/AGS/FASN/National Family Support Network

4. YOUTH AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FACILITIES

4.1	The Northside/Moneymore community hub facility should continue to be progressed, as it currently is, by LLP on behalf of all stakeholders. This facility should accommodate the provision of services currently provided by bodies forming the Moneymore Consortium, as well as providing a hub for a wider array of community services, provided by statutory as well as community and voluntary agencies.
4.2	It would greatly boost morale in the area if, at an appropriate point, clarification could be provided by LCC and LLP to relevant stakeholders in Moneymore/North Drogheda on the likely direction of travel and timeline for the proposed centre, as soon as practicable.
4.3	The relevant bodies should commence, as a priority, exploratory moves including local consultations, to provide a similar facility on the Southside of the Town, in the general Rathmullan area.
Current Status	
<p>4.1 In July 2021, the Department of Justice provided funding of €15,000 through Dormant Accounts Funding to the Moneymore Consortium to support the procurement of architectural services to develop a preliminary site plan, including an estimate of construction costs, for the Moneymore Community Hub Facility. The absence of such plans was identified by the Moneymore Consortium as a key barrier to pre-planning talks and access to funding applications. This preliminary site plan will be used to progress pre-planning discussions with Louth County Council in addition to serving as an output to inform stakeholders.</p>	

The Louth County Council Public Realm Team continue to engage with the Moneymore consortium and will continue to collaborate and offer assistance as the Consortium works with their design team to finalise an agreed design and submit a planning application. Louth LEADER Partnership continue to make themselves available to provide support to the Moneymore Consortium as required.

The Consortium is also working on an Interim Operational Plan. The core objective of this will be consideration of an operational plan aimed at maximising revenues to ensure the viability of the centre. The Consortium recognises the challenge of current construction costs and needs to develop close interagency cooperation to leverage funding to pay for these costs of what they view as an essential piece of community infrastructure in the area.

Funding

While community facilities are funded from many different sources across different Government Departments, Agencies and Local Authorities, there is no dedicated standalone funding stream for capital works for community centres. The Department of Rural and Community Development has developed a proposal for a Community Centre Capital Programme as part of a wider Community Recovery Investment Fund for inclusion in Ireland's National Recovery and Resilience Plan proposals. Programming is also underway for the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and DRCD is seeking to engage with the ERDF for co-financing opportunities.

Additionally, the Department of Justice provided €48,000 from Dormant Accounts Funding to the Moneymore Childcare Centre to extend and refurbish their kitchen and dining area based on HSE requirements, in order to continue providing meals to the 68 children from the area who use their service. Minister for Justice Helen McEntee officially opened the kitchen and dining area in May 2022.

4.2 Louth County Council has identified and confirmed the availability of the most suitable site in the area. The Community and Public Realm teams will facilitate the preparation of the necessary documentation (Section 183 notice) in order that the Council (elected members) can consider the formal transfer of the preferred site when planning permission is confirmed and the necessary funding is in place to complete the project.

4.3 As noted in the Scoping Report on Community Safety and Wellbeing in Drogheda there may be "a need first to build community development capacity and explore the range of local community needs in this area." Lifestyle Development have been providing supports within this community for 30 years and have considerable experience. They are pursuing Family Resource Centre status to enhance their ability to develop community capacity in the area.

Louth County Council is committed to making available a housing unit for use as a community resource. Identifying a group or groups who have the appetite to take responsibility for such a resource is key to progressing this initiative. Commitment by service providers to operate and/or provide some services from the unit will be necessary to ensure its sustainability.

<p>A number of representatives of the local community from the Southside of the town are participating in the Place Based Leadership Development Programme funded by the Department of Rural and Community Development. This programme is designed to build capacity in both the individual and the broader community to respond and develop solutions to issues within their own communities (see actions 4.6/4.7 for additional detail).</p>		
<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Body</i>
Completion of necessary refurbishment works at Moneymore Childcare facility	Complete	Moneymore Childcare Committee
Completion of design, feasibility and QS process	Complete	Moneymore Consortium
Engagement with LCC Planning team	Ongoing	Moneymore Consortium
Identify group(s) suitable to act as anchor tenant for a unit on the Southside	Ongoing	Louth County Council

4.4	Progress, as a priority, the funding and development by LMETB of the sports and community changing/meeting block at DIFE	
Current Status		
<p>A submission has been received by the Drogheda Implementation Board from the Principal in DIFE for support in making capital funding applications for these facilities. This has been approved and the Board is lending its support to applications for these works.</p> <p>The Large-Scale Sport Infrastructure Fund had initially been identified as a route to funding; however on exploring other options LMETB identified SOLAS Capital Investment as another potential funding stream. A Strategic Assessment Report/Business Case was submitted to SOLAS. This is a shovel ready project that LMETB have secured planning permission for and have a design team in place for. The design is well advanced at this juncture and LMETB are very hopeful of a positive response from SOLAS.</p> <p>In submitting this application LMETB have expanded the request to include a six-classroom tertiary education block which would facilitate the advancement of action 6.4 of the Drogheda Report Implementation Plan.</p>		
Next Steps	Timeline	Responsible Body
Identify and apply for funding to develop sports and community changing/meeting block at DIFE	Complete	LMETB

4.5	Agree an action plan for enhancing youth and community development capacity, particularly on the South side of Drogheda	
Current Status		
<p>The Louth LEADER Partnership (LLP) Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme (SICAP) Team administer a grant scheme that empowers local community groups to undertake a range of social inclusion activities including support to address the impacts of COVID-19, such as IT equipment and food bank services. A number of local Drogheda community groups have been supported with this grant aid activity. The grant scheme will reissue in summer 2022 and resources will be prioritised for Drogheda area groups.</p> <p>A new LLP SICAP Education and Community Development Officer took up post in May 2022. This is an additional post for the Drogheda area, provided through resources allocated from Louth Local Community Development Committee (LCDC), and will have a focus on supporting community development capacity, particularly on the Southside of the town, with a particular emphasis on youth. LLP also recruited a new Youth and Education Coordinator in the same time frame, based part-time in Drogheda, to strengthen and develop community connections and youth and education initiatives.</p> <p>The current LLP SICAP Community Development Officer has established a Services for Young People Network. The Drogheda Implementation Board convened a meeting of this network on 30th March 2022 in partnership with LLP to give an overview of the Scoping Report on Community Safety and Wellbeing in Drogheda, the Drogheda Report Implementation Plan and to review action 5.5 of the Drogheda Report Implementation Plan (gaps in service provision for young people). Further meetings are scheduled to take place with a view to developing projects for the Community Safety Innovation Fund and/or notifying the Family Support, Children, Young People and Education Subgroup of the Board of gaps in service delivery for children and young people.</p> <p>A number of residents and community representatives from the Southside of Drogheda are participating in the Place Based Leadership Development Programme which is outlined in more detail in actions 4.6/4.7.</p>		
Next Steps	Timeline	Responsible Body
Education and Community Development Officer in post	Complete	Louth LEADER Partnership
Recommendations to be taken forward to the Drogheda Implementation Board	Q4 2022	Drogheda Implementation Board

