

Introduction

Waterford Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) was established in 2014 under the provisions of the Local Government Reform Act 2014 and are required under Part 6 of the Local Government Act 2001 (S 128 B of the Local Government Act, 2001) to prepare, adopt, and submit an annual report to the Local Authority in respect of the performance of its functions in the previous year. This document constitutes the Annual Report for Waterford LCDC for the year ending 31st December 2023.

Background Legislation

Section 49A of the Local Government Act 2001, as inserted by the Local Government Reform Act 2014, provides for the establishment of Local Community Development Committees. The LCDC functions set out in the Act are as follows:

1. Developing, co-ordinating and implementing a coherent and integrated approach to local and community development.
2. To prepare the community elements of a 6-year Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP). To implement, or arrange for the implementation of, the community elements of the Plan.
3. To review the community elements of the Plan at least once within the period of 6 calendar years and, if necessary, to amend the community elements of the Plan.
4. To monitor on an on-going basis the implementation of the community elements of the Plan and, if appropriate, to revise the actions and strategies set to achieve the objectives of the community elements of the Plan.
5. To coordinate, manage and oversee the implementation of local and community development programmes that have been approved either by the relevant local authority or by agreement between the LCDC and a relevant public authority (e.g., government department, State agency etc.).
6. To improve the coordination of public-funded local and community development programmes and reduce duplication.
7. In addition to public-funded programmes, to coordinate the local and community development programmes within the operational area of the LCDC.
8. To consider a draft of the economic elements of the Plan and adopt a statement for consideration of the Council in this regard, and

9. To prepare an annual report on the performance of its functions.

It is also responsible for the oversight of local and community development expenditure including the Rural Development Programme (LEADER), SICAP, Healthy Ireland, Sláintecare Healthy Communities, and administering various community grant schemes.

Membership and Meeting Attendance 2023

The Waterford LCDC was established in 2014 and has 19 members including representatives from Waterford City & County Council, Public Bodies, local social partner interests, local communities, and representatives of publicly funded or supported local development companies. Membership of the LCDC at 31/12/2023 was as follows:

Senan Cooke	PPN
Jenny Beresford	Dungarvan/West Waterford Chamber of Commerce
Gabriel Foley	PPN
Heather Kiely	PPN
Csilla Czelvikker	PPN
Gerald Hurley	Waterford City Chamber of Commerce
Sinéad Kilcawley	PPN
Catherine Quinlan	ICMSA
Liam Quinn	WAP
Jimmy Taaffe	WLP
Councillor Joe Conway	Elected member WCCC
Councillor Eamon Quinlan	Elected member WCCC
Councillor Pat Nugent	Elected member WCCC
Kate Cassidy	HSE
Richie Walsh	Head of Waterford L.E.O.
Michael Walsh	Chief Executive, WCCC
Michael O'Brien	WWETB
Margaret Mary Collins	CYPSC/TUSLA
Kathryn Kiely	SETU

The LCDC met eleven times during 2023, with a quorum achieved at each sitting. The following are the details relating to these meetings:

Meeting Date	No. Of members	In attendance	Apologies
12/01/2023	19	11	8
09/02/2023	19	16	3
09/03/2023	19	13	6
13/04/2023	19	13	6
11/05/2023	19	12	7
08/06/2023	19	13	6
13/07/2023	19	11	8

13/09/2023	19	12	7
12/10/2023	19	15	4
09/11/2023	19	15	4
14/12/2023	19	11	8

Minutes of the LCDC meetings are available on the Community section of the Council's website - [Local Community Development Committee \(LCDC\) - Waterford City & County Council \(waterfordcouncil.ie\)](https://www.waterfordcouncil.ie)

Waterford Local Economic & Community Plan (LECP)

Review of LECP

2023 has been a successful and productive year for the LCDC with the finalisation and adoption of the **Local Economic & Community Plan 2023 - 2029** (LECP) on 14th December 2023. Following extensive and active stakeholder engagement, the LECP sets out agreed objectives and actions needed to promote and support the economic and community development of Waterford over a six-year period. The community element of the LECP outlines 4 high level goals on the liveability and quality of life, health and wellbeing, inclusion and accessibility, and resilience and sustainability, with a 2-year implementation plan which will commence in 2024. The LECP is available on the Council's website [Waterford City & County Council : Local Economic & Community Plan \(waterfordcouncil.ie\)](https://www.waterfordcouncil.ie).

