



Cumann Lúthchleas Gael Baile Na Sagart

Bunaíodh 1885



Baile Na Sagart,
Lios Mór,
Contae Phortláirge
6th December 2017

Don Tuohy
Senior Executive Officer/ Chief Officer to Waterford LCDC
Community and Sport Department
Waterford City & County Council,
Civic Offices, Dungarvan,
Co Waterford.

Following the rejection of Ballysaggart GAA Leader funding application Ballysaggart GAA wish to appeal this decision.

- The objects included in Section 3 of the Club Constitution are covered by rule 16.1 of the Ballysaggart GAA club Constitution which takes precedence over all rules and regulations in that the Executive Committee of Ballysaggart GAA can meet the criteria of the Leader operating rules. Leader operating rules Page 42 (sporting Organisations) require that GAA clubs have in place a policy to meet the demands of the LAG (LCDC).
- Regarding Planning permission Ballysaggart GAA has previously submitted a letter from the Planning authority regarding the use of premises. This aspect of planning was previously dealt with by the sub committee established by the LCDC. The Planning permission is as stated for a club house and community facilities. Ballysaggart GAA similar to all GAA clubs and units is a sporting cultural and community organisation and all facilities are for use by the community. The Hall element which will be used for all community activities has not been included in the Leader funding application. The Hall element is funded by the Capital sports grant element. The Leader Operating rules acknowledge the use of other sources of National funding for the development of community facilities provided it does not derive from an EU fund.
- In relation to the application by Ballysaggart Community Development Company and cross community support. A joint meeting was held on Wednesday 6th December with both groups under the Chairmanship of Michael J Walsh Chairman BCDG. Ballysaggart GAA put forward the request for an independent Chairperson as outlined by the LCDC. BCDG requested a written letter of support for their Leader

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funding application from the GAA. Ballysaggart GAA was unable to supply this letter as it is contrary to their development application for funding from Capital sports Grants and Leader Funding. Ballysaggart GAA is proceeding with its development. Ballysaggart community and also the business community of the area support the development at Ballysaggart GAA as outlined in our application and in our agreements established with other organisations. Ballysaggart GAA development will cater for the needs of all the community including social activities, sport activities, educational and learning, leisure pursuits and cultural activities. Previously meetings were held with BCDG in June 2015 and February 2017 regarding the application by Ballysaggart GAA for Leader funding. In June 2015 information from BCDG was that renovation and repair work was being carried out at the Ballysaggart schoolhouse. Ballysaggart GAA outlined their plans for development of community facilities. At the February 2017 meeting between Ballysaggart GAA and the BCDG which was independently chaired by Oliver Clancy, the decision was that Ballysaggart GAA would proceed with their application as the BCDG were not in a position to lodge an application at that stage. Ballysaggart GAA lodged their application on March 16th 2017 for Leader funding.

Ballysaggart GAA will meet the requirements regarding governance and availability of the centre to the community as required by the Leader Operating rules. A policy required by the LAG as per the operating rules can be dealt with by the management committee of facility under the Ballysaggart GAA constitution. Leader funds are available to a diverse group of organisations. Has Waterford LCDC sought undertakings from those groups who have successfully been awarded funding by the LCDC that their facilities are available for use by all in the community?

Leader funds have previously and continue to be awarded to sporting organisations and availability to the community is catered for by the organisation to meet the requirements of the LAG.

Ballysaggart GAA has and is providing for the community in Ballysaggart since its inception in 1885 and will continue to do so into the future. As per the application for Leader funding the application was clear in that Ballysaggart GAA were applying for community facilities. The issue of planning was only first raised by Jimmy Taaffe at a meeting with Ballysaggart GAA on Monday 31st July 2017. Prior to this there was no mention of the Planning, at our pre application meetings with WLP, in the WLP project assessment report, in the evaluation committee report or at the LCDC meeting? Ballysaggart GAA facilities are for the community and its environs and agreements have been reached with other organisations as to use. The Ballysaggart GAA project is specifically a community project. The project promoters followed the Leader Operating Rules for the Rural Development Programme Ireland 2014 – 2020. The Project promoters had knowledge of preparation and received expert advice in submitting the application. The Hall is general purpose and is not sport specific as it shall incorporate a stage area in the future. The hall was not part of the component requiring or requesting Leader funding.

