

***Director's Report to  
the City Development Board  
23<sup>rd</sup> September 2009***



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

**1. Update on the Cork City RAPID Programme**

The report of the Special Group on Public Service Numbers and Expenditure Programmes, was published on Thursday 16th July 2009. The report contains measures designed to save the Government some €5.3 billion annually, with associated reductions of over 17,300 in public service numbers.

The report contains a range of proposals which will impact on RAPID communities. Fundamentally the report recommends the ***discontinuation of the RAPID Programme***. The group recommends that the scheme be discontinued, subject to contractual commitments, leading to an annual saving of €1.4m revenue and €6.1m capital, within the DCRGA. In addition, €3.2m funded through DEHLG towards salary costs of RAPID Co-Ordinators.

In addition the report recommends that, the ***Department of Community, Rural & Gaeltacht Affairs should be closed down*** and its functions redistributed across various Departments.

Also, the ***discontinuation of the Dormant Accounts Fund Board*** with remaining projects processed to their conclusion. Any remaining incoming dormant accounts funds should instead be transferred to the Exchequer.

There are a range of other proposals which would have a real and immediate impact on RAPID Communities and on the work carried out at local and community level with the most marginalised communities.

A special meeting of the City Monitoring Group has been called to address the recommendations contained in the report and the four AIT's, particularly the community representatives on the AITs have undertaken to outline the benefits of the programme.

In the meantime, the RAPID programme continues to deliver at a local level and the following brief updates are reported:

### ***Community Safety***

- **Community Safety Forums** and Community Safety Units continue to meet locally in each RAPID area. Further safety forums will be held in October.

### ***Health:***

- The *Health Action Zones*, led by the HSE, continue to operate well with several practical on the ground actions being carried out with the support of local advisory groups e.g. walking groups, health checks, healthy eating courses etc.
- The RAPID/HSE leverage fund is managed by the HSE. Some of the local projects include community buses, meals on wheels etc. Most of the projects are being implemented while others have been delayed.

### ***Employment & Training Theme***

- The ReFocus Project training and employment project is a focused programme for 18 to 25 year olds. It is being rolled out in six parts of the city, including the four RAPID areas. It is a 'whole community' approach with all the relevant local agencies involved. Participants are currently being recruited with the first programme due to begin in October.

- Minister O' Cuiv launched the Employment & Training Theme in June. In Cork, this will be closely linked to the ReFocus Project, although other initiatives may also be possible.
- A new music course for young people will be starting in Knocknaheeny in October.

### ***Physical Environment***

- The Lord Mayor, Cllr Dara Murphy, will officially open the new Gurrabraher/Churchfield Youth & Community Centre (the Hut) on Friday, September 25<sup>th</sup>.
- Five tenants have recently taken occupancy of the new Knocknaheeny community building and are delivering services.

### ***Education***

- The 3 Northside RAPID areas are working on a joint pilot project with Cork City Partnership whereby interactive whiteboards will be installed in four schools, three national and one post primary. This is funded through the Dormant Accounts Fund.
- The 3 Northside RAPID areas are working with Junior Achievement on a new initiative with three post primary schools. It is called 'Enterprise Challenge' and focuses on the economic benefits of staying in school.
- A proposal for an early language and learning project in the Glen has been developed by local agencies. The proposal is called 'Happy Talk'. Philanthropic funding has recently been secured for part of this. The group is chaired by Dr. Áine Hyland.

## **2. CORK CITY LEARNING FORUM**

1. The 5<sup>th</sup> Discovery Science exhibition is set for 9-20 November this year. Sourcing funding has proven very difficult, and more support is still needed to ensure the event meets the huge demand for interactive science - organisers expect attendance of over 8,000 again this year. The centrepiece of the fortnight's events is the City Hall exhibition, which will open on Saturday, the 14<sup>th</sup> of November at 11.30 am. CDB members will be invited.

Activities begin with a London Science Museum show in Millennium Hall, on November 9 & 10, organised by UCC. The EU touring 'Fusion Expo' will be the special feature of Discovery 2009, sited in the Elysian building from November 17-20. This will highlight Cork's place as a major centre for Fusion technology research, and follows the exhibition's display in Paris, Prague and Dublin.

2. The School Completion brochure pack is still in the editing phase.

3. A proposal is in development for EU FP7 funding. The proposed project, with partners in France, Italy and the Netherlands, aims to develop educational computer games.

4. Collaboration with the Adult Education Exhibition in early September was a great success. Acknowledging the increase in numbers needing to upskill or return to education at the moment, the CCLF added a 'training' theme to proceedings, including seminar sessions, 1-1 guidance and information on entitlements. The event was featured on TV3 News as an example of agencies tackling unemployment.

## **3. Integrated Target Group Plan for Travellers**

### ***Youth***

The youth sub committee meets regularly. Following on from the Traveller Youth Work project it recently agreed to establish a network of youth workers in the city that will focus on implementing the learning from the project.

The report on the youth work project is to be published shortly and the committee is looking to plan a high profile launch later this year.

### ***Education and Childcare***

An education worker, Niamh Crudden, has been recruited to work with Traveller families to try to encourage children to stay in school to Junior Cert and beyond. The worker is being managed by the Traveller Visibility Group. Niamh will work closely with the Visiting teacher to Travellers service of the department of education and the mentors, who are working as part of a complementary project supported by UCC CIT and the Cork City Partnership.

### ***Enterprise/Training and Employment***

A grant of €186,700 has been approved by the FAS Special Initiative To Travellers. Previous grants were previously administered by the FAS TESI Committee. The interagency Enterprise Training and Employment sub committee will now oversee the project. The project will be managed by the Bessborough Centre.

4 traveller men are employed as general operatives following on from the completion of a FÁS Construction Skills course. It is intended that they will remain in employment with Cork City Council until October 2010.