LECP 2015 – 2020:

During 2023, Waterford LCDC continued to implement the community elements of the LECP 2015 – 2020 through the following LCDC sub-groups and LCDC supported programmes -

Skills Enhancement LCDC Subgroup:

The skills enhancement sub-group is made up of representatives from Waterford City and County Council, Local Enterprise Office, Waterford Area Partnership, Waterford Wexford ETB, West Waterford Chamber of Commerce, South East Regional Skills Forum, South East Action Plan for Jobs, Skillnet, Waterford LEADER Partnership and the Department of Social Protection.

The aim of the Skills Enhancement Sub-Group is to cultivate an all-inclusive environment where quality training and upskilling opportunities are available to those in employment, those seeking pathways to employment and those who are marginalised from the labour market. The committee met 6 times during 2023 to consider initiatives to address the skill gaps and training provisions in Waterford.

During 2023 the fabrication laboratory in West Waterford was established, an initiative that will support the industry in the region and provide skilled labour for a growing manufacturing base in West Waterford.

A key priority for all agencies was to continue with the P.R. drive during the year to maximise outreach and improve the uptake of training opportunities for all. Breakfast briefings and FET Fairs were held, and the committee continued to monitor development in the offshore wind farming sector where future employment opportunities will arise.

Migrant Integration Strategy:

In early 2018, Waterford City and County Council and Waterford Local Community Development Committee established an Inter-agency Task Group to respond to the call made under the National Migrant Integration Strategy: A Blueprint for the Future. Local Authorities are responsible for establishing a Migrant Integration Forum and updating their integration strategies. The Waterford Migrant Integration Forum was formed in early 2019 with eighteen members. The role of the Forum is inter alia, to contribute to the development of an integration strategy for the entire county and to support the implementation of the Strategy.

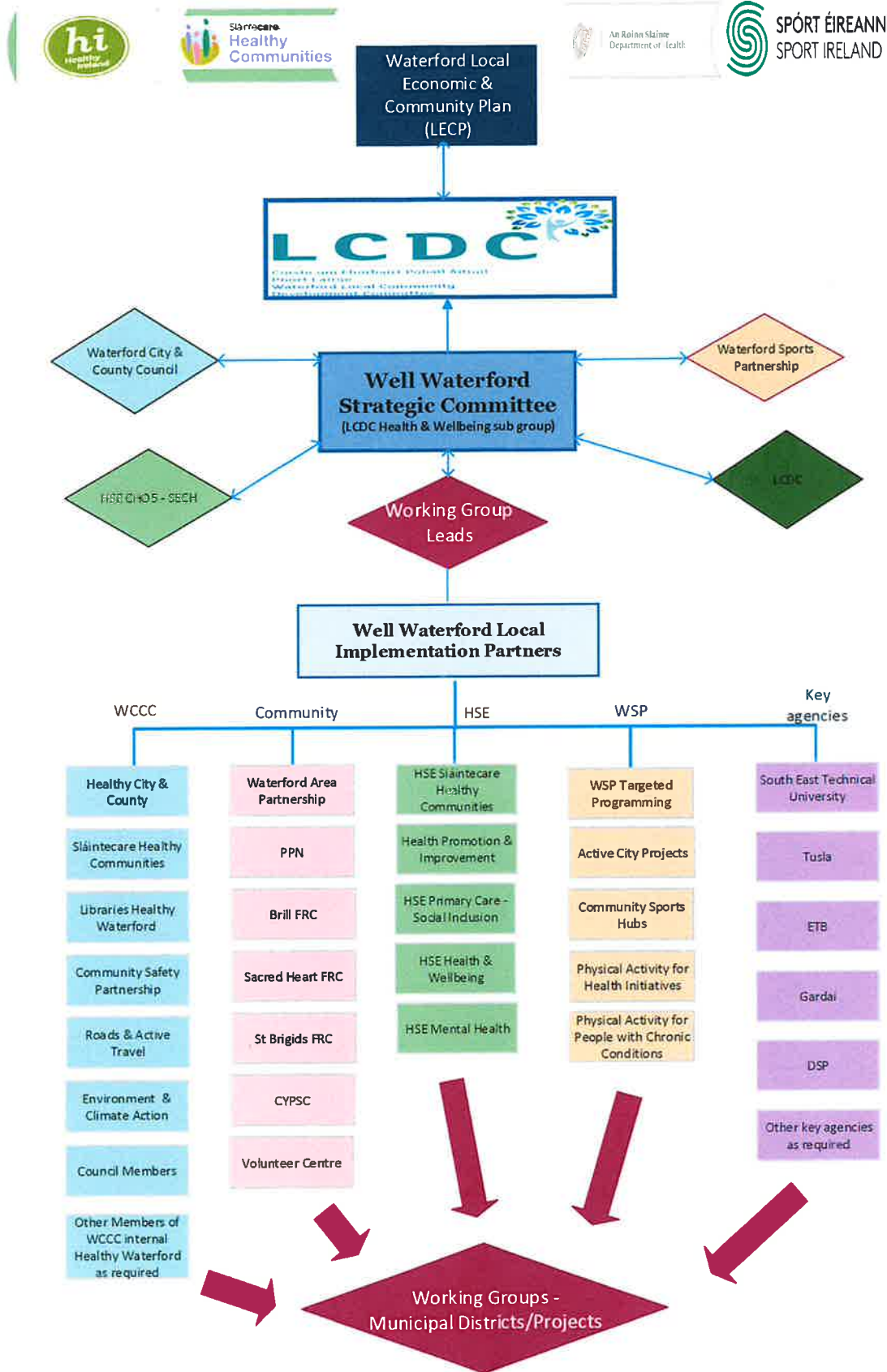
The Migrant Integration Strategy 2021 - 2024 was established and launched in 2021 by Minister of State for Community & Charities, Mr Joe O'Brien, TD. A working group comprised of representatives from various local organisations met on 4 occasions in 2023 to support the implementation of the strategy.

