

Introductory Note re template for a joint protocol between a Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) and a relevant local statutory structure, committee or other body established by a State organisation

The attached template is a guide to the structure of a local interagency protocol to establish engagement arrangements between a Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) and a local statutory structure, committee or other body established by a State organisation, that is involved in local or community development and that is not a member of an LCDC. Engagement will relate to the development and implementation of the community element of the Local Economic and Community Plan. **This template is a guide and can be further amended and adapted to local circumstances depending on the role and function of the body concerned and the nature of its relationship with the LCDC.**

The success of interagency protocols will be largely dependent on a climate of commitment and cooperation between LCDCs and these bodies. All concerned must be willing to work together to build and maintain good working relationships.

Template for a joint protocol between [XX] Local Community Development Committees (LCDC) and [YY] local statutory structure, committee or other body established by a State organisation, that is involved in local or community development

Introduction and Context

The Local Government Reform Act 2014 provides for the establishment of LCDCs in all local authority administrative areas *“for the purposes of developing, coordinating and implementing a coherent and integrated approach to local and community development.”*

In this regard, each LCDC brings together local authority members and officials, State agencies and people actively working with local development, community development, and economic, cultural and environmental organisations to implement a joined-up, cross-sectoral approach to the planning and implementation of local and community development programmes and interventions. In this context, a key function of the LCDC is to prepare and implement the community element of a Local Economic and Community Plan (the Plan) in line with guidelines issued by the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (ref LG 1/2015; AL 1/2015).

In pursuit of a collaborative approach and coherent response to local priorities, the planning and implementation role of local statutory structures, committees or other bodies established by a State organisation, that are involved in local or community development activity is recognised as important in the context of the work of the LCDCs. Such stakeholders could include bodies such as Children and Young Peoples Services Committees; Traveller Inter-Agency Groups; Drugs and Alcohol Task Forces and Joint Policing Committees (this list is not exhaustive). However, as LCDC membership is tightly defined, it is not possible to provide a representative seat for all such bodies, so in order to optimise the coordinated planning of their work, it is important to have appropriate linkages and engagement between them and LCDCs.

The key interaction between the LCDCs and the above mentioned bodies will be through the development and ongoing implementation of the Plan.

Purpose of Protocol

This protocol sets out the arrangements and responsibilities of local statutory structures, committees or other bodies established by a State organisation that are involved in local or community development activity, in regard to inter-agency co-operation in the context of the work of LCDCs and the preparation and implementation of the community element of the Local Economic and Community Plan (the Plan).

Parties to the Protocol

This protocol is an agreement between [XX LCDC] and [YY structure].

Key Principles

The parties to this protocol should be guided by the following key principles:

- an understanding of their respective roles and responsibilities;
- an understanding of local sub-county/city issues and concerns;
- a focus on outcomes for local communities through the implementation of the community element of the Plan;
- mutual respect of each other's validity and interests;
- working together in a spirit of meaningful cooperation and open, transparent communication;
- respect for equity and diversity;
- decision making should be based on consensus.

Roles and Responsibilities

Local Community Development Committee

[XX LCDC] seeks to pursue a collaborative approach in response to identified local priorities, and to work in partnership with [YY structure] to bring about a coherent approach to delivering services which addresses these priorities.

In this context, as part of the consultation process for the development of the Plan set out in guidelines issued by the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (ref: LG 1/2015; AL 1/2015), [XX LCDC] will engage with [YY structure] in its consideration of the community elements of the Plan to agree strategic priorities and actions that will be included in the Plan and implemented by the relevant member agencies of [YY structure]. [XX LCDC] also undertakes to engage with [YY structure] on an on-going basis to monitor the implementation of the agreed action(s), and to agree revisions, where necessary, to these actions arising from changes to local conditions.

Local Structure [insert title]

Insert role/mandate/responsibilities of local structure

Agreement

The parties to this protocol agree to put in place arrangements to support the better coordination of service delivery at local level and bring a more joined-up approach to the implementation of the community element of the Local Economic and Community Plan (the Plan) for [insert county/city area].

To this end, the parties to this protocol commit to the following:

- [XX LCDC] will consult with [YY structure] in relation to the Plan, in line with the arrangements set out in guidelines issued by the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (ref: LG 1/2015; AL 1/2015).
- Based on its existing plans and research, the [YY structure] will identify priorities and associated actions regarding its area of interest and responsibility, for consideration by [XX LCDC].

