

***Director's Report to
the City Development Board
15th April 2009***



I wish to bring the following matters to the attention of the Board:

1. Update on the Cork City RAPID Programme

RAPID is now focused to deliver increased investment and improved public services under seven strategic themes, which are: -

- 1) Community safety and Anti-Social Behaviour***
- 2) Health***
- 3) Family Support***
- 4) Youth Support***
- 5) Physical Environment***
- 6) Education***
- 7) Employment and Training***

Community Safety

- Community Safety Forums and Community Safety Units continue to meet locally in each RAPID area.

Employment & Training

- Each RAPID area is establishing an employment and training task group, under the Citywide Youth Jobs Commitment – ReFocus Project. This will focus on a group of young unemployed people in each area, based on the successful pilot in Knocknaheeny.

Other

- Each RAPID area was allocated funding under the Dormant Accounts RAPID Additionality Fund. The amounts vary from €145,000 to €220,000. These projects were submitted in February and will hopefully be approved in late Spring.

2. CORK CITY LEARNING FORUM

Discovery 2009

The report on ‘Discovery 2008’ has been circulated to all stakeholders. Planning for Discovery 2009 has begun, with a submission to Forfás for funding: 30% of costs have been provided by their Discover Science and Engineering Programme in previous years. This years budget has been set at €130,000. Discovery is currently beginning to confirm the support of other previous partners. A new search for support from business organisations (ie IBEC) rather than individual companies will hopefully see a wider range of local corporates involved this year.

The event will be held from the 9th to the 18th of November, teaming with Science Week Ireland as before. Mathematics is the new focus for Science Week Ireland events this year, so the recent interest of the local IT community will be pursued, in order to make maths a greater part of activities planned.

Lifelong Learning Festival

The sixth Lifelong Learning Festival ran from the 30th March to April 5th, showcasing and celebrating all kinds of learning opportunities citywide.

Highlights of the event were:

The opening of the Festival, performed by Deputy Billy Kelleher T.D. and attended by several T.D.s, M.E.P.s, Senators and Councillors, including Cllr. P. Gosch deputising for the Lord Mayor.

Along with:

➤ ***One Book One Shandon:***

A range of events run on the Northside of the city in association with the Shandon/Cathedral/Blackpool education network and Home School Liaison family learning project. Michael Smith, author of the popular book 'Tom Crean-Iceman' came from the UK to talk to children who had been reading the book with their families; Cork Community Art Link co-ordinated an art project building an igloo out of milk cartons; local schools and libraries hosted children's art exhibitions alongside polar exploration equipment from Pat Falvey's Beyond Endurance team (recently returned from Antarctica). There was also a play written by students, and a quiz on the book.

➤ ***Seminar on Lifelong Learning in the Current Economic Environment:***

Run by CIT with speakers from UL and the national co-ordinator of VTOS

➤ ***Growing up in China:***

Chinese students currently attending UCC talk to local children about their culture.

➤ ***A Batty walk around the Lough:***

The perennial favourite in a new location

➤ ***Celebration of Traveller Culture:***

In Fitzgerald's Park on Sunday afternoon, featuring demonstrations, dancing and tours of the permanent exhibition

➤ ***Try Rowing:***

With Meitheal Mara's newly built longboat 'Fionnbara'

Principal sponsors are Cork City Council, City of Cork VEC, FETAC, CIT, FÁS. Participants include: the 11 Community Education Networks in disadvantaged areas of Cork; the Disability Education Network; UCC & CIT; Colleges & Centres of Further Education; schools; arts, sporting, cultural and heritage bodies; private organisations offering learning opportunities.

Later that day in the Triskel Arts Centre the announcement took place of a cross-border link between the Cork Festival and the West Belfast Community Festival, supported by Co-operation Ireland was celebrated with a visit by Danny Morrison, writer and Chairperson of Féile an Phobail, who gave a joint reading with Cork writer Declan Hassett.

Other current work: Cork City Learning Forum

- 1) School Completion brochure pack – aimed at spreading best practice to non-DEIS schools.
- 2) Investigating the feasibility of a year-round science initiative through collaboration with industry networks and EU partners.
- 3) Consultation with senior staff of state agencies and educators in the city on education and training responses to the current economic situation, set for late April.

The Learning Forum is also investigating actions to address education aspects of the current economic crisis. A high level meeting will take place in the coming weeks to share information on the responses of local agents such as FÁS, UCC, CCVEC, and IBEC. It is hoped to use information gathered at this session to improve service provision and thus smooth the way into upskilling, retraining or basic education and/or develop new processes which will add to information flow and service delivery for those challenged by the recession.

3. Integrated Target Group Plan for Travellers

Youth

The youth work project is now finalised. A seminar has taken place to highlight the best practice guidelines, raise awareness of traveller culture and to identify recommendations on how best to progress traveller youth work among agencies.

Education and Childcare

The traveler education project funding is due to be approved soon. A meeting is to take place with Owen McCarthy of Pobal. Following approval a contract will need to be signed between the City of Cork VEC, which will manage the finance and the TVG which will recruit and oversee the education worker. This recruitment process should have started by May.

Enterprise/Training and Employment

Following completion of the FÁS Construction Skills course, 6 of the original 12 participants are employed by Cork City Council as part of the Pilot Traveller Employment Project. The majority are now employed as General Operatives under 18 month contracts in a number of City Council Directorates. It is proposed that an external evaluation of this project will be

carried over the coming months. An application has been made to FÁS under the Special Initiative for Travellers Fund 2009. The former TESI Project (Traveller Employment Support Initiative) is now reporting to the Working Group and the application, if successful, will allow this project to continue in 2009. FÁS approval of the project is still awaited.