Health and Well-being LCDC subgroup (Well Waterford):

The Health and Wellbeing subgroup of the LCDC was reviewed in 2022 resulting in the rebranding and broadening of the previous Healthy Waterford sub-committee with the final structures of the Well Waterford framework being finalised in 2023. The structure includes a Strategic Oversight Committee, Working Group Leads who lead out on the working groups and report to the Strategic Oversight Committee, Implementation Partners which make up the membership of various Working Groups. The sub-group has a large representative base of community, voluntary and statutory bodies and the framework sets out a model for cross-sectoral engagement, collaboration, information and expertise sharing, maximising resources and reducing duplication of services and reporting.

Under the new Well Waterford framework a commitment from all was given to focus on the overarching goal of improving health and wellbeing in our communities and supporting a collaborative and partnership approach to the implementation of the Sláintecare Healthy Communities, Healthy Ireland and Active Cities work programmes within Waterford. This setup ensures diverse perspectives on the broader social determinants of health, which are crucial for advancing the health and wellbeing agenda. With a key focus on health and wellbeing withing the LECP 2023 – 2029, the subgroup has been tasked with delivering on various actions over the 6-year period of the plan.

The Well Waterford Strategic Group met 5 times during the year, with 10 meetings of Well Waterford Implementing Partners and Working Groups. 3 Municipal District Meetings were also held to give an overview of Well Waterford structures and it's aims and objectives at municipal district level.



LCDC WELL WATERFORD STRUCTURES 2023

The Waterford LCDC also support the following groups/programmes which feed into the LECP –

Traveller Inter-agency Group:

This grouping of relevant statutory agencies and state supported initiatives involved in providing the full range of services to Travellers has its focus on improving the integrated practical delivery of such services. The Waterford Traveller Inter-Agency Group aims to find ways of securing better outcomes for Travellers and improve the use of resources allocated across Government departments for Traveller-specific measures. Waterford TIG met 3 times in 2023.

Comhairle na nÓg:

2023 was another strong year for Waterford Comhairle na nÓg. The main project delivered by members was on Mental Health as voted for at the Youth Conference in 2023. This was presented at the AGM in November and very well received. Members of Waterford Comhairle took part in various national consultations during the year.

17 local secondary schools and youth clubs participated in Comhairle during 2023. A podcast was launched at the Youth Conference on 15th November with over 270 young people taking part with 6 podcasts recorded. The Podcast was used as an example of Good Practice by the National Executive for 2023 around RSE in Schools.

Waterford Comhairle continued to drive the Neighbourwood (Native Irish Tree Trail) project across Waterford city and county where Urban Forests are being created in partnership with South East Technological University and Waterford Council. 18 young Comhairle members assisted local residents and the Lions Club in maintaining the neighbourwood projects during 2023 with an additional 200 trees being planted.

