

## North East Inner City Initiative Programme Implementation Board

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| <b>Location: via Videoconference</b>  |
| <b>Time and date:</b> 8am, 29 <sup>th</sup> April 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), David Leavey (DoT), Michael O’Riordan (Programme Office). |
| <b>Apologies:</b> Feargal O’Rourke (PwC)  |

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

**Proposed:** Paddy Murdiff (NICCC)

**Seconded:** Mary Keenan (DoT)

The Chair welcomed David Leavey (DoT) to the meeting and wished him well in his new role.

### **1. Community Update:**

- The community reps advised that their community groups continue to be busy in supporting residents in relation to COVID-19 related issues and they continue to reinforce the message in relation to social distancing and hand hygiene.
- The Board were advised that funding approved at the March NEIC PIB meeting for the ICON Community Participation worker would cease at the end of April.
- Concerns were raised in relation to recent comments made through the media by healthcare staff in relation to the presence of COVID-19 among specific groups in the north inner city.
- The community are actively working with Dublin Regional Homeless Executive (DRHE) and Dublin City Council (DCC) on issues that arise. Lines of communication have been clarified to avoid duplication of efforts. Specific information is being sought in relation to issues that are being raised.
- Concern was also expressed about the digital divide and how this will affect local students. Community reps are hearing that funding recently released by the Department of Education and Skills (DES), while welcomed, by each school, may not cover their needs – particularly to support Leaving Cert students. Consideration needs to be given to meet the needs of individual schools in the area.
- An update on anti-social behaviour issues from the community reps was circulated to the Board members.
- Concern was expressed in relation to the cost of the response to the pandemic and the possible effects it may have on funding for community groups into the future.
- All community groups are available to assist in whatever way they can, as required.

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### 2. Budget Group

- A number of funding proposals were presented for discussion and consideration by the Board. Below is a summary of the decisions reached on each proposal.

| Subgroup         | Project  | Amount            | Decision |
|------------------|--|-------------------|----------|
| Subgroup 1       | Operation Cribbage (An Garda Síochána)   | €370,000          | Approved |
| Subgroup 1       | Educational bursary to increase Garda retention (An Garda Síochána)                    | €58,200           | Approved |
| Subgroup 1       | "Off the Ball" Programme (QPR)   | €10,000           | Approved |
| Subgroup 1       | Community Dialogue (AGS)   | €14,475           | Approved |
| Subgroup 1       | Acts of Compassion (Acts of Compassion)  | €5,400            | Approved |
| Subgroup 2       | Career Leap (Career Leap)  | €27,952           | Approved |
| Subgroup 2       | NEIC After School Study Programme (Principals' Network)                                | €125,330          | Approved |
| Subgroup 2       | NEIC WEP 2020 - 2021 / Paid Summer Work Placements 2021 (National College of Ireland)* | €9,995.00         | Approved |
| Subgroup 4       | NEIC Arts Projects 2020  | €120,000          | Approved |
| Subgroup 4       | NEIC Community Events Programme 2020   | €230,000          | Approved |
| Subgroup 4       | NEIC Greening Strategy Implementation  | €505,000          | Approved |
| Subgroup 4       | NEIC Sport, Recreation and Wellbeing Programme 2020                                    | €200,000          | Approved |
| Subgroup 5       | Addiction Assessment Hub (HSE)   | €99,592           | Approved |
| Subgroup 5       | Inclusion Health Hub (HSE)   | €636,500          | Approved |
| Subgroup 5       | Community Participation worker (ICON) (2 Months – May and June 2020)                   | €7,302.00         | Approved |
| Subgroup 6       | OT/SLT/Psychology for NEIC schools (HSE)   | €165,000          | Approved |
| Programme Office | NEIC Community Grants 2020   | €100,000          | Approved |
| <b>Total</b>     |  | <b>€2,684,746</b> |          |

\* Given the challenges companies will face as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Board felt that opportunities for work experience may not be as available as in previous times. The Board agreed to fund the position for 3 months and to revisit this project at the July PIB meeting.

