

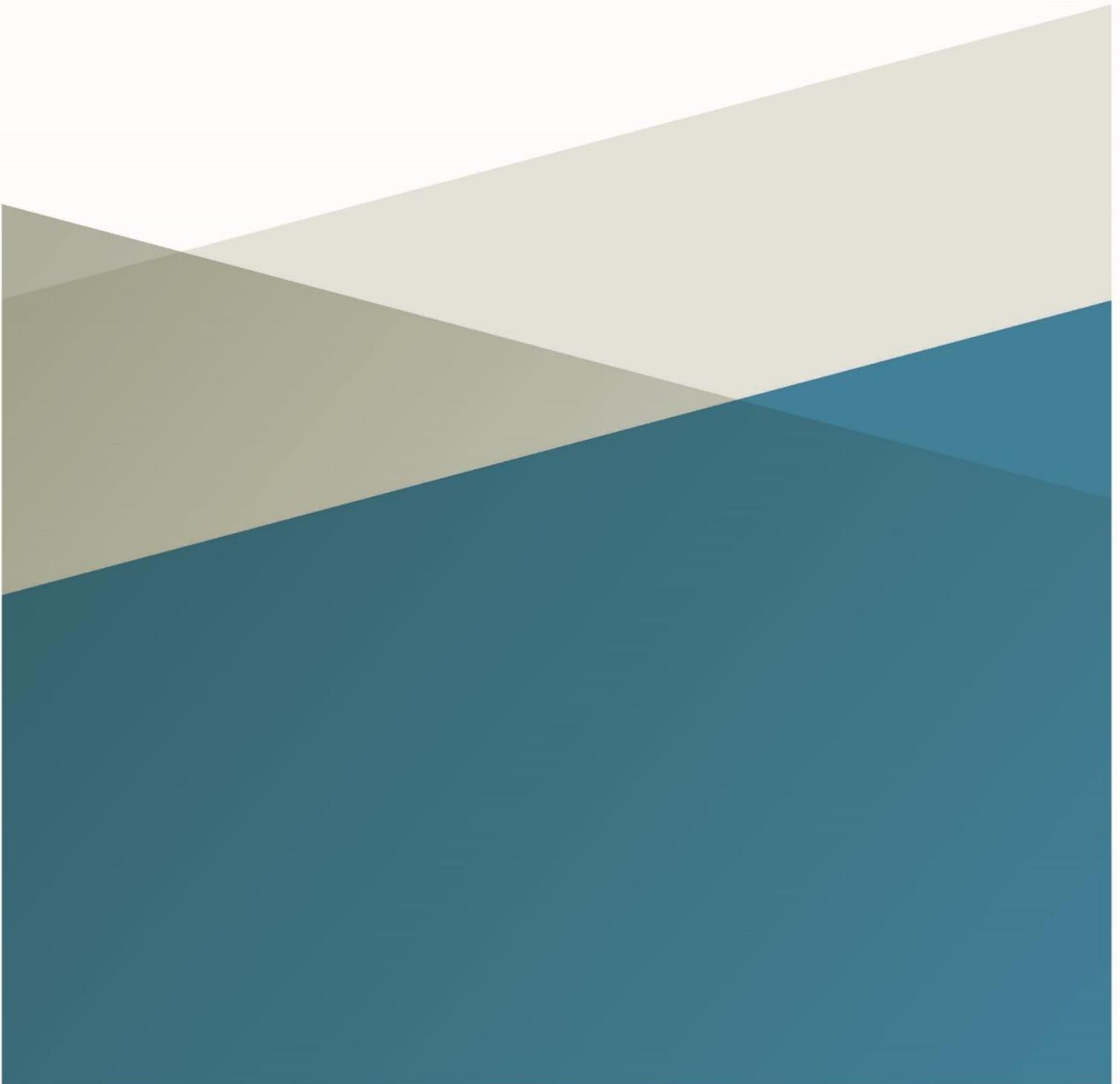


An Roinn Dlí agus Cirt  
Department of Justice

# Drogheda Report Implementation Plan

3<sup>rd</sup> Published Progress Report

January – June 2023



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## INTRODUCTION

The Drogheda Scoping Exercise was commissioned by the Minister for Justice in 2020 in response to rising concerns regarding crime and fear of crime in Drogheda. The report, entitled 'Drogheda: Creating a Bridge to a Better Future', was completed by Mr. Vivian Geiran, former director of the Probation Service, and published in January 2021. The recommendations in the report fall under two general headings:

- the need for improved interagency cooperation in the administration and delivery of services in Drogheda, and
- the need to resource services or provide additional services in the area.

Since the publication of the report, the Department of Justice has engaged with relevant Government Departments and Agencies, and Louth County Council to develop the [Drogheda Implementation Plan](#) to progress the recommendations contained in this report.

At a local level, the Drogheda Implementation Board is the core driver and co-ordinator of the activities outlined in the Plan, while the Department of Justice provides national oversight to ensure strategic direction, action planning and the delivery of the Drogheda Implementation Plan. Additionally, the Drogheda Implementation Plan High Level Oversight Group, chaired by the Department of Justice, provides further oversight and support with representatives from all key government departments, the HSE and Tusla.

This review constitutes a status report on those actions from January – June 2023. During this period, significant progress has been made in implementing actions identified in the Drogheda Implementation Plan, including:

### **Education and Training**

- In April 2023 Louth and Meath Education and Training Board secured approval to deliver a Dental Nurse Traineeship in Drogheda Institute of Further Education (DIFE).
- LMETB have also opened the first Apprentice Training Centre in Drogheda. The first cohort of apprentices have been registered and will commence in the new Drogheda College in July 2023.
- A new Louth Local Development (LLD) Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme (SICAP) Education and Community Development Officer is in post and actively engaging with community organisations in Drogheda.
- In addition, LLD also recruited a new Youth and Education Coordinator who is based part-time in Drogheda to strengthen and develop community connections and youth and education initiatives.

### **Drug use**

- In May 2023, a fixed site needle exchange service, resourced by the HSE, opened in the Red Door. In parallel, a drug related litter campaign, supporting the community as a whole, has been developed.
- A number of posts in HSE Addiction Services, serving Louth Meath and covering Drogheda have also now been filled. These include 2 x outreach workers; 1 x social care lead, 1 x social care project worker.

### **Youth and community Development Facilities**

- In April 2023 Minister for Rural and Community Development, Heather Humphreys, notified Drogheda Implementation Board that her Department have allocated funds of €80,000 to progress preparatory work for the development of the Moneymore Community Hub.

### **Early Intervention**

- A new action prioritising the importance of early intervention was agreed – Action 5.6 Recognising the importance of early intervention and preventative approaches in ‘breaking the cycle’ – exploring the delivery and expansion of evidence based early intervention programmes in the Drogheda area.
- Connect Family Resource Centre has been providing an outreach onsite counselling service to children in Marymount N.S, St. John’s N.S.& St. Paul’s N.S throughout 2023.

### **Small grants Scheme**

The Drogheda Implementation Board allocated €125,000 of the 2023 budget to a small grants scheme for community sector led projects addressing issues/actions identified in the Report and Plan. In total €126,208 was allocated across 21 grants in the Drogheda and Laytown/Bettystown area.

The Drogheda Implementation Plan is a living document that is updated on a regular basis as new actions or activities emerge. This progress report clearly outlines the considerable progress and consistent work that has been achieved to-date by those who are working on implementing and delivering this plan so as to ensure that a stronger and safer community can thrive in Drogheda in the years ahead.

## GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS

AGS	An Garda Síochána
BIDs	Business Improvement District
C&V	Community & Voluntary
CHO8	HSE Community Health Organisation area - Midlands Louth Meath
Connect FRC	Connect Family Resource Centre
CSIF	Community Safety Innovation Fund
DCEDIY	Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth
DDIH	Drogheda Digital Innovation Hub
D/FHERIS	Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Skills
DIB	Drogheda Implementation Board
DOJ	Department of Justice
DRIVE	Drug Related Intimidation and Violence Engagement
DTCAGSM	Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media
FASN	Family Addiction Support Network
HLOG	High Level Oversight Group (senior representatives of Government departments)
JARC	Joint Agency Response to Crime
LCC	Louth County Council
LCDC	Local Community Development Committee
LCSP	Local Community Safety Partnership
LECP	Local Economic Community Policy
LLSP	Louth Local Sports Partnership
LLP/LLD	Louth LEADER Partnership/Louth Local Development
LMETB	Louth and Meath Education Training Board
NERDATF	North East Regional Drug and Alcohol Task Force
MLSP	Meath Local Sports Partnership
MQI	Merchants Quay Ireland
SICAP	Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme

## 1. CROSS-AGENCY COORDINATION

1.1	<p><b>Drogheda Safety &amp; Wellbeing High-Level Oversight Group:</b> Led by (i) Department of Justice and comprising senior representatives of other relevant Departments: (ii) Health; (iii) Housing, Local Government and Heritage; (iv) Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth; (v) Education; (vi) Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science; (vii) Rural and Community Development; (viii) Social Protection; and (ix) Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media.</p> <p>Agency representatives to be invited to meetings as required.</p> <p>Quarterly Meetings to ensure strategic direction and action planning and receive reports on progress on action plan. Once the action plan is agreed, the Oversight Group might be reduced in size.</p>
1.2	<p><b>Safety and Wellbeing Implementation Board:</b> The core driver and coordinator of change. With an independent chair, small support team (headed by a fulltime coordinator) and own budget (to resource the coordination itself, as well as to provide ‘priming’ funds to innovative projects and initiatives) – the team to be hosted, resourced supported by Louth Local Authority or Louth Leader Partnership, but located in Drogheda. Other central Government departments and local bodies to provide proportion of the funding for this as agreed).</p> <p>Board comprised of senior (‘decision making’) representatives from relevant agencies, including, at least: (i) An Garda Síochána; (ii) Probation Service; (iii) Local Authorities; (iv) HSE; (v) TUSLA; (vi) LMETB (vii) LLP; (viii) IYJS/DoJ.</p>
1.3	<p><b>Four sub-groups/working groups:</b> Policing and Drugs; Family Support, Children, Young People and Education; Employment, Business, Enterprise; Area/Community Development, Arts, Culture and Sport.</p> <p>Sub/working groups to have identified chairs (some could be rotated), representatives from relevant agencies and bodies. All sub-groups to include representatives from relevant bodies in the C+V sector; sub-group (d) to include wider definition of ‘community’ representatives, on a rotating basis, as required. Sub-group work focus to be on agreed/clear action plans. To report in at appropriate intervals, through identified representatives, to the Implementation Board. The sub-groups could also identify new or added resourcing needs, and prepare business cases for consideration by the implementation.</p>
<b>Current Status</b>	
<p><b>1.1 Drogheda Safety &amp; Wellbeing High-Level Oversight Group</b></p> <p>The High-Level Oversight Group subsequently met twice between January and June 2023, including a meeting in Drogheda on 24 April.</p> <p><b>1.2: Drogheda Implementation Board</b></p> <p>The Safety and Wellbeing Implementation Board, generally referred to as the Drogheda Implementation Board, was established in late October 2021. An expanded Board membership was agreed in February 2022 to include community representation in addition to senior decision-making representatives from statutory and other key agencies.</p> <p>The Board now consists of an independent, voluntary Chair, appointed by the Department of Justice, and 16 individuals representing 14 organisations. Full board membership is available to view on their dedicated website at <a href="http://www.droghedaimplementationboard.ie/about/board-membership/">www.droghedaimplementationboard.ie/about/board-membership/</a></p>	

Since establishment the Board have met 18 times. Attendance and engagement rates by members remains high with an average attendance rate in 2023 of 80%

LMETB are providing hosting and administration supports to the Board, including employment of a full-time Coordinator. This Coordinator has been in position since December 2021.

### **1.3: Subgroups of the Board**

As noted in previous Progress Report, four subgroups of the Board have been established which reflect the recommendation contained in the Drogheda Scoping Report:

- Policing and Drugs;
- Family Support, Children, Young People and Education;
- Employment, Business, Enterprise;
- Area/Community Development, Arts, Culture and Sport.

Drogheda Implementation Board plays a strategic oversight role in relation to the delivery of the Plan, whilst subgroups work on specific actions. To that end the Board has mapped actions from the Implementation Plan to subgroups which they are progressing.

Over 50 individuals representing 31 stakeholder organisations are members of Drogheda Implementation Board subgroups. Subgroup membership is available to view here [www.droghedaimplementationboard.ie/about/subgroups/](http://www.droghedaimplementationboard.ie/about/subgroups/). Since establishment almost 60 subgroup meetings have been held, in addition to meetings of working groups established by subgroups who are focused on individual actions or activities.

Two plenary sessions have been held in January and June of this year, attended by members of all five structures (Board and four subgroups) met. At these meetings members collectively carried out a review of action delivery and identified successes, challenges and priorities. Event report for the January meeting can be viewed here and for June here.

Funds of €150,000 in 2021, €250,000 in 2022 and €350,000 for 2023 were secured by the Department of Justice through Dormant Accounts Funding (DAF) to fund elements of specific actions (such as action 3.1) in addition to the establishment and running of the Drogheda Implementation Board.

In response to the general heading in both the Drogheda Report and Implementation Plan “the need to resource services or provided additional services in the area” the Drogheda Implementation Board allocated €125,000 of 2023 budget to a small grants scheme for community sector led projects addressing issues/actions identified in the Report and Plan. The closing date for this was the 31<sup>st</sup> March, 43 applications were received with the fund oversubscribed by 170%. In total €126,208 was allocated across 21 grants in the Drogheda and Laytown/Bettystown area.

