



Comhairle Cathrach Chorcaí
Cork City Council

CORK CITY LOCAL ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY PLAN



BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND DRAFT SOCIO ECONOMIC STATEMENT

AUGUST 25th 2015

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INTRODUCTION

Cork City Council invites you to influence the future local economic and community development of Cork City. It has begun developing a Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) which will be adopted by Cork City Council and the Cork City Local Community Development Committee at the end of 2015.

This plan will set out the objectives and actions needed to promote and support the economic and community development of Cork City over the next six years. These actions will be delivered by a range of economic and community development stakeholders.

The LECP will consist of two parts:

- An economic element and
- A community element

Both elements are mutually supportive and will be developed in parallel and adopted by the local authority as a unified plan. This single, integrated economic and community plan will provide the basis for a more coherent, streamlined and co-ordinated approach to service planning and delivery locally.

This is the first stage in the process and sets out the broad socio economic framework including:

- Brief summary profile
- Explanation of the process
- High level goals and suggested themes
- How to have your say

1.1 WHY DO WE NEED A PLAN?

The Local Government Reform Act 2014 requires every local authority to develop a LECP. The purpose of the LECP is to set out,

for a six year period, the objectives and actions needed to promote and support the economic development and the local and community development of Cork City. It is intended that the LECP will facilitate both the expanding economic development role and the emerging local development role of Local Government and bring about better alignment of the work of Local Development Companies with that of the Local Authority and other providers of social, community and economic development, thereby achieving better returns for the communities they serve.

The economic elements of the LECP will guide and support the economic development role of the local authority within a wider regional content. The LECP will take into consideration the existing Regional Planning Guidelines and input from the Regional Assembly. In future the economic elements will be formulated in accordance with a regional framework which will be set out in the Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy. The LECP will also have regard to any regional enterprise strategies prepared by Enterprise Ireland. To date no additional resources have been made available for the LECP. All actions must be implemented within existing budgets. However, it is encouraged that key actions will be prioritised by local statutory agencies in resourcing and that additional funding will be sought for same.

The purpose of the community elements of the LECP are to promote local and community development within Cork City and to ensure the co-ordination of relevant public funded local and community development actions in a way that reduces duplication, targets

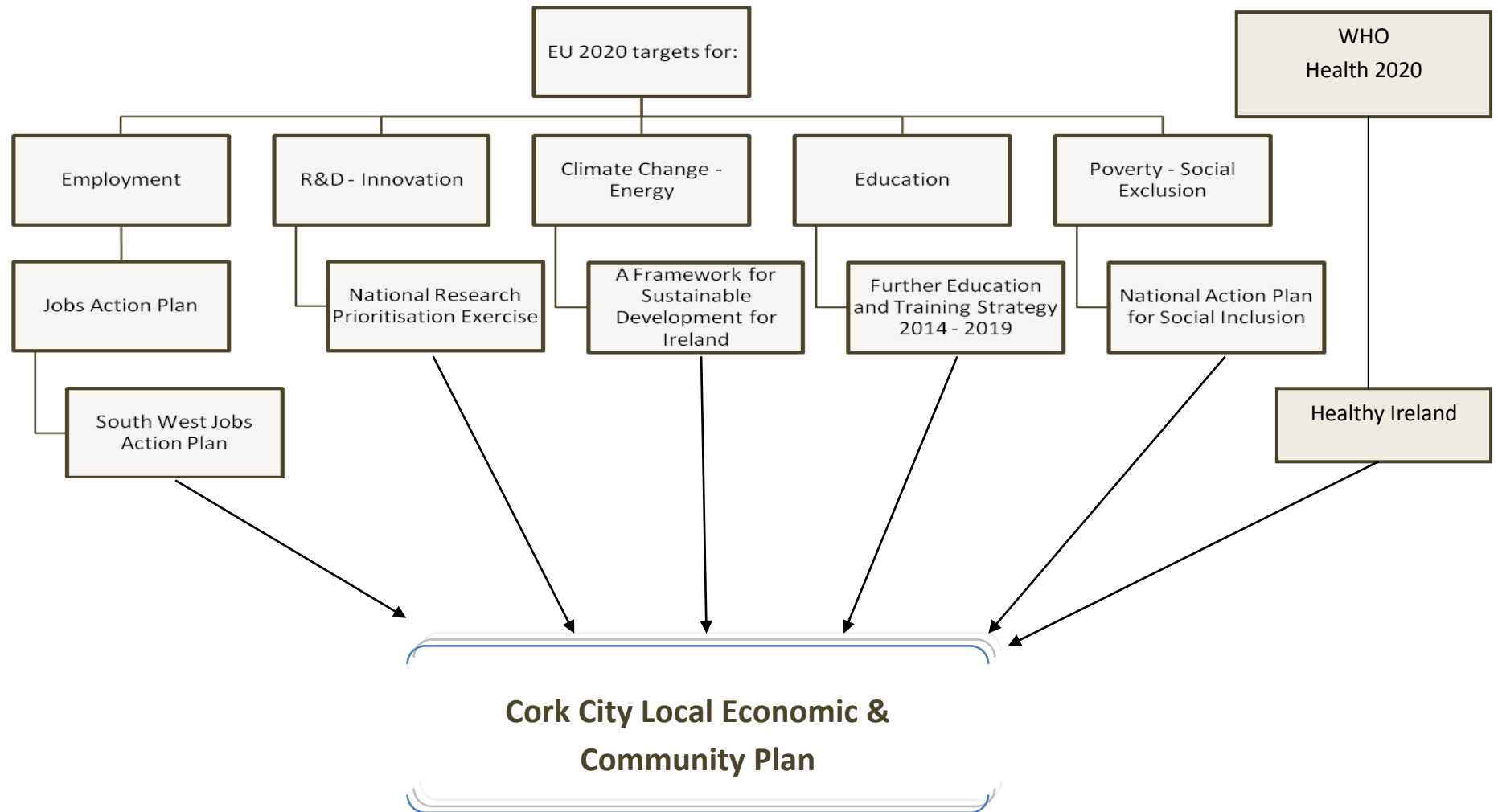
available resources where they are most needed and maximises benefits for communities.

