

## North East Inner City Initiative Programme Implementation Board

<b>Location: via Videoconference</b>
<b>Time and date:</b> 8am, 25 <sup>th</sup> March 2020
<b>Attendance:</b> Chair – Michael Stone, Chief Superintendent Paddy McMenamin (An Garda Síochána), Superintendent Paul Costello (An Garda Síochána), Brendan Kenny (DCC), Paddy Murdiff (NICCC), Mary Keenan (DoT), Joy McGlynn (Tusla), Jim Walsh (DoH), Mary Cregg (DES), Karl Mitchell (DCC), Conor Rowley (DCYA), Donal Cassidy (HSE), Noel Hand (DEASP), Noel Wardick (NICCC), Ursula Donnellan (DCC/Programme Office), Michael O’Riordan (Programme Office).
<b>Apologies:</b> Feargal O’Rourke (PwC)

### **Minutes of previous meeting:**

**Proposed:** Paddy Murdiff (NICCC)

**Seconded:** Noel Wardick (NICCC)

1. The Chair opened the meeting to a general discussion in relation to the response to Covid19 in the area.

#### **Community**

- The community reps acknowledged the strong response from the State agencies and Government Departments and thanked all staff involved for their efforts.
- It was noted that this is a vulnerable community, possibly more vulnerable than most communities particularly given the high intensity of emergency accommodation in the area.
- There is concern amongst community groups for children in relation to the possible negative effect on developmental milestones, educational milestones and nutrition.
- All the community groups are working hard to assist those in need and to spread the message to all in relation to social distancing and hand hygiene.
- All community groups are available to assist in whatever way they can, if required.

#### **Dublin City Council**

- DCC have a strong team in place and are working to stay on top of the situation.
- Working in close cooperation with the DRHE and HSE to assist those in emergency accommodation settings.
- Additional accommodation has been secured in hotels and apartments.
- Facilities to enable people living in emergency accommodation to self-isolate have also been secured.
- Concern in relation to non-compliance waste management was expressed – if household dumping persists it will become an additional public health issue. Currently cleaning crews are operating at 50% capacity of regular service. Help and assistance from community groups in getting the message to residents is required.
- A door-to-door campaign in relation to dumping is planned in the worst affected area – DCC are seeking support from City Councillors and Gardaí with this. (The Gardaí agreed to support this effort).

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- A series of posters involving Kellie Harrington and Michael Darragh Macauley have been produced in relation to reinforcing the messages of social distancing had hygiene etc. These will be erected in the coming days. The posters are being produced in a range of languages.
- It was agreed that if anyone becomes aware of any difficulties in relation to people living in emergency accommodation they should notify Karl Mitchell, [karl.mitchell@dublincity.ie](mailto:karl.mitchell@dublincity.ie) , who will coordinate a response.

### HSE

- HSE are working very closely with DCC and DRHE in relation to people living in emergency accommodation settings.
- They have identified the most vulnerable and are actively working with them.
- New facilities to allow for people to self-isolate and cocoon are being established.
- The importance of social distancing and hand hygiene was emphasised.
- There is a work stream, through Pavee Point, endeavouring to engage with the Roma community in the area but this is proving to be a challenge.
  - The community rep noted that the Dublin City Community Co-op have a dedicated Roma worker who is actively engaged with the Roma community on a range of issues and that he is available to assist in whatever way that would be required.
  - The HSE rep asked that the Co-op worker use his network to reinforce the messaging around social distancing and hand hygiene.
  - The HSE rep will link directly on any specific supports that might be progressed in the NEIC area.
  - The community rep noted the challenge that exists with the Roma community in terms of literacy – the Co-op and Pavee Point have produced a short video that they are pushing out via Facebook reemphasising the HSE key messages around Covid19.
- City Clinic:
  - Service users that are self-isolating need to have their prescription dispensed by a pharmacist or nurse practitioners. This is proving very challenging.
  - Staff in the clinic have very specific skills.
  - HSE have sought support under emergency legislation for clinics such as this.
  - It is likely that support from Community pharmacies will be required.
  - Currently managing within their resources but into the future it is envisaged that support will be required.

### Tusla

- Staff are focussed on maintaining contact with vulnerable families mainly via phone and video calls.
- Social workers are available if needed.
- On-going monitoring of families that might be at risk.
- All referrals are being screened – referral numbers are down – due to schools, crèches etc. being closed.
- YPAR are maintaining connection with families through phone and skype calls. Where required they are organising for food to be delivered.
- Plans being developed for children in vulnerable settings in case parents have to isolate - who would mind children? Who in their network would do this? There is a safety net if no support is available.
- Residential settings in the North Inner City continue to operate.