4.6	Generate an agreed strategic plan for the development of youth and community work and community leaders in Drogheda.
4.7	Include appropriate actions in relation to the training and development of local youth and community workers in this strategic plan; and specifically, education,

	training and career progression routes, linked to pre-university and university-level programmes, as well as incorporating ‘on-the-job’ training elements	
Current Status		
<p>The Department of Rural and Community Development is funding a Place Based Leadership Development programme in Drogheda. Louth LEADER Partnership is leading on delivery of the programme with oversight from Louth Local Community Development Committee (LCDC)</p> <p>The programme will support community leaders who work in fear of intimidation and violence, lack of authority, or a perception that those with authority are unable to make an impact and the fear of being a lone voice. It seeks to develop leaders from within the community. The objective is to help build a powerful community based, cross-sectoral coalition to address the impact of poverty and disadvantage and to create or develop alternative pathways and opportunities for young people most at risk of being drawn into the illicit drugs economy.</p> <p>The programme commenced on 26th January 2022 with 24 participants with a wide variety of backgrounds and experience including representatives of An Garda Síochána, Louth County Council, the Probation Service, Tusla, Department of Social Protection, Community & Voluntary Organisations, Education settings, local residents, and sports clubs.</p> <p>St. Oliver’s Community College is partnering with Cooperation Ireland to develop an in-school youth leadership programme. It is envisaged that this programme will intersect with the work of the Drogheda Implementation Board and provide a ‘pipeline’ of future youth and community leaders for the town.</p> <p>The completion of action 5.2 will feed into the development of any strategic plan for youth and community work and leaders in Drogheda.</p>		
Next Steps	Timeline	Responsible Body
Placed Based Leadership Development Programme to commence	Complete	LLP/LCDC/DRCD
Completion of review of youth service provision in Drogheda	Q3 2022	Family Support, Children, Young People and Education Subgroup
Place Based Leadership participants to develop initiatives in response to youth and community issues	2023	LLP/LCDC/DRCD

4.8	Build on previous initiatives to increase community capacity for responding to violent critical incidents at local level.
This Recommendation has been grouped with recommendation 2.11 above	

5. SPECIFIC SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

5	<p>5.1 Ensure that the good work initiated and under way recently, to coordinate child protection and welfare and other children's services, is maintained and further developed, specifically through the overarching strategic and service coordination proposals recommended above.</p> <p>5.2 An exercise has already been commenced, by LLP/CYPSC, to 'map' the services for children and young people in Drogheda. This valuable service 'audit' initiative, stalled because of Covid-19, should be re-started, prioritised and completed as a matter of urgency.</p> <p>5.3 Urgent consideration should also be given to how the various youth services could be more coordinated and supported.</p> <p>5.4 Ensure the completion of the review of Strengthening Families Programmes already provided and follow through as appropriate.</p> <p>5.5 There does appear to be certain gaps in some specific service provision for young people. These include mental health and suicide prevention, among others. Ensure these are prioritised in future planning and delivery.</p>
Current Status	
<p>5.1 The Family Support, Children, Young People and Education Subgroup of the Drogheda Implementation Board is currently working on a proposal relating to this action. It is hoped that the proposal will be ready for recommendation to the Board in Q3 2022.</p> <p>5.2 The Subgroup is working with agencies such as the LLP SICAP team and Louth Children and Young Persons Services Committee (Louth CYPC) to review current capacity within youth services in the Drogheda area. This exercise is being carried out in conjunction with action 5.5.</p> <p>5.3 Local youth services are working collaboratively on a number of initiatives, including nomination of representative(s) to Implementation Board structures and a submission on resourcing required for frontline youth service delivery. On foot of this submission a proposal by LMETB for a dedicated Drogheda Youth Officer was received, considered by the Family Support, Children, Young People and Education Subgroup and recommended to the Board for approval. A dedicated Youth Officer will increase the capacity of local youth organisations to draw down a variety of funding streams; will support and coordinate activity across youth services and carry out gap and other analyses of youth service delivery in the area. The LMETB has made a submission to the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY) for this resource with the support of the Drogheda Implementation Board.</p> <p>5.4 The Strengthening Families Review has been completed, and has been considered by the Family Support, Children, Young People and Education Subgroup. Many aspects of this</p>	

initiative are working extremely well. The local Strengthening Families Consortium recruited and trained 18 new volunteer facilitators in June 2022. A junior and senior programme are planned for delivery in September 2022 and Boomerang Youth Café, who are leading on delivery in Drogheda, commenced engagement with schools and other referring bodies in May 2022. Subgroup and consortium members are examining other models of delivery with a view to potentially expanding the groupings reach of the programme.

5.5 In conjunction with action 5.2 above the Subgroup is carrying out a review of service provision for children and young people in the Drogheda area, due to be completed in Q3 2022. Discussions and outcomes from the SICAP Drogheda Youth Services Network meetings will inform this process.

The Subgroup noted the challenge of young people aged 12-15 in Drogheda dropping out of the school system, and potentially being at risk of engaging in antisocial or criminal behaviour. This gap was also reflected in sessions with youth services operating across Drogheda. The need to maintain the connection to the school setting was highlighted, in particular by the Education Welfare Officer in a presentation to the subgroup.

LMETB has developed a proposal, in partnership with the Tusla Education Support Service, for a pilot educational intervention programme for 12-15 years old in the Drogheda area, based in St. Oliver's Community College. This proposal was presented to the Family Support, Children, Young People and Education Subgroup and recommended to the Drogheda Implementation Board who, at their March 2022 meeting, endorsed the application to the Department of Education.

The Drogheda Report Implementation Plan notes a gap in mental health services for young people in particular. A submission has previously been made to the HSE for the provision of a Jigsaw Service in the Drogheda/South Louth area. A gap in Suicide Officer provision in the area was also noted and highlighted to the HSE.

<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Body</i>
Complete updated review of children and young people's services in Drogheda	Q3 2022	Family Support, Children, Young People and Education Subgroup
Take forward recommendations on foot of review to Drogheda Implementation Board	Q3 2022	Family Support, Children, Young People and Education Subgroup
Submit application to DCEDIY for a Drogheda Youth Officer	Complete	LMETB
Submit application to Department of Education for educational intervention programme	Complete	LMETB

6. EDUCATION AND TRAINING

6.1	Due to the unique position and situation obtaining in St. Brigid’s and St. Patrick’s NS, St. Joseph’s CBS, and Presentation NS, an increase in DEIS status – from Band 2 to 1 – should be granted to the three schools immediately, at least on an interim emergency basis, at a minimum until (a) the passing of the worst impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, and (b) improvement in the overall crime and related social situation in Drogheda, and (c) completion of any formal update review by the Department of Education. Alternatively, or at least pending the outcome of any DEIS review, it is recommended that at a minimum some alternative way to provide equivalent additional supports to these schools and their students should be found and implemented, to address the needs identified.	
Current Status		
<p>Following the publication of the Drogheda Scoping Report, the Department of Education met with personnel from the three schools involved and explored options to provide additional support. It was explained that at the time a reclassification of the schools from DEIS Urban Band 2 to DEIS Urban Band 1 was not possible as work on the DEIS identification process was still ongoing.</p> <p>Following a review of the teacher allocation in all three schools and engagement with the National Educational Psychological Service, the Department of Education Inspectorate, Tusla Education Support Service, the Department, as an interim measure, allocated an additional 2 concessionary posts to each of the schools involved for the 2021/2022 academic year.</p> <p>The extension of the DEIS programme was completed by the Department of Education in late June 2022. The named schools were not identified as having met the criteria for inclusion under the refined DEIS identification model. However, the Department of Education allocated additional supports to the schools for a fixed term of 5 years in order to support the implementation of evidence-based programmes and initiatives. These programmes will build school capacity to respond to the needs of their students in relation to the issues outlined in the Scoping Report into Community Safety and Wellbeing in Drogheda. This allocation is separate from the DEIS programme and is in response to issues raised in the Drogheda Scoping Report and specifically in response to this action in the Implementation Plan.</p>		
Next Steps	Timeline	Responsible Body
Complete appeal process	Complete	Dept. of Education

6.2	Explore the potential for more apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programmes in Drogheda, and specifically through DIFE.
Current status	
On 19 April 2021 the Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science and the Minister of State for Skills and Further Education launched a five-year Action	

Plan for Apprenticeship. The Action Plan sets out a strategy to deliver on the Programme for Government commitment of reaching 10,000 new apprentice registrations per year by 2025. The plan provides a roadmap to a single apprenticeship system and new supports for employers and apprentices. It will also do the following:

- Create a new National Apprenticeship Office to drive reforms
- Deliver a new grant for employers, with a top-up grant for areas of identified national skills needs and/or targeted recruitment of underrepresented groups such as female apprentices, or lone-parents, people with disabilities, or members of the Travelling community
- Deliver non-financial supports targeted to SMEs in areas such as recruitment and supervision of apprentices
- Set targets for the public sector to take on apprentices and to create cross-sector apprentices
- Examine the potential development of new cross-border apprentice programmes and support apprentice engagement in international programmes such as Erasmus

At local level the LMETB has made a submission to SOLAS to deliver a large-scale apprenticeship hub in Drogheda; delivering 8 apprenticeship programmes twice a year and bringing 250 apprentice training places to Drogheda per annum.