1.2 PLANNING AND POLICY CONTEXT

The LECP must also take account of national, regional and local planning policies including:

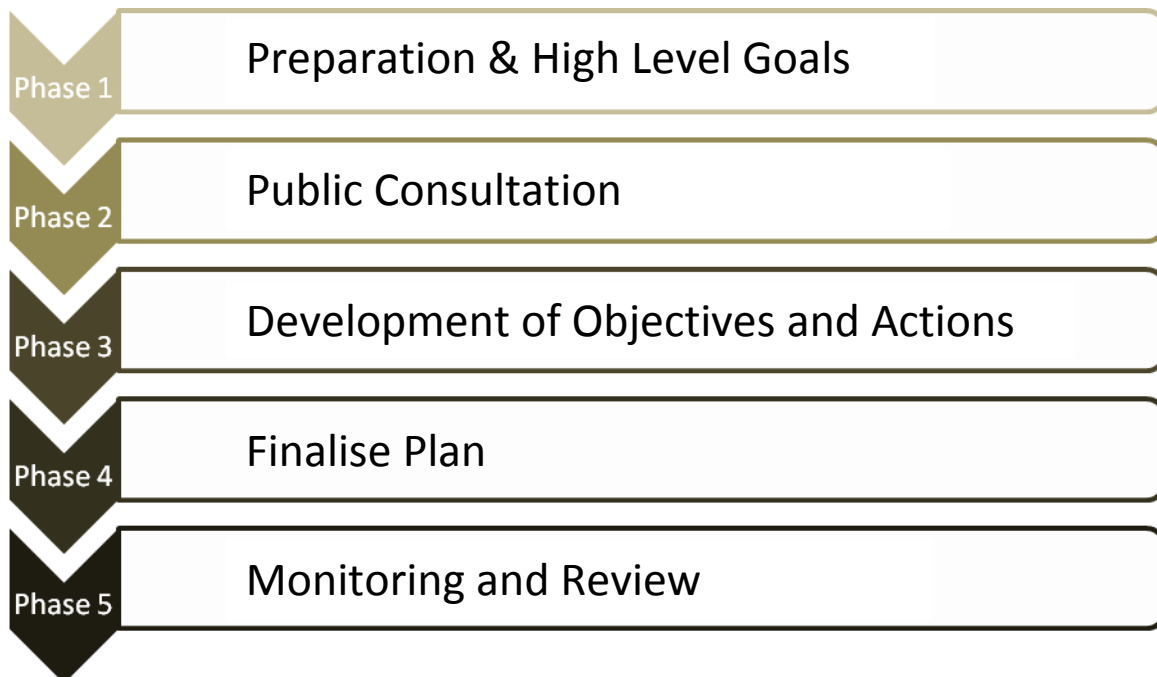


In addition to “Putting People First – the Action Programme for Effective Government”, the Cork City LECP will be informed by a number of European and national policy documents – the diagram below reflects just some of these.