- Community Case Management** – it was agreed to commission a detailed, costed plan for this project for consideration by the Board.
- City Connects** – It was agreed that a separate meeting would be arranged to discuss aspects of the City Connects proposal before returning it to the PIB for consideration.
- Budget Recommendations:**  
Proposed – Paddy Murdiffe  
Seconded – Brendan Kenny

### **Total funds approved by the NEIC PIB to date for 2020 - €4,619,461**

#### \*\* To Note:

- €80,000 has been returned to the NEIC Initiative in respect of the Mountjoy Square Festival as this event has been postponed until 2021 due to COVID-19. Expenditure of €50,000 incurred on Act Fee Deposits, Event Management Planning and Pre-Production Costs will remain valid when the event is re-scheduled
- The total funds approved include a €250,000 Emerging Needs Fund; €1million for the Social Employment Fund and €260,000 for Programme Office costs (incl. communications & outreach, community engagement programme management, general administration, etc.)

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- **Social Employment Fund:** The scheduled meeting of Departmental stakeholders took place but not all of the “key actors” were available to attend. Another meeting will be scheduled to progress this matter.
- **NEIC Strategic Plan - Action Planning Process:** PwC have drafted action plans for each Sub Group. The Programme Office are currently proofing these draft actions plans and the intention is that PwC will provide each Sub Group Chair with their draft action plan before the next PIB meeting.
- **NEIC Community Grants:** The 2020 NEIC Community Grants Scheme will focus on minor capital works and/or equipment to upgrade or improve physical assets i.e. the work environment and normal operations of the applicant organisation including, office facilities, kitchen, activity and garden/landscaped areas. The scheme will accept applications up to €5,000, however applications will be judged on a case by case basis, and there is potential scope to approve slightly amounts, depending on the requested items/upgrades. The scheme will be open for applications form Friday 1<sup>st</sup> May 2020 until 5pm on Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> June 2020.
- **Guidance on funding procedure and reporting requirements:** A meeting with Subgroup Secretaries and the Programme Office to explain the protocols and procedures and identify any additional supports needed has been arranged for 7<sup>th</sup> May.

### **3. Principals Network:**

- The Principals’ Network did not have a meeting.
- The Department of Education and Skills (DES) has provided €50million (**€40 million is annual funding, €10 million is additional funding due to the COVID-19 pandemic**) nationally to schools to purchase IT equipment.
- Students continue to work from home. School Inspectors have been engaging with schools to see how they are keeping in touch with students and the various activities that are being sent home to pupils. The Chair asked for confirmation that **ALL** pupils have been contact by their school – DES to follow up on this.
- Concerns has been expressed for students, particularly Leaving Cert students, regarding their access to IT equipment. Follow up required with Principals to quantify the level of need.
- School meals – school meals are being provided to those who need them. Assistance in delivering the meals for a number of local schools is being provided by the Civil Defence, this was organised by the local COVID-19 Community Response group.

### **4. HSE Update:**

- Clarification was provided on recent commentary in relation to COVID-19 clusters among certain groups of people living in the inner city. Statistics quoted in the recent comments appear to have been taken out of context. Dr Austin O’Carroll, HSE Clinical Lead for COVID-19 Homeless Response, has recorded a short interview in relation to the facts of the situation, and it is available to view at:

<https://t.co/FRuogv7hzp> <https://twitter.com/dionfanning/status/1253768894382292994?s=20>

- **Stabilisation Unit** - the number of residents were rising and remaining consistent until March 2020 when we entered the COVID- 19 crisis. At this point the residents were allowed to complete their programme; once the facility was vacated the facility was adapted to ensure it was COVID-19

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compliant. They are now assessing and admitting people attending City Clinic only on a gradual basis, in line with the HSPC guidelines.