Projects include:

- School based early intervention projects such as developing a ‘Nurture Room’ in Aston Village Educate Together National School and access to Play Therapy supports in St. Bridget and St. Patrick’s National School on Bothar Brugha;
- An innovative Youth Diversion Drug Prevention Programme being delivered collaboratively by the Foróige Cable Project in Moneymore and Youth Work Ireland Louth’s Boyne Project in Finian’s Park;
- “CourAGEous” an initiative working with young people in schools and community to change attitudes and empower young people to address domestic and sexual violence among their peers led by Drogheda Women and Children’s Refuge;

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A bursary scheme to support young people in Laytown/Bettystown access mainstream activities in their local area through East Coast Family Support Centre;</li> <li>• A number of sports projects including developing a Drogheda Boxing Team for a cross border tournament involving all three boxing clubs in the Drogheda area;</li> <li>• “Healing through Creativity” an intensive 6 week programme for people who are dealing with the challenge of having loved ones with substance misuse issues delivered by Family Addiction Support Network;</li> <li>• A collaborative summer music programme led by Music Generation Louth / Meath and supported by Boomerang Youth Café’s Basement Sounds and Drogheda Northside &amp; Holy Family School Completion Programmes; “Clean, Create, Celebrate – Southside Pride” a large collaborative community clean-up project in Rathmullen, led by St. Nicholas GFC</li> </ul>		
<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Body</i>
Department of Justice (DoJ) to coordinate implementation of actions in line with timelines set out in this document and to produce six monthly progress reports	Ongoing	DoJ
Louth and Meath Education and Training Board (LMETB) to host local Drogheda Implementation Board comprised of local representatives of relevant agencies and bodies	Ongoing	LMETB
Recruitment of Coordinator to support local Drogheda Implementation Board	Complete	LMETB
DoJ to provide funding for single staff resource to support Drogheda Implementation Board. Funds secured via Dormant Accounts for 2022.	Complete	DoJ
Submission to be made to Dormant Accounts Fund for 2023 funding	Complete	DoJ

## 2. ADDRESSING CRIME

2.1	<p><b>For those involved at a very serious or “senior” level in the drugs trade and related organised crime in the area, the current approach by AGS of targeting and disrupting their activities to be continued and resourced accordingly.</b></p>							
<b>Current Status</b>								
<p>‘Operation Stratus’ is a Garda operation deployed in Drogheda to identify and disband Organised Crime Gangs through the targeting and arresting of persons involved in very serious distribution and sale of controlled substances in the Drogheda area. This targeted approach has resulted in significant drugs and firearm seizures by Investigating Gardaí in the Drogheda area.</p> <p>A number of incidents have been detected, some of which include Murder, Attempted Murder, Possession of Firearms, Possession of Drugs, Manufacture of Drugs, Importation of Drugs, Possession of Explosives, Petrol Bomb incidents, Criminal Damage offences and Arson.</p> <p>In addition, a Divisional Drugs Unit with dedicated resources under a Senior Investigating Officer is based in Drogheda Garda Station. This Drugs Unit continues to make a significant number of detections and arrests for a range of Drug Related Offences. In 2022 Gardaí in Drogheda took €4 million off the streets, seized assets, charged people with Organised Crime offences and have charged 83 people with possession of drugs for sale &amp; supply.</p> <p>An Garda Síochána continues to proactively target the finances and other assets of all persons involved in the sale and supply of drugs. Gardaí in Drogheda will continue to work closely with other agencies and Garda Units, on a local, national and international level in order to target those involved in the sale and supply of controlled substances.</p> <p>This operational and strategic approach has proven to be very successful. Resources allocated to Drogheda in response to an escalation in organised crime and the Drogheda Report &amp; Implementation Plan continue to be essential in the continuation of An Garda Síochána’s disruption of activity by those at a senior level in the drugs and organised crime trade.</p> <p><a href="#">Click here</a> to view Chief Superintendent Alan McGovern of Louth Cavan Monaghan Division give an insight into the real impact of these resources.</p>								
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 50%; text-align: center;"><i>Next Steps</i></th> <th style="width: 20%; text-align: center;"><i>Timeline</i></th> <th style="width: 30%; text-align: center;"><i>Responsible Body</i></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="288 1417 898 1594"> <p>The strategy outlined above will continue in relation to the seizure of illegal drugs and assets. This strategy is directly linked with Operation Stratus which continues to deal with serious organised criminality in Drogheda.</p> </td> <td data-bbox="898 1417 1142 1594" style="text-align: center;"> <p>Ongoing over the lifetime of the Plan</p> </td> <td data-bbox="1142 1417 1441 1594" style="text-align: center;"> <p>An Garda Síochána</p> </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>			<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Body</i>	<p>The strategy outlined above will continue in relation to the seizure of illegal drugs and assets. This strategy is directly linked with Operation Stratus which continues to deal with serious organised criminality in Drogheda.</p>	<p>Ongoing over the lifetime of the Plan</p>	<p>An Garda Síochána</p>
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2.2	<p><b>Implement as a matter of urgency an intensive wraparound service for vulnerable children and young people exposed to and involved in organised crime group, as well as their families, with a view to facilitating their disengagement from such criminal networks.</b></p>	
<b>Current Status</b>		
<p>The Greentown Project trial sites are progressing in two locations in the State to develop approaches to wrap around support for vulnerable children. The learnings from these trials will inform the deployment of services in areas where children and young people are exposed to, and involved in organised crime groups, as well as their families, with a view to facilitating their disengagement from such criminal networks. The very effective cross-agency collaborative</p>		

work that is taking place has assisted a number of young people to date to receive the necessary training to enable them to gain employment which will help them to break the link with, and dependency on, criminal networks.

Extern is an all-island social justice charity supporting children, young people, individuals and families to overcome their challenges, empower positive change and support the family unit. Representatives of Extern were invited to the May meeting of the Policing and Drugs Subgroup of the Drogheda Implementation Board and presented on an intensive family support pilot which they are delivering in the Drogheda area. This pilot is funded by the Department of Justice. Extern has also been engaging in the Youth Service Network Meetings facilitated by the Drogheda Implementation Board Coordinator and Louth Local Development Partnership.

<b>2.3</b>	<b>Continue – and increase, where appropriate – resourcing (e.g., staff, training, minibus/es) to the two Youth Diversion Projects (CABLE and BOYNE GYDPs), to facilitate their work.</b>	
<b>Current Status</b>		
<p>The CABLE and Boyne Youth Diversion Projects are funded directly by the Department of Justice. CABLE and Boyne Youth Workers work with local Juvenile Liaison Officers to deliver services to young people who have been cautioned, and young people deemed at risk of offending. This work is now captured as part of the partnership approach to service delivery in the new Youth Justice Strategy 2021-2027. Transport may be made available based on business need, the required funding for same is provided via YDP through the Department of Justice. The Chief Superintendent, Garda Youth Diversion Bureau is the lead in An Garda Síochána. Both projects are on two-year funding agreements that are renewable.</p> <p>In 2021 the Department of Justice met all appropriate funding needs for and provided €530,000 in funding to the two projects including additional funding of €25,000 to Boyne and €66,000 to CABLE for the purchase of mini-buses.</p> <p>In June 2022 Boyne Youth Diversion Project was allocated almost €75,000 under the Youth Justice Strategy to deliver Early Intervention Supports and Family Supports primarily to Youth Diversion referrals on the Southside of Drogheda. The CABLE Project had received funding in a previous round to deliver these supports on the Northside of the town.</p> <p>Youth Work Ireland Louth (the BOYNE Project) found it challenging to procure a minibus for the funds initially allocated to them due to the increase in costs nationwide for the purchase of all vehicles, but in particular minibuses. In October 2022 they issued a public appeal to try to secure a suitable vehicle to no avail. In response to this the Department of Justice allocated additional funds to the BOYNE Project to bring the total allocation for the minibus to €60,000.</p> <p>An application from CABLE Youth Diversion Project for funding to employ a full-time Early Intervention Worker is currently being examined within the Department.</p>		
	<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>
	<p>Engagement with CABLE and Boyne projects regarding any additional needs.</p> <p>This objective has been achieved however engagement will remain ongoing.</p>	Complete
		Department of Justice

<b>2.4</b>	<b>Ensure continuing/strengthening of community policing – particularly in the town centre and suburban areas.</b>
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<b>Current Status</b>		
<p>Community Policing in Drogheda has been significantly strengthened. The Drogheda Community Policing Team has recently been awarded the ‘Best Not for Profit’ organisation in 2022 by the Drogheda and District Chamber which marks a significant achievement for An Garda Síochána and Community Policing in Drogheda.</p> <p>Each member of the Community Policing Team has been assigned to dedicated sectors within communities and interest groups in both urban and rural locations within the Drogheda area. Gardaí continue to use technology to assist the community gain an understanding of sector areas through the <a href="#">Garda Website</a>, on the dedicated <a href="#">Louth Garda Facebook Page</a> in addition to sharing with public representatives and interest groups. Any queries/requests to this Unit can be addressed to <a href="mailto:Drogheda.Community@garda.ie">Drogheda.Community@garda.ie</a>.</p> <p>The Community Policing Team attended the Public Facing Joint Policing Committee meeting which took place in Drogheda on 20th September 2022 and were available to provide advice on a personal level for all in attendance. Community Policing is a matter for all members of An Garda Síochána, however, with a dedicated team comes a clear vision in terms of responsibility for dedicated sectors, delivery of schools programmes, high visibility foot and pedal cycle patrols, targeting of hot-spots, engaging with older persons, vulnerable persons, neighbourhood groups, text alert groups, engagement with NGOs, engagement with other agencies and dealing with a range of issues that impact on the communities within the town of Drogheda.</p> <p>This unit has had, and will continue to have, a significant role in addressing and delivering the goals of the Drogheda Implementation Plan.</p>		
<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Body</i>
Roll-out of the Community Policing Framework to the Louth Division	Complete	AGS
Continue to increase the profile and effectiveness of the Community Policing Team and achieve strategic and community orientated policing objectives.	Ongoing	AGS

<b>2.5</b>	<b>Consider the implementation of a Joint Agency Response to Crime (JARC) project in the Drogheda area.</b>
<b>2.10</b>	<b>Explore ways in which the timeliness of criminal justice responses to offending and offenders can be improved where possible.</b>
<b>Current Status</b>	
<p>In 2020, an oversight and governance structure was established to coordinate and align multi-agency offender management programmes, including SORAM, JARC, Domestic Violence, Complex High-Risk Prisoners and Life Sentenced Prisoners. In 2022, ACER 3 programme in JARC was evaluated. Whilst the recommendations resulting from evaluations are currently being reviewed by the relevant governance structures, work has been ongoing to discuss the aims and needs of the JARC programme, with a particular focus on how the programme can be adapted for future use. The aim is for learnings from the evaluations and workshops to be utilised in future JARC programmes, including the proposed Drogheda project.</p> <p>Red Door Project will work with the Probation Service, Irish Prison Service and An Garda Síochána to provide the JARC programme in the area. The JARC National Coordination Team (NCT), which co-ordinates, supports and oversee operational responses in JARC, is currently reviewing a draft Standard Operating Procedure (SOP). The NCT is also considering the proposed implementation plan for the project in Drogheda. The SOPs and implementation plan</p>	

will also require the approval of the Offender Management Governance and Strategy Group, which provides leadership, oversight and governance to a range of multi-agency offender management initiatives including JARC and the Offender Management Oversight Group oversees the governance and risk management of JARC and other multi-agency offender management programmes. As a result, the aim is to have the SOPs and implementation plan approved in H2 2023.

<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Body</i>
Any decision to rollout JARC to additional locations will be made by the Offender Management Governance and Strategy Group in the context of the outcome of ongoing programme evaluation. Evaluations are expected to continue to be discussed throughout Q3 and Q4 2023.	Q4 2023 (previously Q4 2022)	Offender Management Governance and Strategy Group (Chaired by DoJ, Membership includes IPS, AGS and Probation Service)
To date, one workshop has taken place and more will take place in H2 2023.	Q4 2023	Offender Management Governance and Strategy Group (Chaired by DoJ, Membership includes IPS, AGS and Probation Service)

<b>2.6</b>	<b>Allocate additional Probation Service resources (1-2 probation officers, as well as community service and community-based organisations, where and as needed) immediately to the Louth team, to allow adequate focus on and resourcing of responses to drug-related offending, young people involved in crime and related projects, as well as in the event of any expansion of the JARC programme, youth justice, community service and restorative justice programmes.</b>	
<b>Current Status</b>		
<p>The Probation Service resources on the Louth Team, which include the Drogheda catchment area, remained static in 2022.</p> <p>The Probation Service continues to review resource levels for this team. There are likely to be resource implications to facilitate the delivery of specific actions within the Drogheda Implementation Plan, such as the continuation and sustainability of the Drug Court and the JARC type initiative which will be at commencement stage in Q1 2023. The delivery of community sanctions is a key aspect of the work carried out and will continue in 2023, in partnership with other relevant community-based services.</p> <p>The Probation Service team from Co Louth is represented on both the Policing and Drugs Subgroup and the Family Support, Children, Young People and Education Subgroup of the Implementation Board.</p>		
<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Body</i>
Probation Service resources to be kept under review	Ongoing over the lifetime of the Plan	Probation Service

<b>2.7</b>	<b>In spite of the constraints of Proceeds of Crime legislation, explore how to demonstrate to local communities in a visible and practical way that money and</b>
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	<b>other resources seized from organised criminals is, in effect, used to provide funding for community and other services.</b>		
<b>Current Status</b>			
<p>The Community Safety Innovation Fund (CSIF) was established by the Minister for Justice and the Minister for Public Expenditure in April 2021 to allow proceeds of crime to be directed into community projects to support community safety. The Community Safety Innovation Fund reflects the successes of An Garda Síochána and the Criminal Assets Bureau in disrupting criminal activity and seizing proceeds of crime by providing additional funding for investment in community safety projects. The fund was allocated €2 million under Budget 2022. The funding was increased to €3 million for 2023, and the call for applications to the 2023 fund was open for 8 weeks, closing in May. A total of 61 applications were received. It is anticipated that another round of funding will open for applicants in 2024.</p> <p>Foróige submitted a successful application to the CSIF in 2022 for ‘New Choices’, an individualised alternative learning programme for young people aged 10-16 who have dropped out, or are at risk of dropping out, of the school system in the Drogheda area. This proposal was developed in response to gaps identified by the Drogheda Young Person’s Services Network; and the Family Support, Children, Young People and Education Subgroup Service Audit. The New Choices worker commenced in March 2023 and is based in bespoke, town centre offices to encourage engagement with young people and their families. Since the service was established, referrals have come from a variety of sources including Education Welfare Officers; Tusla Family Support Service; Primary and Secondary Schools; and Community organisations. The service is already operating at maximum capacity with young people on a waiting list for supports.</p> <p>Funding was also approved under the CSIF 2022 for a new Prison Link worker situated within the Red Door Project for 2 years to provide individual 1:1 sessions with clients to aid preparations, engagement and referral to relevant services in prison.</p> <p>The role has involved attending Mountjoy and Wheatfield prisons doing assessments and developing care plans in relation to prisoner’s addiction and rehabilitation needs. These plans encompass residential rehabilitation programmes, community-based day programmes, mental health supports, education and housing needs, and how to access social welfare payments on release. There has been successful engagement with a number of agencies and services with regard to clients who are incarcerated, released back into the community and those who are awaiting prison sentences.</p> <p>The role has also enabled the project to be part of Joint Agencies Response to Crime (JARC) meetings.</p>			
	<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Body</i>
	Applications for CSIF 2023 to be reviewed and applicants informed of decision. Funding to be issued to all successful applicants.	2023	DOJ

<b>2.8</b>	<b>Explore the provision of appropriate multi-disciplinary responses (including out-of-hours) to incidents (e.g., with mental health components or factors, such as suicidal or self-harming behaviour) currently managed by ‘frontline’ AGS members</b>
<b>Current Status</b>	
<p>The project is due to be piloted in Limerick Garda Division and will be reviewed and evaluated by An Garda Síochána. As the commencement and subsequent evaluation of the project in</p>	

Limerick is awaited, this timeline will remain fluid. Any provision of multi-disciplinary response in Drogheda will also require prior approval by the Commissioner.

