

**South Dublin County Public Participation Network**

***Strengthening local community  
development infrastructure***

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**January 2017**

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## *Executive summary and key judgements*

The purpose of this research was to examine community development in South Dublin, set it in a national context; examine the supports provided by the local authority and related bodies; and identify resources and mechanisms to support community development and social inclusion work in the future. The research was carried out by desk research and interviews, including a focus group.

It was found that there is no quantum for voluntary and community activity in the county in general and work for social inclusion and development in particular, because neither has been baselined by the county council nor by the area partnership, which means that it is not possible to assess need. It was possible to calculate the investment of the county council and partnership in community development and related actions (up to €5.1m, 28.5 staff), but there are no formal published reports on their activities, while outcome reports are not externally available. Although there are two funding schemes, their allocations are not routinely published and information must be obtained by councillor questions and trawling minutes. Between these critical information deficits, the actual level of need was impossible to assess.

The research found that examples are available further afield on how support can be provided for community development, such as grant schemes, technical support, infrastructural investment, policy support and local social capital programmes. Locally, South Dublin was the pioneering site of Community Linkage Funds which provided €1,475,312 over 2004-8 and there is ample scope to further develop the idea of the community foundation.

The existing relationship between the county council and community development organizations is highly problematical. On the community side, human and financial resources are badly depleted and the original model of community development compromised by new funding methods. Its engagement, understanding and communication with the county council is difficult. The research made recommendations to:

- Baseline the voluntary and community sector in the county, especially those organizations concerned with community development and social inclusion;
- Document, report and publish the work of the community development sections in the council and partnership;
- Reform the funding system by transparency, detailing the funded and unsuccessful organizations, with independent assessment and appeals;
- Set up a ring-fenced independent complementary mechanism for funding community development that could grow into a community foundation;
- Drawing on the existing PPN architecture, establish a structure for dialogue between the voluntary and community sector and the council in a process of positive, constructive engagement to strengthen community development.

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## Terms of reference

The South Dublin County Public Participation Network has asked for a research to outline:

- The role traditionally played by the community development sector in highlighting and tackling poverty and social exclusion;
- The current status of the community sector emerging from the changes of the past number of years;
- The difficulties this presents in terms of effectively combating poverty and social exclusion, especially in aftermath of the period of austerity endured by the most marginalized;
- The role that the local authority could play in strengthening community infrastructure and supporting the emergence of a revitalized community sector;
- Identify the resources required and the mechanisms through which resources could be released or channelled.

## Method

This research was carried out by:

- Desk research to obtain a national policy perspective and a local authority and local community perspective;
- Interviews with key people in the community sector, the local community development committee and local authority in South Dublin;
- Focus group meeting with representatives from the community sector;
- Writing a draft report for feedback and then a final report;
- Presentation to an event outlining the key findings and recommendations.

## Acknowledgements

I wish to thank those who kindly participated in the research, who provided information, agreed to interview and who participated in a focus group. Interviews were done on the basis that views would not be personally attributed. They were:

*Interview:* Jamie Moore, PPN; Aiden Lloyd, PPN; Sarah O’Gorman, South Dublin County Council (SDCC); Anna Lee, South Dublin LCDC; Dara Larkin, SDCC (retired), Larry O’Neill, South Dublin County Partnership; Maurice Walsh, PPN; Sheilann Monaghan, South Dublin County Partnership.

*Focus group:* Jamie Moore (PPN); Ann Corrigan (Near le Cheile); Michelle Kearns (Dolcain), Tara Deasy and Jennifer Clancy (Clondalkin Drugs Task Force); Dara Larkin (Fettercairn Youth Horse Project); Aiden Lloyd (PPN); Sharon Harty (CASP), Fran Keyes (Tallaght Travellers CDP); Layton Kelly (New Hope); Latifat Olagoke (Afra - Eorpach); Una Ruddock (Eco Ear); Catherine Heaney (Fettercairn Community Health Project); Tony Cooney (Killinarden Community Council); Owen De Bardúin; Doreen Carpenter (Clondalkin Travellers Development Group).

*South Dublin County Council:* Paul McAlerney, Maria Finn, Alison Silke, Paula Swayne, Thomas McDermott.

A telephone interview with the Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government was sought but declined.

# 1 Context: community development

This contextual chapter sets the historical backdrop (1.1) and the contemporary environment (1.2) before some conclusions are drawn (1.3)

## 1.1 Historical backdrop

The origins of community development in Ireland may be traced to August 1891 with the establishment of the Congested Districts Board. This provided until 1923, in the western parts of the country, small grants for community development through parish committees, funding for community organizers, credit for cooperatives and small-scale, community-based nursing stations.<sup>1</sup> It was not until the 1970s that what is recognisable as modern community development began with the first European programme against poverty (1975-80), which funded projects in the most disadvantaged urban and rural communities and whose research brought fresh insights into the nature of poverty. The second European programme against poverty (1985-9) funded a second round of projects focussed both on geographical areas and communities of disadvantage (e.g. lone parents). When it ended in 1989, the then Minister for Social Welfare, Dr Michael Woods, made them the core of what evolved into the Community Development Programme (CDP). With the assistance of the Combat Poverty Agency, this grew into a large national programme, assisted by 13 regional and thematic technical support agencies.<sup>2</sup> The community development projects within the programme were locally-based, responsible to their communities, provided many valuable local services, worked with their local authorities to contribute to enlightened local development and channelled the policy issues arising from their work into the new national strategies for social inclusion. The training provided by the projects was important in building the capacity of local communities, an example being the many board members who participated in third level education. The programme was proclaimed in Ireland and admired abroad as the flagship of community development in the European Union. It was complemented by 107 Family Resource Centres carrying out complementary roles in local communities; and the funding of nine national thematic networks against poverty.<sup>3</sup>

The growth of the Community Development Programme, which had 180 projects in the new century, was paralleled by strategies for local development, social inclusion, local government reform and recognition of civil society. It may be useful to see them as parallel streams. Faced by the high levels of unemployment and emigration, the state initiated a process of 'local development' in the form of twelve partnership companies in the Programme for Economic and Social Progress (PESP) (1989-93) designed to take locally based action against unemployment, an initiative that eventually spread nationally in the form of the Operational Programme for Local, Urban and Rural Development (OPLURD) (1994-9), the Local Development Social Inclusion Programme (LDSIP) (2000-6) and finally the Local Community Development Programme (LCDC) (2007-15). Several of the partnerships established structured

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<sup>1</sup> *Local and community development - an overview* in Catherine Forde *et al* (eds) [The changing landscape of local and community development in Ireland - an overview](#). Cork, University College Cor, 2016.