- **Homeless Case Management Team** - With the agreement of the NEIC PIB the case managers who were supporting the homeless accommodation in the area were temporally redeployed to support the housing response to the COVID- 19 crisis. At the time of redeployment there were 38 clients being case managed by the team. The Case Management Team at Chrysalis are holding these cases, and the team are supporting all cases via phone consultations with limited outreach support in line with social distancing requirements. As we enter what is the new normal, it is anticipated the 3 case managers from Coolmine will revert to the NEIC over coming weeks to resume their support for those living in homeless accommodation in the NEIC, including those cocooning in the area.
- **Addiction Case Management Team** - This team is still fully operational and based in the Inclusion Hub. The 3 full time case managers are working mainly through telephone support with limited socially distanced outreach to 159 clients. A return to full case management over the coming weeks is anticipated, and this service will be modified to ensure all public health guidelines are adhered to. In addition to this they are also supporting City Clinic with medication drops to those isolating and cocooning with the support of Gardaí from Store Street.
- **Inclusion Health Hub** - Safetynet are still based in the hub and are providing regular GP services including postnatal support, and support for vulnerable people in line with the HSPC guidelines. This service is proving to be of great assistance to vulnerable groups.
- Concerns exist regarding overcrowding in some houses in the area. DCC and the HSE to link in relation to these concerns.
- People congregating in groups continues to be a concern – DCC will erect more signage to discourage this, particularly in the local parks. The Gardaí are actively engaged in encouraging people not to congregate.
- Concern was raised over the amount of alcohol consumption in homes and the effects that this may have – increases in domestic violence etc.
- It was reported that HSE funded groups have generally been very supportive on the ground in assisting with efforts to slow the spread of COVID -19 in the area. Some organisations need to refocus their activities to assist with the effort.
- Overall there has been good cooperation between the various agencies and groups to support the efforts of the HSE.
- The HSE rep noted that a subgroup of NPHET are preparing a report in relation to minority groups and undocumented people and he will bring items from the PIB’s discussion to the attention of that group.
- The SWAN Youth Service Outreach team and Crinan Youth Project are working in partnership and have recommenced activities to engage with hard to reach young people in the NEIC (aged between 10 and 25). They are working to address their needs through direct contact and front line outreach work fully respecting social distancing requirements.

### **5. DEASP Update:**

- The local offices continue to be very busy in what is a challenging working environment – 3 offices continue to operate in the area: Parnell Street, North Cumberland Street and Gardiner Street (homeless services).

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- Latest figures indicate 9,000 (approx.) in receipt of the Pandemic Unemployment Payment (PUP) in the D1 postal district.
- Intreo Office opening hours have been revised to 10am to 1pm on Monday, Wednesday and Friday.
- There has been a high volume of enquiries from people seeking PPSN's. There is a waiting list for appointments for a PPSN.
- There continues to be redundancy notices from companies being lodged with the Department.
- The NEIC network is working well and the various issues that are being raised are being resolved.

### 6. Subgroup Reports:

#### Subgroup 1:

- The Gardaí are operating the "4E" approach to implementing the COVID-19 restrictions - **Engage – Explain – Encourage - Enforce**
- Regarding the correspondence received from the community rep:
  - Ballybough House – very good CCTV in that area.
  - Hardwicke St – there has been some representations from local elected representatives, social distancing is an issue and gardaí are working to encourage the community in the area to maintain the current restrictions.
- There have been a number of drug seizures and also a firearm seizure in the last few weeks.
- Both *Diamond Park* and *Mountjoy Square Park* have been attracting some groupings of people in recent times. On inspection the Gardaí have found that people are within the allowable 2km travel zone and mainly from the same household. There are some large family groupings living in the general Mountjoy Square area. Dublin City Council and the Gardaí are working closely in relation to activity in the parks.
- Gardaí are escorting methadone deliveries with HSE staff from City Clinic.
- Recently Gardaí brought packages from the community in Sheriff St to patients in the Mater Hospital.
- Social distancing was initially a challenge with the homeless on the streets but this situation is improving.
- Tuesdays are the busiest days – this is linked with people collecting DEASP payments. Gardaí are encouraging people to travel on their own to collect payments rather than in groups.
- Domestic violence – Gardaí are continuing to respond to and deal with any incidents notified to them. In all cases the objective is to remove the perpetrator rather than the victims. All cases are referred to Tusla.
- On Street entertainment – a number of quizzes and bingo games have taken place in complexes and on streets – most have been positive events but some have developed into parties and had to be stopped. On street parties will be stopped by the Gardaí under the current restrictions.
- Luke Kelly statue – discussions currently underway with Dublin City Council with the intention of developing a solution to prevent further defacing of the statue.
- There are no reports at present re quality of drugs or poisoning due to the quality of supply in the area at this time – if reports are received they will go public with the information.
- The contact details for reporting incidents are:  
Phone – 01 666 8000

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Email – [dmr.northcentral.community@garda.ie](mailto:dmr.northcentral.community@garda.ie)