The Policing and Drugs subgroup of Drogheda Implementation Board, of which An Garda Síochána are members, are exploring options in relation to local responses. It was also acknowledged that An Garda Síochána in Drogheda has excellent working relationships with all of the agencies concerned and will continue to respond efficiently and effectively to incidents concerning mental health.

While awaiting the commencement and subsequent evaluation of CAST Pre-Pilot to commence in Limerick in Q4 2023, the Drogheda Implementation Board is working with Superintendent in Drogheda in relation to local responses.

A number of other initiatives throughout the country have been examined to learn from best practice and to decide on the establishment of a pilot initiative in Drogheda. A meeting is to be convened with a number of key stakeholders – including Fr. Mc Verry Trust, Samaritans, Homeless Aid and others who engage with persons with mental health issues and other health-related issues. This will provide a reliable understanding of the current state of play in the Drogheda area with a view to establish a Drogheda based pilot initiative.

<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Body</i>
<p>Await the commencement and subsequent evaluation of the project in Limerick Division. CAST Pre-Pilot to commence in Limerick in Q4 2023.</p> <p>Plans to develop a pilot in Drogheda are ongoing, while developments in Limerick are awaited.</p>	Ongoing	An Garda Síochána

<b>2.9</b>	<p><b>Explore how to address the previously raised and discussed issue of the impact of the county boundaries of Louth and Meath, and the corresponding delineation between Garda Districts/Divisions, specifically in relation to the policing of the Laytown-Bettystown area of East Meath.</b></p>
<b>Current Status</b>	
<p>The Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (D/HLGH) is keeping the operation of urban area committees under review. These aim to improve co-operation and municipal governance for sizeable urban areas that significantly extend beyond county boundaries. Several models will be considered, ranging from cooperative arrangements to more formal structures. In the longer term, the review will also consider whether there is a requirement to legislate in order to support such structures.</p> <p>The realignment of the boundaries between Louth Cavan Monaghan Division and Meath Westmeath Division has been approved by the Garda Commissioner. A small team has been developed to put realignment into action The exploration phase of the issue of boundaries between Louth and Meath, in relation to the Laytown-Bettystown area, is complete, and the implementation phase of boundary realignment has commenced.</p> <p>This specific action requires an exploration of how to address the previously raised and discussed issue of the impact of the county boundaries of Louth and Meath, and the corresponding delineation between Garda Districts/Divisions, specifically in relation to the policing of the Laytown-Bettystown area of East Meath.</p> <p>This matter has been progressed to the implementation stage, and a number of meetings between Louth and Meath Senior Divisional Management teams have taken place. In addition</p>	

a team of ICT and representatives from PULSE / CAD have also attended these meetings. A significant volume of work is now currently underway to ultimately achieve the required change in divisional boundaries.

A presentation on this process will be given to the Drogheda Implementation Board by Superintendent Watters at their meeting of 21<sup>st</sup> July 2023.

<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Body</i>
A review is examining whether a formal mechanism is required to improve cooperation in administrative areas in large urban settings that cross over administrative boundaries.	Ongoing	D/HLGH
Superintendent Drogheda will recommend at the next Implementation Board Meeting that this action should now be closed.	Complete	AGS

<b>2.10</b>	<b>Explore ways in which the timeliness of criminal justice responses to offending and offenders can be improved where possible</b>
This Recommendation has been grouped with recommendation 2.5 above.	

<b>2.11</b>	<b>Explore the practicality of implementing the Community Crime Impact Assessment (CCIA) process in Drogheda</b>
<b>4.8</b>	<b>Build on previous initiatives to increase community capacity for responding to violent critical incidents at local level.</b>

<b>Current Status</b>		
<p>CCIA is an instrument intended to give due weight to the experience of a community living with drug-related criminality and anti-social behaviour. CCIA's are part of the National Drug Strategy Reducing Harm Supporting Recovery 2017-2025. Strategic Action 4.1.40 aims to "measure the impact of drug related crime and wider public nuisance issues on communities" by: "developing and piloting a Community Impact Assessment Tool in order to measure the impact of drug-related crime and wider public nuisance issues on communities".</p> <p>Citywide Drugs Crisis Campaign, who developed the CCIA tool, presented to the Drogheda Implementation Board and Department of Justice team members in June 2022. Following on from this Drogheda Implementation Board resolved to implement CCIA in Drogheda at meeting dated 23/09/2022.</p> <p>A procurement process was undertaken, and a local community organisation appointed to deliver the CCIA in identified areas of Drogheda. Training was provided to community contacts and representatives of statutory agencies. The initial data collecting phase of the project has been completed with a report on issues highlighted submitted to the Board in May 2023. Local problem-solving groups to address issues identified by local residents and outlined in the report were established in Q2 2023 with further meetings scheduled for September.</p> <p>In response to action 4.8 above a Community Critical Incident Response Plan is also being developed – led by Louth and Meath Children and Young Person Services Committee (CYPSC) Coordinators. The first meeting regarding same was held on 13<sup>th</sup> March 2023 in the Drogheda area.</p>		
<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Body</i>

Drogheda Implementation Board to engage with City Wide, An Garda Síochána and the Department of Health (DoH) in relation to exploring the practicality of implementing the Community Crime Impact Assessment in Drogheda	Complete	Drogheda Implementation Board/ DoH/AGS
Commence delivery of CCIA in Drogheda	Complete	Drogheda Implementation Board
Implement actions identified during first phase of CCIA Process	Q1 2024	Drogheda Implementation Board

<b>2.12</b>	<b>Explore the implementation of a ‘See It. Say It’ scheme in Drogheda, in relation to anti-social behaviour.</b>	
<b>Current Status</b>		
<p>An Garda Síochána in Drogheda has engaged with the Assistant Commissioner, Roads Policing &amp; Community Engagement to progress the “See Something, Say Something” initiative which is currently being evaluated after having been piloted in Kerry.</p> <p>This initiative will provide an anonymous platform for people to report concerns by text within the Drogheda Community making it easier to report issues.</p> <p>Chief Superintendent Louth Cavan Monaghan has met with Assistant Commissioner, Roads Policing &amp; Community Engagement to expedite implementation.</p> <p>Assistant Commissioner, Roads Policing &amp; Community Engagement has discussed implementation with the Chief Information Officer in An Garda Síochána and the scheme can go ahead while we are waiting for an update from Head of Innovation and Digital Services in relation to CAD assistance.</p> <p>A meeting will be held in the week beginning 28 August 2023 with all partners in the process including Assistant Commissioner, Roads Policing &amp; Community Engagement, Head of Innovation and Digital Services, Chief Superintendent Louth Cavan Monaghan and Superintendent Drogheda.</p>		
<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Body</i>
Presentation by key members of AGS headquarters and Kerry Division to Drogheda Implementation Board.	Complete	An Garda Síochána
A meeting to determine roll out will-take place imminently and will be led by Roads Policing & Community Engagement as policy owner for the initiative.	Q3 2023	An Garda Síochána
Roll out the “See Something, Say Something” initiative in Drogheda by the beginning of Q4 2023.	Q4 2023	An Garda Síochána

<b>2.13</b>	<b>Continue to provide training and awareness raising in relation to the impact and implications of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) for all relevant bodies in Drogheda.</b>	
<b>Current Status</b>		

The Youth Justice Strategy 2021-2027 provides a developmental framework for further ongoing enhancement of youth justice services. The strategy outlines approaches to the effects of trauma and disadvantage, including through interagency work, through strengthening Garda policies on engagement with young people, and through pursuing specialised training support for front line personnel who engage with young people. Implementation of the Strategy is being supported by cross-agency governance and oversight structures, a dedicated research partnership with the University of Limerick (REPPP project), and a Youth Justice Advisory Group. This Advisory Group comprises community, professional and academic experts with a broad range of relevant experience including in relation to the impact of trauma and adverse childhood events.

A series of training and other events to raise awareness of Adverse Childhood Experiences have taken place or been attended by practitioners in Drogheda across 2022. The Tusla and Louth Local Development ABC Programme teams are working collaboratively with Drogheda Implementation Board structures to build on these initial activities and develop a plan for building a community resilience network with a trauma informed approach in the area. This activity is also closely aligned to Action 6.5.

<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Body</i>
DoJ to work with partners to deliver on the Youth Justice Strategy 2021-2027 objectives which relate to the effects of trauma and disadvantage on young people.	Ongoing in line with the objectives of the Youth Justice Strategy 2021-2027	DoJ working with DCEDIY and other GSG bodies, local authority, community and local development and other expert and community partners
Increase Louth Community Resilience Network membership and formalise plan for building community resilience	Ongoing	Louth Local Development ABC Programme, Louth CYPSC, TUSLA

### 3. DRUG USE

<b>3.1</b>	<b>The Red Door project should receive urgent additional funding for the provision of drugs outreach work (as a particular priority), counselling, family support, client progression pathways, Court-related and prisoner support and additional harm reduction services in the Drogheda area. Specifically, €150,000 additional for a full year, should be allocated to the Red Door, for provision of these additional services</b>
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#### Current Status

A number of additional posts in the Red Door Project have been resourced through Dormant Accounts Funding and the HSE since October 2021. They include the new positions of Social Worker and Drug Court Liaison Worker, discussed further under action 3.5, and an additional Project Worker post. Funding for the Social Worker and Project Worker posts has been confirmed by the HSE until end of 2023. The Department of Justice has secured Dormant Accounts Funding to continue funding the Drugs Court Case Worker post until Q3 2024. In addition, the Red Door Project team were successful in securing funding through the Community Safety Innovation Fund (see action 2.7) for two years to employ a Prison Links Worker. All of these interventions enhance the Red Door's capacity to support a broader base of clients and deliver harm reduction services in Drogheda.

[Click here](#) to view the Red Door team speak about the impact of these resources on their service.

The North East Regional Drug and Alcohol Task Force (NERDATF) review was completed with the resulting new NERDATF Strategy plan finalised in Q1 2023.

The conclusions and recommendations arising from the above two reports and the HSE review of Addiction Services in Louth and Meath, CHO 8 will inform the development of a roadmap for drug and alcohol service provision across the Louth/Meath area. A meeting was scheduled in Q1 2023 between the Head of Primary Care, General Manager, Addiction Manager, NERDATF Chairperson and NERDATF Co-ordinator in October in order to progress. This meeting was subsequently cancelled and is to be rescheduled.

<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Body</i>
Additional funding agreed for 2022 and allocated to the Red Door Project from earmarked dormant accounts and HSE funding	Complete	Department of Justice/Department of Health/HSE
Further engagement on additional resourcing needs following completion of HSE regional resourcing review	Complete	DoJ/DoH/HSE
DoJ, DoH and HSE to consider the issue of sustainability of funding to ensure a medium to long-term plan is in place for service delivery	Ongoing	DoJ/HSE/DoH

<b>3.2</b>	<b>Explore the possibility of utilising the Red Door facility as more of a 'one-stop-shop' for drug treatment and related services.</b>
The HSE, North East Regional Drug and Alcohol Task Force (NERDATF) and the Red Door Project continue to engage in a collaborative approach to support the establishment of a needle and syringe exchange programme to operate from the Red Door Project (see action 3.7)	

The additional resources allocated under 3.1 above, have facilitated the Red Door Project team in expanding the services provided within the Centre and reaching a significantly higher number of clients

The Red Door Project have also made their premises available to Merchants Quay Ireland Family Support Service (funded by the HSE) to hold meetings with their clients.

<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Body</i>
HSE, North Eastern Regional Drugs Task Force (NE-RDTF), the Red Door Project and the Probation Service to engage on how services can be developed and to eliminate overlapping or duplication of services; examine potential to step up the engagement with Social Work and Probation with the aim of considering the use of the Red Door facility as a “one-stop-shop”	Ongoing	HSE, NE-RDTF, Probation Service, DoJ

<b>3.3</b>	<b>Review the State funding (approximately €7,500 p.a.) provided to the Family Addiction Network (FASN) – providing family support, especially in the context of drug-related intimidation work and wider family support for addiction-related issues.</b>
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**Current Status**

Additional once off funding was allocated by the HSE Midlands Louth Meath to the Family Addiction Network (FASN) in May 2022, amounting to €9,635. In December 2022, an additional once off funding was again allocated to FASN by the HSE Midlands Louth Meath/NE Regional Drug and Alcohol Task Force, amounting to €20,000.

The FASN was included in an independent evaluation of community and voluntary drug and alcohol services, commissioned by the North East Regional Drug and Alcohol Task Force (NERDATF). The Draft NERDATF external evaluation report and draft NERDATF Strategic Plan 2022-2025 have been circulated to the NERDATF Committee and finalised. Merchants Quay Ireland (MQI) arranged a meeting with FASN in February where both services provided updates on service provision, development and potential for interagency working to included cross referrals, workshops, training and group work.

