

## Waterford Rural Coordination Working Group (RCG)

### Report to the Waterford Local Action Group (LAG), November 2018

#### Background

There are significant levels of services, resources, programmes and projects with a rural development emphasis being delivered into County Waterford but, up to now, many of these services have been planned and delivered in an ad hoc manner leading to a lack of coordination across the sector. Indeed, the need for co-ordination has been raised and discussed by the LAG on a number of occasions in the past. This lack of coordination has led to gaps and overlaps in service and a lack of agreed strategic priorities across the various agencies delivering these services.

The LAG structure, which brings together the main stakeholders in rural development, along with the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) structure, provides an ideal platform for agreeing rural development priorities via the Local Development Strategy and the Local Economic and Community Plan (LCDC). **It is proposed that the RCG become a formal sub-committee of the LAG and will report to the LAG at its regular meetings.**

#### Membership

The initial membership of the group is composed of representatives of different sections of Waterford City and County Council along with nominees of Waterford Leader Partnership and Waterford Area Partnership. These represent the main deliverers of rural development initiatives in County Waterford. Other agencies and stakeholders will be included on an ad hoc and timely basis.

Current members are:

Ivan Grimes (Community, WCCC) & Michael Quinn (Economic Development, WCCC) (Joint Chairs); Jimmy Taaffe (Waterford Leader Partnership); Catherine Power (Waterford Area Partnership); Don Tuohy (Community, WCCC); Richie Walsh (Local Enterprise Office, WCCC); Vinnie O'Shea (Rural Development, WCCC); Gabriel Hynes (Roads and Infrastructure, WCCC); Raymond Moloney (Environment, WCCC); Billy Duggan (Economic Development, WCCC); Hugh O'Brien (Planning, WCCC)

#### Approach

Rural development agencies can only plan and deliver quality services and projects if the communities which they serve can act as full partners in the process. For this to happen, communities require leadership and capacity and, where this is absent in a community, there needs to be an initial emphasis on building this capacity. Some 40 communities in Waterford have been identified as being individual communities, while also looking at these communities as part of wider development zones and a broad survey has been undertaken in order to determine main community needs in rural County Waterford.

Overall approach is:

- Undertake town and village health checks to determine current state of development in our communities
- Determine where there are capacity building requirements in communities and target resources via SICAP and LEADER programmes to address these deficits
- On a phased and prioritised basis, prepare development plans for and with communities either on an individual or grouped basis
- Identify funding and resources in order to deliver projects outlined in the development plans
- Undertake regular reviews of progress and evaluate programmes, projects and performance

### Priorities

The current order of priorities has been agreed by the group:

- The ongoing development of our primary rural towns i.e. Dungarvan and Tramore
- Cappoquin and the broader Blackwater Valley
- Portlaw and the broader Comeraghs area, including Kilmacthomas
- Bunmahon and the Copper Coast
- The Suir Estuary
- An Ghaeltacht and Ardmore

In 2019, from a capacity building perspective, SICAP will concentrate on Cappoquin / Blackwater Valley and Portlaw / Comeraghs while Waterford Leader Partnership will focus on Bunmahon / Copper Coast.

### Current Projects

#### **Town and Village Renewal Scheme 2017**

€626k was allocated for various projects in County Waterford. Recipient communities were Ballyduff Lower; Ballymacarbry; Bunmahon; Cheekpoint; Clonea Power; Dungarvan; Portlaw; Tramore; Villierstown. 3 projects are completed with 6 others due to be completed before end 2018