<sup>2</sup> Women's Aid, City Wide Drugs Crisis Campaign, Blue Drum, DESSA [Disability Equality Specialist Support Agency], NCCRI, Pavee Point; Tosach; Draoicht; Framework; Mid West Community Development Support Agency; West Training; and Triskele.

<sup>3</sup> The organizations funded were Irish Rural Link, One Parent Exchange Network, European Anti Poverty Network, Community Workers Cooperative, Irish National Organization of the Unemployed, Irish Traveller Movement, Forum of People with Disabilities and One Parent Exchange and Network.

means of engaging with local communities through ‘community fora’ and ‘community platforms’ (the latter title indicated a focus around social inclusion) and from 2000, €1.27m was allocated to the local authorities to support this engagement.

At the same time, the government introduced European concepts of social inclusion, elevating them to a national strategy in the form of *Sharing in progress* (1997), with its subsequent iterations. This committed the state and all its organs, from national to local, to working with both geographical communities and other communities of disadvantage to reduce their inequalities of power and resources, not least the type of groups served by community development projects. In local government, the state began a process of local government reform. In 1996, local authorities were required to establish Strategic Policy Committees (SPCs), one of which would address community action, and to which community-based representatives would be elected; and in 2014 Public Participation Networks (PPNs), with its three membership pillars of social inclusion, community and environment.<sup>4</sup>

The final stream in the history was the acknowledgement by the state of the role of civil society and voluntary and community organizations. Promised in 1976, such recognition eventually emerged as the white paper *Supporting voluntary activity* (2000). In this, the state affirmed the value and independence of the voluntary and community sector, including its right to advocacy, committed to establish consultation units in each government department, set down multi-annual funding and agreed to provide substantially new resources for the funding of infrastructure so as to ensure its effectiveness. By the early years of the new century, this was a mature environment: a Community Development Programme, social inclusion strategy, local government reform and a recognition of the vital role of the voluntary and community sector. There was a downward trend in poverty rates.<sup>5</sup>

## 1.2 Contemporary environment

This changed with the strategic turn of 2002. Within days of the election of the new government that year, the policy unit for the Community Development Programme was cancelled.<sup>6</sup> The white paper *Supporting voluntary activity* was effectively - albeit not formally - repudiated: national funding was immediately reduced, research funding was cancelled forthwith and training funding later. Funding for community development was immediately cut and support for national networks eliminated. The consultation units were never established.<sup>7</sup> With the breaking of the financial crisis in 2008, much of the elaborate architecture supporting community development was eliminated, with 41 agencies extinguished, most in the social policy field and most prominently the Combat Poverty Agency which had led the process of construction. The following year, the first 14 of the community development projects were closed down, as were the technical support agencies. The austerity measures taken by government in the budgets that followed most affected those served by the outgoing community development projects, especially the unemployed, who, according to

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<sup>4</sup> For an analysis of these reforms, see *The shape of things to come? The role of the community sector in local government reform*, for Community Directors Forum, 1998; and *So you are either in or you're out?* South Dublin Community Platform, 2015.

<sup>5</sup> For the historical background, see Acheson, N *et al*: *Two paths, one purpose - voluntary action in Ireland, north and south*. Dublin, Institute of Public Administration and University of Ulster, 2004.

<sup>6</sup> Advocacy Initiative: *Are we paying for that?* Dublin, author, 2014.

<sup>7</sup> Report on implementation of white paper *Supporting voluntary activity*. Dublin, The Wheel, 2004

research by the Economic and Social Research Institute, suffered the greatest income reductions of any group.<sup>8</sup>

The dissolution of the institutions and the austerity régime were accompanied by sharp reductions in funding for voluntary and community organizations. From 2008 to 2014, government spending fell by -7.1% but since recovered to a point 0.2% higher than 2008. During this period, funding for voluntary and community organizations was cut in a band of between -35% and -45%, less for voluntary organizations but more for community organizations. This led, inevitably, to a reduction in numbers employed, falling from 53,000 in the benchmark year of 2008 to 36,000 by the end of 2015, down -31%, observed as unmatched in Europe since 1948.<sup>9</sup> Examinations of the profiles of individual sectors and organizations show a substantial denuding of voluntary sector funding, personnel and capacity. A study of the environment sector, for example, showed how full-time staff fell from 86 to 41 (-52%), in effect a process of de-skilling and de-professionalization, while part-time staff rose 39%, scheme staff 129% and interns 38%.<sup>10</sup>

In local government, there was a substantial reorganization, termed the 'optimal coherence', 'alignment' and then 'cohesion' process. Most community development projects, with their staff and assets, were transferred into the Local Community Development Programme, with their boards of management closed down.<sup>11</sup> The Local government reform Act, 2014 set down the system whereby each local authority should have a Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) responsible for local and community development, inheriting the work of the successors to the PESP partnerships. In 2015, what had been the Local Community Development Programme was privatized, sold in 31 commercially-tendered lots with the new name of the Social Inclusion and Activation Programme (SICAP), the lots constructed in such a way that six former partnerships were closed down.

### 1.3 Local context

Looking at the local context, South Dublin has an active community development and social inclusion sector. In modern times, Tallaght was a site of both the *Poverty 2* programme (the West Tallaght Resources Centre) and the PESP programme (Tallaght Partnership), benefitted from the expansion of the Community Development Programme and the Family Resource Centre programme, building a tradition of community development and social inclusion over a generation. Its current size may be measured by the membership of the South Dublin Community Platform (44 members) and by the membership of the social inclusion pillar of the Public Participation Network (127 members). These groups work in such areas as education, the Traveller community, youth, women, addiction, ethnic minorities, disability, housing, families, counselling, learning difficulty and homelessness.

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<sup>8</sup> Keane, Clare; Callan, Tim; Savage, Michael; Walsh, John R; Colgan, Brian: *Distributional impact of tax, welfare and public pay policies - budget 2015 and budgets 2009-2015*. Dublin, ESRI, 2015.

<sup>9</sup> *Downsizing the voluntary and community sector*. Dublin, Irish Congress of Trade Unions, 2012; The Wheel: *Analysis of 2017 budget*. Dublin, author, 2016.

<sup>10</sup> Irish Environmental Network: *Funding environmental organizations*. Dublin, author, 2015.

<sup>11</sup> Anomalously, a small number continued to operate independently: Traveller groups, women's groups and Dublin projects with the original Dublin Inner City Partnership had been closed down.