The conclusions and recommendations arising from the above two reports and the HSE review of Addiction Services in Louth & Meath, CHO 8 will inform the development of a roadmap for drug and alcohol service provision across the Louth/Meath area. A meeting between the Head of Primary Care, General Manager, Addiction Manager, NERDATF Chairperson and NERDATF Co-ordinator has been rescheduled from October 2022 to early 2023 in order to progress this.

MQI have been funded by the HSE to provide a new Northeast Family Support Service in the Louth Meath area, including Drogheda. The Northeast Family Support Service offers a confidential non-judgemental and supportive service in Counties Louth and Meath to any family member, partner or friend impacted by a loved one’s problematic use of alcohol and/or drugs. The posts of Family Support Co-ordinator and Family Support Worker were both in place by Q3 2022.

The HSE commissioned Family Support Services are now operational across the Louth/Meath area. Progress has been made in relation to interagency referrals both in to the service and onward referrals. The Family Support Coordinator and Family Support Worker continue to engage in an interagency approach and are receiving referrals from community-based addiction services.

<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Body</i>
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Family Support Coordinator and Family Support Worker roles to commence	Completed	HSE
HSE to engage with FASN on funding proposal submission	Ongoing	HSE

<b>3.4</b>	<b>Commission/carry out an urgent review of the organisation of drugs (statutory and community and voluntary) services in the Drogheda area, similar in focus – but perhaps on a smaller scale – to the Service Review of the Dundalk Addiction Services (2015) carried out by the HSE, with a view to ensuring improved effectiveness and efficiency as a matter of urgency.</b>	
<b>Current Status</b>		
<p>The HSE review of Addiction Services in Louth and Meath, CHO 8 was completed in June 2021. The HSE Senior Management Team continue to work through the recommendations and continue to progress work with all related disciplines across the Louth/Meath area.</p> <p>The North East Regional Drug and Alcohol Task Force (NERDATF) commissioned an external review of S39 funded services across the Louth Meath area which was completed in Q4 2022. The NERDATF review was completed with the resulting new NERDATF Strategy plan finalised in Q1 2023 which will form the basis for the collective work of its members.</p>		
<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Body</i>
Consultants appointed and review commenced	Complete	HSE
Consultants to meet with service providers in HSE, Taskforce and community and voluntary groups in Meath and Louth (staff and service users)	Complete	HSE
Evaluation of S.39 Organisations completed	Complete	HSE
NERDATF to work through recommendations	2023	NERDATF

<b>3.5</b>	<b>Reinstate/continue the local Drug Court, with appropriate funding and other resourcing and formally evaluate its operation over a period of say one to two years, before deciding on its longer-term future.</b>	
<b>Current Status</b>		
<p>The Drug Treatment Court (DTC) in Louth, operating as a pilot, encompasses principles of the National Drug Rehabilitation framework, i.e. assessment, care planning, client consent, a shared care model and exit planning. It is a cross agency response to drug users before the Court, with a focus on rehabilitation, as opposed to punishment.</p> <p>The designated DTC Liaison Case Worker, based in the Red Door Project in Drogheda and resourced through Dormant Accounts Funding, and the allocated Probation Officer, engage with each participant and co-ordinate client case management plans, assessing client progress and agreeing progress reports for Court. The focus of the DTC is the process of recovery, encompassing a motivational approach, emphasising harm reduction and supporting progress towards a goal of abstinence.</p> <p>The Department of Justice has secured Dormant Accounts Funding to continue funding the DTC liaison Case Worker post until Q3 2024.</p>		
<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Body</i>

Develop business case for specific Drugs Treatment Court Liaison Case Worker role situated within Red Door Project Complete DoJ/Probation Service	Complete	DoJ/Probation Service
Provision of second year of funding for DTC Liaison Case Worker	Complete	DoJ
Funding for year 3 to be disbursed	Q4 2023	DoJ
DoJ to formally evaluate the operation of the Drugs Court over one year with a decision reached regarding its longer-term future	2023	DoJ/Probation Service

<b>3.6</b>	<b>Agencies working in the substance use field in Drogheda should look at practical ways of improving interagency cooperation, including the identification and implementation of appropriate gateways to treatment and progression routes for service users, as well as reducing or eliminating overlaps and duplication, providing joint (cross-agency) training, developing shared language and even greater cooperation on assessment and intervention methods.</b>
<b>Current Status</b>	
<p>Three meetings of the HSE Clinical Quality and Safety Committee (CQSC) for Addiction Services, which is chaired by the HSE Clinical Lead, Addiction Services CHO8, have taken place. These meetings discussed the establishment of a subcommittee structure which will comprise membership from the MRDATF, NERDATF and Funded Services (Section 39s).</p> <p>The third meeting took place in November 2022 and subgroups were agreed for S39 and North East Regional Drug and Alcohol Task Force (NERDATF) / Midland Regional Drug and Alcohol Task Force (MRDATF), as well as Tier 4 Residential and Waiting List sub-groups. Some subgroups meetings have already taken place - these subgroup structures will further enhance interagency collaboration &amp; networking and offer further operational &amp; clinical supports in 2023.</p> <p>CHO 8 and NERDATF continue to engage with service providers to further strengthen interagency collaboration and co-operation. The conclusions and recommendations arising from both the NERDATF evaluation and strategic plan development will further inform and support this collaboration.</p> <p>The NERDATF is directing local shared care partners to the HSE and National Drug Rehabilitation Framework online training resource, and links agencies in 2023 to see what additional training and supports they need before planning an in-person workshop.</p> <p>HSE Clinical Quality and Safety Committee (CQSC) for Addiction Services Subgroups has begun to meet. There has been some queries regarding representation and this is being worked through with the intention that there will be representation for the 3 constituent parties namely S39 representation, Task Force and HSE.</p> <p>It was noted at the last HSE Clinical Quality and Safety Committee that the S39 services are commissioned through a Service Level Agreement (SLA) issued via the relevant Task Forces. Within the SLA's all CQ&amp;S issues pertaining to services being provided are included in the SLA process and are monitored/overseen via the CMSU and the SLA quarterly meetings. Therefore it was agreed not to develop another sub-group for the Task Force services as this was considered a duplication of work.</p> <p>To further support 3.6 the HSE Clinical Lead, Dr Garrett McGovern, is now providing information sessions in relation to drug/alcohol use with a different subject discussed with a</p>	

Q&A slot at the end of each information session. All community, voluntary and statutory service are invited to attend these information sessions.

The HSE Clinical Lead has also set up a monthly session for those working in the area of Addiction to present on difficult cases. This allows staff to look at treatment options per case and also allows for learning with services.

To support action 3.6, the HSE Addiction Services secured additional funding to develop an Addiction Homeless services to include two new posts i.e. Addiction Homeless - Social Care Lead and Social Care Worker. Both posts will be in place by mid-August 2023 and will work collaboratively with both Addiction Service and Homeless services across the NE region via interagency cooperation including identifying and implementing appropriate gateways to treatment, and progression routes for those who are not currently engaged in the treatment services. This service will also support those who are in addiction and who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless due to their addiction. The priority target group are those with an addiction who have a history of sleeping rough and long-term users of emergency homeless services due to their addiction.

<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Body</i>
The National Drug Rehabilitation Framework (NDRF) eLearning module has been completed and is available on HSELand for HSE, HSE-funded services, TUSLA, Probation, Homeless services, volunteers and students.	Complete	The HSE National Social Inclusion office
The Pilot assessment and care plan project is led by the HSE National Social Inclusion office. Evaluation of the pilot sites was delayed due to COVID priorities and the cyber-attack. The evaluation commenced in 2022 and is expected to be completed by Q2 2023. The final write-up is underway and expected by year end.	Q2 2023 (previously Q3 2022)	The HSE National Social inclusion office
HSE Clinical Quality and Safety Committee (CQSC) for Addiction Services Subgroups consisting of S39 representation, Task Force and HSE to be established and meeting	Ongoing	HSE/MRDATAF/NERDATAF

<b>3.7</b>	<b>Ensure full implementation of all appropriate harm reduction measures, as mandated by the National Drugs Strategy, including Needle and Syringe Programmes (NSP) and Naloxone, in Drogheda.</b>
<b>Current Status</b>	
<p>The HSE have secured funding to support the employment of two posts (1.6 Whole Time Equivalent) – Drug &amp; Alcohol Workers, with an additional Outreach Worker post secured. The posts will operate across the Louth/Meath area. These workers will support the provision of a mobile needle and syringe exchange programme, harm reduction, key working and interagency care planning. These workers liaised with the HSE NSIO Naloxone Programme and have completed naloxone training to facilitate provision of naloxone as part of the Outreach and Fixed needle and syringe exchange programmes. Both HSE Outreach worker posts are in place since May 2023 and are working collaboratively with all other community, voluntary and statutory agencies, including the Red Door Project.</p> <p>Mobile vehicles (vans) have been made available to both Outreach staff members by the HSE to support the provision of the needle and syringe exchange programme.</p>	

The HSE, North East Regional Drug and Alcohol Task Force (NERDATF) and the Red Door Project continue to engage in a collaborative approach to support the establishment of a fixed needle and syringe exchange programme to operate from the Red Door Project. Meetings, training and engagement around governance arrangements took place over Q3 and Q4 2022 to facilitate the establishment of the service. The service went live in May 2023. The HSE Addiction Service continue to fund the cost of Needle Exchange paraphernalia and the costs associated with the insurance for this service. The HSE Outreach workers are also working collaboratively with the team in the Red Door. An information video on the service, funded by Drogheda Implementation Board, has been produced and can be viewed here.

The NERDATF Coordinator has established an interagency collaborative initiative around safe disposal of drug related waste and litter across the Louth/Meath area. Interagency meetings commenced in October 2022. The Group’s work includes training of staff across the groups as well as developing a draft protocol for the safe clean up and disposal of discarded drug paraphernalia. The group is currently looking at equipment needs, Contracts/Standard Operating Procedures, reporting templates and a communication plan similar to the existing HSE/MRDATF plan across the Midlands area. A further update will be provided in the next progress report.

The information session for local partners engaged in responding to drug related litter has been finalised and will be available online or in –person, depending on the needs of the agency.

With the establishment of the HSE Outreach services it is envisaged that there will be a reduction of drug related litter across the Louth/Meath area.

<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Body</i>
Outreach drug/alcohol project worker assigned, manager in place, funding allocated by the HSE. The NSP project began on 11 May operating 3 days per week	Complete	HSE
€50,000 allocated for needle exchange provided and delivered by the HSE recurrently	Ongoing	HSE
Vacant Outreach Worker post to be clarified pending outcome of review	Complete	HSE
Establishment of a Safe Disposal Drug Related Waste and Litter Group	Complete	NERDATF/HSE
Three outreach worker posts to be filled. 2 posts have been filled. HSE in the process of filling the remaining post.	Ongoing	HSE

<b>3.8</b>	<b>Explore and implement the most appropriate way of ensuring a best-practice response to drug using clients with identified dual (drugs and mental health issues) diagnosis. This could include interagency co-location of staff and joint training</b>
<b>Current Status</b>	
The HSE will organise another webinar (previous webinar held in April 2022) which will provide an update on the National Clinical Programme for Co-morbid Mental Illness and Substance Misuse (Dual Diagnosis). Staff from HSE CHO8, the North East Regional Drug and Alcohol Task Force (NERDATF) and funded services will be invited to attend. A further update will be provided in the next progress report.	

The HSE and NERDATF plan to commence an initiative in early 2023, focused on Dual Diagnosis Awareness and Train the Trainer Workshops. The purpose of the initiative is to build community capacity around dual diagnosis. Similar initiatives previously took place in both Dublin North East Inner City and Finglas/Cabra, facilitated by the Dublin North/Northeast Recovery College. Funding for this is being discussed with the Drugs Policy Unit in the Department of Health. A further update will be provided in the next progress report.

The HSE National Social Inclusion Office, through the HSE Service Plan are providing €10,000 to support the development of Dual Diagnosis training for the NE area. To support this the HSE Addiction Services Manager CHO8 & the Addiction Service Lead in CHO1 have approached the NATP (National Addiction Training Programme) to look at developing a Dual Diagnosis workshop/training programme to support the community, voluntary and statutory services for this area in 2023.

Through additional resources allocated under 3.1 above the Red Door Project staff are in a position to support a number of clients with acute and complex mental health needs along with ongoing addiction issues who require intensive case management. This involves providing daily check-ins, weekly one to one sessions and interventions to ensure their safety.

The Red Door Project is also a member of a consortium of seven organisations who have secured funding to deliver a ‘Seeking Safety’ pilot project. Seeking Safety is an evidence based integrated treatment for PTSD/Trauma and Substance Abuse and is focused on women who have experienced domestic and gender based sexual violence and are presenting with addiction issues. Project worker and Peer Support Worker posts are in place to support the delivery of this project.

[Click here to view the Red Door team speak about the impact of these resources on their service.](#)

<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Body</i>
Clinical programme being developed and rolled out	2023	HSE
Inter-agency work to be carried out through Slaintecare on dual diagnosis to ensure a uniform and sustainable response nation-wide	2023	HSE
Review of roll-out of dual diagnosis to be carried out	2023	HSE
Webinar to take place on Co-morbid Mental Illness and Substance Misuse. A further update will be provided in the next progress report.	Q1 2023	HSE

<b>3.9</b>	<b>Provide further interagency training workshops on responding to drug-related intimidation for relevant staff in statutory agencies as well as those in the community and voluntary sector.</b>
<b>Current Status</b>	
<p>The Drug Related Intimidation and Violence Engagement (DRIVE) Model is an interagency response and data driven intervention model to respond effectively to drug-related intimidation and violence in communities in Ireland. The National Drug Related Intimidation and Violence Engagement (DRIVE) lead has been in post since June 2022 with a workplan for delivery of the DRIVE model being developed nationally by the Drive Oversight Committee (DOC), to include the adaptation and development of a training programme to complement</p>	

the DRIVE Model. As a result, local Drug Related Intimidation training has been postponed until national training programme and materials are developed and the local DRIVE lead (see below) is in position.

The North East Regional Drug and Alcohol Task Force (NERDATF) have contacted Louth County Council to discuss the DRIVE project with the Joint Policing Committee, with a view to including this in their workplan.