- Based on these identified priorities and actions, [XX LCDC] will liaise with [YY structure] to finalise and agree the priorities and actions to be included in the Plan. These agreed priorities and actions will also be included in [YY structure]'s operational plan.
- [YY structure], on behalf of its relevant member agencies, commits to delivering the agreed actions in the Plan.
- Taking account of existing monitoring and reporting arrangements, [XX LCDC] and [YY structure], on behalf of its relevant member agencies, will agree associated measurable timescales and indicators that will be used to monitor progress on these actions.
- In order to minimise unnecessary duplication and overlap, [YY structure] will ensure that its [activities] operational plan is consistent with the overall priorities and objectives of the Plan.

Reporting and Monitoring Arrangements

- Following the publication of the Plan, [YY structure] will attend a meeting of the LCDC on an annual basis [or other frequency agreed by the parties concerned]. The purpose of these meetings will be to present [XX LCDC] with a Progress Report on actions in the Plan for which its relevant member agencies are responsible and to outline the extent to which [YY structure]'s activities [operational plan] are consistent with the Plan.
- The Progress Report will identify whether the actions in the Plan for which the relevant member agencies of [YY structure] are responsible are on track, completed, delayed or cannot be completed. The Progress Report will also outline the extent to which [YY structure]'s activities during the previous [period] are consistent with the Plan.
- [XX LCDC] and [YY structure] will agree appropriate arrangements to address any actions or activities which are delayed, cannot be completed or are not consistent with the Plan.
- [XX LCDC] may, as necessary, invite [YY structure] to attend a meeting outside of the scheduled meetings to address matters of joint concern to [XX LCDC] and [YY structure] and to agree appropriate action.

Resolving Disagreements

- [XX LCDC] and [YY structure] are committed to resolving disagreements in relation to the Plan. Meaningful engagement at the early stages of development of the Plan and the early recognition of problems and a shared commitment by the parties to this protocol to deal with problems is key to resolving differences. Solving issues within this interagency forum is the preferred approach.
- However, if issues cannot be resolved, then [XX LCDC] may, for the purposes of ensuring consistency with the objectives of the Plan and in accordance with section 128F(4) of the Local Government Act 2001, as inserted by section 36 of the Local Government Reform Act 2014, make recommendations to the relevant public authority or publicly funded body, as to the way in which the local and community development programmes and related policies or strategies of such public authority or publicly funded body should be developed or operate.

Involvement in Sub-Committees and Task Groups of the LCDC

- [XX LCDC] will give priority to participation by [YY structure], as appropriate, on sub-committees established to work on relevant thematic areas or priorities.

Adjustments to the Plan

- Any necessary adjustments to the Plan by either party to the protocol will be flagged at the earliest possible convenience and will be discussed and addressed at the next scheduled meeting, or in accordance with any Ministerial guidelines in relation to the Plan.

Indemnity

- [XX LCDC] shall accept no financial or legal responsibility for the work of, or any issues arising from the work of, [YY structure] in the implementation of the Plan.
- [YY structure] is responsible for any staff or volunteers working on these actions and agrees that [XX LCDC] and [ZZ City/County Council] have no legal or financial obligations arising therefrom.
- [YY structure] will comply with all relevant statutory and legal obligations in respect of all matters relating to the actions attributed to it under the Plan.

Publicity

- [XX LCDC] may make reasonable requests to [YY structure] to give appropriate recognition to [XX LCDC] in certain materials relating to actions included in the Plan.
- [XX LCDC] shall give appropriate recognition to [YY structure] involvement in the Plan as may reasonably be required in materials concerning the Plan.

Implementation Date

This protocol has been adopted for implementation with effect from [date].

Review of Protocol

- The protocol will be reviewed periodically (every 3 years is recommended) by both parties to the protocol with a view to strengthening and improving engagement particularly in relation to the implementation of the Plan.

Agreement:

We the undersigned agree to comply with the commitments set out in this protocol.

[Insert name of Chief Officer/Director of Service]
Chief Officer
[insert name of county/city] Local Community and Development Committee

[Insert name of signatory]
[Insert title of signatory]
[insert name local structure/committee]

[Insert Date]