No contemporary quantum is available of either the voluntary and community sector in the county as a whole, or of those parts concerned with community development and social inclusion. A baseline would give us a profile of its fields of work, resourcing, staffing, volunteers, capacity, skill levels, data sets, knowledge, outputs and products, outcomes, impacts and evaluation. It has not been baselined by the county council, nor to the best information available by the partnership. Although the LCDC's *Local economy and community plan, 2016-2021* has a wealth of economic and social detail (*Social economic profile* pp41-81), including sections on social inclusion, citizenship and civic participation, it does not appear to measure the size, nature nor human or financial resources of voluntary and community organizations in the county.<sup>12</sup> We do know that 26 organizations sponsor Community Employment schemes, providing 740 places and that CE provides a substantial part of their staffing and for 43% most of their total revenue.<sup>13</sup> Such baseline studies have been done elsewhere, but their absence here is a serious gap in the knowledge base.<sup>14</sup> It is understood that the council's view is that such a baseline is not necessary.

## 1.4 Conclusions

This is a challenging environment in which to work, both nationally and locally. By the turn of the century, the state had built up an internationally recognised programme for community development with 180 projects; resourced partnerships to work at local level with unemployed people and other; national social inclusion strategies; and the recognition of civil society in general and the voluntary and community sector in particular. Following the strategic turn in 2002, this was largely deconstructed, a process accelerated by the financial crisis in 2008, with little of the former edifice remaining. Clearly, this presents an intimidating level of difficulty for community development organizations now attempting to combat social inclusion. Not only have substantial financial supports been withdrawn, but there is a lack of official acknowledgement or explanation of these decisions, leading most such groups to believe that they function in an environment ranging from indifference to hostility. A particular problem in South Dublin is that the precise size and resourcing (human and financial) - the quantum - of the voluntary and community sector in the county has not been measured nor baselined. This creates a difficulty from the start, for when we go on to measure the investment applied thereto (chapter 2), we have no idea of how adequate or appropriate or not this is likely to be.

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<sup>12</sup> South Dublin County Council: *Local economic and community plan, 2016-2021*. Dublin, author, 2016.

<sup>13</sup> South Dublin Community Platform: *Community employment*. Dublin, author, 5th May 2016.

<sup>14</sup> E.g. Cavan County Development Board: *County Cavan community and voluntary sector*. Cavan, author, 2006; *People power - a profile of the community/voluntary sector in co Monaghan*. Monaghan, Mentor & Eleanor Kelly Associates, 2005.

## 2 Role of local authority

This chapter examines the role of local authorities in general and South Dublin County Council in their support of community development, first examining the context and structure (2.1) and then the current supports (2.2). Conclusions are drawn (2.3).

### 2.1 Context and structure

Local authorities have a long-established role in working with communities within their jurisdiction, generally taking the form of a 'communities' or 'recreation and amenities' sections responsible for parks; playgrounds; communications with community groups, tenants and resident associations; community centres and swimming pools; and libraries. In addition, local authorities have found themselves working with community groups in other fields under their remit, such as planning, development, housing and environmental protection. Over the years, these functions became more formal and structured, with social inclusion added to their remit.

First, under *Better local government* (1996), local authorities were required to establish Strategic Policy Committees (SPCs), generally between four and six, that included elected councillors (normally two thirds) and the social partners, including voluntary and community organizations (normally one third), each supported by a director of services from the authority. In the case of South Dublin, there are SPCs for arts, culture, gaeilge, education and libraries; economic development, enterprise and tourism; environment, public realm and climate change; housing; social and community; and land use, transportation and planning. The social and community SPC is the one most relevant here.<sup>15</sup> Analysis of the participation of voluntary and community organizations in the new SPCs raised questions about the format and organization of SPC meetings, under-resourcing of voluntary and community participants and their scope and ability to make a meaningful contribution.<sup>16</sup>

Second, under *Putting people first* (2012) and the subsequent Local government Act, 2014 a new committee of the local authority was established, the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) (2013), whose role is to 'develop, coordinate and implement a coherent and integrated approach to local and community development in the county'. Its two principal functions are to develop a Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP), while overseeing community development in general and the local partnerships in particular. The existing partnerships - which included the community development projects that they had subsumed - were transferred to the LCDCs in July 2014 and following their privatization, most of the outgoing partnerships resumed their previous role under the new rubric of the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) and this was the case in South Dublin (the South Dublin County Partnership). The LCDC comprises a combination of elected

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<sup>15</sup> The South Dublin Social and Community SPC comprises councillors Dermot Looney (chairperson); Jonathan Graham; Vicki Casserly; Sarah Holland; Kenneth Egan and Emma Murphy, with social partners or sectoral members Gráinne Ní Mhuirí and Layton Kelly.

<sup>16</sup> ADM: *Role of the community sector in local social partnership*. Dublin, author, 2002.

representatives, state agencies and social partners, including voluntary and community organizations.<sup>17</sup>

Although not formally part of *Putting people first*, the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government commissioned a working party on civic engagement which recommended the establishment of Public Participation Networks (PPNs) in all local authorities.<sup>18</sup> PPNs were based on three electoral colleges (community, environment, social inclusion), a set of consultation mechanisms, a secretariat and became the route whereby representatives were nominated to both the SPC. This was subsequently established in South Dublin in 2015.<sup>19</sup>

## 2.2 Current supports

Organizations engaged in community development and social inclusion in South Dublin are in a position to apply for funding and other support from national sources. The purpose of this report is to examine *local* support as provided through the county council and its related bodies, for example, the LCDC, the partnership and the SICAP programme. (2.2.1-3).

### 2.2.1 Local authority

The local authority provides supports community development through four main streams:

- Community development section
- Grants
  - Community Grants
  - Community Investment Fund
- Social Inclusion Unit
- PPN.

Dealing with each in turn, the council has a community development department. Staffing comprises a senior officer, three area officers and nine community officers (13) who are assigned to different areas e.g. Clondalkin and Lucan, Tallaght south and Tallaght and Rathfarnham. In addition, a further four staff work with sports organizations, two are assigned to interagency work and all are supported by a clerical and administrative team.

The county council states that the team provides a range of supports for voluntary and community groups in the county in the form of advice and support services, 48

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<sup>17</sup> Anna Lee, Community (chair); councillors Paula Donovan, Kieran Mahon; Eoin Ó Broin; Billy Coman, South Dublin County Council; Colm Ward, South Dublin Local Enterprise Office; Peter Byrne, South Dublin Chamber; Larry O Neill, South Dublin County Partnership; Fiona Ward, Department of Social Protection; Pdraig Rehill, Health Services Executive; Greg Tierney, Crosscare; Paddy Lavelle, Education and Training Board; Prof. Mary Corcoran, Department of Sociology, NUI Maynooth; Prof. Joe Barry, Trinity College Centre for Health Sciences, Tallaght Hospital; Maurice Walsh, Public Participation Network (Social Inclusion Pillar); Justin Byrne, Public Participation Network (Environment Pillar); Doreen Carpenter, Public Participation Network (Social Inclusion Pillar); Ronan Leydon, Public Participation Network (Community Pillar); and Stephen Dunne, Public Participation Network (Community Pillar, Vice Chair).