1.3 STAGES

The process for the development of the LECP will involve five stages as follows:



1.4 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The LECP is underpinned by a number of guiding principles:

- **Sustainability** – promoting a more resource efficient, green and more inclusive **society and** economy
- Maximising returns by **co-operation, collaboration** and avoiding duplication
- **Participative ‘bottom-up’ approach**– ensuring meaningful community participation and consultation in the planning process
- The promotion and mainstreaming of **equality**
- Harnessing existing local and community development infrastructure to make **best use of resources**
- **Community development** principles – addressing social exclusion and providing supports for the most marginalised
- **Accessibility and ownership** – written in a straight forward style

1. SUMMARY PROFILE OF CORK CITY

Profile sourced from:

- Cork City Profile 2014 (A statistical and geographical profile of Cork City Local Authority area focused on Health and Social Inclusion)
- Cork Equal & Sustainable Communities Alliance (CESCA) Area Profile
- Cork City Partnership Area Profile
- Cork City Development Plan 2015-2021
- Cork Area Strategic Plan Update 2008
- Cork City Employment and Land Use Survey 2011
- South West Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022

2.1 HOUSING

Housing is a key cross cutting issue, for both the economic and local elements of this plan. This ranges from social housing to the private rented sector and right across the board.

The Cork housing market is experiencing an undersupply of both new and second-hand houses - new house construction in Cork is just 40% of the ESRI estimate of need. Demand for rental accommodation is rising while rental stock is diminishing with no new construction. Figures from DTZ Sherry Fitzgerald show the number of units available to rent per month in 2015 had fallen by approx 87% since the celtic tiger and was 70%

lower than the normal market figure. Demand for short term private rented accommodation in the City Centre is a particular issue.

- **16.12% (8,300)** of housing units are local authority rentals and these are highly concentrated in the Knocknaheeny, Mayfield, The Glen A, Gurrabraher C and Blackpool A EDs – all of which fall within, or border, RAPID designated areas. The total number of properties in the City is 51,500 (Local property Tax Statistics, July 2015)

2.2 DEMOGRAPHY

Cork is the second largest city in the state.

Cork City's population has declined from 123,062 in 2002 to 119,230 in 2011. However the overall population in the Cork metropolitan area has grown consistently over this period, reaching 289,739 in 2011.

The Age Dependency ratio of Cork City is significantly higher than the national average (21.4% versus 17.4%). This reflects the ageing nature of Cork City, where the amount of older people in proportion to the working age population is high. Cork City is ageing at the third fastest pace of all 31 administrative cities and counties. Almost one in three of those aged over 65 are living alone.

2.3 EDUCATION

Cork City benefits greatly from its status as a hub for third level institutions and learning. Cork City is a University city with two Higher

Education facilities: University College Cork and Cork Institute of Higher Technology (incorporating the Crawford College of Art & Design and Cork School of Music). Cork is also home to three Further Education colleges and some leading edge research institutes which have positioned the city well in terms of 'the knowledge economy'. Cork has a long established community education network, and adult and community education services are provided by numerous community and voluntary organisations.

There is a distinct spatial component to educational disadvantage in the city, with areas north of Cork City generally having lower education levels.

2.4 DISADVANTAGE

There is a distinct spatial component to disadvantage in the city. RAPID areas suffer disproportionately from deprivation, as well as the Northside more generally. Areas around Turner's Cross and Ballyphehane south of the River Lee also have pockets of deprivation. Recession has led to wider dispersal of disadvantage also.

In line with other urban areas, other groups at particular risk of poverty and deprivation are the unemployed, lone parents, those with lower levels of education, those living alone, those with a disability, Travellers and the immigrant community.

2.5 DIVERSITY

According to the 2011 Census there are 14,611 Non-Irish Nationals in the city, comprising 12.5% of its total population. Of this group, 25% are Polish, 29% are other EU 27 states, 13% from the UK and 29.54% are classified as 'Rest of the World' nationalities. However anecdotal evidence suggests the

number of Non-Irish nationals living in Cork City is considerably higher.

There were an estimated 789 members of the Traveller community in Cork as of 2011, which comprises 0.7% of the population. These groups are concentrated in small areas around Mahon, Hollyhill, Ballyvolane and Carrigrohane.

There are an estimated 12,000 gay, lesbian and bisexual people living in Cork City. These groups are identified as being discriminated against in relation to employment, education, accommodation, health and personal safety.

2.6 HEALTH OUTCOMES

In 2012, Cork City achieved Healthy Cities status. To achieve this status cities must demonstrate to the World Health Organisation that health is a core value for the city administration and that the vision, values and strategy for the city are translated into action for health through planning.