<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Body</i>
Action Plan for Apprenticeship to be implemented and delivered in the Drogheda area	2021-2025	D/FHERIS
Submit application to SOLAS for an apprenticeship hub	Completed	LMETB

6.3	Explore the potential for implementing an ‘Operation Encompass’ approach as part of the responding to domestic abuse and domestic violence incidents.	
Current Status		
<p>The Operation Encompass Programme, as it operates in the UK, involves the police sharing information with a child’s school where there has been a domestic incident at the child’s home the previous day. A member of staff in the school then ensures that the child is given the appropriate support during the school day.</p> <p>The Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth has convened an inter-Departmental Group to explore the feasibility of the introduction of a programme in Ireland similar to Operation Encompass in England and Wales and aims to bring the deliberations of the inter-departmental group to a conclusion by Q3 2022.</p>		
Next Steps	Timeline	Responsible Body
Inter-Departmental Group to report on feasibility of the introduction of a programme similar to Operation Encompass	Q4 2022	DCEDIY/DE/AGS/Tusla

6.4	Explore the potential for locating a ‘branch’ of DKIT in Drogheda, and also for the development of DKIT ‘feeder’ programmes – particularly those related to vocational and professional education and training – operating in Drogheda.		
Current Status			
<p>Members of the LMETB, DKIT and DIFE senior management teams have met a number of times to explore this action and discuss potential avenues for further consideration.</p> <p>Meetings are ongoing to discuss progressing this action, in particular the location of a cluster of DKIT programmes within the DIFE campus. LMETB/DIFE have expanded their funding application to SOLAS capital investment programme (see action 4.4) to include the development of a 6 classroom tertiary education block which would facilitate this.</p>			
Next Steps		Timeline	Responsible Body
DKIT, LMETB and DIFE teams to continue to explore the potential to deliver a cluster of DKIT programmes within the DKIT campus		Ongoing	LMETB

6.5	Continue to develop training in and application of Restorative Practice aimed at dealing with conflict and addressing issues such as school suspensions, expulsions and refusals.
Current Status	
<p>The Professional Development Service for Teachers (PDST) provides Continuous Professional Development (CPD) to schools on Restorative Practice. In the 2020/21 school year the PDST has supported 65 schools nationwide with over 1240 teacher CPD interactions. To apply for support, schools need to contact the PDST directly through their school support application system. The Department of Education will engage with schools in the Drogheda area in this regard. In November 2020 PDST provided input on Restorative Practice at an event hosted by an organisation called Genesis in County Louth who support schools in preventing learners from becoming disengaged from education. This event was called Suspensions and Exclusions in Primary School: Developing an Action Plan.</p> <p>Education Support Centres, which are funded by the Department of Education, are available to support clusters of schools to assist them in developing plans to meet their learning and development needs. The Education Support Centre located in County Louth has initiated engagement with the schools in the Drogheda area and the PDST. The Education Support Centre will work with local interested schools and the PDST with a view to establishing a cluster in Restorative Practice.</p> <p>The Family Support, Children, Young People and Education Subgroup of the Drogheda Implementation Board is examining the application of Restorative Practice at primary and</p>	

second level in Drogheda schools. The group has also identified locally based trainers who could deliver restorative practice training in the Drogheda area if required.		
<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Body</i>
Department of Education to continue to develop training in and application of restorative practices aimed at dealing with conflict and addressing issues such as school suspensions, expulsions and refusals	Ongoing	Dept. of Education

7. ARTS, CULTURE, SPORT AND RECREATION

The Dormant Accounts Fund (DAF) is the mechanism used to fund sports-related projects that are specifically in line with defined 'disadvantage' purposes. This funding is used to support projects aimed at increasing participation and engagement in sport among people from social, educational and economic disadvantage, and people with disabilities. Funding details are set out in the annual Dormant Accounts Action Plan published by the Minister for Rural and Community Development, e.g. 2020 €8 million, 2021 €10 million. Applications for projects are reviewed and assessed by Sport Ireland. Dormant Accounts Funding applications are available on a nationwide basis.

7.1	Develop a strategic plan for the development of opportunities in the arts, culture and sports in the Drogheda area, specifically those aimed at and involving young people.
Current Status	
<p>Louth County Council is at an advanced stage in drafting an Arts Development Plan. A specific priority of the plan will be to focus on community engagement, bringing arts into communities, and in particular engaging young people.</p> <p>Creative Ireland community grants funding was allocated in January 2022 to two youth initiatives in Drogheda. A movie-making project for young people aged 16-22 in the Moneymore area through Connect Family Resource Centre and a music project being delivered through Boomerang Youth Café which will result in the production of an album of work by young people from across Drogheda and East Meath.</p> <p>Crinniú na nÓg 2022, the national day of Creativity for Children and Young People under 18, takes place on 11th June with a number of events scheduled in the Droichead Arts Centre. Discussions are ongoing for Louth and Meath County Council to collaborate on Crinniú na nÓg 2023 for the Drogheda/East Meath area.</p> <p>Louth Local Sports Partnership (LSP) will hold a Level 1 Award in Sports Leadership programme for young people aged 13-17 years in summer 2022 in Drogheda Institute of Further Education (DIFE). The programme is designed to develop generic leadership skills that can be applied to a variety of sport and physical activity settings as well as contributing to the personal</p>	

development of the young person. Participants will receive a Sport Ireland recognised Level 1 Award in Sports Leadership by completing the course.

Volunteer Supports funding has been used by Louth LSP to deliver a range of other training and education initiatives in recent years. The Volunteer Supports initiative aims to successfully identify and assist individuals who are volunteering in disadvantaged communities or with people with disabilities to gain community sport and physical activity leadership skills e.g. as coaches, leaders, referees, committee members etc. This fund can be used to support coaching and development programmes or to support standalone training opportunities to support volunteers. Louth LSP received €12,000 from Sport Ireland through the 2021 Dormant Account Fund to run Volunteer Supports initiatives.

<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Body</i>
Completion and confirmation of County Arts Development Plan	Ongoing	Louth County Council
Delivery of Creative Ireland Projects	Q4 2022	Louth Arts Office
Completion of Crinniú na nÓg 2022 programme	Ongoing	Louth Arts Office

7.2	Explore opportunities for developing a centre of sporting excellence in Drogheda.		
Current Status			
<p>The Area/Community Development, Arts, Culture and Sport Subgroup the Drogheda Implementation Board has been assigned responsibility for this action and members are reviewing the potential for same</p> <p>One initiative being explored is the development of a South Louth/East Meath water based outdoor amenities hub through Louth and Meath Sports Partnerships. There will be a need to establish demand, build capacity and create sustainability in clubs already operating on the Boyne, the Nanny or along the estuary. Initial pilot activity will commence Summer 2022</p>			
Next Steps		Timeline	Responsible Body
Recommendation to be taken forward to Drogheda Implementation Board		2022	Area/Community Development, Arts, Culture and Sport Subgroup
Water based outdoor amenity hub to be piloted		Q3 2022	Meath & Louth Sports Partnerships

