

***Director's Report to  
the City Development Board  
21<sup>st</sup> September 2011***



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

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

***Local Programme Update:***

**Community Safety**

- Community Safety Fora and Community Safety Units continue to meet and respond to local issues.
- District Policing Fora Management Committees also continue to meet. These liaise with and report to the Joint Policing Committee and are tied in with the RAPID process
- The City Council has made arrangements to extend the community warden service until the end of the year. Local communities are delighted with this outcome. Some funding has also been secured towards elements of the service for 2012 and further funding will be considered in the context of the budgetary process.

**Physical Environment**

- The City Council's partnership with the probation service to remove graffiti in the RAPID areas continues to operate well and this has recently been extended to cover the City Centre in conjunction with Cork Business Association. The probation service also assist in a number of environmental projects in the RAPID areas.

- Work is underway in conjunction with Cork City Council's Housing and Community Directorate to establish a community garden in Knocknaheeny in partnership with NICHE and the local community.
- Community Wardens are working with residents group and local communities to undertake regular estate-based clean-ups.
- The current phase of the Glen Regeneration will be completed at the end of 2012. This will include a large community services centre which will house a number of local educational, family and youth services. Consultation on the Northwest Regeneration plan also took place over the summer with large numbers attending the meetings.

## **Education**

- A 'Sport in Your Community Course' has been developed through RAPID, the Local Sports Partnership, Cork City Council's Sports development Officer and the local education networks. The course provides a 10 week course for unemployed adults in the local area who want to get involved in sport at a community level. Running two days per week, the course provides a range of essential skills such as first aid, active leadership, code of ethics and also includes some coaching qualifications. The first course has been completed in Gurrabraher and the next course will begin in Mayfield at the end of September.
- RAPID has been working with Munster Rugby, Cork City Council, HAZ and Cork City Sports Partnership who have agreed to fund the development of domestic rugby across the north-side of the City. Work has begun on targeting some of the post primary schools in the areas.
- Funding has been approved through the National Early Years Access Initiative for an early learning and language development project in the Mayfield/the Glen RAPID area. €400,000 has been secured over three years with matching philanthropic funding. Staff are currently being recruited. The project is led by Cork City Partnership with a multi-agency steering group.

## **Youth**

- Youth Cafés and youth networks continue to be supported through RAPID in each area. New youth cafes are currently being developed in Farranree and Ballyphehane.
- Late night soccer initiatives will shortly be in place in four RAPID areas – Mayfield, Mahon, Knocknaheeny and Togher. This is supported by

Cork City Council, the City of Cork VEC, Ogra Chorcaí, an Garda Síochána, RAPID and local youth groups.

- A Youth information night will be held in Mayfield in the Kerrigan Tyrell Youth Centre on Monday, September 26<sup>th</sup>. Various local youth and sporting groups will have stands at this.

### **Employment & Training**

- Graduation ceremonies for the 2010/2011 Project ReFocus students took place in June. The next round of Project ReFocus will begin in October with information sessions being held in each area.
- Cork RAPID has been asked to make a presentation at an OECD employment conference which will be held in Dublin on October 13<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup>. It is titled 'Building Quality Jobs in the Recovery' and is organised by the OECD LEED Programme in co-operation with the Irish Departments of Environment, Community and Local Government, Social Protection, Children and Youth Affairs and Pobal. RAPID has been asked to make a presentation in relation to collaborative responses within communities to ensure labour market inclusion.

### **Health**

- The Mayfield/the Glen Health Action Zone, led by the HSE, continues 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. There has been a significant focus on developing a community gardens. HAZ also arranged for five people from the RAPID areas to participate in the Belfast marathon, in conjunction with Cork City Council and Co-operation North.
- A new worker has recently been recruited for the Friendly Call service and promotion will begin again on the service shortly.

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

### **Lifelong Learning Festival**

9<sup>th</sup> Cork Lifelong Learning Festival will take place from Monday March 26 to Sunday April 1, 2012. This year's festival reached a new level of recognition as it was opened by President Mary MacAleese. It was the biggest yet, with more than 395 events taking place across the city. Some participants organise more than one or even a series of events; and each year new participants join those already committed to their involvement. So it continues to grow each year.