The 2011 Census reported 21,098 persons living with a disability in Cork City, representing 17.7% of the city's population and a 40.7% increase since 2006. This is significantly higher than the proportion State-wide, which was 13%. In general, disability rates increase with age and this is reflected in the age profile of those with a disability in Cork City. 35% are aged 65 and over, while 6% are in the 0-14 age group.

It is clear that populations living with a disability feature more prominently in RAPID areas, particularly in the Fairhill and Togher Electoral Divisions. Other clusters are evident between Montenotte and Mayfield, as well as in Turner's Cross, Ballyphehane and Greenmount.

The electoral divisions with the highest levels of their populations having 'fair', 'bad' or 'very

bad' general health are: Fair Hill B, Gurrabraher C, Gurrabraher B, City Hall A and Fair Hill A.

2.7 EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT

The 2011 Cork City Employment and Land Use Survey recorded a figure of 71,577 for total employment in Cork City. This represents a 2% decline compared to the 2006 employment total. While the number of people employed in the City Centre in 2011 had fallen by 13% since 2006, the Centre still accounted for almost 34% of all employment.

The 2011 survey shows a total of 4,331 employers in the city, which between them provide 71,577 jobs. 52% of companies surveyed employed less than 5 employees, and the vast majority (96%) employ less than 50. However it is notable that the remaining 4% of companies (which employ 50 people or more) account for 60% of the city's employment.

In 2011 professional services (primarily healthcare and education) accounted for 31% of the total employment. The next largest sector was retail which accounted for 14% of total employment – almost half of these jobs were located in the city centre.

Cork City had the second highest concentration of “unemployment blackspots” in the state (EDs where the proportion of unemployment is greater than 35%), based on the 2011 Census. These are concentrated in the Northside RAPID areas. While unemployment levels have fallen since 2011, it is reasonable to assume that this geographic concentration still persists.

2.8 ECONOMIC PROFILE

Cork City has a diverse economic base with strong concentration of activity in ICT, Life Sciences, International Services, Business Services, Education, Health and Retail sectors and is the main service centre for the South West Region. The wider city region also has a strong pharma and bio pharma sector. Cork has a strong record of attracting and retaining overseas companies such as Apple, EMC and Flextronics. The City is well placed to build on this base to further develop the Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and indigenous sectors.

Cork is identified as a gateway in the National Spatial Strategy and its economic influence reaches the entire region. The Regional Indicators Report 2013 shows that the South West Region has a well balanced economy with an even split between services and industry and a significantly higher Gross Value Added (GVA) per person than any other region except Dublin. This is largely due to the performance of the Greater Cork City area and indicates the importance of Cork City to the economic health of the region.

Cork has a strong business support eco system and was ranked no. 1 small European city for business friendliness by FDI Intelligence in 2014.

As a metropolitan retail centre Cork City provides a range of high order comparison shopping.

CORK CITY SOCIO-ECONOMIC SWOT ANALYSIS

STRENGTHS

- Strong record in attracting and retaining Foreign Direct Investment
- Strong business services networks/organisations, which actively support new business ventures and inward investing companies
- The Port of Cork is an EU designated Trans European Network Core Port and a nationally designated Tier 1 port which accommodates services across all six shipping modes
- International airport serving range of British and European scheduled destinations, including major business hubs of London Heathrow and Amsterdam Schipol
- A reputation for excellence in undergraduate and post graduate education, training, research and development
- Cork City has a very strong community and voluntary sector
- Excellent quality of life, with sports, cultural and recreational facilities with both the city centre and the countryside being within easy access
- Significant additional entrepreneurship support available
- Cork City has World Health Organisation (WHO) Healthy City Status and is pursuing WHO Age Friendly City Status. Cork also has a Food Policy Council
- Strong track record of inter agency collaboration in the City e.g. LGBT interagency working group
- Several centres of medical excellence located in the city
- EcCowell Cork promotes integrating strategies across economic, education health and environmental needs
- The River and waterways are easily accessible and greatly add to the attractive lifestyle and tourism offering. Cork's harbour is the world's second largest natural harbour and a major natural asset

WEAKNESSES

- Shortage of modern, large floor plate offices to meet the needs of inward investors and large indigenous companies
- Possible over dependence on Foreign Direct Investment
- Continuing concentration of disadvantage in certain geographic areas and among particular communities, while recession has also impacted the wider community and led to a wider dispersal of disadvantage.
- Decline in passengers and routes through Cork Airport
- Population has been gradually declining since 1979, with some evidence of stabilisation between 2006 and 2011
- Reduction in funding to the community and voluntary sector in recent years
- Significant lack of availability and access to quality, affordable housing in the city is a challenge including the short-term rented sector
- The age dependency ratio is much higher than the national average
- Risk of flooding in city centre