7.3	Explore potential for increased use of the Boyne river, the sea and other local amenities that could lend themselves to development of different sporting disciplines and opportunities.	
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Current Status
<p>Boyne River/Sea</p> <p>The Boyne River is central to the ‘attraction of scale’ for the Drogheda project currently under way, led by Fáilte Ireland in partnership with Louth County Council. This will scope out what an attraction of scale would look like in Drogheda. Following market/consumer testing and refinement of the concepts, 2 of the 4 concepts have progressed to feasibility study stage. These reports are in draft form and are currently being reviewed by Fáilte Ireland & Louth County Council. Work is ongoing in this regard. The Boyne River is central to these considerations both in terms of how and where such an attraction would be located adjacent to the Boyne, and how tourism related experiences emerging from the project can use the Boyne as a tourism asset.</p> <p>Fáilte Ireland is currently delivering a project to ‘reimagine’ the Boyne Valley Drive. Drogheda is a key touch point on the Drive and is one of 5 entry points being developed as an industry hub. Linked to this there are 2 further industry clusters being developed along the coast from Annagassan to the mouth of the Boyne and on the southern side from Julianstown to the mouth of the Boyne. In addition, there are a further 3 industry clusters in development west of Drogheda along the Drive to Slane. These clusters will result in new experiences that will utilise the sea, coastline and river as tourism assets for Drogheda & the Boyne Valley.</p> <p>The Development of the Irish Sea Way is an element of the current Programme for Government, with Fáilte Ireland having commenced initial scoping work on the possibility of developing this initiative as a cycle route. Louth Local Sports Partnership has also engaged with clubs on the river to seek opportunities for participation programmes.</p> <p>Boyne Valley Drive</p> <p>The Boyne Valley Drive will be re-imagined from a point to point journey between some of Ireland’s most important and compelling heritage sites, to a wider immersive visitor proposition that will become a 5000 year journey through time. The project will focus on the development of 15 immersive industry/product clusters across the Boyne Valley. This integrated approach will deliver a world class experience for visitors and locals, and a framework around which wider regional experiences, activities and economic activities can flourish. The re-imagined Boyne Valley Drive Report and Action Plan have been completed, with activation of the plan now underway. Industry cluster groups are currently being set up to drive the development at local level, supported by Fáilte Ireland & the Louth and Meath Local Authorities.</p> <p>An innovative interpretative walk between Drogheda and the Battle of the Boyne site is currently being considered as part of a themed Boyne Valley walk linked to the Drogheda industry/product cluster, aligned to the re-imagining of the Boyne Valley Drive and development of Boyne Navigation & Greenway.</p> <p>In 2014 the Department of Transport funded the construction of the Greenway from Drogheda to Oldbridge. Engagements with Louth County Council since then have been</p>

concentrated on the extension of the Carlingford Greenway as part of the INTERREG programme.

Boyne Greenway and Navigation Restoration

Meath County Council is now proposing to develop the Boyne Greenway and Navigation Restoration, with the Department of Transport having provided funding to carry out pre-construction work on the extension of the Greenway. An application to An Bord Pleanála is likely to be submitted in late 2022. The scope of the project is to create a safe, attractive and environmentally sympathetic canal and river side walking and cycling route in tandem with the sensitive restoration of the Boyne navigation route. The scheme will be approximately 26.5km long and will incorporate a study area extending across the river valley. The proposed greenway scheme would extend from the Councillor Andy Brennan Park in Navan Town to the main gates at the Oldbridge Estate where it would link to the existing Greenway between Drogheda and Oldbridge. The proposed restoration of the Boyne Navigation would extend from Oldbridge Guard Lock to the canal harbour in Navan. The scheme would therefore follow a route adjacent to some of Ireland's most significant visitor attractions including the Battle of Boyne site and the UNESCO World Heritage site at Brú na Bóinne.

An Engineering Consultancy Service for the project was appointed in Q1 2020. To date, study area identification, data collection in the form of topographical surveys, walk-over surveys and constraint identification have taken place in addition to ongoing stakeholder and landowner engagement. Non-Statutory Public Consultation was undertaken in Q1 2021 in relation to proposed Greenway Route Options. A draft Strategic Assessment Report (SAR) was prepared and the project team met with SRAD in Q2 2021 to discuss the draft.

Meath County Council has recently received a Working Draft Greenway Route Option Report and are awaiting a draft Feasibility Study Report for the Navigation Restoration. It is expected that, following engagement and consultation with relevant landowners and stakeholders, it will proceed with Non-Statutory Public Consultation in relation to the Emerging Preferred Greenway Route. A peer workshop with Transport Infrastructure Ireland has been scheduled for late May 2022. A separate application for statutory approval is with An Bord Pleanála for a greenway between Drogheda and Mornington. Further information was requested and this was submitted by MCC in March 2022 who anticipate that there will be a need for this to go on public display before An Bord Pleanála issue their decision.

Boyne Valley Trails is a Drogheda based voluntary group. A series of walking routes and tours, including the Boyne Valley Camino, have been developed to avail of the natural, cultural and heritage landscape in Drogheda and its' vicinity. A Walking Festival was held in Drogheda on the June 2022 Bank Holiday and another planned for September 2022. Their website can be [viewed here](#).

The Area/Community Development, Arts, Culture and Sport Subgroup of the Drogheda Implementation Board is exploring opportunities for developing a centre for sporting excellence in Drogheda, particularly through using the natural local resources of the river and

<p>sea. One initiative being explored is the development of a South Louth/East Meath water based outdoor amenities hub through Louth and Meath Sports Partnerships. There will be a need to establish demand, build capacity and create sustainability in clubs already operating on the Boyne, the Nanny or along the estuary.</p>		
<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Body</i>
Fáilte Ireland project 'Reimagining the Boyne Valley Drive' - report to be completed.	Complete	DTCAGSM/ Fáilte Ireland
Fáilte Ireland project to 'Reimagining the Boyne Valley Drive' - project report to be rolled out	Ongoing	DTCAGSM/ Fáilte Ireland
Progress Greenway Route Option Report	Ongoing	DTransport/MCC
Receipt of Draft Navigation Restoration Feasibility Report	Ongoing	DTransport/MCC
Baseline and Targeted Ecological Surveys	Q3 2022	DTransport/MCC
Non-Statutory Public Consultation in relation to the Emerging Preferred Greenway Route	Ongoing	DTransport/MCC
Non-Statutory Public Consultation in relation to the feasibility of the Navigation Restoration	Ongoing	DTransport/MCC
Develop a plan to create an innovative interpretative walk between Drogheda and the Battle of the Boyne site along the existing Greenway by the Boyne	Ongoing	Fáilte Ireland
Review the feasibility of incorporating a Greenway into a coastal defence project in Drogheda	2022	Fáilte Ireland
Review feasibility of the completion of the Greenway between Blackrock and Drogheda	2023	Fáilte Ireland

7.4	Explore the possibility of making the Drogheda Leisure Park available to the public as a community facility in the Drogheda area.	
Current Status		
Drogheda Leisure Park is a premises on the Southside of Drogheda currently owned by a private consortium.		
Next Steps	Timeline	Responsible Body
Review Drogheda Leisure Park premises	Ongoing	Drogheda Implementation Board

7.5	Consider ways in which local sporting and cultural role models can be identified and employed in initiatives in engaging young people in particular in healthy and prosocial activities and implement as appropriate.	
<p>The Area/Community Development, Arts, Culture and Sport Subgroup of the Drogheda Implementation Board has been assigned responsibility for this action and is considering it in tandem with other actions within the Plan.</p> <p>Louth and Meath Library services and Arts Offices are exploring potential cultural role models that youth can engage with.</p> <p>Louth Local Sports Partnership has identified the potential for peer role models within the sporting environment. Programmes such as the Award in Sports Leadership Programme for 13-17 year olds referenced in action 7.1 have the potential to develop in-community peer role models who may encourage others to engage in healthy prosocial activities.</p>		
Next Steps		Timeline
Identify appropriate role models		2022
		Area/Community Development, Arts, Culture and Sport Subgroup