### ***Accommodation/Health***

The report on the coordination of services at Hollyhill Halting site has been published (Trotman Report). The Accommodation and Health subcommittee is currently considering how the recommendations of this report can be implemented.

#### **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.

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

The Cork Networking Committee (CNC) held a series of facilitated meetings to clarify its strategies, goals, objectives and working methods. Two consultation days regarding a proposed new Cork City Integration Forum were held. This process culminated on 20th June with the acceptance of the Forum's Terms of Reference and election of an executive committee. 21 immigrant, statutory and voluntary groups attended and registered for the new Forum. Planning for the first full Forum meeting is ongoing.

An event to mark World Refugee Day was held on the same day in the Central Library, Grand Parade, following the Forum meeting. It consisted of a display of photographs and a presentation about the work of the UNHCR. The Lord Mayor, Councillor Dara Murphy addressed a gathering of 60 people which was followed by music and dancing from Afghanistan, Chechnya and Africa.

#### **5. Cork City Marathon 7<sup>th</sup> June 2010**

Preparations for Cork City Marathon 2010 are underway, again organised by Cork City Council, with the Cork Athletics Association of Ireland, 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 is anticipated to ensure the growing success of this event.

The 2009 title sponsor, Bord Gáis Energy, has already committed to the 2010 marathon, which will be officially launched in November. With support from BGE we hope to raise the local, national and international profile of the marathon, enticing more participation from home and abroad.

As in previous years, the organisers will put several measures in place to promote social inclusion. An important aspect of that promotion will be to focus on newly unemployed people in and around Cork City. Health, fitness and moderate exercise will be encouraged through the Team Relay Event. We hope to work closely with LeisureWorld Cork again to offer affordable training schemes for potential participants.

Despite a substantial decline in sponsorship in 2009, significant savings were made to bring the event in on budget. We will seek to increase the numbers again for 2010 and to achieve further savings through vigilant management of the 2010 budget. Overall participation has increased rapidly in the three years of this event, and the support of Bord Gáis Energy as title sponsor has helped ensure the viability and success of the Race as we look forward to June 7<sup>th</sup> 2010.

## **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. Marketing of the Cork Region**

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 Connect Cork Committee is made up of representatives of Community & Enterprise, Cork City VEC and the Cork City Library. The computer courses for beginners will take place in the City Libraries again this Winter. FÁS have expressed an interest in running their online courses to library users. The course will be pitched at experienced computer.

The connection with FÁS in this case helps to widen the range of the Connect Cork activities and augurs well for the future this approach in promoting the use of computers in the community.

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

The L.G.B. steering group is coordinating a two pronged awareness campaign. The first will include the development of a brochure highlighting the resources available from the Cork Gay Mens Project and LinC. This campaign will also include a poster campaign.

The second will involve the development of a document to be distributed to staff, with responsibility for putting annual reports together, to guide them in how to specifically highlight where services are being accessed by the gay and lesbian communities. It is intended that this document will be made available to the agencies before the end of September.

## **11. Local Sports Partnership**

The Local Sports Partnership's work is ongoing. Since the last meeting of the CDB, they are working on implementing the Strategic Plan following the Operational Plan set out for 2009. This involves the delivery of a number of programmes locally with the aim of increasing

participation in Sports and Physical Activity. The Cork City Sports Partnership will launch its website [www.corksports.ie](http://www.corksports.ie) in early October.

## **12. Project ReFocus**

Under the chairmanship of Mr. Athony Dinan. The City wide Steering Group has met on several occasions to clarify the work programme and support the implementation of the workplan. A revised budget and funding arrangement are being considered. Partner agencies have committed to supporting the programme as far as possible. The six local task groups have been meeting and clarifying their target groups and identifying participants to start the programme in September.

The Knocknaheeny Employment and Training group is continuing to meet. A process of assessment and documentation of the experience to date in Knocknaheeny has been carried out by Uoner (Donagh MacArtain) to inform further work. The assessment has been widely circulated for information and discussion.

A special meeting of the Knocknaheeny Task Group was held in Thomas Crosbie Holdings which was attended by members of other task groups to outline the overall process and inform the new members.

## **13. Comhairle na nÓg**

The Comhairle na nÓg group will meet again this September. The plan for Comhairle in the winter is to

- o build the capacity of the young people themselves to run their own Comhairle meetings,
- o create a steering group that will provide interagency focus for the development of the group
- o create a more representative forum by focussing on the recruitment of hard to reach young people.

An application for funding has been made to the Office of the Minister for Children and Youth affairs. A decision on funding will be made in October. This funding is required to ensure that our two part-time facilitators will continue in the job.

## 14. 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 were set up in Cork, Dublin, Louth 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.

In Phase 1 of the project (January to May 2009), each Local Jury met on three occasions.

A national Review Day was held at Farmleigh House, Phoenix Park in Dublin on 29<sup>th</sup> June 2009 where the four Local Juries came together, along with the Council for the Conversation on Democracy, to discuss their experience of the Project to date and to share insights.

Phase 2 of the project will roll out between September and December 2009. It is intended that the four Juries will hold three further sessions each. In the second phase of the Project, the juries are being asked to change their focus. With this in mind, the Facilitators will be inviting each of the Juries to consider the following three questions:

- Any insights?
- What has been achieved?
- How can this process be continued?

The Cork Local Jury is due to meet on 12<sup>th</sup> October 2009.

## **15. Cork City Joint Policing Committee**

Cllr. Patricia Gosch has been elected Chair of the new Cork City Joint Policing Committee. Guidelines for Local Policing For a have been received and will be brought to the next meeting of the Joint Policing Committee.

*Jim O'Donovan*

*Director  
City Development Board*

*23<sup>rd</sup> September 2009*