2023 Period Equality Project

Waterford City & County Council entered into an SLA with the Department of Health to participate in the distribution of free period products under the Period Poverty project with 41 suitable distribution points in operation during 2023. A satisfactory geographic spread was achieved with multiple distribution points across the major urban centres of Waterford City, Dungarvan Town and Tramore Town. Distribution points are also located in the smaller towns and villages of Lismore, Cappoquin, Tallow, Portlaoise, Ardmore, Kilmacthomas and Dunmore East. Outlets include twelve libraries, two sports centres, eleven community centres, three public council offices and a number of community service agencies. Oasis House, Waterford Women's Centre, Squashy Couch, Tinteán Housing, Waterford Homeless Integration Centre and Edmund Rice Youth Centre were specifically selected to assist in reaching target areas where deprivation and disadvantage exist. An estimated 3000 women have been reached in Waterford City & County in 2023. Feedback from the public continues to be positive.

Age Friendly Alliance:

During 2023 significant work and consultation continued on the Waterford Age Friendly Alliance Strategy 2023 – 2028 which was officially launched by Minister Mary Butler TD on 16th June 2023. In delivering this strategy, the Waterford Age Friendly Alliance will ensure that the City and County continues to have an age-friendly approach to policies, programmes, services and infrastructure relating to the physical and the social environment, enabling older people to live in security, good health and continue to participate in society in a meaningful way. More details on the strategy can be found on the Council's website [Waterford City & County Council : Waterford Age Friendly Alliance Strategy \(waterfordcouncil.ie\)](https://www.waterfordcouncil.ie)



Mary Butler, Minister for Mental Health and Older People, Marion O'Meara, OPC, Kevin Moynihan, WCCC Age Friendly Coordinator & Susan O'Connor, Chairperson of Waterford Older Persons Council (OPC) at the launch of the Waterford Age Friendly Strategy 2023 - 2028

Waterford Local Community Safety Partnership (WLCSP) pilot

In 2023, the Community Safety Partnership pilot continued to gather momentum and successfully sourcing funding under the Community Safety Innovation and the Community Safety Small Grants Funds. The Partnership roll out four community safety innovation fund projects during 2023 – Northwest Suburbs Community Action Plan; Dungarvan Community Horticultural Education Programme; Consent Matters Project; and the City Centre Safety Wardens Project – as well as leading out on and supporting several collaborative initiatives on Anti-Social Behaviour, Safety at Halloween, Portlaw Engages Youth project, a Road Safety Week, Drug Awareness, Prevention and Support initiative, City Centre Safety and the Purple Flag projects, amongst others.

On 27th March 2023, Minister for Justice Simon Harris TD launched the Waterford Community Safety Plan 2023 – 2028 which sets out objectives and actions for the Partnership and key partners to implement during the lifetime of the Plan. More details on

the Safety Partnership and Plan can be found on the Council's website [Waterford City & County Council : Local Community Safety Partnership \(waterfordcouncil.ie\)](https://www.waterfordcouncil.ie)

The pilot, which is a new government initiative bringing together statutory services, the voluntary and community sector, local councillors, and community members to collaboratively work together to identify and respond strategically to safety issues locally, has been extended to a statutory roll out nationally in 2024.



Members of the Community Safety Partnership with Minister Simon Harris TD at the launch of the Community Safety Plan 2023 - 2028

Waterford Ukrainian Community Response Forum:

Ukrainian Community Response continued in 2023 with over 1,024 arrivals to the Council's temporary emergency accommodation Rest Centres during the year with 734 of those were matched with longer term accommodation. The Community Response work received shortlisting at both Chambers Ireland Excellence in Local Government Awards under category of Diversity & Inclusion and the LAMA awards for Most Inclusive Project. The Community Response continue to receive amazing support from the community and voluntary groups involved in extending the céad míle fáilte to our new arrivals.

Local Authority Integration Team:

The Local Authority Integration Team was established in Waterford in December 2023 tasked with implementing the Local Integration Model which was developed as a collaboration between: the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY); the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH); the City and County Management Authority (CCMA); and the Local Government Management

Agency (LGMA). The overarching aim of the model is to empower individuals within the target groups to ultimately live independently in the community. The model centres on a new national network of Local Authority Integration Teams (LAITs) to be located in each Local Authority to lead out on the coordination of integration supports and services to the target cohort. The target cohorts under the remit of the LAITs are:

1. Applicants for International Protection (IP Applicants)
2. Those with Refugee, Subsidiary Protection, or Permission to Remain status
3. Programme Refugees
4. Beneficiaries of Temporary Accommodation (BOTPs)

Oversight of publicly funded programmes

The main publicly funded programmes managed by the LCDC are SICAP (Programme Implementer being Waterford Area Partnership who were successful in winning the tender to implement the programme 2018-2022) and the Rural Development Programme (Implementing Partner being Waterford Leader Partnership). The Chief Executive Officers of both Waterford Leader Partnership and Waterford Area Partnership are members of the LCDC.

Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme:

There is a clear focus on social inclusion and marginalised communities in the LECP. The SICAP programme in Waterford assists in addressing many of the objectives set out in the LECP including reducing youth unemployment and making stronger connections between services and people. Social Inclusion Community Activation Fund assistance 2023 €1,552,157. 79 community groups and 1,013 individuals were assisted during 2023.

A SICAP sub-committee of the LCDC oversees the work of the SICAP programme Implementer and in 2023 gave regular updates to the LCDC on progress. LCDC SICAP subcommittee carried out regular verification reviews of the implementation of the SICAP programme being delivered by the Waterford Area Partnership and reported back to the LCDC at each meeting. Three visits took place in 2023 and compliance with programme requirements was consistently high. No remedies were applied to the Programme Implementer as all Key Performance Indicators were achieved.

Rural Development LEADER Programme 2014 – 2020 (extended):

LEADER or RDP1420 commenced operation in October 2016. Waterford LEADER Partnership CLG are contracted by Waterford LCDC and Waterford City and County Council. The Local development company operate a Targeted Call Process. This involves regular invitations for expressions of interest for LEADER funding to invest in Enterprise, Tourism and Community Projects. The final project applications were approved by the LCDC at the December meeting.

Waterford LCDC is the Local Action Group (LAG) with ultimate responsibility for implementation of the LEADER programme in Waterford. The LEADER programme 2014 –

2020 (extended) is due to end early in 2024. The LAG has allocated €7,917,335 to 171 projects since 2017. Significant progress was made during 2023 on work relating to the programme. The LAG met 12 times over the year, approved 5 projects and processed LEADER funds to the value of €739,913.

The Local Development Strategy (LDS)

During 2023 the LDS was prepared by Waterford LEADER Partnership, submitted by Waterford LCDC, approved by the Department and contract signed on 14th December 2023. Waterford LEADER Partnership will, on behalf on Waterford LAG, implement the new LEADER programme 2023 -2029. The budget for the new LEADER Programme 2023 to 2029 is €6.1m with €4.5m allocated to projects. Supplementary funds may be allocated over the course of the programme which will be most welcome given the emerging challenges in rural areas.

Healthy City and County (Healthy Ireland) Fund:

The following projects were granted funding in 2023 under Healthy Ireland Round 4:

- TREO Port Láirge €10,000
- Aiséirí Progression Program €7,360
- Playful Streets €7,500
- SHEP Community Wellbeing €6,500
- Place Standard approach to Community Wellbeing €20,000
- Healthy Communities Grow It Yourself €15,000
- Autism Friendly Cities €3,000
- Social Farming €8,500



Would your area like to run a Playful Street event?



Events will be run from May to September 2024
Expression of interest open, contact us for a form:
Eoin: eoinmorrissey@waterfordcouncil.ie
Lauren: lwalshekett@waterfordsportspartnership.ie



HELP US HELP YOU MAKE YOUR STEET A PLAYFUL STREET!



Playful Street events were popular and successfully held throughout Waterford during 2023

As well as the work above a comprehensive community engagement initiative was developed during 2023 where agencies were brought together for a collaborative 'Connecting Communities' roadshow based on the municipal district approach to community development, engagement, and wellbeing. The mission was to develop a collaborative – cross organisational and multi-agency roadshow aiming to showcase the best Waterford has to offer in community services with the inclusion of over 30 agencies visiting 7 rural & urban locations.

Further work took place in 2023 as part of the national network of healthy cities where Waterford was selected as the representative of the Southern Regional assembly thus putting Waterford in a key strategic position for an application to the WHO Healthy Cities framework. This coincided with Waterford being approached to be a partner with an Interreg EU Project also during 2023.

Sláintecare Healthy Communities Programme:

Sláintecare Healthy Communities Programme is a complex change programme which will address the root causes of health behaviours which stem from negative exposure to the wider determinants of health. Staff from the Sláintecare Healthy Communities and Health Promotion units of the HSE are working closely with the Council's Local Development Officer (LDO) on launching and implementing the Sláintecare Healthy Communities programme. In 2023, Sláintecare Healthy Communities seed fund of €75,000 supported 5 community projects in Lisduggan/Larchville, Slievekeale, Custom House B, Kilcohan and 4 primary schools. All projects are expected to be completed by mid-2024.