7.6	Explore ways in which existing facilities in Drogheda (e.g. Lourdes Stadium, or DIFE – as described above) can be used to maximize their potential for the benefit of the local community.
Current Status	
<p>Louth Local Sports Partnership (LSP), working with Louth County Council, is establishing a Dormant Accounts funded Community Sports Hub in Moneymore to maximise existing facilities for the benefit of the local community. A Hub Coordinator has been recruited to lead on this project. Louth LSP has identified the County Council managed Lourdes Athletic Stadium, located within the designated RAPID area on the Northern side of Drogheda Town known as Moneymore, as the ideal venue to establish a Community Sports and Physical Activity Hub. The provision of training and education opportunities as well as offering a facility for local sports clubs to further develop and provide sport within the community will also be key objectives of the Hub. Local partners engaged in the development/delivery of this initiative include; Local Authority, HSE, community groups, sports clubs, schools.</p> <p>Louth County Council has increased the number of sporting staff available in addition to changing the staffing structure at Lourdes Stadium. This has allowed for increased opening hours for casual users and has created shared slots to allow additional groups use the stadium in 2022. By end of April 2022 use of the stadium had returned to pre-pandemic levels and examples of new initiatives include a Men on the Move and Buggy Buddies programmes to draw new users into the facility.</p>	

The Louth County Council Sports Facilities Team were successful in early 2022 in securing over €100,000 from Sports Capital Funding to increase capacity in Lourdes Stadium to include a new storage area and outdoor fitness area, conversion of old storage area to new multi-purpose room and additional toilets. These capital works will allow further increased usage and the capacity to cater to different groups and training opportunities at the facility.

The My Open Library service is due to launch in July 2022 in Drogheda and will offer a democratic community space to all members of the community at times best suited to the user. Fighting Words Drogheda will showcase the library space to targeted groups of teens in and from the area. In addition, Louth and Meath Library Services are collaborating on and co-funding a Community Library in Mosney Reception Centre to make this service more directly accessible to residents of the Centre.

<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Body</i>
Community Sports Hub Coordinator to lead on maximising existing facilities for the benefit of the local community.	Ongoing	Louth Local Sports Partnership
Procurement of design lead and construction contractor to progress the improvement of facilities at Lourdes Stadium	Q3 2023	Louth County Council

8. LOCAL AUTHORITY ORGANISATIONS AND SERVICES

8.1	While central Government/Departmental oversight of the present proposals is recommended, the two Local Authorities (Louth and Meath), as well as other bodies under their auspices (such as LLP) to continue their important local coordination work and responsibilities.		
Current Status			
<p>Louth County Council and Meath County Council cooperate and work together over a wide range of services including Fire, Planning, Roads, Libraries and Tourism and have developed a number of joint strategies.</p> <p>Two meetings of Drogheda Borough and Laytown/Bettystown public representatives were held on 26th January 2022 and 26th May 2022. Items discussed included Tourism, Proposed projects and works for the area of Drogheda and East Meath, Local Area Plans, Environmental Awareness Coordination, and Garda cross boundary responsibilities and activities.</p>			
Next Steps		Timeline	Responsible Body
Louth and Meath Local Authorities to develop a Local Area Plan for Drogheda		Q4 2022	Louth County Council/Meath County Council

8.2	As a matter of urgency and priority, Louth and Meath County Councils to agree an appropriate mechanism or ‘vehicle’ for the generation, agreement and implementation of a joint local development plan for Drogheda Town in its entirety, and including the appropriate area of East Meath, particularly the Laytown-Bettystown area of County Meath.	
Current Status		
<p>Working Group and Steering Group meetings are ongoing between Meath County Council Executive and Louth County Council Executive on background work in relation to the Drogheda Joint Urban Area Plan.</p> <p>A joint study is currently being undertaken by both local authorities in relation to a Transport Strategy for Drogheda (link below):</p> <p>https://scanner.topsec.com/?t=ddb5703c22189a65073c8abb3ed0daee5fbdc0db&r=show&u=https%3A%2F%2Fbit.ly%2FDroghedaTransportStrategy&d=1400</p>		
Next Steps	Timeline	Responsible Body
Louth and Meath Local Authorities to develop a Local Area Plan for Drogheda	Q4 2022	Louth County Council/Meath County Council

8.3	LCC to consider ways to ensure greater Council presence, visibility and engagement in Drogheda.	
Current Status		
<p>Since 2014 Louth County Council is the single local authority for all of County Louth. Staff and services are deployed across all of the council buildings and many staff across all the services attend the Drogheda office for meetings.</p> <p>Louth County Council continues to deliver a myriad of services from the Fair Street Office complex and other rented offices in Drogheda town. Housing, Operations and Fire Services have significant staff numbers in place in Drogheda. Staff from Planning, Infrastructure, Energy and Economic Development offices also operate on a regular basis from the Drogheda facilities.</p> <p>Facilitation works at the Fair Street offices of Louth County Council have commenced. The preferred contractor mobilised to site in Q2 2022 and commenced a works programme which should take eighteen months.</p>		
	Next Steps	<div><div>Timeline</div><div>Responsible Body</div></div>
	Construction / reconstruction of Louth County Council Offices to continue	<div><div>2023</div><div>Louth County Council</div></div>

8.4	Local Authority to consider and decide on an effective way of responding to and managing anti-social behaviour by its tenants and others as appropriate.	
Current Status		
The Louth County Council Estate Management Team continues to offer services to housing tenants in Drogheda. The Estate Management Team works collaboratively with An Garda Síochána to manage what can be a challenging environment in terms of antisocial behaviour.		
Next Steps	Timeline	Responsible Body
The work of the Estate Management Team to continue.	Ongoing	Louth County Council

8.5	Local Authority also to put in place effective ways of responding to estate management issues that can assist in addressing anti-social behaviour (e.g., closing off alleyways, cutting back or removing hedging, installing lighting or speed ramps on roads etc).	
Current Status		
Louth County Council has an Estate Management Section which comprises anti-social behaviour Investigation Officers and Tenant Liaison Officers, supported by two Social Workers. A number of housing infill projects are at various stages of planning and/or design. The completion of such works will address a majority of the poor design issues that lead to the issue of anti-social behaviour.		
Next Steps		Timeline
Continue the progression of infill housing		Ongoing
		Responsible Body
		Louth County Council

8.6	Local Authority to explore and implement appropriate ways of speeding up implementation of the policy and practice of dealing with social housing ‘voids.’		
Current Status			
<p>All scheduled works on voids for 2021 were completed with 58 voids returned to use. Works to a further 21 voids in the Drogheda area are currently underway for 2022 with 11 more in the pipeline to be approved by year end. An additional 33 units in the Drogheda area have been sanctioned for improvement under the energy retrofit scheme this year.</p> <p>Rolling void units are a feature of managing a stock in excess of 4000 social housing units. The majority of long-term voids are now returned to service and plans to secure funding and address the remaining void stock is an objective of the Housing Section of LCC.</p>			
Next Steps		Timeline	Responsible Body
58 void units returned to use, a further 25 units to be improved under the energy retrofit scheme		Complete	Louth County Council

in order to eliminate voids backlog in Drogheda area		
Continue to manage the vacant housing stock and expedite the Energy retrofit scheme	Ongoing	Louth County Council

8.7	Louth County Council to engage as a matter of urgency with residents of Moneymore and Castlemanor (and any other stakeholders as appropriate), with a view to closing off the offending ‘gap’ and taking other measures arising; or else finding a mutually acceptable and reasonable resolution to this issue.		
Current Status			
Staff from the Estate Management Team have engaged with a number of residents in the Castlemanor Estate and have an open line of communication to address any immediate concerns.			
Next Steps		Timeline	Responsible Body
Continue to survey the use of the preferred route and explore practical options for the management of same.		Ongoing	Louth County Council

9. LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND ASSETS

9.1	Local Authority to clarify, for the relevant governance and oversight bodies, the potential value and specific contribution that the PANCR and other similar strategic local developments can add to the combined efforts at improving community wellbeing in Drogheda.
Current Status	
<p>The construction of the Port Access Northern Cross Route (PANCR) has been a strategic objective of Louth County Council for over 20 years. Louth County Council continues to prioritise the delivery of PANCR and recognise that the construction of the road and associated infrastructure is one of the key requirements to ensure Drogheda develops to its full potential in a sustainable manner. Louth County Council notes that this critical piece of infrastructure, once delivered, will bring benefits that include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Opening up new areas for housing construction (circa 6000 units) in North Drogheda2. Opening up a direct route from the M1 Motorway to the port removing vast numbers of HGVs from the North Quay Drogheda3. Allowing the construction of new housing/office and retail spaces in the port area of the town.4. Greatly improve the quality of life for Drogheda residents, workers and visitors to the town.	