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- Services are being maintained in women's refuges

### Gardaí

- Rosters have been restructured to provide for more members to be available for frontline duties.
- Gardaí will be encouraging people to maintain social distancing but it is a challenge.
- Gardaí will continue to maintain a visible presence in relation to operation Canter.
- Drug dealing is ongoing in some location – Gardaí will continue to deal with this. Issues should be reported to email [DMR.NorthCentral.Community@garda.ie](mailto:DMR.NorthCentral.Community@garda.ie) or phone 01 6668107.
- The Chair noted that the Oasis counselling service had recorded a sharp rise in contact from people seeking support over the last few weeks.
- Chief Superintendent McMenamin noted that there is a concern of a potential rise in domestic violence but there is no indication of an escalation at this time. If anyone becomes aware of someone in a vulnerable situation they are advised to contact the Gardaí immediately.
- Reports emanating of an increase in drug related intimidation connected to gangs in the area. Any concerns should be reported to the Gardaí.
- It was noted that An Garda Síochána are available to assist any group that needs support at this time.

### Department of Education and Skills (DES)

- Some concerns have been raised in relation to school children that would be dependent on school meals (breakfast and lunch) and how they may be faring now due to the school closures. DES have been in contact with DEASP on this matter, further follow up will be made and schools will be contacted in relation as to how they might continue to provide some support.

### Department of Health (DoH)

- Policy response at a national level in relation to Methadone is being discussed.
- Measures to bring more people into the service will be put in place.
- Looking at ways of distributing and delivery methadone – creative solutions may be required.
- A booklet is being prepared for delivery to all households nationally. (It was agreed that the NEIC will support distribution).
- Mental Health – how are people coping? Some work ongoing at a national level on this with DoH and HSE.
  - Tusla are endeavouring to get information out to families in relation to mental health.
  - It was agreed that the Programme Office would re-publicise the NEIC Services Map because there is a wealth of information there on services operating in the area – a valuable resource at this time.
- General – It was noted that the NEIC newsletter has been printed and is due for delivery to households throughout the NEIC area. The newsletter will contain a copy of the **HSE Coronavirus COVID-19** advice leaflet. Delivery will commence Monday 30<sup>th</sup> March 2020.

### Where should the focus of the PIB be for the next few weeks?

- **HSE** – testing is the key priority. Community assessment units are being developed.
- **Schools** – Have students access to necessary technology (laptops/tablets) and WIFI?

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Have schools developed “home “packs for students?

DES rep reported that they are starting to look at student access to broadband and equipment and they are in the process of surveying schools nationally to see how each school is engaging with its pupils. The Chair stated that the PIB would like to see the responses from schools based in the NEIC to this survey.

What have school completion put in place to ensure there is no food poverty among vulnerable students?

### **2. Subgroup Reports:**

#### **Budget Group:**

- The Budget Group meeting did not take place due to the current situation so there were no recommendations for funding presented to the Board.
- The Subgroup Chairs may want to reconsider what the priorities are for their group. The Chair requested that an email issue to Sub Group Chairs asking that question.

#### **Subgroups 3 and 6:**

- Subgroups 3 and 6 held the first of their planned joint meetings.
- The group were advised that a new draft of the City Connects plan was being finalised for circulation.
- Critical Incident Protocol – there is a lot of work happening in this area by different groups. The Dublin CYPSC developing a Dublin-wide protocol.
- Subgroup 3 is planning a workshop on mental health across the NEIC to discuss pathways accessibility/drawbacks.
- It was noted that child protection referrals to Tusla have reduced since schools and crèches/childcare facilities have closed. It is important to ensure that all services are outreaching to vulnerable families and individuals in the area.