OPPORTUNITIES

- Potential for new residential and employment development through redevelopment and intensification of 'brownfield land' in areas such as the City Centre, Docklands, Mahon and Blackpool
- Development of a number of Tier 1 broadband connections in Cork
- Redevelopment of Port of Cork
- New office developments in City Centre and Mahon, as well as Significant retail developments planned
- Key development opportunities identified at Blackpool and Tivoli
- Development of new 6,000 seat events centre and implementation of City Centre Action Plan
- Leverage the existing research capabilities and overseas companies to support sustainable indigenous business growth
- Development of joint Cork City and County Tourism strategy and action plan
- Implementation of the Lower Lee (Cork City) Flood Relief Scheme (including Blackpool and Ballyvolane)
- Digital start-up hub in Parnell Place
- Triple helix – collaboration between government, business and higher education e.g. IT@Cork, Energy Cork
- Potential to develop the social economy
- Cork's participation in UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities

THREATS

- Development of disruptive technologies could impact on employment and attractiveness
- Rising costs could reduce Cork's competitiveness and attractiveness
- Insufficient investment in key enabling infrastructure and technology
- Competition from other City Regions
- Lack of housing to attract workers
- Dependence on small number of companies for high proportion of employment

2. HIGH LEVEL GOALS & PROPOSED THEMES

The integrated high level goals have been informed by the vision set out in the new Cork City Development Plan (2015-2021):

“

...

to be a successful, sustainable regional capital and to achieve a high quality of life for its citizens and a robust local economy, by balancing the relationship between community, economic development and environmental quality. It will have a diverse innovative economy, will maintain its distinctive character and culture, will have a network of attractive neighbourhoods served by good quality transport and amenities and will be a place where people want to live, work, visit and invest in

”

- ✦ That Cork will have vibrant, resilient, inclusive, sustainable communities where people have a good quality of life and access to quality public services
- ✦ To ensure balanced and sustainable economic development and employment in the city
- ✦ To promote social inclusion and equality by ensuring that all residents of Cork City have equal opportunities to access, participate and engage in the social, economic and lifelong learning opportunities in the city

These goals will be achieved through a range of objectives and actions that will be carried out under distinct themes (see diagram below). The focus will not be on the core business of any one agency but on cross cutting multi-agency areas of work, avoiding duplication and enhancing collaboration. A number of citywide multi-

agency structures are already in place under some of these themes. Many of these also have local participation structures in place e.g. the Joint Policing Committee holds local community safety fora. A key challenge is to create a range of public services that respond to changing local needs.



**Cork City
LECP**



Integrated LECP

Economic Element

To ensure balanced and sustainable economic development and employment in the city

Support the maintenance of a diverse economic base within the city

Support innovation in the local economy

Develop skills within the Cork area to match the needs of existing and future businesses. Provide support services for the unemployed and to help maintain and expand businesses in areas of high unemployment

Support measures to improve transport and telecommunications networks into and around Cork city and region

Build on Cork's strong place quality assets and improve the attractiveness of the city for residents and visitors

Co-operate with other stakeholders to deliver the strategic governance that ensures the Cork Gateway remains a competitive location for economic activity and also to maintain the excellent quality of life available in Cork which underpins the Gateway's competitiveness

Economic & Community Elements

Cork will have vibrant, resilient, sustainable communities where people have a good quality of life and access to quality services

To make sufficient housing available to meet ongoing private and social housing demand.

To ensure Cork is a healthy city that connects to improve the health and well-being of all its people and reduce health inequalities.

To integrate communities and community and voluntary groups into decision making and to promote civic participation and community engagement

To ensure Cork is a safe city with a secure environment in which to live, work and play.

To ensure the vibrant social economy sector is supported and enhanced

To create a culture of lifelong learning and enhance educational levels across the city

Community Element

To promote social inclusion and equality by ensuring that all residents of Cork city have equal opportunities to access, participate and engage in the social, economic and lifelong learning opportunities in the city

To develop integrated responses to the needs of children and young people and improve outcomes through local interagency working

To develop integrated responses to the needs of older people, promoting their inclusion and contribution in all areas of life and responding flexibly to ageing related needs and preferences

To reduce the marginalisation of specific communities within the city, taking into account the nine grounds and socio economic status