The NERDATF hosted an information session on the DRIVE initiative as part of a National DRIVE Roadshow on 7 September in Monaghan. The event was very well attended with a wide range of community, voluntary & statutory sectors represented. A DRIVE Roadshow was held in the Louth/Meath area in November 2022 with a large number of community, voluntary and statutory agencies in attendance.

In response to the Drogheda Report and Implementation Plan the Department of Health have allocated resources for a local DRIVE Lead, based in Drogheda and covering the North East Region. This post is one of two local DRIVE lead pilots in Ireland. NERDATF, in consultation with HSE Addiction Service Manager CHO8, has prepared a funding application for this resource. This was submitted to the DOC (DRIVE Oversight Committee) for discussion at their December 2022 meeting and a decision on same is awaited.

The HSE National Social Inclusion Office, through the HSE Service Plan have provided €50,000 to support the development of a DRIVE Lead for the NE area. To support this development the HSE Addiction Services Manager CHO8 & the Addiction Service Lead in CHO1 have worked with HSE Procurement Services and developed a tender for a DRIVE Lead. The tender is on etenders website with a closing date of 7 September 2023. All HSE, Task Force and S39 services have been notified of same.

The HSE Addiction Services Manager CHO8 is the national representative on the DOC (Drive Oversight Committee) and will keep them updated on developments for the DRIVE lead.

NERDATF is to establish an interagency DRIVE implementation group that will lead on the roll out of DRIVE across the NERDATF region. Funding is expected for the regional Drive Lead imminently, following the submission of proposal last autumn. Once this is secure then partners will be asked to nominate representatives to join this group from the local authorities /Joint Policing Committees, family support services, alcohol & drug treatment services and others.

As noted in the Drogheda Implementation Plan Progress Report to end June 2022, the Policing and Drugs Subgroup identified a need to extend the term 'interagency' to include staff in the education sector so that they can have access to relevant information and feel empowered to deal with issues relating to drug and alcohol use in children and families, including drug debt related information. Two drug and alcohol information and networking seminars were held in May and October attended by over 170 people across both events from primary, secondary and further education providers and community organisations in both Drogheda and East Meath. Feedback on these events was overwhelmingly positive ([Click here](#) to view May event report) and the subgroup are exploring resourcing so that such events can be mainstreamed and run on an annual basis at a minimum.

<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Body</i>
Interagency training workshops to recommence. In the meantime, Family Addiction Support Network and AGS are providing support.	Ongoing	NERDATF/AGS/FASN/National Family Support Network
Funding for regional DRIVE lead in North East to be approved.	HSE DRIVE Lead tender is currently up on	HSE CHO8 & CHO1

	etenders website	
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#### 4. YOUTH AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FACILITIES

4.1	<b>The Northside/Moneymore community hub facility should continue to be progressed, as it currently is, by LLP on behalf of all stakeholders. This facility should accommodate the provision of services currently provided by bodies forming the Moneymore Consortium, as well as providing a hub for a wider array of community services, provided by statutory as well as community and voluntary agencies.</b>
4.2	<b>It would greatly boost morale in the area if, at an appropriate point, clarification could be provided by LCC and LLP to relevant stakeholders in Moneymore/North Drogheda on the likely direction of travel and timeline for the proposed centre, as soon as practicable.</b>
4.3	<b>The relevant bodies should commence, as a priority, exploratory moves including local consultations, to provide a similar facility on the Southside of the Town, in the general Rathmullan area.</b>
<b>Current Status</b>	
<p><b>4.1</b> Following on from an initial business plan resourced by Louth Local Development, funding provided by the Department of Justice and engagement with Senior Planners in Louth County Council, pre-planning has been achieved. The Moneymore Consortium have received professional estimated costings for the delivery of the Community Hub based on these modified plans, including the fitting out of the building. Current estimate of costs, including all professional fees, stands at €5.8million.</p> <p>Consortium members made a series of presentations to key stakeholders in March 2023, including Drogheda Implementation Board, regarding the need for this community resource and requesting support in securing resources to progress the project. Securing full planning permission will be an essential first step to accessing funds for the building development. This requires funding to develop specialist technical and other documentation. In April 2023 Minister Heather Humphreys of the Department of Rural and Community Development notified Drogheda Implementation Board that her Department have allocated funds of €80,000 to progress this preparatory work which is a necessary precursor to the development of any such project.</p> <p>This Community Hub is now going to be project led by Louth County Council with a view to accessing the Department of Rural and Community Development’s Community Centre Investment Fund. It is proposed that this application will be made in 2024 to allow preparatory work to be undertaken.</p> <p><b>4.2</b> Louth County Council have identified and confirmed the availability of the most suitable site. The Department of Justice provided funds of €15,000 to develop a preliminary site plan for this location. The Consortium held an official Architect led launch of plans in October 2022. This event was attended by a wide variety of stakeholders, including local residents, to showcase site location and other key information regarding the development of the Community Hub. Through community fundraising the Moneymore Consortium produced a video to showcase the need for this community resource and the video was an integral element to presentations given to Drogheda Implementation Board and local elected representatives in March 2023.</p> <p>As per action 4.1 Louth County Council are now project lead. As the Community Hub is scheduled to be a 2024 application Louth County Council intend engaging in a process to ensure adequate governance structures are put in place at the outset of the project.</p>	

**4.3** Louth County Council continue to be committed to making a housing unit available for use as a community resource for the area. Discussions are ongoing in relation to securing an anchor tenant for this unit.

<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Body</i>
Completion of necessary refurbishment works at Moneymore Childcare facility	Complete	Moneymore Childcare Committee
Completion of design, feasibility and QS process	Complete	Moneymore Consortium
Engagement with LCC Planning team	Work Progressing and ongoing	Moneymore Consortium
Submission of application to Community Centres Investment Fund	2024	Louth County Council
Identify group(s) suitable to act as anchor tenant for a housing unit on the Southside	Work Progressing and ongoing	Louth County Council

<b>4.4</b>	<b>Progress, as a priority, the funding and development by LMETB of the sports and community changing/meeting block at DIFE</b>	
<b>Current Status</b>		
<p>A submission by LMETB to SOLAS Capital Investment, and supported by the Drogheda Implementation Board, for the phased development of a sports and community changing/meeting block at Drogheda Institute of Further Education (DIFE) as per this action was successful.</p> <p>In accordance with action 6.4 of the Plan LMETB included a request for capital investment to develop a new multi-purpose tertiary education block as a key response to the Drogheda Report on Community Safety and Wellbeing and would constitute a second phase of development on the site.</p> <p>Minister Simon Harris announced this multi-million capital investment at an event in DIFE on 5th September 2022 which was also attended by Minister McEntee. Following approval by SOLAS LMETB considered the most economically advantageous method of project delivery on a live densely populated site. It was decided that the safest and most expedient approach was to appoint a new design team, give them the full brief for delivering both phases at the same time – as one phase and proceed to appoint a contractor for one building project. Procurement of Design Team is underway.</p> <p><a href="#">Click here</a> to view Davy McDonnell, Principal of DIFE speak about the impact of this investment.</p>		
<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Body</i>
Identify and apply for funding to develop sports and community changing/meeting block at DIFE	Complete	LMETB
Commence procurement process for Design Team to Design and Plan the works.	Complete	LMETB
Submit planning application	Q4 2023	LMETB

4.5	<b>Agree an action plan for enhancing youth and community development capacity, particularly on the South side of Drogheda</b>
<b>Current Status</b>	
<p>An LMETB submission to the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth for a dedicated Youth Officer for the Drogheda area in response to the Drogheda Report Implementation Plan, initially recommended by the Family Support, Children, Young People and Education subgroup and endorsed by the Board, was approved by DCEDIY and the post filled in September 2022. Since that time the Youth Officer has been working in partnership with key stakeholders to define and research the current youth specific requirements to be addressed generally and in particular for the Drogheda area. Further details on the activity of this Youth Officer are outlined under action 5.3.</p> <p>Louth Local Development secured a new town centre premises in Q2 2023 which will provide additional and bespoke space for community engagement and development in Drogheda. These new offices, a significant investment in the community of Drogheda building on prior investment in staffing resources for the town (see below), will be designed to provide a safe space for a number of SICAP under represented target groups including young people not in employment education or training (NEETS); disadvantaged communities; Travellers; Roma; migrants/new communities; grassroots community organisations and more to come together and engage in community development activity. The location is also ideal for deep engagement with communities on the southside of the town.</p> <p>A new Louth Local Development (LLD) Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme (SICAP) Education and Community Development Officer is in post and actively engaging with community organisations in Drogheda. This is an additional post for the Drogheda area, provided through resources allocated from Louth Local Community Development Committee (LCDC), with a focus on supporting community development capacity, particularly on the Southside of the town; they also have a particular emphasis on youth.</p> <p>LLD also recruited a new Youth and Education Coordinator who is based part-time in Drogheda to strengthen and develop community connections and youth and education initiatives.</p> <p>Louth Local Development (LLD) Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme (SICAP) team administer a grant scheme that empowers local community groups to undertake a range of Social Inclusion activities including support to address the impacts of COVID-19 such as IT equipment and food bank services. A number of local Drogheda based community groups were supported with grant aid activity in 2022 and 2023 with additional funding specifically ringfenced in the SICAP Summer Programme Grants scheme for Drogheda based youth services for value adding summer programmes.</p> <p>The LLD SICAP Community Development Officer established a Services for Young People Network in early 2022. This group, initially convened in partnership with the Drogheda Implementation Board Coordinator, met a number of times across 2022 to look at the Scoping Report on Community Safety and Wellbeing in Drogheda, Drogheda Report Implementation Plan and to review action 5.5 of the Drogheda Report Implementation Plan (gaps in service provision for young people). Several actions were identified to enhance capacity to deliver supports to young people in Drogheda and two collaborative submissions to the Department of Justice Community Safety Innovation Fund (CSIF – see action 2.7) were developed as a result. One of these applications, the New Choices Project, an intensive alternative learning programme for young people aged 13-16 who are not in education, was successful. Details in relation to this programme are outlined above under action 2.7. The group continue to identify actions to enhance youth development capacity in the town</p>	

including planning a large-scale event in Q3 2023 to showcase services and opportunities available for children and young people in Drogheda.

As outlined in the January 2023 report on the Drogheda Implementation Plan the SICAP team developed a NEETs engagement strategy. 2022 activity resulted in the SICAP team working with a number of young people and their families in 2023, including supporting the young people to access LLD's Third Level Access grant (see action 4.7 below). In addition, in April 2023 a new 'Onwards and Upwards' programme was piloted by the SICAP team with young people participating in Youthreach in Drogheda.

A number of residents and community representatives from the South Side of Drogheda are participating in the Place Based Leadership Development Programme which is outlined in more detail in actions 4.6/4.7.

<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Body</i>
Education and Community Development Officer in post	Complete	Louth Local Development
Recommendations made and actioned	Ongoing over the lifetime of the Board	Family Support, Children, Young People and Education subgroup

<b>4.6</b>	<b>Generate an agreed strategic plan for the development of youth and community work and community leaders in Drogheda.</b>
<b>4.7</b>	<b>Include appropriate actions in relation to the training and development of local youth and community workers in this strategic plan; and specifically, education, training and career progression routes, linked to pre-university and university-level programmes, as well as incorporating 'on-the-job' training elements</b>
<b>Current Status</b>	
<p>A Place Based Leadership Development Programme, funded by the Department of Rural and Community Development led by Louth Local Development (LLD) with oversight from Louth Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) commenced in Drogheda in early 2022 and was completed in May 2023. The objective of this programme is to help build a community based, cross sectoral coalition to address challenging issues in the community. Participants are from a variety of sectors including community &amp; voluntary organisations, local residents, youth workers, school staff, An Garda Síochána, Louth County Council, Tusla and the Department of Social Protection. The course aim was to develop the leadership skills of participants and promote collaboration and partnership working amongst those that take part. The programme facilitated the development a deep understanding of the key challenges impacting upon the area and to identify and try possible solutions. The Department of Rural and Community Development have allocated a seed fund to allow participants to develop and commence project concepts that emerged from the programme. Engagement in relation to this phase of the programme commenced in June, supported by the LLD Education and Community Development Officer, and will continue throughout Q3 and Q4 2023. The programme is currently undergoing an independent evaluation which will be launched in September 2023.</p> <p>A new LLD Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme (SICAP) Education and Community Development Officer has been in post since May 2022. This additional post is specifically for the Drogheda area and the staff member has been building relationships with youth and community organisations in Drogheda, particularly on the Southside. Following a targeted approach regarding funding for students accessing Third Level Education within the Drogheda area, €10,000 was allocated in 2022 to support students at a socio-economic</p>	

disadvantage to avail of the SICAP Third Level Access Grant Aid. Further increases to funding available via this grant were made in 2023. SICAP Community Development and Education team members have been working in collaboration with youth services and relevant training and employment services to encourage students in the Drogheda area to access this scheme.

The Family Support, Children, Young People and Education subgroup of the Drogheda Implementation Board have completed their service audit as per action 5.2 of the Plan and are reviewing the outcomes from same. The identification of opportunity gaps in relation to training opportunities for youth workers and leaders emerged from this audit. The subgroup are exploring potential steps that could be taken as part of their review.