<sup>18</sup> Healy, Fr Sean: *Working Group on Citizen Engagement*. Dublin, Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government, 2014.

<sup>19</sup> For an account of this process, see *So you are either in or you're out?* Dublin, South Dublin Community Platform, 2015

community care services, six labour activation and training programmes, summer projects (35 community groups), village festivals, family days, community celebrations, community endeavour awards, hosting Comhairle na nOg, Tidy Towns and the *Pride of place* competition.<sup>20</sup> Inter-agency support is provided in the form of *Healthy counties*, health and well-being week, Fettercairn Community Health Project, Clondalkin Healthy House, Health Assets Needs Analysis, Clondalkin Community Action on Suicide, Clondalkin Jigsaw, Clondalkin Young Minds, Tallaght Roma Integration Project, Tallaght Drug and Alcohol Task Force, Clondalkin Drug and Alcohol Task Force, the *Age Friendly County Programme*, support for men's sheds and the 55+ area planner directory. The county council coordinates the Joint Policing Committee and four local policing fora and in the area of family support assists the Clondalkin Family Support Network, Neart le Cheile, the SW Clondalkin Network and the family resource centres. In the area of housing, the county council links to tenant and resident groups, approved the disability accommodation strategy, hosts the Traveller unit and provides a homeless assessment and placement service.

Sport is a significant aspect of the community development work with the themes of participation, support and working partnerships and a number of strands: disability, community, schools and colleges, social inclusion, with club and player development. The county council hosts the South Dublin Sports Partnership, which provides training, events and support, with two full-time and one part-time staff, a Sports Inclusion Disability Officer.

Social Inclusion Units in the local authorities date to 2002 when the first ten were established in the local authorities as part of the National Social Inclusion Strategy. It is understood that there used to be a social inclusion advisory committee in the council in the past. In South Dublin, the Social Inclusion Unit states that it provides funding 'for the delivery of programmes, initiatives and events that promote social inclusion'.<sup>21</sup> This is budgeted at €322,700 in 2015, €373,900 in 2016 and set for €385,000 in 2017.<sup>22</sup> Two staff are assigned. In practice, the sum available for projects is in the order of €51,000, the balance being assigned to social inclusion activities across the rest of the council's remit.

The Social Inclusion Unit has a number of projects: community garden, garden for all seasons, global community garden, *European week against racism*, *Bealtaine*, social inclusion week, the celebration of social inclusion through the performing arts, the Traveller culture schools project, the Migrant Integration Forum, integration strategy, *Yellow flag* programme, intercultural centres in Clondalkin and Tallaght and *Taking five steps to be a literacy friendly local authority*. All these activities are evaluated to determine the numbers participating, cost, value, impact and outcomes, reports being sent to senior management and the chief executive, but these evaluations are not publicly available.

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<sup>20</sup> South Dublin County Council: *Community development supports*. Monograph, 9pp, 2016. I am grateful to Paul McAlerney of the county council and his colleagues for compiling and supply this information.

<sup>21</sup> South Dublin County Council: *Community department role in South Dublin County*. Dublin, author, undated, PPT, 24pp.

<sup>22</sup> South Dublin County Council: *Annual budget, 2016*. Dublin, author, p50.

Turning to the grant schemes, the Community Initiative Fund, introduced with funding of €80,000 in 2015, is now in its second year with funding of €250,000.<sup>23</sup> Grants are in a range of €1,000 to €50,000 and they cover children and young people, older persons, persons with disabilities, ethnic minorities, families, environmental conservation and improvement, sports development and participation, safety within communities and the promotion and protection of our heritage & culture. It may not be used for core funding nor regular costs. Allocations are made by four senior offices, with two external assessors.

The Community Grants scheme is for the development of broadly-based community activities. This has been running for a number of years: the allocation was €50,000 in 2015 and €250,000 in 2016.<sup>24</sup> Funding is available under the following strands:

- Multi-purpose community centre maintenance and running grants, up to €6,000;
- Employment grant for new or existing community centres, up to €30,000;
- Seed management and employment grants for new community centres, up to €8,000;
- Start-up costs for community groups, up to €500;
- Running cost grants for community groups, up to €500;
- Community development, up to €500 for research, funding and training;
- Social inclusion, equality and anti-poverty grant, up to €1,000. This is for projects or actions by local voluntary group or organizations that specifically address exclusion, inequality and or poverty, for example by equality proofing, anti-racism training, or developing social inclusion;
- Personal sports grants up to €500;
- Countywide community activity or event, up to €3,000;
- Environmental improvements, up to €500;
- Summer projects grants, up to €2,000;
- Equipment grant up to €5,000;
- Grants for IT infrastructure, up to €5,000;
- IT networking and administration, up to €1,000.

These grants have two windows, March and September. In both schemes, unsuccessful applicants may make an internal appeal to the senior officer. According to the county council, unsuccessful applicants are always given the reason for rejection.

The county council does not formally publish the outcomes of the grant applications or the amounts allocated and does not consider it relevant that it should do so: anyone wishing to find the outcomes of grant rounds should ask councillors to find out or trawl minutes of SPC or council meetings. An example is the council meeting of 12th December 2016, when councillor L O'Toole asked for details of the Community Initiative Funds in 2016 (reproduced in annex 1). Perhaps the most interesting aspect of the CEO's response was that there was an oversubscription rate of 49:20 (49 applicants to 20 successful), with applications totalling €1.04m for the €250,000 available, which is an indicator of significant unmet need. It does not appear that information is available on unsuccessful groups, which is essential in determining preferences in allocation patterns and in assuring the transparency of the scheme.

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<sup>23</sup> South Dublin County Council: Annual budget, 2016. Dublin, author, p8.

<sup>24</sup> South Dublin County Council: Annual budget, 2016. Dublin, author, p8.

Finally, the local authority supports the PPN which has a 2017 budget of €95,000, of which €50,000 is provided by the Department of Housing, Community and Local Government, €30,000 matching funding by the SDCC and a further €15,000 from the county council. This funds the work of the PPN, its full-time officer, office and work programme. The budget is allocated to staffing (one full time, one part-time); administration (€60,000); technical assistance to the pillars (€9,000); training (€2,000); policy work (€2,000); events (€5,000); publications (€2,500) and newsletter (€1,250).