In the absence of central Government funding, Louth County Council continue to work with developers and other stakeholders in order to progress delivery of the Port Access Northern Cross Route.		
<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Body</i>
The delivery of PANCR remains a strategic objective for Louth County Council	Ongoing	Louth County Council

9.2	Local Authority (and others as appropriate) progress the West Gate Vision plan for Drogheda Town centre	
Current Status		
<p>Using funding secured under the first round of the Urban Regeneration Development Fund (URDF), Louth County Council has recently concluded the first phase public consultation process for the development of the master plan for the Westgate Vision. The Westgate Vision Consultation Report was published in March 2022 and is available to view here https://www.westgatevision.ie/downloads/westgate-consultation-survey-report.pdf .</p> <p>A public realm team is in place to manage this project and a design team has been procured to progress the plan. Designs are almost completed and it is anticipated that they will be submitted to An Bord Pleanála in Q3 2022. The public realm team continues to work with appointed consultants managing the West Gate vision.</p>		
Next Steps	Timeline	Responsible Body
Louth County Council to make an application for the first phase public realm redevelopment in the next round of the Urban Regeneration Development Fund.	2022	Louth County Council
Submission to An Bord Pleanála	Q3 2022	Louth County Council

9.3	Local Authority clarify what the Fáilte Ireland ‘Destination Town’ designation can bring to Drogheda, and how this can be progressed accordingly.
9.4	As part of this, establish Fáilte Ireland presence/tourist information office in the Town.
Current Status	
<p>Drogheda has been identified as a Tourism Destination Town by Louth County Council and has received €500,000 support from Fáilte Ireland for development in this regard. The Fáilte Ireland guidelines for Destination Towns sets out the key drivers of what makes a town appealing to the international tourist. Drogheda’s designation as a Destination Town is recognition by Fáilte Ireland of the town’s enormous potential as a key destination for tourists into the future.</p> <p>An Access & Orientation Plan was developed for Drogheda as an initial stage of the Destination Town plan. This was underpinned by the objectives of ‘Linking the Heritage Assets’ in Drogheda’s historic core. The Plan was brought to Part 8 completion by Louth County Council</p>	

in January 2020. It includes a wayfinding system which is more easily understood by visitors as well as a visitor Signage & Orientation Plan for Drogheda.

Louth County Council has appointed a multidisciplinary design team who are completing the design with a view to moving to procurement in Q3 2022.

Louth County Council has secured funding of €672,000 from Fáilte Ireland for an Urban Animation programme in Drogheda. The project is expected to progress to procurement in Q3 2022 followed by installation of the elements later in the year. A tender was issued for Drogheda Urban Animation Myths and Legends Trail in April 2022.

In terms of action 9.4, Visit Louth already manage a tourism office in Drogheda. Fáilte Ireland provides maps and other relevant information to this office. Louth County Council share a Tourism Officer with Meath County Council whose work is focused on the Boyne Valley area, which includes Drogheda. The Tourism Officer is highlighting Drogheda offerings at national and international level. Drogheda as a tourism destination will be included in promotions at shows such as Bloom and Balmoral.

An application under stream two of the Historic Town Initiative has been submitted, seeking funding to prepare a plan in preparation for an application for Stream one in 2023.

<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Body</i>
Louth County Council to progress the Destination Town Project which will include the development of a major tourism attraction concept for Drogheda.	Q3 2022	Louth County Council /Fáilte Ireland

9.5	Local Authority (and others as appropriate) explore and clarify the potential for future use of the Dominican Church and Priory in Drogheda Town (being acquired by LCC).	
Current Status		
Louth County Council has purchased this building. The conveyance process has now been completed. A number of opportunities are currently under consideration by Louth County Council.		
Next Steps		Timeline
Continue to explore options for its use and funding for any such plans.		Ongoing
		Responsible Body
		Louth County Council

9.6	As part of strategic planning for the development of the Town, explore ways in which to develop and promote Drogheda as a healthier and welcoming town.
Current Status	
The ethos of the Fáilte Ireland Destination Experience Development Plan is revealing the landscape, exploring the destination, wandering through time on ancient routes, trails pathways and blueways. This applies equally to their urban centres. All the development	

projects are about finding new and exciting ways to explore the tourism assets. Projects such as industry hubs/clusters and the destination town will create a sense of arrival. The clusters at their core will mobilise the industry and give the capability to deliver at all points of the visitor journey. Any site improvement work needed to support the development of the destination town will also be identified. The Fáilte Ireland Destination Experience Development Plan was launched on 12 May 2021 with training having taken place in June 2022 for industry staff.

Work is ongoing on the visitor orientation plan linking all the heritage assets along the axis of the old town walls, currently being rolled out with interpretation. Four concept options for an attraction of scale have been market tested and are being refined. A Business Plan will be developed for the 2 refined concepts. Work continues in supporting Drogheda's bid for developing a music event of scale, it is envisaged that this will take place Summer 2023.

Initiatives under the Healthy Ireland Plan are being facilitated locally. The Library Service is progressing the roll out of enhanced IT services and the facilitating of a My Open Library Service. The Urban Animation project referenced in 9.4 is an element of this objective.

The work of the Drogheda Business Improvement District (BID) Company in collaboration with Louth County Council and others continues to contribute to the improvement in the presentation of Drogheda for both residents and visitors. The launch of the Drawda Urban Arts trail in late April 2022, featuring 6 large scale murals of local mythological figures has been particularly impactful. Produced by Droichead Arts Centre and Love Drogheda BID in partnership with the Louth County Council Arts Office, and working together with local, national and international artists, and a mythologist, it is an indication of the potential for collaborative initiatives to make a difference to the appearance and atmosphere of the town. Access video of mural creation process [here](#) and video of Urban Art Trail launch day [here](#).

Drogheda BIDs are also exploring a number of initiatives to present Drogheda as a more welcoming town for families. For example from mid-May onwards they have organised free family friendly entertainment, including stilt walkers, street magicians, musicians, entertainers, balloon modellers, local dance groups and face painters in the town centre on Saturdays from 12-4PM.

Louth County Council Operations and Community Sections also continue to work with Drogheda Tidy Towns. A joint "Drogheda Spring Clean" initiative with Louth and Meath County Councils was held from the 4th – 5th March 2022, resulting in a number of individuals and groups 'adopting an area' and taking responsibility for the cleanliness of that area. A number of other large-scale clean ups have also been held since March. Drogheda Tidy Towns also launched their 5 year plan in February 2022, which can be [read here](#) and is divided into themes such as Streetscape and Public Spaces; Greenspaces & Landscaping; Nature & Biodiversity; Sustainability; Tidiness & Litter Control.

Drogheda Cycling has been organising regular community cycles in the town and surrounding area. This is supported by the Community Policing Unit, who are escorting the cycles so that participants, in particular children, feel safer cycling on the road.