From the 2022 Seed Fund 4 projects were completed with the work ongoing on the other 3 and expected to be completed in 2024.

Sláintecare Healthy Communities Programme in partnership with Adult Literacy for Life and Turas Nua developed and delivered a comprehensive training for life and work in Ireland to 14 migrants with 7 of them getting employment by the end of the training.

Work progressed in 2023 with community groups and in partnership with Healthy Ireland and other statutory and non-statutory organisations. The Sláintecare Local Implementation Team (LIT) was set up in March 2023 and met 3 times during the year.

Community Support Fund 2022/2023:

The Community Support Fund (CSF) was launched today 18th November 2022 by Minister for Rural and Community Development, Heather Humphreys TD, and Minister of State with responsibility for Community Development and Charities, Joe O'Brien TD to support community and voluntary groups in light of rising energy costs. Waterford received an allocation of €320,195, including 5% administration. 180 projects across Waterford benefitted from the CSF during 2023.

Community Recognition Fund 2023:

Waterford City and County Council (WCCC) received an allocation of €1,351,000 across 13 projects under the Department of Rural and Community Development-funded Community

Recognition Fund 2023. There was also an allocation of €70,869 for the associated administration costs, bringing the total allocation to €1,421,869.

The successful projects to be delivered by WCCC were:

- **8 Thomas Street, Waterford City**, €395,000, to develop a green space pocket park.
- **Regional Sports Centre**, €45,000, to reline the athletics track and upgrade the emergency lights and CCTV.
- **Central Library, Lady Lane, Waterford City**, €45,000, to create a new meeting space and purchase equipment for same.
- **WCCC and Autism Support Dungarvan, Abbeyside, Dungarvan**, €45,000, for the installation of sensory equipment in Council playground.
- **Tramore**, €295,000, for the installation of an outdoor gym, skateboard park and develop a sensory garden.
- **Carbally**, €45,000, for the installation of an outdoor gym.
- **Dungarvan**, €45,000, for the installation of an outdoor gym.
- **Dungarvan MUGA**, €195,000, for the installation of a MUGA at Dungarvan Sports Centre.

The successful externally delivered projects were:

- **Lismore GAA Club**, €145,000, to upgrade the facilities in its community centre, dressing rooms and clubhouse.
- **St. Patrick's Gateway Centre, Waterford City**, €45,000, to re-surface its garden paths, install benches and create a sensory garden.
- **Waterford Area Partnership**, €17,000, to purchase equipment for its integration centre and upgrade building.
- **Tallow GAA Club**, €17,000, to develop a community walkway around pitches.
- **Modeligo Community Development**, €17,000, to upgrade its sports field facilities and for additional works to upgrade the outdoor toilet facilities at the nearby Modeligo Community Centre.

Dormant Fund LGBTI+ 2023:

Waterford City and County Council received an allocation of €18,613.80 under the 2023 Dormant Account Fund, Action 6.3 National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy to support LGBTI+ Community Organisations.

Of the overall allocation, Waterford & South Tipperary Community Youth Service (WSTCYS) was allocated €16,113.80 under the following measures:

- Measure A - Extending drop-in hours, developing information and guidance tools, holding additional community events.
- Measure C - Providing outreach support.
- Measure D - Providing sporting/physical activity programmes to promote inclusion, community participation, health and wellbeing.

South East Technological University LGBT+ Staff Network was allocated €2,500 under Measure B - Delivering LGBTI awareness/sensitivity training in healthcare settings, businesses, schools etc.

Closing Statement

2023 was another busy but productive year for Waterford LCDC under the leadership of our Chairpersons, Cllr John O’Leary to May 2023 and Cllr Joe Conway from June 2023.

I would like to acknowledge the co-operation and commitment of all members and partners of the LCDC which resulted in programmes being delivered successfully and funding opportunities being maximised for the benefit of Waterford communities.

I also wish to acknowledge the support given to the LCDC by the staff of the Community & Sports Department of Waterford Council over the year, in what was again a busy and challenging year which saw the strength and resilience of Waterford’s statutory, community and voluntary sectors in a collaborative response to those seeking refuge from the war in Ukraine.

I confirm that no matters have been reported with regards to the obligations of the LCDC under the Official Languages (Amendment) Act 2021.

Signed:

Sinéad Breathnach
Chief Officer to Waterford LCDC
Community and Sport Department of Waterford City & County Council