Accommodation/Health

Work on Health Impact Assessment is expected to start following agreement on a specific proposal in relation to a city halting site. A Final Report, prepared by AW Trotman Associates, on mapping and co-ordination of services to the Hollyhill halting site, has been received. The Report has been referred to the Working Group for further consideration. Work has started on planning a Consultation Day on developing a best practice model for service delivery at the site.

4. Service Needs of New Communities

The City's integration strategy "Connecting Communities" has been endorsed by the City Development Board. The Strategy Implementation Group will continue to meet to monitor progress.

The Cork Networking Committee (CNC) has held a series of facilitated meetings to clarify its strategies, goals, objectives and working methods. Two consultation days regarding a proposed new Cork City Intercultural Forum have been held. Work is progressing towards setting up an immigrant led Forum with an elected committee.

A notification of a grant of €40,000 to support integration of new communities has been received from the Minister for Integration, Mr. Conor Lenihan. It has been decided to target actions in the City's Integration Strategy for this funding. Work is ongoing on the 6 projects which have been approved by the Office of the Minister for Integration.

5. Cork City Marathon 1st June 2009

Cork City Marathon 2009 will be organised by a partnership of Cork City Council, the Athletics Association of Ireland (Cork County branch), the Cork Business Houses Athletics Association, an Garda Síochána and the Health Services Executive with the assistance of several other statutory and voluntary groups and over 300 individual volunteers.

The ongoing support of the Business community and the Cork public will be vital to ensure the increasing success and enjoyment of the day.

The Team Relay, in which up to 5 people can share the marathon course, is now a major feature of the event. Allowing people of most abilities to participate, the Team Relay promotes health and fitness, through moderate exercise, and encourages social inclusion and team participation for all involved. For the 2008 marathon, the organisers put several measures in place to promote social inclusion. These measures will again be supported and extended, through co-operation with the appropriate groups, for the 2009 Marathon.

6. Cork Common Ground Project

The Board is continuing efforts to progress this initiative. It is considering a number of possible locations in which to set up. A new Chair has joined the Board, Mr. Seamus Scally. Inspections and site visits are underway.

7. Economic Strategy Group

Staff are participating in the various projects of the Cork Marketing Partnership including the Convention Bureau and Cork City Cares.

An Economic Marketing Plan for the region has been prepared and is being presented to the various stakeholders for consideration.

9. Connect Cork

The mobile learning bus was a popular inclusion in the lifelong festival. It was situated in the Glen CDP and in Mahon CDP.

The computer courses in the libraries will be continued over the next term and participants will receive certification at a ceremony in May.

10. Report on Work of the Gay & Lesbian Steering Group

A resource pack to be presented to each of the agencies is being developed. It will be available to the agencies in the autumn with the view that its recommendations will be considered in the formulation of annual reports in those bodies and other reports.

11. Local Sports Partnership

The Local Sports Partnership's work is ongoing. Since the last meeting of the CDB, the Strategic Plan is now at Draft stage. It is hoped that the final draft will be complete within a couple of weeks and we look forward to a launch with a visit from John Treacy, in early May. Details to follow. The second term of Buntús is now complete with a total of 32 schools benefiting from the programme to date. The demand for the Code of Ethics Courses for Clubs in the City is growing daily with 8 courses being delivered in the first four months of the year.

12. Resource Centre for Youth Work

Discussions have restarted on a suitable location for a Resource centre for Youth Work.

13. Project ReFocus

An implementation plan has been prepared and funding is being sought. Mr Anthony Dinan Group Managing Director Thomas Crosbie Holdings has undertaken the role of independent chair of the City Wide Steering Group.

An initial meeting of the Core group has taken place. Members of the core group have agreed to chair the local task groups and six groups in all will be set up to include areas outside the RAPID areas .

The Knocknaheeny Employment and Training group is continuing to meet. A process of assessment and documentation of the experience to date in Knocknaheeny is being carried out by Uoner (Donagh mac Artain) to inform the further work .

A second group in Knocknaheeny has started the course while the working group continues to support those who have completed the first two courses.

14. Comhairle na nÓg

The Cork City Youth Council of Comhairle na nÓg continues to meet on a fortnightly basis. It has suggested aims to be considered for inclusion in the review of the CDB Review. These aims centre on the need to become more representative of young people and building links with the different agencies working in the City.

15. The Conversation on Democracy in Ireland

The Conversation on Democracy in Ireland Project is

- an initiative of... **the Jesuits in Ireland**
- to promote..... **a more reflective and effective democracy**
- by inviting...
 - **citizens**
 - **politicians**
 - **public servants**
- to reflect together..... **on public life**
- with a view to..... **creating insights**
- to be made accessible... **for wider discussion and debate**

Local Juries have been set up in Cork, Dublin and Louth with further pilots being arranged in Fingal, Donegal and Galway.

The twelve members of each Jury include 4 elected representatives, 4 appointed public officials and 4 leaders in the community and voluntary sector.

The local Cork Jury has already met for three sessions in January, February and March .A fourth session is planned for 30th April 2009.

The Jury has been addressing the following questions:

■ **What's working well?**

Can this Jury agree on one recent reform which is working well?

■ **What can be learnt from it?**

Can this Jury agree on what can be learnt from the success of this reform?

■ **Can we apply this learning?**

Can this Jury agree to apply this learning to another area of policy through the authority or activity of its members?

■ **Can this Jury agree on how to measure success or failure in this exercise?**

Following on from the fourth session in April 2009 it is proposed to hold a national event in Dublin in June/July 2009, for all the local Juries to meet and share insights and experiences learned from the first four sessions.

Jim O'Donovan

Director

City Development Board

3rd April 2009