### 2.2.2 Local Community Development Committee (LCDC)

Although the LCDC has six formal functions, the principal activities of the Local Community Development Committee are to prepare, with the Economic Policy Development SPC, the Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) and oversee the national SICAP programme in the area.<sup>25</sup> Although its membership is listed, no further details of its work appear to be published or readily available. The LCDC was allocated a budget of €26,000 in 2015 (believed to be its first such allocation), €32,600 in 2016 and 2017, which is understood to be an attributed overhead.

### 2.2.3 SICAP

SICAP began in summer 2015, has a 2016 budget of €2m budget and it is understood that of its 110 staff, 12 work in community development, which includes a health officer, clerical officer and ethnic minority worker. Under the standard national template, the partnership companies follow three goals:

1. Empowering disadvantaged communities:

To support and resource disadvantaged communities and marginalized target groups to engage with relevant local and national stakeholders in identifying and addressing social exclusion and equality issues.

2. Lifelong Learning

To support individuals and marginalized target groups experiencing educational disadvantage so they can participate fully, engage with and progress through life-long learning opportunities through the use of community development approaches.

3. To engage with marginalized target groups and individuals and residents of disadvantaged communities who are unemployed but who do not fall within mainstream employment service provision or who are referred to SICAP to move them closer to the labour market and improve work readiness and support them in accessing employment and self-employment and creating social enterprise opportunities.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> The department lists six purposes for the LCDC: primary responsibility for coordinating, planning and overseeing local and community development funding; bring a more joined up approach to the implementation of local and community development programmes and interventions, pursuing an integrated approach to local, community-based services across providers and delivery structures; drive meaningful citizen and community engagement in the scoping, planning and evaluation of local and community development programmes; pursue a more cost-efficient administration of local and community development programmes and delivery structures, the matching of resources to priorities and better value for money in the management and delivery of programmes; focus on learning and feedback, enhancing the links between services and policy development; and pursue opportunities for additional funding for the area. It is possible that the LCDC will be charged with responsibilities with the RAPID urban investment programme in 2017. The LECP is South Dublin County Council: *The South Dublin County Local Economic and Community Plan*. Dublin, author, 2016.

<sup>26</sup> 'The Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) is one of the key funding streams of the Partnership', from [http://www.sdcpartnership.ie/who\\_we\\_are/sicap](http://www.sdcpartnership.ie/who_we_are/sicap).

Under goal 1: *Empowering disadvantaged communities*, partnerships are expected to assist community groups and it is understood that each act of assistance is formally logged as an ‘intervention’. At national level in 2015, 2,506 groups were so assisted and 1,952 by June 2016, 70% on target, but we have no details on how many may have been assisted in South Dublin.<sup>27</sup> It is known that the South Dublin Partnership works with 115 community groups, which takes the form of advice on planning, governance and implementation. No baseline report on community development and social inclusion organizations has been made and there is an estimate that up to 250 groups may work in the area. No published report of activities or outcomes is readily available, but the partnership will publish its SICAP first annual report in 2017. An important feature of the work of the partnership is its system of consultation with community groups, for the partnership has a Community Development Advisory Group which includes 23 community development organizations.<sup>28</sup> This meets bimonthly to monthly to share information on community development. Historically in the south Dublin area, it is understood that the Clondalkin partnership used to operate a grants scheme, but not the Tallaght partnership.

## 2.4 Conclusions

There are now well-established structures whereby local authorities work with community development groups, from their traditional work supporting communities to the two great local government reforms of *Better local government* and then *Putting people first*, followed by the establishment of the recent PPN structures.

The local authority current supports community development and social inclusion through its community development sections, two sets of grants, the social inclusion unit and the PPN and here table 1 summarizes the resources committed:

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<sup>27</sup> Pobal: *SICAP 2015 end of year report; Mid-year report, 2016*. Dublin, author, 2016

<sup>28</sup> South Dublin County Partnership – Community Development Advisory Group: *Terms of Reference and operational procedures*. 4pp.

**Table 1: Resources commitment by South Dublin County Council (including partnership) to community development and social inclusion, 2016**

	Human resources	Financial resources
Community development	13 staff	€2m
<u>Grants:</u>		
Community Initiative Fund		250,000
Community Grants		250,000
Social Inclusion Unit	2	€373,900
PPN	1.5 staff	€95,000
LCDC		€32,600
Partnership	12 staff in community development	€2m
<b>Total</b>	<b>28.5</b>	<b>€5,001,500</b>

Source: South County Dublin: Budget 2016. Dublin, author.

Note that this is a *maximum* figure, as some subsidiary individual items *may* be double-counted in the overall figure; and that in the case of the two grant schemes, the figures include all organizations, not just those working in community development and social inclusion.

There are significant information deficits, though:

- Although the county council has provided an outline of its work in the field of community development, there is no annual report and although these activities are evaluated to determine the numbers participating, cost, value, impact and outcomes, these reports are internal and not made publicly available. There does not appear to be a formal, public, published, strategic plan for its work in community development;
- The county council does not routinely publish the beneficiaries of its grant schemes and such information must be obtained by trawling minutes of meetings and by councillor questions. The council disputes the relevance of making such documentation available, but such information is critical in assessing the manner in which the council supports voluntary and community activity, patterns of demand and support, preferences and subscription levels. We cannot assess the proportion of overall funding finding its way specifically to community development and social inclusion. Oversubscription on the 2016 CIF scheme, for example, indicated that what could be provided fell far short of what was needed;
- We have no formal information on the community development work undertaken by the partnership, nor the allocation of its funding, since no reports appear to be available and a first annual report is not due until 2017.

## 3 Resources & mechanisms

This chapter looks at examples of how community development has been supported, both in Ireland and elsewhere (3.1), before examining how this may be applied in Ireland (3.2). The situation in South Dublin is then examined (3.3) and conclusions are then drawn (3.4).

