

County Louth Local Development Strategy- Summary

Introduction:

Louth Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) was established in 2014 for a three year term under the provision of Part 6 of the Local Government Reform Act. The LCDC comprises of public and private sector members, including local authority members and officials; State agencies; private sector representatives; and, local and community development representatives. Working in partnership, Louth LCDC will prepare and implement the community elements of the 6-year Local Economic and Community Plan, and will coordinate generally the local and community development activity to reduce overlap, avoid duplication and improve the targeting of resources.

Louth LEADER Partnership (LLP) will operate as the implementer for the Local Development Strategy (LDS) in respect of the delivery of the prospective LEADER Programme. The total available funding for the LDS is € 6.1M.

Co. Louth is the smallest county in the State. It is also one of the most densely populated, containing as it does the two largest towns in the country, namely Dundalk and Drogheda. In addition to these major urban centres, the County also contains a number of substantial towns and villages including Ardee, Dunleer, Clogherhead and Carlingford.

The county is strategically located on the Dublin-Belfast economic corridor, and has strong links to Northern Ireland. By reason of this location combined with high quality infrastructure (road and rail), accessibility to ports and airports (north and south), high speed broadband, a skilled and educated workforce, the county is well placed for the future.

Co. Louth Local Economic Community Plan (LECP) reports that statutory, business and community organisations are very active in Co. Louth and all have generated significant outcomes for the community. It is believed that the model approach adopted in Co. Louth through the formation of the Louth Economic Forum has been responsible for continued economic investment programmes; both new and those that replaced reduced or departed companies and organisations. At the same time, the community and voluntary sector has worked in partnership with statutory agencies to ensure that a wide range of social inclusion measures are targeted at people who people experiencing disadvantage.

Membership:

Membership of the LCDC/LAG has been fixed by statutory instrument. The current composition is as follows:

Name	Representing	Sector	Pillar
Cllr Colm Markey, Chair	Louth County Council	Public	Local Government
Cllr. Liam Reilly	Louth County Council	Public	Local Government
Cllr. Dolores Minogue	Louth County Council	Public	Local Government
Cllr. Pearse McGeough	Louth County Council	Public	Local Government
Joan Martin, Chief Executive	Louth County Council	Public	Local Government
Thomas McEvoy	Louth LEO	Public	Local Government
Anne Keeley	Dept. Social Protection	Public	State Agencies
Fiona Murphy	Health Service Executive	Public	State Agencies
Sadie Ward-McDermott	Louth Meath ETB	Public	State Agencies
Breffni Martin	Environment	Private	Environment
Eva Beirne	PPN	Private	Local & Community
Larry Magnier	PPN	Private	Local & Community
Geordie McAteer	PPN	Private	Local & Community
Kevin Moran	PPN	Private	Local & Community
Michael Gaynor	Chamber of Commerce	Private	Local & Community
Vacant	Chamber of Commerce	Private	Business
Frank O'Brien	ICTU	Private	Social Partners
Breeda Tuite	Farming Sector	Private	Agriculture
Mary-Ann McGlynn	Louth Leader Partnership	Private	LDC

The LAG members represent a wide range of interested parties, community representatives, elected officials and statutory bodies with exceptional skills and experience, while many have direct experience within a LAG in the past.

Strategic Themes & Aims:

LEADER 2014-2020 calls for a focus on addressing poverty and social exclusion, particularly given the significant economic and social changes that have taken place within the last decade. The Co. Louth LDS will be managed and delivered in a manner that prioritises actions that will have the greatest impact in this regard. Our vision for Co. Louth is the creation of a sustainable and vibrant rural economy in harmony with our built and natural environment. It will harness our natural resources and underpinned by learning and development lead to resilient local communities. The agreed Local Development Strategy Themes and Objectives are as follows:

Programme Theme 1: Economic & Enterprise Development & Job Creation

Sub Theme 1.1: Rural Tourism -

Aim 1: To build local business and community offerings in the activity, adventure, heritage and culture visitor sectors, whilst developing Co. Louth as a tourism destination.

Aim 2: To provide targeted support for the provision of visitor services and associated infrastructure.

Sub Theme 1.2: Enterprise –

Aim: To support the development of rural enterprise and strengthen entrepreneurial capacity to sustain and grow business through increased employment opportunities.

Sub Theme 1.3: Rural Towns –

Aim: To support the improvement of the commercial, human, social, environment and built character of rural towns and villages.

Sub Theme 1.4: Broadband –

Aim: To provide support for the optimisation of the social, economic and employment benefits from broadband use.

Programme Theme 2: Social Inclusion

Sub Theme 2.1: Basic Services Targeted at Hard-to-Reach Communities -

Aim: To provide support for the maintenance and improvement of quality-of-life, through the promotion of social inclusion and the development of local facilities and thereby making rural areas a better place in which to live and work

Sub Theme 2.2: Rural Youth -

Aim: To improve the capacity of young people, youth and community organizations across Co. Louth through processes of engagement, and participation at local community, social, environment and economic development levels.

Programme Theme 3: Rural Environment

Sub Theme 3.1: Protection & Sustainable Use of Water Resources

Aim: To support the protection and sustainable use of freshwater, estuarine and marine water resources.

Sub Theme 3.2: Protection & Improvement of Local Biodiversity

Aim: To promote community awareness and support for the protection and improvement of biodiversity in rural and coastal areas across Co. Louth.

Sub Theme 3.3: Development of Renewable Energy

Aim: To develop renewable energy initiatives that collectively reduces the carbon footprint of the county.

Co. Louth LAG has agreed ambitious targets with the implementer under the LDS across the full range of measures. The programme will seek to positively influence community groups and all rural dwellers in the county. The LAG aims to build stronger communities and reinforce the enterprise culture in the region. Those most in need in society will be targeted within the rural economy, but the company will embrace the understanding that the LDS is open and accessible to all rural dwellers.