Among highlights in 2011 were the two cross-border projects, the result of the Cork festival's twinning with Féile an Phobail. The Mahon Men's Art Group worked with four mural artists from the Belfast Artists' Collective to create a mural in the car park next to Blackrock Castle during the festival. It was officially unveiled by the Lord Mayor of Cork Cllr Terry Shannon in August, when he wished the group well as they journeyed to Belfast, where they worked with the same artists to create a mural just off the Falls Road. Meitheal Mara welcomed two groups of youngsters, drawn from the two communities in the North to a currach building workshop in Cork in July. The project was to have commenced during the festival in April but was postponed due a bereavement. Pdraig & Seamus from Meitheal Mara travelled to Belfast during August Féile to work with the young people to complete their currachs, which were then launched by the Mayor of Lisburn. The Cork Lifelong Learning Festival is now being copied by other cities. Limerick held its first festival in June, having asked for advice and suggestions while planning it and the Co-ordinator has been asked to give a presentation to Waterford VEC in late September, which is thinking of organising something similar.

### **Discovery**

Plans are proceeding for the 7th Discovery Science Festival, a main partner in Science Week Ireland. Extended to two weeks this year, workshops for schools will run 7-11 and 14-18 November, while the City Hall exhibition runs from the 12 to 15<sup>th</sup> of November. Associated events of the wider science communication community in Cork (Eg. UCC, BCO) continue under the Discovery banner to the 19<sup>th</sup> November, finishing with a family day in Eli Lilly's Kinsale plant.

The VIP family launch takes place at 11 am on Saturday the 12<sup>th</sup> of November, when board members, with children and students in their families, will be welcome to explore the fun side of learning about science at Discovery in the company of civic, business and education leaders. Invitations will issue in due course. Family session will continue for the

weekend 12-14 November, with schools visiting the exhibition on the following 2 days.

Constantly evolving and expanding, under difficult economic constraints, Discovery is aiming to secure several new sponsors, exhibitors and projects this year, specifically more involvement from the IT community in Cork, and more on teaching IT to teachers and students. The event also expects to have more activities for older students this year, hoping to be visited by a NASA astronaut as part of a careers day. Final arrangements are currently in progress.

Information will appear on the website in early October.

Those in Cork involved in science communication (Discovery, the Cork Science Café and other projects) presented a Best Practice study at the 2011 Engineers Ireland STEM communication conference last June. The presentation was very well received.

Due to the high level of communication between those working in this field, the group has begun to use the name 'ScientificaLEE' for joint actions, the most recent being the production of a science events calendar which was posted to schools for the new term.

Notice on the group's proposal to Dublin City of Science 2012 is expected by the end of September. The proposed event, a citywide summer arts/science event entitled CuriousCity, has received strong support from arts organizations such as the Midsummer festival, Glucksman gallery and Triskel arts centre. Activities proposed explore science in the arts and arts in the sciences, along with public participation events, for example commissioning of music and dramatic pieces on scientific themes and a science-themed public participation world record attempt. An open-air family event is also planned.

The Discovery co-ordinator has completed her time as chair of the Cork Festivals Forum. The Festivals Forum are successfully progressing several projects in association with the City Council TEAM unit and Failte Ireland, as well as promoting Cork's Festivals around the City in an integrated manner.

The Cork City Learning Forum held a stand at the September Adult Education & Training Exhibition, which was very well attended this year. The Cork Adult Education Council, VEC and Learning Forum developed a workshops thread to the event in 2010, and this was successfully repeated this year. Topics included CV workshops, future skills needs, as well as sessions for school leavers and for unemployed men.

The Learning Forum will hold a Plenary Session on October 13 on the subject of how education, training and social supports are responding to the current employment crisis. This follows the 2010 session on the same theme, which

was attended by 67 members of the education, training and support communities in Cork, who exchanged information and made recommendations for action. One such recommendation was the production of a signposting leaflet to collate information for job/education seekers on the subject of available supports. This leaflet, sponsored by the VEC, has been distributed through relevant centres (FAS, Social Protection, Community Centres) and at events.