### 3.1 Examples

In the course of the investment in community development that took place from the 1980s, government provided a range of supports to assist community development organizations. These took the form of:

- *Grant schemes*: The Combat Poverty Agency ran small grant schemes for research, community development, education, information and public awareness;<sup>29</sup> Technical assistance grants were also provided by monitoring committees of the structural funds to enable community groups to ensure the funds were more effective in promoting social inclusion (e.g. research);<sup>30</sup>
- *Technical support*: The type of support given by the 13 technical support agencies. These provided assistance in the form of training, workplan development, evaluation, good governance, standards and good practice and policy issues. The annual investment was in the order of €14.4m annually.
- *Policy*: A policy unit was designed to support community development, its functions being capacity-building, development (research and networking) and influence; its working methods seminars, publications, networking and newsletter, its purpose being to 'bridge the gap between the expertise of the community development sector and the policy arena' and ensure that 'work on the ground was reflected in policy-making and representation'.<sup>31</sup>

In other countries, supports for community development and social inclusion have taken a number of forms. Examples are:

- In Northern Ireland, funding has, for many years, been specifically directed toward building the infrastructure of community development organizations (e.g. the current Regional Infrastructure Programme (RISP));<sup>32</sup>
- In Britain, numerous programmes have been developed to upgrade the capacity of the voluntary and community sector (*Futurebuilders*, *Change up*), providing investment in governance, IT, performance, workforce development;<sup>33</sup>. Presently, the Local Trust was allocated £220m from 2015-2027 for initiatives to build and support 150 community-based initiatives (£22m this year) through a combination of grants and an investment in measurement, research, finding out *What works?* evaluation and learning.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> See *Evaluation of the small grants scheme*. Combat Poverty Agency, 1996.

<sup>30</sup> *Equality and the structural funds*. Galway and Belfast, Community Workers Cooperation and Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action, 1997.

<sup>31</sup> Advocacy Initiative: *Are we paying for that?* Dublin, author, 2014.

<sup>32</sup> *Pathways for change - position paper by the task force on resourcing the voluntary and community sector; Investing together - report of the task force on resourcing the voluntary and community sector*. Belfast, Task Force, 2004, 2005.

<sup>33</sup> Department for Social Development: *Voluntary and community sector - support services strategy*. Belfast, Deloitte, 2006.

<sup>34</sup> Local Trust: *Local Trust strategy 2014-2017*. London, National Lottery, 2014.

- In continental Europe, the Local Social Capital programme run by the European Commission provided a combination of grant aid and technical assistance for organizational development; new organizations; networking between associations; specific activities (e.g. training, conferences); technical and logistical assistance with pre-development, planning, monitoring and evaluation. A feature of the delivery system was that it was fast, combined micro, small and larger grants; running and capital grants; and was designed to have flexible and user-friendly management;<sup>35</sup>
- In eastern and central Europe specifically, funding streams specifically built capacity and infrastructure in voluntary organizations, including such areas as core capacity, administration, finance, advocacy, policy work, visibility, management and leadership; coupled with technical assistance programmes to enable voluntary and community organizations to better manage their assets, plan and diversify; as well as make state-of-the sector reports to measure progress. Structural fund programming has included funding for capacity building (e.g. research, databases, networking, engagement with the political system).<sup>36</sup>

Community foundations, which in this instance could be developed with the support of the local authority, other state as well as private funders, are another possible route to support voluntary activity, being endorsed by the government as far back as the green paper *Supporting voluntary activity* (1997) which preceded the later white paper.<sup>37</sup> Local community foundations are not well developed in Ireland, but have considerable potential. Being independent, they have the further advantage of providing an arm's length level strategizing, planning and management.<sup>38</sup> The related concept of a community gain foundation or fund has also been explored, one of the principal benefits being that it holds out prospects of achieving strong local support, confidence and consensus.<sup>39</sup> A recent example of such a fund is the Croghan, co Wexford Community Benefit Fund set up in 2016 whereby the local windmill energy generator provides €50,000 annually to support local community projects.

Community benefit funds have a particular application and history in South Dublin. The Urban renewal Act, 1989 promoted the introduction of a similar idea, called community linkage funds and these were subsequently established in Kildare, Limerick and South Dublin. Information is available on the operation of the second round of the community linkage funds in South Dublin for the period 1999-2009.<sup>40</sup> Under this scheme, developers contributed €2.54/0.0929m<sup>2</sup> which raised €5,706,953 with the expected final total of €8m. Of this, €1,475,312 was distributed to community organizations in Tallaght in three allocations in 2004, 2006 and 2008.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> *The potential of local social capital in the struggle against social exclusion*. Brussels, European Anti Poverty Network, 2003.

<sup>36</sup> Cross Border Centre: *Sustainability of voluntary and community organizations*. Dundalk, author, 2003; *Making the most of EU funds*. Brussels, Open Society Institute, 2007.

<sup>37</sup> Everett, John: *Community foundations - an introductory report on the international experience and the Irish potential*. Dublin, Smithy Everett & Associates, 1998.

<sup>38</sup> The best known is probably the Fermanagh Trust.

<sup>39</sup> Haase, Trutz: *Community gain*. Dublin, Trutz Haase in association with Brady Shipman Martin, 2006.

<sup>40</sup> South Dublin County Council: *Tallaght Integrated Area Plan - urban renewal scheme final report, 1999-2008*. Dublin, author, undated.

<sup>41</sup> This left a substantial amount of unallocated resources. It is understood that €5.7m was the final amount collected, the shortfall against €8m being due to developments that did not in the end avail of the tax incentives. Of the balance against the three allocation rounds, it is understood that €2.8m was used for the Killinarden Enterprise Centre and around €50,000 to fund a community post. It is speculated that the remainder may have been allocated to the two grant schemes described in chapter 2.

These funds were allocated to designated disadvantaged neighbourhoods (Brookfield, Fettercairn, Jobstown and Killinarden) to youth and community work, community and the environment, with scope for cross-cutting applications. Applications were invited in the range €10,000 to €40,000 under six criteria: targeting poverty, application by a number of organizations, an integrated approach, innovation, additionality and learning. There was an application process, with guidelines and an evaluation panel drawn from public representatives, the county council, community development and two independent external experts, with the list of beneficiaries and amount of the three rounds published. This scheme was widely applauded as putting South Dublin in the forefront of good practice in community development.