<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Body</i>
Placed Based Leadership Development Programme to commence	Completed	LLD/LCDC/DRCD
Completion of review of youth service provision in Drogheda	Completed	Subgroup B
Place Based Leadership participants to develop initiatives in response to youth and community issues	2023	LLD/LCDC/DRCD

<b>4.8</b>	<b>Build on previous initiatives to increase community capacity for responding to violent critical incidents at local level.</b>
This Recommendation has been grouped with recommendation 2.11 above	

## 5. SPECIFIC SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

5	<p>5.1 Ensure that the good work initiated and under way recently, to coordinate child protection and welfare and other children’s services, is maintained and further developed, specifically through the overarching strategic and service coordination proposals recommended above.</p> <p>5.2 An exercise has already been commenced, by LLP/CYPSC, to ‘map’ the services for children and young people in Drogheda. This valuable service ‘audit’ initiative, stalled because of Covid-19, should be re-started, prioritised and completed as a matter of urgency.</p> <p>5.3 Urgent consideration should also be given to how the various youth services could be more coordinated and supported.</p> <p>5.4 Ensure the completion of the review of Strengthening Families Programmes already provided and follow through as appropriate.</p> <p>5.5 There does appear to be certain gaps in some specific service provision for young people. These include mental health and suicide prevention, among others. Ensure these are prioritised in future planning and delivery.</p> <p><b>5.6 Recognising the importance of early intervention and preventative approaches in ‘breaking the cycle’, explore the delivery and expansion evidence based early intervention programmes in the Drogheda area</b></p>
<b>Current Status</b>	
<p><b>5.1</b> Child protection and welfare services were included in mapping process undertaken through action 5.2 below.</p> <p><b>5.2</b> A comprehensive service audit process by the Family Support, Children, Young People and Education subgroup of the Drogheda Implementation Board (Subgroup B) was completed in July 2022. A full analysis of the results of this audit including gaps, challenges, proposed solutions and what has been done to date was conducted by the Subgroup members at their September and October 2022 meetings. The service audit review is a ‘live’ document which continues to be used by the Subgroup to identify priorities and track delivery of interventions.</p> <p>A number of proposed responses to identified gaps have already been progressed, such as securing the position of Drogheda Youth Officer (see 4.5 above and 5.3 below); the establishment of a new child protection team; and the piloting of a ‘Family Help’ team in Tusla in Drogheda to support repeat children welfare referrals. A recommendation to resource targeted counselling interventions for children on the Southside of Drogheda made by the subgroup to the Drogheda Implementation Board was approved (see Action 5.5 below).</p> <p><b>5.3</b> Youth Officers play a crucial role supporting, developing and monitoring their local youth services. An LMETB submission to the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth for a dedicated Youth Officer for the Drogheda area in response to the Drogheda Report Implementation Plan, endorsed by the Board, was approved by DCEDIY and the post filled in September 2022.</p> <p>UBU Your Space Your Place is a Department of Children Equality Disability Integration and Youth (DCEDIY) funding scheme which provides local services for young people. The new Youth Officer has been working with all Drogheda UBU funded projects to ensure they are up to date with all compliance, funding-drawdown, reporting and performance evaluation tasks.</p>	

UBU's run on a three-year cycle and DCEDIY require ETB's to complete an Area Profile Needs Assessment and Service Requirement (APNASR) tool to facilitate the identification of service requirements for the new UBU funding cycle 2, which will commence in January 2024. The Youth Officer in partnership with key stakeholders carried out significant research into needs in the Drogheda area as part of this process. This included carrying out a gap analysis, identification of specific targeted needs and engagement with stakeholders with respect to youth services/provisions across the Drogheda region. Following this research, a submission was included in the APNASR submission for enhanced UBU provision in Drogheda. This submission was reviewed and endorsed by Drogheda Implementation Board at their May 2023 meeting.

The Youth Officer has also been identifying and applying for other resourcing opportunities such as an application to the Department of Education for phase 3 of the Local Youth Creative Partnership.

**5.4** As discussed in Progress Report to end June 2022 a review of the Strengthening Families programme was completed and considered by the Family Support, Children, Young People and Education subgroup. The programme is operating very well with two programmes successfully delivered in Drogheda in 2022. This action is deemed to be closed.

**5.5** This action is aligned to Service Audit outlined in action 5.2 above. The Subgroup's review of this audit identified that there continues to be a gap in counselling and mental health provision for young people in the Drogheda area. While this is impacting the town as a whole, some targeted specialist interventions had been provided through Connect Family Resource Centre (FRC) on the Northside of Drogheda. A particular gap on the Southside was therefore noted. On foot of this funding was provided to Connect FRC to provide short-term, targeted counselling interventions for primary age children who have been impacted by trauma on the Southside of Drogheda. Connect FRC has been providing an outreach onsite counselling service to children in Marymount N.S, St. John's N.S. & St. Paul's N.S throughout 2023. This service will resume in Marymount N.S in September 2023. Drogheda Implementation Board also provided resources through their Small Grants Scheme to develop a Nurture room in Aston Village N.S. and provide specialist Therapeutic Play resources to pupils impacted by trauma in St. Bridget and St. Patrick's N.S.

The subgroup continue to pursue potential responses to the general gap in mental health services for young people and had the opportunity to meet with the Head of Service Mental Health in HSE CHO8 (Midlands Louth Meath) to get an insight into services currently available through the HSE and plans for the region.

The challenge of a lack of interventions for young people aged 12-15 in the Drogheda area who have, or may be at risk of, dropping out of school and potentially engaging in antisocial or criminal behaviour was further noted by the subgroup. Two initiatives have been developed in response to this. LMETB developed a proposal, in partnership with the Tusla Education Support Service and endorsed by the Drogheda Implementation Board for a pilot educational intervention programme for 12-15 years old in the Drogheda area, based in St. Oliver's Community College. LMETB are resourcing this intervention themselves with support from Tusla Education Support Service. This pilot programme, Forás, has been running since December 2022 with the support of an Education Welfare Officer and the Holy Family School Completion Programme, working with young people at risk of not completing their Junior Cycle programme in St. Oliver's Community College. The initial pilot programme identified 12 students, working intensively with 5 and monitoring the remaining 7 supporting them to continue to engage with school life. A review of the programme is being undertaken in preparation for the 2023-2024 academic year.

Foróige also submitted a successful application to the Community Safety Innovation Fund for 'New Choices', for an individualised alternative learning programme for young people aged 10-16 who have dropped out or are at risk of dropping out of the school system in the Drogheda

area. This proposal was developed in response to gaps identified by the Drogheda Young Person’s Services Network; and the Family Support, Children, Young People and Education Subgroup Service Audit. The New Choices worker commenced in March 2023 and is based in bespoke, town centre offices to encourage engagement with young people and their families. Since the service was established referrals have come from a variety of sources including Education Welfare Officers; Tusla Family Support Service; Primary and Secondary Schools; and Community organisations. The service is already operating at maximum capacity with young people on a waiting list for supports.

**5.6** Members of the Family Support, Children, Young People and Education subgroup identified that early intervention is *the* key preventative strategy in relation to addressing the causal factors that led to the commissioning of the Drogheda Report. They further identified that while a number of actions are relevant to this (for example Action 2.13) no single action specifically places a core emphasis and focus on this. A working group of the subgroup was established and wording for a new action developed. A recommendation was made for the inclusion of a new action and prioritisation of early intervention approaches by the Subgroup to the Board with a presentation by members of this working group. This submission was ratified by the Board at their March meeting. The subgroup have proposed a number of potential responses to this new action which are currently being explored.

<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Body</i>
Complete updated review of children and young persons’ services in Drogheda	Complete	Family Support, Children, Young People and Education subgroup
Recommendations made and actioned	Ongoing over the lifetime of the Board	Family Support, Children, Young People and Education subgroup

## 6. EDUCATION AND TRAINING

6.1	<p><b>Due to the unique position and situation obtaining in St. Brigid’s and St. Patrick’s NS, St. Joseph’s CBS, and Presentation NS, an increase in DEIS status – from Band 2 to 1 – should be granted to the three schools immediately, at least on an interim emergency basis, at a minimum until (a) the passing of the worst impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, and (b) improvement in the overall crime and related social situation in Drogheda, and (c) completion of any formal update review by the Department of Education. Alternatively, or at least pending the outcome of any DEIS review, it is recommended that at a minimum some alternative way to provide equivalent additional supports to these schools and their students should be found and implemented, to address the needs identified.</b></p>		
<b>Current Status</b>			
<p>Following the publication of the Drogheda Scoping Report, the Department of Education met with the 3 schools involved and explored options to provide additional support. It was explained to the schools that at the time a reclassification of the schools from DEIS Urban Band 2 to DEIS Urban Band 1 was not possible as work on the DEIS identification process was still ongoing.</p> <p>Following a review of the schools’ teacher allocation and engagement with the National Educational Psychological Service, the Department of Education Inspectorate, Tusla Education Support Service and with the agreement of the 3 schools, as an interim measure the Department allocated an additional 2 concessionary posts to each of the schools involved for the 2021/2022 academic year.</p> <p>The extension of the DEIS programme was completed by the Department of Education in late June 2022. The named schools were not identified as having met the criteria for inclusion under the refined DEIS identification model. The Department of Education allocated additional supports to the schools for a fixed term of 5 years in order to support the implementation of evidence-based programmes and initiatives. These programmes will build school capacity to respond to the needs of their students in relation to the issues outlined in the Scoping Report into Community Safety and Wellbeing in Drogheda. The additional resources include additional teaching posts across the 3 schools which will meet the recommendations set out in this action. This allocation is separate from the DEIS programme and is in response to issues raised in the Report and specifically in response to this action in the Implementation Plan.</p> <p>A case study on the impact of these interventions for the three schools in question was completed in January 2023 and can be <a href="#">viewed here</a>.</p>			
	<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Body</i>
	Allocation of additional resources for evidence based programmes to named schools	Complete	Dept of Education
	Complete appeal process	Complete	Dept of Education

6.2	<p><b>Explore the potential for more apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programmes in Drogheda, and specifically through DIFE.</b></p>
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### Current status

On 19 April 2021 the Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science and the Minister of State for Skills and Further Education launched a five-year Action Plan for Apprenticeship. The Action Plan sets out a five-year strategy to deliver on the Programme for Government commitment of reaching 10,000 new apprentice registrations per year by 2025. The plan provides a roadmap to a single apprenticeship system and new supports for employers and apprentices.

In 2022 LMETB made a successful submission to SOLAS to deliver a large-scale electrical apprenticeship hub in Drogheda which will bring over 360 apprentice training places per annum to the town in addition to up to 20 permanent jobs. A large premises on the southside of Drogheda was secured by LMETB for the purpose of delivering these apprentice training places. The first cohort of apprentices have been registered and will commence in the new Drogheda College on the 10<sup>th</sup> July 2023.

[Click here](#) to view LMETB Chief Executive, Martin O'Brien speak about this new Apprentice Training provision in Drogheda.

In April 2023 LMETB secured approval to deliver a Dental Nurse Traineeship in Drogheda Institute of Further Education (DIFE).

The Business, Enterprise and Employment subgroup of the Drogheda Implementation Board are exploring linkages with employers for other vocational training opportunities such as traineeships and apprenticeships to be delivered in DIFE.

<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Body</i>
Action Plan for Apprenticeship to be implemented and delivered in the Drogheda area	2021-2025	D/FHERIS
Drogheda Apprentice Training Centre to commence intake of apprentices	Complete	LMETB

<b>6.3</b>	<b>Explore the potential for implementing an 'Operation Encompass' approach as part of the responding to domestic abuse and domestic violence incidents.</b>
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### Current Status

The Operation Encompass Programme, as it operates in the UK, involves the police sharing information with a child's school where there has been a domestic incident at the child's home the previous day. A member of staff in the school then ensures that the child is given the appropriate support during the school day.

The Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY) has convened an Inter-Departmental Group to explore the feasibility of the introduction of a similar programme in Ireland. Discussions have been primarily around the applicability of Operation Encompass in this jurisdiction. Ireland has a different administrative landscape to the UK, including the existence of a dedicated child and family agency. The Department of Justice, Department of Education and DCEDIY have received, and are now giving in-depth consideration to legal advice on the applicability of Operation Encompass in this jurisdiction.

<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Body</i>
Inter-Departmental Group to report on feasibility of the introduction of a programme similar to Operation	Ongoing	DCEDIY/DE/AGS/Tusla

Encompass. Legal advice has been obtained and requires in-depth consideration before taking the issue further.		
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<b>6.4</b>	<b>Explore the potential for locating a ‘branch’ of DKIT in Drogheda, and also for the development of DKIT ‘feeder’ programmes – particularly those related to vocational and professional education and training – operating in Drogheda.</b>	
<b>Current Status</b>		
<p>The successful application by LMETB for capital investment from SOLAS to develop a tertiary education facility on the Drogheda Institute of Education (DIFE) campus (noted under action 4.4) will greatly enhance capacity to delivery third level programmes in Drogheda through potential providers, both domestic and international. <a href="#">Click here</a> to view Davy McDonnell, Principal of DIFE speak about the tertiary education block.</p> <p>A number of engagements took place across 2022 and 2023 between senior LMETB management and interested Third Level providers. On 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2023 a memorandum of understanding between Dublin City University (DCU) and LMETB will be signed in DIFE by Daire Keogh, President of DCU and Martin O’Brien, Chief Executive of LMETB. This partnership will expand pathways to University for graduates of DIFE in specific discipline areas and opens opportunities to pilot DCU courses within DIFE.</p> <p>LMETB continue to seek further opportunities to develop Tertiary provision.</p> <p>Drogheda Institute of Further Education, the largest provider of Further Education and Training (FET) in the North East Region, is at the forefront of facilitating improved participation and progression of FET Students to Higher Education. DIFE launched 10 new full-time courses in November 2022, with a critical part of the development being engagement with local industry to facilitate collaboration, networking and employer linkages for integrated work placements. DIFE also seeks to provide innovative new routes to employment opportunities through strategic partnerships with industry. In April 2023 their innovative Amazon Web Services Data Technician programme was shortlisted for ‘Best Industry Academic Collaboration’ Education Award, while the College received the ‘Best Provider of Further Education in Ireland’ award for the third time.</p>		
<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Next Steps</i>
Explore the potential to deliver a cluster of programmes within the DIFE campus through domestic and international 3 <sup>rd</sup> level providers	Work is progressing and will be ongoing for the duration of the Plan	LMETB
New flexible multi-purpose built tertiary facility to be developed through the capital programme to extend capacity at the Drogheda Institute for Further Education	2023	D/FHERIS

<b>6.5</b>	<b>Continue to develop training in and application of Restorative Practice aimed at dealing with conflict and addressing issues such as school suspensions, expulsions and refusals.</b>	
<p>The Professional Development Service for Teachers (PDST) provides CPD to schools on Restorative Practice. In the 2020/21 school year the PDST have supported 65 schools</p>		

nationwide with over 1240 teacher CPD interactions. To apply for support, schools need to contact the PDST directly through their school support application system. The Department of Education will engage with the schools in the area in this regard. In November 2020 PDST provided input on Restorative Practice at an event hosted by an organisation called Genesis in County Louth who support schools in preventing learners from becoming disengaged from education. This event was called Suspensions and Exclusions in Primary School: Developing an Action Plan.