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Ballysaggart GAA has and is receiving cross community support for its development. The need was identified for a facility to cater for all people in the community and all activities. The proposed facility when established caters for that need.

The decision to build two facilities in Ballysaggart arose when BCDG decided to expand the old schoolhouse. The development and sustainability of two premises was raised at the joint meeting. All present at the joint meeting support the retention and upgrading of facilities at the schoolhouse by BCDG to some degree. Views were expressed at the joint meeting regarding the size, sustainability and capacity of the BCDG development to cater for all the needs of the community.

Both Ballysaggart GAA and BCDG noted differing approaches by the LCDC in the letters to both organisations regarding their applications.

A request for an independent facilitator by the LCDC to the GAA was not conveyed to the BCDG. The meeting was chaired by Michael J Walsh of the BCDG, Ballysaggart GAA requested an independent facilitator for the joint meeting.

The LCDC requested BCDG to seek a letter of support from Ballysaggart GAA. This was not outlined in the letter from the LCDC to Ballysaggart GAA. Ballysaggart GAA was unable to give this letter of support as it is contrary to the GAA proposal. Ballysaggart GAA members have no objection to the upgrading and repair of existing facilities at the schoolhouse.

It is also noted that the LCDC letter to the BCDG stated the community was divided. Can the LCDC substantiate on this conclusion and as to the source of such information.

Ballysaggart GAA having received funding from the Capital sports will lose this funding should they not proceed with their development. The Capital sports award of funding along with the application for Leader funding by the GAA will aid the co-ordinated development of a facility in the centre of the village and adjacent to the present sports field. This proposed development by the GAA has cross community support and will cater for all activities. If both facilities are developed sustainability will become an issue.

Ballysaggart GAA noted a period of eleven days between the issue of letters from the LCDC. Can the LCDC clarify the reason for the delay in notifying Ballysaggart GAA.

The promoters have concern regarding the implementation of Operating Rules. There is no wish to displace other projects that have applied for Leader funding but the promoters express concern regarding operation of the Leader Operating Rules.

- Can the LCDC verify if recent letter of rejection was issued by the LCDC?
- Ballysaggart GAA wishes to establish if the Operating Rules were amended by WLP to allow other applications to progress.
- Did the LCDC circulate a document stating that Ballysaggart GAA, its members and or others carried out canvassing? Was Ballysaggart GAA or persons named informed of such allegation. Can the LCDC provide copies of the allegation to Ballysaggart GAA?
- Is the LCDC satisfied that all conflicts of interest are in accordance with the operating rules?
- Are checks carried out by the implementing Partner WLP, the Evaluation committee or the LCDC to validate the application including the ownership or leases by applicants?
- Ballysaggart GAA is awaiting clarification if their file has been up loaded to the relevant Department website.

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- The number of queries on the application by Ballysaggart GAA seems excessive and Ballysaggart GAA wishes to establish if all applications have received similar examination.
- Can the LCDC forward the conclusions of the subcommittee to Ballysaggart GAA?
- Ballysaggart GAA wishes to establish if Waterford Council, the LCDC or WLP can carry out work in relation to putting forward an application or assisting in the completion of an application for a promoter.
- Is the LCDC satisfied that Ballysaggart GAA has received a full copy of its current file from WLP? Have copies of all documentation been placed on the file?

The promoters have dedicated vast time and resources to the project application. The promoters gave detailed examination to the intricacies of this application. WLP gave encouragement to proceed and at no stage during the pre application submissions did WLP highlight areas of concern.

Any additional details and relevant documentation will be forthcoming on request. Ballysaggart GAA project promoters are available and wish to meet to discuss or clarify any issues which may arise with the LCDC .

Is mise,
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