### 3.2 Application

Arising from this, it is evident that the building of an effective sector concerned with community development and social inclusion does require a significant investment in building its capacity to operate effectively. This is something well understood in Ireland in the past and has been well grasped by our comparators in Northern Ireland, Britain and further afield. The most reiteration of government policy, to be found in *Our communities* (2016) commits it *inter alia*, to:

- ‘Support local and community development sectors in mobilizing community participation and engagement with local planning processes.’
- Manage the delivery of interventions that provide positive action programmes targeting those groups that are most marginalized, and support them to become involved in issues and concerns affecting themselves and their communities.<sup>42</sup>

This is welcome and would have broad support, but the application thereof is the critical question. The South Dublin Community Platform takes the view that there should be:

A framework whereby regional and local agencies and authorities, including South Dublin County Council, develop and implement policies, strategies and mechanisms to fund community development activity in the county. The development of an independent and complementary funding mechanism for community development needs to be a priority. We would strongly urge the development of an initiative to explore the possibilities of setting up of such a fund which would facilitate South Dublin to set and deliver on its community development social inclusion priorities.<sup>43</sup>

The South Dublin County Council makes the case that it already *does* fund community development through the grant schemes outlined in chapter 2. The critical issues arising though are that:

- These funds are not independent, but decided by officials, with internal appeal;
- These funds apply to a broad range of groups, of which community development and social inclusion groups are only part. The quantum finding its way to community development and social inclusion is not known. The platform makes the case that there should be a specific fund for community development and social inclusion (a ‘complementary mechanism’);

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<sup>42</sup> Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government: *Our communities: framework policy for local and community development in Ireland*. Dublin, author 2016.

<sup>43</sup> South Dublin Community Platform: *Submission to Local Economic and Community Plan*. Dublin, author, 2016.

- Although this funding does provide support for community development and social inclusion groups, it rules out core funding and may not cover the full range of capacity-building functions described above;
- There is no process of engagement with the officials deciding on the fund as to priorities and planning. It is understood that there is occasional discussion at SPC level, which includes two community representatives, but this falls far short a dedicated, bilateral structured engagement.

Here, mechanisms for bilateral structured engagement have been developed in other contexts, the most useful example being the Ballymun Community Facilities Forum, whereby community groups met Ballymun Regeneration on a regular, structured basis to discuss such issues as funding and facilities.<sup>44</sup>

### 3.3 Situation in South Dublin

Issues of resources and mechanisms were discussed at a focus group of community groups held in the course of this research and convened by the PPN. They identified the following issues, dealing with resources first:

- Their overall funding had been cut substantially since 2008, at a time when demand on their services rose greatly;
- They had lost staff, while existing staff were exhausted and demoralized, with many burnt out and it was difficult to recruit new staff or volunteers. Staffing was now largely reliant on Community Employment;
- The nature of resourcing had changed greatly, now being prescriptive, task and service orientated, indicator-driven, with some Service Level Agreements prohibiting advocacy work, between them effectively preventing the use of community development methods;
- There was strong criticism of the lack of transparency in the grants schemes operated by the council. Groups were not told why their applications were unsuccessful and some of those who asked was told that this information was secret. Those who were told received unconvincing explanations (e.g. 'duplicating' the work of others, when it was the only organization of its kind). There appeared to be no external assessment of applications (community grants) - which should include experts in community development and social inclusion - and there was no non-internal appeals process.

Dealing with mechanisms and their engagement with the county council:

- In some case, individual community development staff in the county council had engaged with them, participated at their meeting and boards and been extremely supportive. Some were praised for delivering facilities into particular areas. These were exceptions, for most groups felt that overall, the community development section had not sufficiently engaged with them. They raised issues from which there had been no subsequent response, or where staff had accepted the validity of the issue raised, but were unable to progress them further in the council;
- In their view, the approach of the council had lost what had been an approach of community development and social inclusion, such frameworks and thinking being now much less evident. There was an absence of a plan for social inclusion. Specifically, community groups questioned the qualifications and training of staff in

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<sup>44</sup> Everett, John: *Building for change - a community facilities strategy for Ballymun*. Dublin, Everett Associates & TSA consultancy, 2007.

community development and social inclusion and their lack of understanding of the situation of people living in poverty.<sup>45</sup> They cited the allocation of substantial funding to groups not concerned with social inclusion in preference to those which were as a lack of such an understanding or prioritization; and absence of knowledge of particular pockets of deep poverty in the county;

- The relationship with the council had become difficult, replacing what had been a partnership approach in the past. The consultation process around the LECF had been poor. The standard of communication with individual officials was inconsistent, ranging from the good to the poor: outcomes should not be dependent on 'who you got on the phone that day'.

Community groups were well aware and sympathetic to the financial and other pressures on council staff. The reduction in public service numbers since 2008, around 10%, has been more severe in the local authorities (figures of 30% were cited). The issue of the capacity of the local authority for its community development role has been raised elsewhere.<sup>46</sup> Resolving some of the issues raised here, for example transparency, has limited financial resource implications and could be accomplished at low cost.

### 3.4 Conclusions

From this chapter, it is evident that a number of mechanisms have been developed in Ireland to support community development and social inclusion organizations (e.g. grants, technical assistance, policy unit). It is clear that in other jurisdictions (e.g. Northern Ireland, Britain, continental Europe), the concept of investment in building the capacity of community development and social inclusion organizations has been refined across a number of domains. In Ireland, the concept of a community foundations has been introduced but is not well developed. South Dublin, though, had a historic role in pioneering the idea of a Community Linkage Fund, but that appears to have concluded in 2008. In its most recent iteration of policy, there is a broad commitment by government to support for community development, but the question of how that is applied in detail is a key one. We know that South Dublin County Council does fund community development and community groups, but key questions raised here refer to the independence, concentration, criteria and engagement processes around such funding. Community groups have been especially critical of the resourcing of community development, both by the council itself and further afield and found their engagement quite unsatisfactory. They raised some quite fundamental questions which will be elaborated in the final chapter before conclusions are reached and recommendations made.

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<sup>45</sup> This opens a much wider question about qualifications and recruitment systems in the local authorities as a whole. Staff in the community section are not specifically required to have a qualification in community development, but the norm in this and other sections is for a third level qualification to be required, with specific requirements for each posted tested at point of recruitment.

<sup>46</sup> Boyle, Richard & O'Riordan, Joanna: *Capacity and competence requirements in local government*. Dublin, Institute of Public Administration, 2013.

## 4 Conclusions and recommendations

This chapter is divided into conclusions and discussion (4.1) and recommendations (4.2).

### 4.1 Conclusions and discussion

The conclusions of this research are as follows:

- We do not know the size and resourcing of the community development and social inclusion sectors in the county. It does not appear to be estimated in the Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP), nor does it appear to be baselined by the county council, the partnership nor SICAP.
- The county council, with the partnership, have significant resources in this broad field, up to €5m and 28.5 staff.
- Although we have an outline of the council's work in community development, information on its outcomes, which is collected, is restricted internally. It does not appear to have a formal, public, published plan for community development;
- Despite their importance, allocations to Community Grants or the Community Investment Fund are not routinely published but must instead be obtained by mining minutes and persuading councillors to ask questions at council meetings. Although we have one datapoint on oversubscription levels - one indicative of shortfalls - we have no information on which organizations have been unsuccessful and on allocation, success and rejection patterns or the proportion going to community development and social inclusion;
- Although under the SICAP programme, the partnership is committed, under goal 1, to working with community development and social inclusion organizations and we know that it has engaged with 115 groups, we do not know the outcomes of its work nor how its community development department assists community development and social inclusion organizations. Positively, there is a prospect of an annual report in 2017.