Education Support Centres, which are funded by the Department of Education, are available to support clusters of schools to assist them in developing plans to meet their learning and development needs. The Education Support Centre located in County Louth has initiated engagement with the schools in the Drogheda area and the PDST. The Education Support Centre will work with local interested schools and the PDST with a view to establishing a cluster in Restorative Practice (RP).

On reviewing this action in the context of the Scoping Report into Community Safety and Wellbeing the Family Support, Children, Young People and Education subgroup of the Board identified that restorative approaches and practice go beyond the school setting and hosted an event “Building a Restorative community through a Trauma Informed Approach” in Q3 2022 in partnership with Louth Local Development to build community capacity and awareness of this. As a first step towards building a restorative/resilient community members of Louth Local Development’s ABC Team completed a Train the Trainer programme in Restorative Practice in Q2 2023 so as to facilitate the delivery of RP programmes in community settings in Drogheda.

<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Body</i>
Department of Education to continue to develop training in and application of restorative practices aimed at dealing with conflict and addressing issues such as school suspensions, expulsions and refusals	Ongoing	Dept of Education
Explore the development and delivery of a restorative community approach in Drogheda	2023	Drogheda Implementation Board

## 7. ARTS, CULTURE, SPORT AND RECREATION

<b>7.1</b>	<b>Develop a strategic plan for the development of opportunities in the arts, culture and sports in the Drogheda area, specifically those aimed at and involving young people.</b>	
<b>Current Status</b>		
<p>Louth Arts Development Plan 2022-2026 was published in December 2022. The Plan includes strategic priorities and actions regarding community arts engagement and a specific focus to bring more inclusivity, diversity and equality by reaching marginalized groups and those living in areas of disadvantage.</p> <p>Drogheda Arts Festival is a significant cultural event held on the May Bank Holiday every year. The 2023 programme included a number of collaborative youth projects, including a number of youth-led projects, which had emerged from the Arts and Community event ('Commencing the Conversation') hosted by Drogheda Implementation Board in September 2022.</p> <p>Louth and Meath County Council teams were successful in securing additional funding from Creative Ireland to deliver a targeted Cruinniú na nÓg 2023 programme in the Drogheda/East Meath area in response to the Drogheda Report Implementation Plan. This greatly expanded programme of events for children and young people took place on the 11<sup>th</sup> June 2023.</p> <p>Louth and Meath Local Sports Partnerships support clubs in developing opportunities in Drogheda and East Meath in a variety of other ways including distribution of grants; training supports; facilities supports; delivering women in sports leadership programmes; and specific initiatives such as a schools' basketball programme which has engaged 560 students across Drogheda. Louth Sports Partnership will deliver the Level 1 Award in Sports leadership in Drogheda Institute of Further Education in August 2023. The programme is designed to develop generic leadership skills that can be applied to a variety of Sport &amp; Physical Activity settings as well as contributing to the personal development of young people aged 13-17.</p> <p>An event bringing together sports clubs and groups, similar to the Commencing the Conversation event held in September 2022, is planned for the latter half of 2023 which will gather on the ground feedback in relation to Sports focused actions.</p>		
<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Body</i>
Completion and confirmation of County Arts Development Plan	Complete	Louth County Council
Delivery of Creative Ireland Projects (2022)	Complete	Louth Arts Office
Completion of Crinniú na nÓg 2022 Programme	Complete	Louth Arts Office
Delivery of a Crinniú na nÓg 2023 Drogheda / East Meath Programme	Complete	Louth Arts Office
Delivery of projects identified during Commencing the Conversation event	2023	Louth and Meath Arts Offices, Drogheda Implementation Board, Community Partners

<b>7.2</b>	Explore opportunities for developing a centre of sporting excellence in Drogheda.	
<b>Current Status</b>		
<p>Subgroup D of the Drogheda Implementation Board, Area/Community Development, Arts, Culture and Sport, has been assigned responsibility for this action.</p> <p>Louth and Meath Sports Partnership Coordinators, members of Subgroup D, have developed a collaborative proposal, 'Driving Change Through Sport' to deliver on sporting actions within this Plan. The proposal was presented to Drogheda Implementation Board at their meeting in December 2022 and endorsed subject to adaptations made to reflect Board feedback. The proposed project would advance initiatives such as the previously proposed development of a South Louth/East Meath water based outdoor amenities hub.</p> <p>An event bringing together sports clubs and groups, similar to the Commencing the Conversation event held in September 2022, is planned for the latter half of 2023 which will gather on the ground feedback in relation to Sports focused actions such as this one.</p>		
	<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>
	Recommendation to be taken forward to Drogheda Implementation Board	Ongoing
	Explore funding opportunities to deliver the 'Driving Change through Sport' proposal	2023
		Responsible Body
		Area/Community Development, Arts, Culture and Sport Subgroup
		Louth and Meath Sports Partnerships/Drogheda Implementation Board/High Level Oversight Group

<b>7.3</b>	<b>Explore potential for increased use of the Boyne river, the sea and other local amenities that could lend themselves to development of different sporting disciplines and opportunities.</b>	
<b>Current Status</b>		
<b>Boyne River</b>		
<p>Louth County Council in partnership with Failte Ireland have been exploring the potential development of a concept(s) for an 'attraction of scale' focused on the Boyne River and using the river as a tourism asset for Drogheda and the Boyne Valley Drive. Following market/consumer testing and refinement of the concepts, two concepts have progressed to feasibility study stage. These reports are in draft form and are under review by Fáilte Ireland &amp; Louth County Council. The Boyne River is central to these considerations both in terms of how and where such an attraction would be located adjacent to the Boyne, and how tourism related experiences emerging from the project can use the Boyne as a tourism asset.</p> <p>The Development of the Irish Sea Way is an element of the current Programme for Government, with Fáilte Ireland having commenced initial scoping work on the possibility of developing this initiative as a cycle route. Louth Local Sports Partnership has also engaged with clubs on the river to seek opportunities for participation programmes.</p>		
<b>Boyne Valley Drive</b>		
<p>Fáilte Ireland is currently delivering a project to 'reimagine' the Boyne Valley Drive. The Boyne Valley Drive will be re-imagined from a point to point journey between some of Ireland's most important and compelling heritage sites, to a wider immersive visitor</p>		

proposition that will become a 5000 year journey through time. The project will focus on the development of 14 product clusters, five key industry clusters & four infrastructure initiatives across the Boyne Valley.

Drogheda is a key touch point on the Drive and is one of 5 entry points being developed as an industry hub. Linked to this there are 2 further industry clusters being developed along the coast from Annagassan to the mouth of the Boyne and on the southern side from Julianstown to the mouth of the Boyne. In addition, there are a further 3 industry clusters in development west of Drogheda along the Drive to Slane. These clusters will result in new experiences that will utilise the sea, coastline and river as tourism assets for Drogheda & the Boyne Valley. Drogheda Business Improvement District lead the cluster group in Drogheda.

### **Boyne Greenway and Navigation Restoration**

There has been significant activity in the development of the Boyne Greenway and Navigation Restoration. Meath and Louth local authorities have completed a Section 85 agreement which will allow for the development of the Rathmullen to the Boyne section of the Greenway. The scope of the project is to create a safe, attractive and environmentally sympathetic canal and river side walking and cycling route in tandem with the sensitive restoration of the Boyne navigation route. The scheme will be approximately 26.5km long and will incorporate a study area extending across the river valley.

The operational, technical and environmental complexities of the project have had an impact on timelines for the selection of the emerging preferred route. Meath County Council have been liaising with the OPW and have engaged specialists to undertake a flood modelling and risk assessment exercise to comprehensively deal with the flooding impact at an earlier stage than might normally be the case on a project of this type. Following receipt of data from the OPW, and after obtaining a digital terrain model (DTM) early in 2023, consultants were appointed in March 2023 to undertake the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and flood modelling exercise for the consideration of options on the project. This exercise will facilitate the development of scenarios to mitigate local flooding spots so as to inform the design and environmental reports required for planning approval; close out the Feasibility Study Options Assessment and also undertake stakeholder and public consultation before confirming the Preferred Option and formally seeking Transport Infrastructure Ireland approval to move into the design stage (Stage 3). Time-dependent base line ecological surveys along the river to inform the design and environmental reports have been ongoing in this period.

A separate application for statutory approval is being considered by Bord Pleanála for a greenway between Drogheda and Mornington.

**Boyne Valley Trails** is a Drogheda based voluntary group supported by Boyne Valley Walking. Working in partnership with LOVEDROGHEDA Business Improvement District they have developed a series of walking routes and tours, including the Boyne Valley Camino, to avail of the natural, cultural and heritage landscape in Drogheda and its' vicinity.

The Boyne Valley Camino trail, a self-guided, 25km loop walk from Drogheda was completed in Q2 2023 with signage and waymarking resourced through financial support provided by Louth County Council via the Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme and tourism funding.

<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Body</i>
Fáilte Ireland project to "reimagine" Boyne Valley Drive project report to be rolled out	Ongoing	DTCAGSM/ Fáilte Ireland
Progress Greenway Route Option Report	Q2 2023	Meath County Council
Receipt of Draft Navigation Restoration Feasibility Report	Complete	DTransport/MCC
Baseline and Targeted Ecological Surveys	Q1 2023	DTransport/MCC

Non-Statutory Public Consultation in relation to the Emerging Preferred Greenway Route	Q4 2023	DTransport/MCC
Non-Statutory Public Consultation in relation to the feasibility of the Navigation Restoration	Q3 2023	DTransport/MCC
Develop a plan to create an innovative interpretative walk between Drogheda and the Battle of the Boyne site along the existing Greenway by the Boyne	Ongoing	Meath County Council
Review the feasibility of incorporating a Greenway into a coastal defence project in Drogheda	2022	Louth County Council
Review feasibility of the completion of the Greenway between Blackrock and Drogheda	2023	Louth County Council

<b>7.4</b>	<b>Explore the possibility of making the Drogheda Leisure Park available to the public as a community facility in the Drogheda area.</b>	
<b>Current Status</b>		
Drogheda Leisure Park is a premises on the Southside of Drogheda currently owned by a private consortium. Drogheda Implementation Board Chair and Coordinator met with members of this consortium and it is not within the scope of the Drogheda Implementation Board to bring this building into use as a community facility at this time.		
<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Body</i>
Review Drogheda Leisure Park premises	Ongoing	Drogheda Implementation Board

<b>7.5</b>	<b>Consider ways in which local sporting and cultural role models can be identified and employed in initiatives in engaging young people in particular in healthy and prosocial activities and implement as appropriate.</b>	
<p>The Area/Community Development, Arts, Culture and Sport Subgroup of the Drogheda Implementation Board has been assigned responsibility for this action and is considering it in tandem with other actions within the Plan.</p> <p>Louth and Meath Library services and Arts Offices continue to explore potential cultural role models that targeted youth can engage with.</p> <p>Louth Sports Partnership recognise the potential for peer role models in a sporting environment with Youth Leadership initiatives run regularly in Drogheda by Louth Local Sports Partnership. Programmes such as the Award in Sports Leadership Programme for 13-17 year olds referenced in action 7.1 have the potential to develop in-community peer role models who may encourage others to engage in healthy prosocial activities. This programme was held in DIFE in August 2022, attended by 31 participants. They will be rolling further programmes out in Q3 2023.</p> <p>As outlined in action 7.2 Louth and Meath Sports Partnerships have developed a collaborative proposal which was presented to the Drogheda Implementation Board in December 2022. This proposal includes the development of initiatives that would harness local sporting role models to engage young people in sporting and healthy activities. This proposal was reviewed on foot of feedback from Drogheda Implementation Board and endorsement provided in March 2023.</p>		

Drogheda Implementation Board plan to host an event for sports clubs in the Drogheda area in Q2 2023, replicating that for the arts and culture sector as outlined in action 7.1		
<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Body</i>
Identify appropriate role models	Ongoing	Area/Community Development, Arts, Culture and Sport Subgroup

<b>7.6</b>	<b>Explore ways in which existing facilities in Drogheda (e.g. Lourdes Stadium, or DIFE – as described above) can be used to maximize their potential for the benefit of the local community.</b>	
<b>Current Status</b>		
<p>The Lourdes Stadium has been physically upgraded and a new staffing structure put in place to ensure maximum use. The Louth County Council Sports Facilities Team were successful in early 2022 in securing over €100,000 from Sports Capital Funding to increase capacity in Lourdes Stadium to include a new storage area and outdoor fitness area, conversion of old storage area to new multipurpose room and additional toilets. These capital works will allow further increased usage and the capacity to cater to different groups and training opportunities at the facility. Design lead and construction contractor have been appointed to this project and it is hoped that works will be completed Q3 2023.</p> <p>The My Open Library service commenced in Drogheda in July 2022 and offers a democratic community space to all members of the community at times best suited to the user, making the library available to the public 14 hours a day, 365 days a year.</p> <p>The Lourdes Community and Recreation Centre, based in Yellowbatter on the Northside of Drogheda and in close proximity to a number of established and new social housing developments, has been closed to the public since the start of COVID. Drogheda Implementation Board, LMETB and Louth County Council carried out refurbishment works to bring this facility back into community use. LMETB committed to taking the building under licence until September 2023 to facilitate access by local community organisations. A community morning to showcase the building and local community services took place in April 2023. Groups are now actively using the building and a community organisation has indicated they are in a position to take over the lease on a longer-term basis to ensure this community space continues to be made available for use.</p> <p>As noted in action 7.2 a ‘Driving Change Through Sport’ proposal was developed by Louth and Meath Local Sports Partnerships. This proposed project would include working alongside local authority sports facility teams and other community resources to maximise community engagement with same.</p>		
<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Body</i>
Procurement of design lead and construction contractor to progress the improvement of facilities at Lourdes Stadium	Q3 2023	Louth County Council
Reopen Lourdes Community and Recreation Centre for community use	Complete	LMETB
Explore funding opportunities to deliver the ‘Driving Change through Sport’ proposal	2023	Louth and Meath Sports Partnerships/Drogheda Implementation Board/High Level Oversight Group