#### **Subgroup 1:**

- The subgroup met and there were discussions on funding proposal that were being forwarded for consideration at the budget group.
- Garda presence on the street has increased.
- In line with the Government directives, Gardaí will be requesting people to disperse and observe social distancing requests, if they are gathered in groups. The Gardaí would appreciate understanding and cooperation from the community with these actions at this time.
- Morale amongst the members is high and all leave has been deferred.
- Some additional probationer Gardaí have been assigned to the division and some more are expected in coming weeks.
- The Luke Kelly statue was defaced with paint; the culprit has been apprehended and will be brought to court.
- It was noted that the Gardaí have been given additional resources and that they have two vans that can be used to support the community at this time.
- Enquiries in relation to the Community Vans should be directed to:  
Phone – 01 666 8000  
Email – [dmr.northcentral.community@garda.ie](mailto:dmr.northcentral.community@garda.ie)

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- It was noted by the Gardaí that their engagement with the public in relation to the current situation has been positive to date.
- It was also mentioned that the Gardaí have a very good presence on social media with good content on their Twitter and Instagram accounts.

### Subgroup 4:

- DCC are in daily contact with Gardaí and are being supported with the use of the community vans.
- The series of local hero posters is being produced in a variety of languages – copies will be circulated to PIB members for information and use.
- The “School on Stilts” building at the rear of Rutland St. School is currently being demolished. The demolition work is due for completion by end March 2020.
- It was noted that the planting on the plaza at the Junction of North Circular Road and Belvedere Place is in full bloom and is looking exceptionally well at the moment.

### Subgroup 5:

- The planned subgroup meeting was cancelled.
- The Chair of the subgroup met with NICDATF Chair and Coordinator with a rep from the NEIC programme office.
  - The HSE has identified premises for the taskforce in Dominic Street. Due to be available for occupation in May/June.
  - Actions were agreed in terms of the NICDATF being more active and visible in the area.
  - It was agreed that NICDATF would participate at an upcoming NEIC seminar being organised by subgroup 5.
  - It was also agreed that that NICDATF will hold a showcase event on International Drug Overdose Awareness day on 30<sup>th</sup> August.
  - It was agreed that they will DCC in relation to the offer to present to local councillors on the work of NICDATF.
  - NICDATF will engage with DEASP to support case officer to assist people in drug rehabilitation to access employment.
  - A follow up meeting will be arranged.
- Revised proposals have been received on the following:
  - NEIC Healthy Communities.
  - ICON community participation project.
  - NFSN family support coordinator.
- The Community Reps raised the issue of the community participation project where funding is due to cease at the end of March. The Chair of subgroup 5 will ask the HSE to consider extending fund for a further 2 months pending consideration of the revised submission. Following discussion the PIB agreed to fund the position for 1 month amount- **€3,651.00**. The Programme Office will contact ICON in relation to this offer.

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### **3. DEASP Update:**

- The local offices have been very busy dealing with the volume of new claims that have been presented. Planning that had been put in place for Brexit has helped in dealing with the surge of claimed.
- There is a lot of tension and anxiety amongst the public – the Department’s main focus is to provide income support payments to all that need them.
- Department is very conscious of needs of vulnerable people in the community.
- People living emergency accommodation need access to payments. Payments are made through the Post Office network. Some local Post Office closures have occurred and payments have been transferred to GPO. DEASP are monitoring Post Office closures.
- DRHE have been appointed as agents so that they can collect payments for people in emergency accommodation if they have to go into isolation.
- DEASP are maintaining services and all offices remain open. There is the ability in the offices to continue to issue payments.
- The changes in policy are being dealt and implemented as they are issued.

### **4. Community Update:**

- **Liberty Park Plan** – community consultation is underway. Interim plan has been submitted as agreed.

### **5. Action Plans:**

- All subgroups have participated in Action Planning workshops with PWC. Engagement in these workshops was very good and feedback to date is positive on the process.
- Compilation of the outcomes of the workshop has been delayed due to a bereavement of a relative of a key member of the PWC team.

### **6. AOB:**

- DoT is interested to learn more in relation to Post Office closures and is available to assist to ensure payments are accessed if required.
- The planned Mountjoy Square Festival (July 2020) has been cancelled.

- **Total Funds approved by the NEIC PIB to date for 2020 - €504,715**

**Next meeting:** **Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> April 2020 @ 8.00am**

**Venue: To be confirmed.**

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**Summary of agreed actions for next meeting:**

<b>What</b>	<b>Who</b>
Circulate OASIS note to Supt. Costello	Programme Office
Circulate <i>Local Hero</i> posters to PIB members	Programme Office
Update Website and Social media in relation to Garda Support vans.	Programme Office
Contact ICON re offer of funding	Programme Office
Update PIB on supports being provided to students (primary and secondary) in the NEIC	Mary Cregg, DES
Email Sub Group chairs re 2020 funding priorities	Mary Keenan, DoT