## Town and Village Renewal Scheme 2018

Waterford City & County Council submitted 10 completed applications for consideration - announcement made in October 2018. Nine Applications were allocated funding and Cappoquin was included in a DRCD pilot programme to look at increasing residential occupancy in Rural Towns & Villages receiving €100,000. Details of allocations below:

| Town/Village      | Grant Allocated | Project Summary                                      |
|-------------------|-----------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| Ardmore           | €100,000        | Enhancement to Cliff Walk in Ardmore                 |
| Kilmacthomas      | €100,000        | Village Enhancement & Railway Station Upgrade        |
| Estuary           | €80,000         | Coastal Walk/Bridge Upgrade/Tourism Action Plan      |
| Kilmeaden         | €96,000         | Link to Greenway                                     |
| Lismore           | €92,000         | Lady Louisa Walk Restoration/Boardwalk on Town River |
| An Rinn           | €64,000         | Tourism Signage Strategy                             |
| Mahon Bridge      | €80,000         | Link Crough Wood to Mahon Bridge                     |
| Copper Coast Area | €64,000         | Tourism Signage Strategy                             |
| Kill              | €80,000         | Village Enhancement/Public Realm Enhancement         |
| <b>Total</b>      | <b>€756,000</b> |                                                      |

## Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure 2018

Department of Rural & community Development announced funding allocations to measure 1 in September 2018. Measure 2 and 3 applications have yet to be assessed and allocations announced.

### Waterford ORIS Projects

|   | Trail Location                                  | Nature of Works                                                                                                   | Measure | Amount Sought     |
|---|-------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|-------------------|
| 1 | <b>Waterford Greenway</b>                       | Significant further development - soft/ancillary infrastructure and interpretation/Information boards and signage | 3       | €244,940          |
| 2 | <b>Tramore Nature Park</b>                      | 1.4 km trail upgrade works; improved signage potential re boardwalk area and clean-up                             | 2       | €64,900           |
| 3 | <b>Whortle &amp; Minaun Walk – Suir Estuary</b> | Passage East to Cheekpoint to Faithlegg: trails up to NTO standard                                                | 2       | €81,760           |
| 4 | <b>Dunmore East Cliff Walk</b>                  | Drainage element on trail                                                                                         | 1       | €8,000 allocation |
| 5 | <b>Nire Valley Walks</b>                        | Upgrade works-arising out of NTO inspection December 2017                                                         | 2       | €27,500           |

## FLAG 2018

Waterford City and County Council is implementing the following projects based on the following allocations:

1. Blackwater Tourism Action Plan - Complete Tourism action plan arising from 2016 West Waterford Tourism Workshop – application request for €8,400 – Prescience Consultants carrying out same.
2. Heritage Study on fishing/maritime environment of Waterford Estuary - Study on heritage aspect and potential opportunities on Waterford Estuary – study to include dendrochronology report of fishing weirs- application request for €5,166 - Eachtra Archaeological Projects Ltd. carrying out same
3. Trail Study and Assessment Report for Copper Coast - Study looking at feasibility of coastal path along Copper Coast and assessment report/costings re appropriate route(s)- €4,200 – Earthroute Ltd. carrying out same
4. Camera System – Tramore Harbour – security and safety of Tramore Harbour - €4,200- delayed subject to WCCC assessment of overall CCTV schemes and compliance re GDPR

## CLÁR 2018

There has been funding in the amount of €528k allocated to Waterford under the CLÁR programme for 2018 (a funding programme for identified significantly disadvantaged rural areas). This funding was provided mainly for schools-orientated infrastructural developments and rural roads improvements. 2018 beneficiaries include Mothel; Kinsalebeg; Grallagh; Kilgobnet; Lismore; Modeligo; Ardmore; Rathgormack; Ballyduff; Aglish and Clashmore.

### **Rural and Urban Regeneration and Development Funds (RRDF & URDF)**

Under these schemes, significant funding applications have been submitted to the Department of Rural and Community Development in respect of:

| Area              | Total Funding Application | Initial Application | Scheme | Applicant Body |
|-------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|--------|----------------|
| Cappoquin         | €4.3 million              | €4.3 million        | RRDF   | WCCC           |
| Blackwater Valley | >€4 million               | €129k               | RRDF   | WLP            |
| Tramore           | €2.9 million              | €2.9 million        | URDF   | WCCC           |

Summaries of these applications will issue under a separate cover