Louth Library Service continues to promote a number of 'Healthy Ireland at your Library' initiatives including dedicated events, specialist book stock and e-resources. This service will

be expanded to Mosney Resettlement Centre under the Louth/Meath Library Services collaborative community library initiative.		
<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Body</i>
Roll-out of the Fáilte Ireland Destination Experience Development Plan	Ongoing	Fáilte Ireland
Louth County Council, Drogheda BIDs, and Drogheda Tidy Towns to continue to develop initiatives to promote Drogheda as a healthier and welcoming town	Ongoing	Louth County Council, Drogheda BIDs, Drogheda Tidy Towns
Appointment of a Healthy Ireland Coordinator	Ongoing	Louth County Council

10. EMPLOYMENT, ENTERPRISE AND DEVELOPMENT

The North-East Regional Enterprise Plan to 2024 was launched by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment in Cavan on 24 February 2022. The plan will be overseen and monitored by a Regional Steering Committee made up of regional stakeholders and chaired by a senior level private sector businessperson. A 'Project Delivery Team' from the steering committee is in place to focus on drawing up a 'first cut' of potential Strategic Objectives for the new North East Plan. These new objectives will be based on a review of the outgoing 2020 Plan, as will emerging new themes from the Steering Committee and stakeholder consultation meetings.

10.1	Local Authority and other relevant stakeholders - consider possibility to develop a new business and technology park on the North side of Drogheda.	
Current Status		
In June 2021, IDA Ireland acquired a new landbank on the north side of Drogheda, Co Louth. This land acquisition is part of IDA Ireland’s long term strategic plans to position Louth and the wider North East region to compete for FDI investment. The necessary site works are to be delivered within the current IDA Ireland strategy timelines. The acquisition of this landbank is part of IDA Ireland’s overall property programme which is supported by the Government through the Department of Enterprise, Trade & Employment.		
Next Steps	Timeline	Responsible Body
IDA to deliver on site works on the new land bank on the North Side of Drogheda. IDA consultants are currently working on design requirement.	Ongoing	IDA
Under the new IDA Regional Property Programme, IDA will deliver advanced building solutions in Drogheda and Dundalk. The concept review for Drogheda building is ongoing, the advance building in Dundalk is due for completion Q2 2022	2021-2024	IDA

10.2	Explore ways to develop productive links – in terms of promoting employment opportunities – with appropriate third level institutions.
Current Status	
<p>Since 2016, Dundalk Institute of Technology (DKIT) has engaged in Enterprise Ireland programmes, which support Innovation and Research and Development (R&D) in Irish industry, and has received just over €3.1 million in funding. The work of Enterprise Ireland is focused on their clients and creating an ecosystem to support them and entrepreneurship in general.</p> <p>The LMETB received €4.6M under the Border Enterprise Development fund to establish the National Advanced Manufacturing Training Centre of Excellence in Dundalk, Co. Louth. This will develop and pilot the application of skills foresighting in collaboration with training and technology specialists. The project contributes to addressing the disruptions impacting the future of work and provides a pipeline of skilled, innovation ready talent of current and future workers to border region employers. It will enhance the employability of learners in high skill and high reward sectors in the border region.</p> <p>Funded through the Regional Technology Cluster Fund, Dundalk IT has been supported with a Cluster Education and Outreach Manager. This Manager has been in place in DKIT since April 2021. This role will focus on working with industry groups to develop strong cluster programmes in the North East Region. They will work with established clusters such as the Fintech Corridor or emerging Connected Health Cluster groups to enable them to be more effective, innovative and collaborative.</p> <p>All of the below activities, delivered through DKIT, are available to relevant Enterprise Ireland clients in Drogheda:</p> <p>New CREDIT Technology Gateway in DKIT with a focus on energy efficiency – helping companies make their products and manufacturing operations more energy efficient. Funding of €338,000 for the establishment of this new Gateway was approved in January 2021. The Innovation Vouchers Initiative provides vouchers worth €5,000 to small business to introduce them to innovation, linking them with the network of knowledge providers, North and South of the border. This initiative encourages companies and public knowledge providers to work together on specific innovation projects related to the company's needs. In addition to the funding awarded to establish the CREDIT Technology Gateway the team has been successful in 3 follow up capital grant awards from Enterprise Ireland that will see almost €750,000 in world-class research equipment added to the suite of capability at the gateway.</p> <p>The Innovation Partnership programme offers financial support to companies engaging in collaborative research projects with third level institutions – with grants of up to 80%. Enterprise Ireland provided €67,000 to fund Innovation Partnership Projects (mainly feasibility grants) between companies and research teams in DKIT over the last five years.</p> <p>The Commercialisation Fund supports researchers in Higher Education Institutions and Research Performing Organisations to undertake research that has the potential to result in</p>	

the commercialisation of new innovations by way of licenses to improve the competitiveness of Irish industry, or through the spin-out of new start-up companies. Over the last 5 years DKIT have received payments of over €100,000 for Commercialisation Fund projects and to invest in its technology and knowledge transfer infrastructure

New Frontiers is an entrepreneurship programme delivered by the Institutes of Technology/Technological Universities to accelerate the development of sustainable new businesses which have a strong employment and growth potential and contribute to job creating and economic activity in regional locations. DKIT has received almost €1.8 million in funding from the New Frontiers Programme.

The **Disruptive Technologies Innovation Fund** was announced in the National Development Plan 2018-2027. It will be a very significant initiative in developing Ireland's innovation ecosystem and responsiveness and the total value will be €500 million. This competitive fund will drive collaboration between the research base and industry. There have been 3 funding calls to date under this fund. Under Call 1 in 2018, Dundalk Institute of Technology was approved funding for 2 projects totaling c. €686,000 of which more than half has been paid (June 2021). The latest call for the DTIF closed on 10 February 2022 with at least one application from DKIT.

The **Technology Transfer Strengthening Initiative** supports knowledge transfer, which is a cost-effective means through which companies of any size can build on key areas of innovation capability and improve their levels of 'innovation intensity'. This initiative is supported by funding the Technology Transfer Office, which is the team in DKIT responsible for managing knowledge transfer services, including intellectual property management, licensing, partnering with industry and the creation of new companies. Since 2016 DKIT has been paid over €55k under this initiative.

The European Union provides assistance for new enterprises. **Horizon Europe** is an instrument which supports collaborative R&D in Europe and supports an important source of non-exchequer funding for companies. Enterprise Ireland leads the **Horizon Europe National Support Network**. Irish companies that compete successfully for funding from Horizon Europe will boost their innovation capability and competitiveness which in turn will deliver strong national economic impacts, including job creation. DKIT has received €2.83 million in funding under Horizon 2020 (the previous programme) and close to €300,000 from Enterprise Ireland to assist in winning this EU funding.

<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Body</i>
Cluster Manager to continue to develop work plans and programmes for specific groups.	Ongoing	DKIT
Establish Credit Technology Gateway in DKIT	Complete	Enterprise Ireland
Roll out Innovation Vouchers initiative	Ongoing	Enterprise Ireland
Develop Innovation Partnership Projects between Companies and DKIT research teams	Ongoing	Enterprise Ireland
Support Commercialisation Fund Projects in DKIT	Ongoing	Enterprise Ireland

Support the development of sustainable new businesses through New Frontiers	Ongoing	Enterprise Ireland
Enhance collaboration between DKIT research teams and industry through the DTIF	Ongoing	Enterprise Ireland

10.3	Explore potential for enterprise initiatives and job creation in the agri-food sector		
Current Status			
<p>The Boyne Valley Food Innovation District is a smart specialisation collaboration for the Mid and North East regions that nurtures food and drink SMEs and talent from across the regions in achieving their commercialisation and scaling potential. The Boyne Valley Food Hub in Navan will see the development of 9 individual food units and production labs in a continuum of sizes to support opportunities for food entrepreneurs and their staff to interact with each other; facilitating relationships, and creating critical mass between businesses and institutions to generate, sharpen and accelerate the advancement of ideas</p> <p>Tender documents and a proposal for the Boyne Valley Food Hub are currently being reviewed. This project is being retendered due to initial tender submitted exceeding funding allocation – this will delay delivery of project.</p>			
Next Steps		Timeline	Responsible Body
Re-tendering for Boyne Valley Food Hub completed		Q4 2022	Meath Enterprise/ Meath County Council