### **3. Cork City Inter Agency Services Plan for Travellers**

Only one meeting of the Traveller Interagency Steering Group has taken place this year because of concerns relating to its effectiveness in delivering effective integrated services. Sub group interagency meetings continue in the areas of Education, Youth Needs and Traveller Cultural Awareness. The Health and Accommodation sub group group has not met recently due to a lack of clarity about a way forward.

The meeting of the steering group highlighted a number of issues that are affecting the coordinated delivery of services to Travellers. These include the lack of a national high level co-ordinating group to ensure the participation of all the agencies working with members of the Traveller community. The level of seniority of attendees at steering group meetings is also an issue in terms of progressing initiatives.

A meeting has been held at a senior level to consider the issues involved. Further action is required to ensure progress

### **4. Service Needs of New Communities**

#### **Going Forward**

Following its review of the Cork City Integration Strategy the CCIS Monitoring Group is proceeding to develop a strategy for the period 2012-2014.

The first step in the strategy development is to host an integration seminar to which agency heads are invited to discuss the need for a clear city wide agenda around integration.

The conference is aimed at heads of agencies, those working directly with the new communities and those that have a broader remit in social inclusion within the City.

The conference aims to outline current practice at local, national and European level. A workshop will be devised to get feedback from participants as to the main challenges to integration in Cork City and solutions to overcome them.

The conference will be held on the morning of September 26<sup>th</sup> and all CDPB members have been invited.

It is also hoped to get a commitment from agencies to take part in the City Integration Strategy Group in developing the strategy.

## **5. Cork City Marathon 6<sup>th</sup> June 2011**

The Bord Gáis Energy Cork City Marathon 2011 has been an outstanding success. With the City Council as major sponsor and Bord Gáis Energy as title sponsor, 1,700 marathon runners, 1,200 half marathoners and 900 teams of up to five people took part in the race. The event was also supported by 96FM/C103, the Evening Echo, the River Lee Hotel, Keary's Renault, and Mahers Sports.

As in previous years, over 350 volunteers, including a record number of City Council staff, helped out at Registration and on race-day working as stewards, race officials and water-station helpers. Over 150 voluntary staff provided a first-class and comprehensive medical-response service for the race. A cast of over 100 musicians provided entertainment for the runners around the course.

*Registration Expo:* The two-day registration in City Hall was enhanced by an Expo with over 15 exhibitors displaying sports and fitness merchandise and stalls offering expert advice.

*Half Marathon:* The success story this year was the introduction of a half marathon (13.1 miles/21km) on the same course as the marathon. The event was so popular that the numbers had to be capped at 1,200 to ensure a safe and manageable race. The reaction from the race stewards and participants was overwhelmingly positive and the half marathon will be retained for future years.

*Local Co-ordination Centre (LCC):* The LCC at the Central Fire Station was used for the first time and served as the Race Control Centre for the emergency services and race officials. The centralised communication and CCTV coverage of parts of the course proved very useful and was a very positive exercise for all involved.

*Finances:* Financially, the marathon continued the progress made in 2009 and 2010, making a surplus of c. €15,000 which is set against the loss made in the first two years of the event (2007, 2008). The budget again included a contribution of €10,000 each to the two main Cork athletics bodies (Athletics Ireland and the Business Houses Athletics Association), thereby substantially supporting athletics in the county. It is also noted that the success of the marathon continues to promote year-long running in Cork and the surrounding counties, with record entries in almost all road races throughout 2010/2011.

*Social Inclusion:* With the support of the Cork Sports Partnership, 13 teams of 5 members from the HSE-supported *Meet and Train* and *Fit4Life* groups took part in the 2011 team relay. The *Meet and Train* programme encourages women to take part in moderate, regular exercise. While the groups are open to women from all areas of the city and county, they are aimed especially at those in less affluent areas. Concession fees of 50% were offered and the Sports Partnership covered the cost of entry.

There was a massive increase in the number of people availing of the 50% concession fee offered to those who are unwaged and in receipt of benefit. While there were only 21 concession fees in the 2010 marathon, 161 concessions were given this year.

*International Recognition:* In 2011 the Cork Marathon became a member of AIMs, the Association of International Marathons. This gives the race international recognition as an IAAF-accredited (International Association of Athletics Federations) event and, consequently, the 2012 race will be included on the list of Olympic-qualifying marathons.