### Subgroups 2:

- COVID-19
  - It was reported that some families do not have devices other than phones which makes it very difficult for children to actively engage with school work. Access to Wi-Fi can also be a problem.
  - Some schools are experiencing difficulties with school meal deliveries. The Programme Office will follow up with DCC's Community Response group.
  - Some students are experiencing self-discipline issues in terms of managing their studies without the routine of school.
  - Anxiety levels amongst members of the public has increased – this is being experienced first-hand by staff members in Intreo Offices.
  - Early Learning Initiative is continuing to engage with families albeit remotely.
- A first draft of action plans for the subgroups have been produced by PwC – these are currently being refined by the Programme Office (this work has been delayed due to the COVID-19 emergency) but will be available for each subgroup before the May PIB.
- The group agreed that the learnings from PTECH should be shared with the non-PTECH secondary schools. It was agreed that a meeting of the PTECH facilitator, the 3 non-PTECH principals and Dr. Leo Casey (NCI) would be arranged.
- The *Business in the Community Ireland* (BITCI) summer work placement programme with the Irish Fund Industry will not proceed due to the Leaving Certificate being rescheduled for July/August. BITCI have incurred a small expenditure in preparation for the programme. They were advised to submit an invoice for consideration.
- The Irish Computer Society (ICS) have accessed funds for a **Woment4IT** training programme. The training will be for 120-160 hours, with the goal of placing participants in jobs at the end of the programme. Discussions have taken place with ICS and the Programme Office to include people from the NEIC area on the programme.

### Subgroup 3:

- Tusla's core critical services continue to operate – a reduction in referrals to social workers has been noted.
- The Critical Incident Group met to offer support to families in the Ballybough area following a recent incident there.
- A number of services in the area are providing activity packs for families.
- Concern was expressed in relation to domestic violence and the potential for a surge in referrals following COVID-19 restrictions.
- A number of proposals are being developed for discussion at the subgroup.

### Subgroup 4:

- A short video aimed at encouraging people to stay at home, developed by Dublin City Council (DCC) was shown to the Board. It was agreed that the video should be circulated as widely as possible.

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- COVID-19 Community Call is operational. This is being coordinated by DCC – food, medicines, etc. are being provided as required and requested through the Community Call – all groups are encouraged to engage with this initiative to avoid duplication of effort.
- A programme of *Health and Wellness* activities (yoga, music, cultural etc.) has been developed and will commence in Senior Citizen Complexes on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> May.
- The Green Ribbon workers are currently engaged in weeding in the area.
- Preparation work on capital projects and the Greening Strategy is still ongoing.
- It was noted that the planting on the plaza in Store Street is in full bloom and is looking exceptionally well at the moment.

### Subgroup 5:

- The planned subgroup meeting was cancelled.
- The update from the HSE on operations in the area was welcomed.
- A number of proposals are currently being worked on for consideration by the group.
- The Department of Health is developing a new poster campaign in relation to alcohol – copies will be forwarded to the programme office when available.
- A request was made to the PIB to consider extending the funding for the ICON Community Participation Worker for a further 2 months (May /June) – **this was agreed.**

### Subgroup 6:

- City Connects Project Management Team is continuing with its work to progress the project
  - The pre-planning phase has concluded.
  - Interviews with school principals have been completed.
  - An on-line survey with Boards of management has been completed
  - A listing of services providers and the services delivered is being compiled – this will be linked to the MyConnects system
  - An on-line survey on Assessment of Resources and Student Needs is to issue to schools principals for dissemination to school staff.
- 7. **Action Plans:** The subgroup Chairs were asked to revisit timelines and possibly re-prioritise items when they are reviewing their draft action planes.
- 8. **AOB:**
  - Intercultural Development Officer – on hold due to COVID-19.

**Next meeting:**

**Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> May 2020 @ 8.00am**

**Venue:**

**Video Conference.**

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

| <b>What</b>   | <b>Who</b>             |
|---|------------------------|
| Circulate <i>“Inner City STAY at HOME”</i> video.   | DCC + Programme Office |
| Issue NEIC Community Grant information and application forms.                               | Programme Office       |
| Discussion re particular cases of overcrowded accommodation settings and possible solutions | DCC + HSE              |
| Contact ICON re offer of funding  | Programme Office       |
| Update PIB re schools contact with pupils   | Mary Cregg, DES        |