10.4	Consider ways to reduce the impact of crime and antisocial behavior on business and employment in the Town.	
10.6	Ensure that community Garda foot patrols in the town centre and more widely are maintained	
Current Status		
As outlined in action 2.4 there has been a significant change in the Community Policing Unit in Drogheda which at the start of 2022 was increased to a strength of 1 Sergeant and 16 Gardaí. These 16 Gardaí have been assigned to dedicated sectors within communities in both urban and rural locations in the District. The unit will be known as the Drogheda Community Policing Team. In addition to the responsibilities and objectives outlined in action 2.4, An Garda Síochána continue to liaise very closely with the Business Improvement District Scheme Committee and the Purple Flag initiative for Drogheda Town Centre, ensuring high visibility patrols are carried out to reduce opportunities for crime and anti-social behaviour, and to reduce fear of crime and anti-social behaviour.		
Next Steps	Timeline	Responsible Body
To continue to engage with relevant stakeholders	Ongoing	AGS

10.5	Explore ways to attract or facilitate at least some of the estimated 15,000 people from Drogheda who commute to other locations for work every day back to work in the Town
Current Status	
<p>The development and leveraging of remote work infrastructure is a crucial component to the progression of increased national remote work adoption. Adequate infrastructure must be in place to allow employers and employees avail of remote working opportunities both at home and in hubs. Further developing and leveraging the existing remote work hub infrastructure and the delivery of broadband nationally will be a significant driver in facilitating people to work remotely. Pillar 2 of the National Remote Work Strategy is focused on developing and leveraging remote work infrastructure. The Strategy's actions are being monitored by the Inter-Departmental Group (IDG) on Remote Work chaired by Department of Enterprise Trade and Employment and progress is underway to achieve all actions by their respective delivery dates. The IDG will continue to meet as the year progresses to drive implementation of the Strategy.</p> <p>Funded under the Border Enterprise Development fund, the Drogheda Digital Innovation Hub (DDIH), was developed by Louth County Council with Drogheda Enterprise Centre CLG t/a The Mill Enterprise Hub (The Mill), and supported by Enterprise Ireland. This project has been awarded €587,600 in funding against project costs of €734,500 (80%) and is designed to encourage high-potential future oriented tech projects seeking to start and grow, to locate in the greater Drogheda/North East region. The project aims to foster an environment to facilitate these businesses to succeed in the region, through the provision of a bespoke and affordable co-working space in Drogheda town centre complemented with tailored management and mentoring support to facilitate their growth and export potential. This project is an opportunity to target 'post-covid' commuters, those seeking a career change from employee (commuter) to entrepreneur (in the region) and the 'Brexit opportunity' to target UK businesses seeking an EU home will add to the project's success. It is also an opportunity to attract many technology start-ups located outside the region due to the lack of viable property solutions. The project will also offer entrepreneurs a viable alternative to locating in Dublin city, which has successfully built a reputation as a centre for future oriented technology companies. Of note, the project intends to partner with Dublin BIC on greater support across the Northeast, and specifically target highly skilled commuters to create tech startups via a CommuTECH support programme.</p> <p>Design work is progressing for the provision of a Digital Hub facility as part of the O'Reilly building complex of Narrow West Street and recruitment for a Digital Hub Enterprise Manager is due to commence shortly.</p> <p>Drogheda Chamber of Commerce, Love Drogheda BIDS, and The Mill Enterprise Hub are collaborating on a new strategy to encourage more start-ups, multinationals and remote workers to base themselves in the wider Drogheda region. They recently completed a remote working and commuter survey to inform the development of this strategy. Drogheda Chamber</p>	

are developing a website to showcase Drogheda to the international business market and attract employment opportunities to the local area.		
<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Body</i>
Enterprise Manager to be recruited	Q3 2022	Louth County Council
Refurbishment work to be completed on DDIH Hub	Q4 2022	Louth County Council

10.6	Ensure that community Garda foot patrols in the town centre and more widely are maintained
This recommendation has been grouped with recommendation 10.4 above.	

11. ETHNIC AND RACIAL ISSUES

11.1	All stakeholders – consider the practical implications of the recently (2020) launched Louth Meath Joint Integration Strategy and implement accordingly.		
Current Status			
<p>The Joint Louth Meath Migrant Integration Forum has been established and a work plan on the delivery of the strategy agreed. The Forum is meeting on a quarterly basis.</p> <p>Culture Connect, in collaboration with Louth LEADER Partnership SICAP, successfully launched the Cultural Ambassadors Programme, with a Celebration of Success event held for 17 Cultural Ambassadors, with the Mayor of Drogheda in attendance. The Cultural Ambassadors Programme aims to facilitate communication and provide intercultural understanding, civic engagement and participation amongst people from minority ethnic/refuge/migrant backgrounds and service providers including statutory agencies. The Cultural Ambassadors can provide advice in 25 different languages and are a great asset in terms of access and equality to information and services and will complement and support the work of the Joint Louth Meath Migrant Forum.</p>			
Next Steps		Timeline	Responsible Body
Implementation of Joint Louth Meath Migrant Integration Strategy		Ongoing 2019-2022	Louth County Council / Meath County Council

11.2	Explore and identify any existing or emerging issues of racial tension in the area and agree steps to deal with these.		
Current Status			
The Joint Louth Meath Integration Forum and Local Migrant Integration network continue to engage and act as a channel to identify and seek to address racial tension issues that may arise.			
Next Steps		Timeline	Responsible Body

Continue to monitor the issues through the Joint Louth Meath Migrant Integration Forum and the Local Migrant Integration Network.	Ongoing	Joint Louth Meath Migrant Integration Forum via Louth County Council and Meath County Council
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11.3	Plan at oversight group level how to engage with and involve the traveller and Roma communities in the area to a greater extent than currently, to include specific actions.
11.4	LLP to progress actions already identified to engage and build development capacity in the traveller and Roma communities.
11.5	HSE and other partners - build on positive engagement made with travellers and Roma during the course of the public health response to the Covid-19 pandemic.
<i>Current Status</i>	
<p>Opportunities to support Traveller and Roma communities are explored via the Louth Community Development Committee and Louth Leader Partnership networks. Provision to address such support needs is provided for via the Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme.</p> <p>The Social Inclusion Manager and Involve (formerly the National Association of Traveller Centres) met with the Drogheda Implementation Board Co-ordinator on 5 April 2022 as part of their scoping engagement strategies with Travellers and Roma in the Drogheda area and discussion was held regarding relevant recommendations within the Drogheda Implementation Plan. There are plans to explore this further with Louth LEADER Partnership Development staff.</p> <p>A Business Case supporting the need to re-establish the Traveller Health Unit and support structures was prepared in December 2021. This was considered at a HSE Midlands Louth Meath Community Healthcare Organisation (CHO8) Senior Leadership Team meeting in February 2022, with support in principle agreed. Funding for same is to be provided by Covid-19 monies in 2022 to support appointment where possible of key staff (either through HSE or a section 39 organisation or Agency) or align structures across CHO8 to fulfil:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Inclusion Manager • Community Developmental Coordinators <p>A named General Manager has now the lead in Social Inclusion and work is progressing.</p> <p>Separately CHO 8 will be submitting a Business Case in an effort to secure ongoing funding for the Service for 2023 onwards through a HSE-led Initiative to improve health outcomes for other vulnerable groups (including Roma, Migrants and Women) who are currently living in insecure</p>	

or unsuitable housing. This has provided the CHO with an opportunity to bid for €200k funding for development of a Traveller Project for Co. Louth.

Funding will also be considered in terms of the Estimates Process 2023.

<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Body</i>
HSE to support the re-establishment of the Primary Health Care Unit for Traveller Project in Louth, in keeping with recommendation 76 in the National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy 2017-2021.	2023	HSE