*Environmental Action:* There were also positive steps taken to improve the environmental credentials of the event. By increasing the paper-entry fee by €5 and developing a new online entry system with a cheaper transaction charge, there were significantly fewer paper entries. Eighty-two percent of all entries were online. We hope to increase this further over the next couple of years and to phase out all paper entries eventually.

It was also decided to reduce the number of plastic bottles at water stations on the course by supplying water from mains at half the stations. Generally, runners don't like the use of cups but most appreciate that using 54,000 plastic bottles, as in 2010, is environmentally undesirable. By balancing the

use of bottles and mains strategically, a safe and plentiful supply of water was ensured.

The marathon shirts this year added to the environmental credentials of the race – each shirt was made from four recycled plastic bottles! The high-quality, breathable Under Armour shirts were sourced and provided by Bord Gáis Energy.

*Business & Tourism:* The pub and food traders in the city centre had another exceptionally busy afternoon and evening on race day, with several pubs offering free food and a celebratory drink to participants after the race.

Overseas participant numbers didn't increase over 2010 but were maintained at about 10%. We are currently exploring advertising opportunities abroad to target foreign visitors and increase the numbers for 2012.

*2012 Event:* A review meeting attended by all the partners was held on 9<sup>th</sup> September. There was a general consensus to continue with the June bank holiday Monday and next years marathon will be held on Monday, June 4<sup>th</sup> 2012.

## **6. Cork Commonground Project**

The board of Cork Commonground Ltd. has surveyed community groups to ascertain the level of interest in taking up accommodation in the North Mon Building. It is meeting to consider the outcome of the survey and to decide its way forward.

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

A seminar aimed at employers is being arranged for the 17<sup>th</sup> of October to raise awareness of the value of including LGB staff equally in the workforce. The seminar will include contributions from Apple Computers, EMC<sup>2</sup>, Garda G-Force, An Garda Síochána and the INTO. It is hoped that senior managers in personnel and equality officers from around the country will attend this seminar.

## **8. Project ReFocus**

A further phase of Project ReFocus is underway. The local task groups are continuing to meet and to support the participants and the mentors. The membership of the city wide group has been changed and the group has met to consider its priorities. Ongoing support will be provided by Denis Barrett of the city of Cork VEC.

## **9. The Conversation on Democracy in Ireland**

In July 2011, Edmond Grace met with Director of Community & Enterprise, Jim O'Donovan , in Cork to discuss the future development of the project. Plans are underway to progress same under the new name called "**People Talk**". We are currently awaiting further information on these developments.

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

The joint Policing Committee met in committee on 5th September 2011 and received reports from the various local District Policing Management Committees, the City Council and the Garda Siochana. A Horse Forum is being established and will meet for the first time on September 21<sup>st</sup>.

## **11. Comhairle na nÓg**

The Comhairle na nÓg Annual General Meeting will take place on the 11<sup>th</sup> of October. This AGM will attract an attendance of approximately 100 second level students. The Youngsters will decide the themes that will guide them in their work in 2012.

The group is close to finalizing its consultation with young people on the types of space young people would like. It is hoped to forward this to groups that make decisions on the types of accommodation that young people access.

## **12. Healthy Cities**

The city health profile is nearing completion. This profile will lead the agenda

## **13. Music as a Tool for Social Inclusion**

The application for funding by the Cork City Music Education Partnership under the U2 and Ireland funds National Music Education Programme has been unsuccessful. However the application scored very highly. A call for further applications has been made and the MEP is preparing a revised application.

## **14. Community Participation (Making it work in Cork)**

A number of different initiatives are under consideration to make more inclusive community participation.

**Community Website** – The Community Website [www.corkcommunities.ie](http://www.corkcommunities.ie) is now up and running. This website will facilitate community groups to post news items and updates on the website. Work to promote the website will carry on throughout the winter.

**Supports to Community Associations** - The Community & Enterprise Directorate is currently considering ways in which its staff can be made available to support community associations.

**Community Grants** – Cork City Council has approved grants of €142,500 for Community Associations and €39,400 for smaller grants for projects by community groups on September 12<sup>th</sup>.

***Jim O'Donovan***

*Director  
City Development Board*

*21<sup>st</sup> September 2011*