The lack of a quantum as to the size of the community development and social inclusion sectors presents a problem at two levels. First, such a knowledge is intrinsically desirable for good planning. Second, it is necessary if we are to calculate its resource deficits. There is a conviction in the community development and social inclusion fields - supported by what we know of Community Employment staffing - that its resources are at a very low ebb, but this cannot be proven. By contrary, on the statutory side, the view has been heard that it is comparative well-funded and core-supported by other sources and that there is little need for additional funding from the council, but equally this is not objectively tested. These perspectives could not be much further apart. The lack of a quantum on either side means that it is difficult to match the needs of one against the resources available from the other in an objective, non-partisan way. At present, the council is unconvinced of the value of a knowledge base in this area. Once there is both a knowledge base and clearer information on grant and other allocations, then it would be better possible to assess the deficits than can be bridged.

Having said that, the resourcing of community development and social inclusion is more than a matter of the size of the resources, but how they are allocated and for what. Although the criteria of the Community Grants scheme and the Community Initiative Fund cover some the broad remit of capacity-building for voluntary and community organizations, we cannot comment on their effectiveness since we do not know their allocation. Moreover, there does not appear to be a point at which there can be a structured engagement between the council on the one hand and community development and social inclusion on the other to ensure that such grants could be used strategically or effectively. As a result, the platform's case for an 'independent and complementary mechanism' has merit. This research explored concepts of local community foundations and related community gain foundations and they have features which could be applied here, such as the concept of an independent, self-standing, ring-fenced fund devoted to supporting community development and social inclusion organizations. The Community Linkage Fund pioneered by this very council is a widely applauded precedent.

Although a considerable amount of human and financial resources have been allocated (<€5m), no annual reports appear to be available as to the work carried out by the key elements in the landscape, such as the county council community development section, or the partnership under SICAP. A striking feature of community development work in the county is that there are two sets of community development staff, about 12 in each in the county council and the partnership. Although they meet each other frequently and informally, there is no formal system of coordination between them - ironic granted that the present structures were introduced to produce 'cohesion', 'optimal coherence' and 'alignment'.

This research identified the importance of improved dialogue between social inclusion voluntary and community organizations on the one hand and the county council on the other, including the council's community section, so as to ensure greater coherence in community development actions within the county. This could discuss not only the more transparent and effective operation of funding schemes, but find ways in which the two sides could together plan community development. In the more distant future, it might even be possible to consider joint projects between the county council on the one hand and community development organizations on the other hand to test effective responses to poverty, social exclusion and disadvantage. The best way to do this would be the setting up of a structure for dialogue that built on and used the existing PPN architecture.

This may misunderstand the purpose of such an engagement, for it would be about improving an understanding between the two sides, opening communication channels and working toward partnership approaches to poverty and social exclusion. At present, there is a wide gulf between the understanding of the nature and direction of community development, as expressed by the focus group and the council itself, which makes the case for structured dialogue between them all the more imperative. The fact that the focus group raised issues around the qualifications and training of community development staff - a sensitive, uncomfortable area - is illustrative of lack of confidence and trust in the council and the gap that must be bridged. Granted the importance of the council delivering a professional service, these may be legitimate questions, but they must find a forum where they can be debated in a constructive, non-partisan way.

## 4.2 Recommendations

From this, it is possible to put forward the following recommendations:

- *Baseline*: The county council and partnership together research and publish a baseline of the community development and social inclusion sectors so as to get a full picture and profile of its human and financial resources, fields, data and outcomes;
- *Documentation*: Activity reports to be published by the county council community development department, the social inclusion department, LCDDC, partnership and SICAP, including where funding is spent;
- *Transparency*: Publish beneficiaries and amounts of Community Grants and Community Initiative Fund, as well as list unsuccessful candidates; provide all unsuccessful candidates with reasons and marking details; invite independent assessment of the community grants scheme, including those with an expertise in community development and social inclusion to participate in assessment; put in place an independent appeals process;<sup>47</sup>
- *Strategy*: The county council should develop and publish a strategy for community development, under the aegis of the Local Community Development Committee, to give substance to the national policy on community development outlined in *Putting people first*;
- *Mechanism of funding for community development and social inclusion*: Set up an independent fund ring-fenced 'complementary mechanism' for building the capacity of the community development and social inclusion sectors along the lines of best international practice outlined in chapter 3, a fund that could evolve in time to a community foundation in its own right;
- *Engagement*: A mechanism should be developed within the PPN through the social inclusion pillar to begin a structured engagement between the community development and social inclusion sector on the one hand and the county council on the other. This would address funding issues; plan the effective delivery of community development and social inclusion measures in the county; and later test responses to poverty, exclusion and disadvantage.

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<sup>47</sup> Numerous requests for such information were made from end November to mid-December. §5 of the SDCC *Customer service action plan* requires acknowledgement within two days for e-mail and three for written communications.

## Community Initiative Fund: allocations, 2016

Organization Name	Project Name	Allocation €
CoderDojo Quarryvale	CoderDojo Youth Summer Camp	1,000
Clondalkin Equine Club	Equine Youth Training Programme	18,400
Irish Red Cross - Tallaght Unit	Community First Aid Training	10,548
New Hope Residential Centre	Community Gym	6,950
Dodder Anglers Association	Dodder River Clean Up	2,000
Beacon of Light	Children's Play and Art Therapy Rooms	4,200
Saggart Village Residents' Association (SVRA) & Saggart Heritage & Arts Centre	Refurbishment of Heritage & Arts Centre	7,000
Clondalkin Tidy Towns	Tree Base Resin Project	5,000
The WEB Project	Sensory Garden Toilet & Wash facilities	22,600
Glendoher & District Residents Association (G&DRA)	Harvest – A Community Orchard	6,000
Tallaght Community Arts	Double Take Community Arts	4,798
Four Districts Day Care Centre	Sensory Community Garden	44,910
Rathcoole Community Centre	Community Wifi	6,000
Youth Horizons	Short Films - Jobstown Learning	5,500
Brittas and District Community Association (BDCA)	Local Village Renewal	9,500
Killinarden Community Council	Knockroe Lodge Retreat	40,000
Clondalkin Round Tower Heritage Group	Clondalkin Heritage Trail	20,127
Ballyroan Community & Youth Centre	Community and Youth Theatre	35,000