## 8. LOCAL AUTHORITY ORGANISATION AND SERVICES

<b>8.1</b>	<b>While central Government/Departmental oversight of the present proposals is recommended, the two Local Authorities (Louth and Meath), as well as other bodies under their auspices (such as LLP) to continue their important local coordination work and responsibilities.</b>		
<b>Current Status</b>			
<p>Louth County Council and Meath County Council cooperate and work together over a wide range of services including Fire, Planning, Roads, Libraries and Tourism, and have developed a number of joint strategies.</p> <p>A series of joint meetings of Drogheda and East Municipal districts were held during 2022 to brief members on what is happening in relation to the activities of both local authorities in their area. Items discussed included tourism, proposed projects and works for the area of Drogheda and East Meath, Local Area Plans, Environmental Awareness Coordination, and Garda cross boundary responsibilities and activities. While not part of the statutory local area planning process, they are an opportunity to share local coordination work across Louth and Meath county boundaries.</p> <p>The joint Boyne Valley Tourism Strategy 2016 -2020 has been fully completed with an interim plan in place during Covid. Consultants have been appointed to develop a new joint 2023-2027 Tourism strategy to guide the future development and growth of tourism across the Boyne Valley.</p> <p>An annual tourism plan is being implemented on a joint basis between Meath and Louth County Councils, to include press visits with resulting coverage on Drogheda in key national and Northern Ireland publications, creation of Drogheda specific content on <a href="http://discoverboynevalley.ie">discoverboynevalley.ie</a>, #MyBoyneValley video series, marketing campaigns, promotional shows and social media to attract visitors to Drogheda. In Q1 2023 the Boyne Valley Tourism officer coordinated a two day trip to the region for 25 tour operators which included visits to Drogheda area sites and businesses such as Listoke Gin, Drawda Urban Art Trail, Droichead Arts Centre and the Battle of the Boyne Site. Similar events for the local tourism industry were also held in this quarter. The #MyBoyneValley Drogheda video was launched in March 2023 and has attracted a significant number of impressions.</p> <p>Meath and Louth local authorities have agreed to collaborate on developing and improving cycle facilities on the R132 in Drogheda. Louth County Council have appointed consultants for the stretch of the R132 between the Bridge of Peace and the railway station. A proposal is to be sought from their consultants to extend this to Southgate shopping centre. If this proposal is acceptable a section 85 agreement will be entered into for Louth County Council to progress the design on behalf of Meath County Council.</p>			
	<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Body</i>
	Continuation of joint meetings of elected representatives with briefings from senior local authority staff and exchange of information	Ongoing	Louth County Council/Meath County Council
	Meath and Louth Local Authorities to develop a new Tourism Strategy for the Boyne Valley 2023-2027	2023-2024	Meath County Council/Louth County Council
	Implement joint Annual Marketing Plan for the Boyne Valley	2023	Meath County Council/Louth County Council

<b>8.2</b>	<b>As a matter of urgency and priority, Louth and Meath County Councils to agree an appropriate mechanism or ‘vehicle’ for the generation, agreement and implementation of a joint local development plan for Drogheda Town in its entirety, and including the appropriate area of East Meath, particularly the Laytown-Bettystown area of County Meath.</b>	
<b>Current Status</b>		
<p>Working Group and Steering Group meetings are ongoing between Meath County Council Executive and Louth County Council Executive on background work in relation to the Drogheda Local Area Plan. The Louth County Council Executive developed a Draft Strategic Issues Paper in Q4 2022, which has been shared with Meath County Council Executive. It is planned to issue this non-statutory Strategic Issues Paper for public consultation in Q1 2023.</p> <p>Timelines and completion date for the statutory process may be impacted by a number of factors including with regard to submissions received on the statutory draft plan and whether any material amendments are required.</p> <p>With regard to the preparation of a Drogheda Joint Urban Area Plan, Meath County Council is considering the implications of a Judicial Review judgement in the south Drogheda environs and a possible variation to be made to the Meath County Development Plan</p>		
	<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>
	Louth and Meath Local Authorities to develop a Local Area Plan for Drogheda	2023
		<i>Responsible Body</i>
		Louth Local Authority/Meath Local Authority

<b>8.3</b>	<b>LCC to consider ways to ensure greater Council presence, visibility and engagement in Drogheda.</b>	
<b>Current Status</b>		
<p>Refurbishment works at the Fair Street offices of Louth County Council have commenced. The preferred contractor has been on site since Q2 2022, delivering a highly visible works programme of some eighteen months. The completed works will showcase Louth County Council’s presence in Drogheda.</p> <p>In addition, considerable other visible public realm works have been completed in the town centre in the first half of 2023, including the refurbishment of the pedestrian Dominic’s and de Lacy Bridges and the public realm development on Saint Peter’s Hill occupying an elevated site overlooking the town of Drogheda and across to the tower at Millmount on the far side of the River Boyne are nearing completion.</p>		
	<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>
	Construction / reconstruction of Louth County Council Offices to commence	Complete
		<i>Responsible Body</i>
		Louth County Council

<b>8.4</b>	<b>Local Authority to consider and decide on an effective way of responding to and managing anti-social behaviour by its tenants and others as appropriate.</b>	
<b>Current Status</b>		

Louth County Council Estate Management team continues to offer services to the housing tenants in Drogheda. The Estate Management Team work collaboratively with An Garda Síochána to manage what can be a challenging environment regarding ASB challenges.		
<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Body</i>
The work of the Estate Management team to continue.	Ongoing	Louth County Council

<b>8.5</b>	<b>Local Authority also to put in place effective ways of responding to estate management issues that can assist in addressing anti-social behaviour (e.g., closing off alleyways, cutting back or removing hedging, installing lighting or speed ramps on roads etc).</b>	
<b>Current Status</b>		
Louth County Council has an Estate Management Section which comprises anti-social behaviour Investigation Officers and Tenant Liaison Officers, supported by two Social Workers. A number of housing infill projects are at various stages of planning and or design. The completion of such works will address a majority to the poor design issues that lead to the issue of ASB.		
<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Body</i>
Continue the progression of infill housing	Ongoing	Louth County Council

<b>8.6</b>	<b>Local Authority to explore and implement appropriate ways of speeding up implementation of the policy and practice of dealing with social housing 'voids.'</b>	
<b>Current Status</b>		
Loth County Council completed a very active voids programme in 2022 following a similarly active programme in 2021. In 2022 62 properties were returned to active housing stock. 164 units were completed in the Energy Retrofit programming bring the housing units to a BER rating of B2. A plan is in place to retrofit a minimum of 200 units in 2023.  Rolling void units are a feature of managing a stock in excess of 4000 social housing units. The majority of long-term voids are now returned to service and plans to secure funding and address the remaining void stock is an objective of the Housing Section of LCC.		
<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Body</i>
58 void units returned to use, a further 25 units to be improved under the energy retrofit scheme in order to eliminate voids backlog in Drogheda area	Complete	Louth County Council
Continue to manage the vacant housing stock and expedite the Energy retrofit scheme	Ongoing	Louth County Council

<b>8.7</b>	<b>Louth County Council to engage as a matter of urgency with residents of Moneymore and Castlemanor (and any other stakeholders as appropriate), with a view to closing off the offending 'gap' and taking other measures arising; or else finding a mutually acceptable and reasonable resolution to this issue.</b>	
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<b>Current Status</b>		
Louth County Council have engaged with residents of both Moneymore and Castlemanor in relation to this matter. Technical staff in Louth County Council considered all proposals to address the issues raised and a decision was made in Q1 2023 to regularise access. Louth County Council are now considering an Active Travel Solution to this “crossing point”. This will be advanced in the coming months.		
<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Body</i>
Alternative routes and options to be explored	Complete	Louth County Council/AGS
Commence works to regularise access	Q 2023	Louth County Council

## 9. LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND ASSETS

<b>9.1</b>	<b>Local Authority to clarify, for the relevant governance and oversight bodies, the potential value and specific contribution that the PANCR and other similar strategic local developments can add to the combined efforts at improving community wellbeing in Drogheda.</b>	
<b>Current Status</b>		
<p>The construction of the Port Access Northern Cross Route has been a strategic objective of Louth County Council for over 20 years. Louth County Council continues to prioritise the delivery of PANCR and recognise that the construction of the road and associated infrastructure is one of the key requirements to ensure Drogheda develops to its full potential in a sustainable manner. Louth County Council notes that this critical piece of infrastructure, once delivered, will bring benefits that include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Opening up new areas for housing construction (circa 6000 units) in North Drogheda</li> <li>2. Opening up a direct route from the M1 Motorway to the port removing vast numbers of HGVs from the North Quay Drogheda</li> <li>3. Allowing the construction of new housing/office and retail spaces in the port area of the town.</li> <li>4. Greatly improve the quality of life for Drogheda residents, workers and visitors to the town.</li> </ol> <p>Louth County Council Chief Executive announced the signing of a Licence for Road Works by 'PANCR Developments Limited' in September 2022, which allowed for construction of Phase 1 of the long-awaited Port Access Northern Cross Route, along with other necessary infrastructure works including water services.</p> <p>Phase 1 construction of the PANCR has commenced.</p>		
	<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>
	The delivery of PANCR remains a strategic objective for Louth County Council	Work is progressing and will be ongoing for the duration of the Plan
		<i>Responsible Body</i>
		Louth County Council

<b>9.2</b>	<b>Local Authority (and others as appropriate) progress the West Gate Vision plan for Drogheda Town centre</b>	
<b>Current Status</b>		
<p>Using funding secured under the first round of Urban Regeneration Development Fund (URDF), Louth County Council carried out a public consultation process for the development of the master plan for the Westgate Vision. The Westgate Vision Consultation Report was published in March 2022 and is available to view here <a href="https://www.westgatevision.ie/downloads/westgate-consultation-survey-report.pdf">https://www.westgatevision.ie/downloads/westgate-consultation-survey-report.pdf</a> .</p> <p>A public realm team is in place to manage this project and a design team has been procured to progress the plan. Designs were completed in Q3 2022 and presented to elected members of Louth County Council. The public realm team have been working very closely with the design consultants on a full review of the planning pack including EIAR, AA Stage 2 Reports and</p>		

drawings. As of end Q2 2023 they are in the final stages of preparation to lodge with An Bord Plenála. A further application will be submitted to the Urban Regeneration Development Fund.

<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Body</i>
Louth County Council to make an application for the first phase public realm redevelopment in the next round of the Urban Regeneration Development Fund.	In Progress	Louth County Council

<b>9.3</b>	<b>Local Authority clarify what the Fáilte Ireland ‘Destination Town’ designation can bring to Drogheda, and how this can be progressed accordingly.</b>
<b>9.4</b>	<b>As part of this, establish Fáilte Ireland presence/tourist information office in the Town.</b>

**Current Status**

**9.3** Drogheda has been identified as a Tourism Destination Town by Louth County Council and has received €500,000 support from Fáilte Ireland for development in this regard. The Fáilte Ireland guidelines for Destination Towns set out the key drivers of what makes a town appealing to the international tourist. Drogheda’s designation as a Destination Town is recognition by Fáilte Ireland in terms of the town’s enormous potential as a key destination for tourists in the future. As outlined in action 7.3 work is ongoing on identifying what an attraction of scale might look like in Drogheda.

An Access & Orientation Plan was developed for Drogheda as an initial stage of the Destination Town plan. This was underpinned by the objectives of ‘Linking the Heritage Assets’ in Drogheda’s historic core. The Plan was brought to Part 8 completion by Louth County Council in January 2020. It includes a wayfinding system which is more easily understood by visitors as well as a visitor Signage & Orientation Plan for Drogheda. Groundworks and installation commenced on this project in Q2 2023 and is expected to be completed in Q3 2023.

Louth County Council secured funding of €672,000 from Fáilte Ireland for a three-year Urban Animation Project in Drogheda which has been branded Lú Festival of Light. The first iteration of this family friendly festival, held over 10 days during Hallowe’en 2022, leveraged Drogheda’s connection to Ireland’s mythological past, consisting of spectacular light projections on key heritage buildings in the town and drawing thousands to the streets of Drogheda for a safe, evening activity. The Lú Festival will take place again over the Hallowe’en midterm in 2023 and is expected to draw significant numbers of visitors to the area.

A ‘Local experts’ visitor servicing programme is taking place in 2023 across the wider destination of Meath & Louth. One of these ‘local experts’ events took place in May in Co. Louth with 76 attendees visiting Drogheda and a second is planned in Co. Meath for Q3 2023.

**9.4** Visit Louth already manage a tourism office at The Tholsel in Drogheda. Fáilte Ireland provides maps and other relevant information to this office. Louth County Council currently share a Tourism Officer with Meath County Council whose work is focused on the Boyne Valley area, which includes Drogheda. The Tourism Officer highlights Drogheda offerings at national and international level, including at shows such as Bloom and Balmoral (see action 8.1 above). Louth County Council have applied for sanction to recruit a Tourism Officer for County Louth who will also have responsibility for Drogheda/South Louth.

<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Body</i>
Louth County Council to progress the Destination Town Project which will include continued	Work is progressing and will be ongoing	Louth County Council / Fáilte Ireland

exploration re: the potential development of a major tourism attraction concept for Drogheda.	for the duration of the Plan	
Fáilte Ireland to advise on the future provision of visitor information services in line with its national approach which has been developed to meet visitor needs	Q3 2023 (Previously Q1 2023)	Fáilte Ireland / Louth County Council
Roll out a 'Local experts' visitor servicing programme in 2023 across the wider destination of Meath & Louth	Ongoing across 2023	Fáilte Ireland

<b>9.5</b>	<b>Local Authority (and others as appropriate) explore and clarify the potential for future use of the Dominican Church and Priory in Drogheda Town (being acquired by LCC).</b>	
<b>Current Status</b>		
<p>Louth County Council has purchased this building. The conveyance process has now been completed. A number of opportunities are currently under consideration by Louth County Council and the design consultants leading on the Westgate Vision have been appointed to review same.</p> <p>The Dominican Priory is currently in use as centre for housing Ukrainian refugees.</p>		
<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Body</i>
Continue to explore options for use and funding for any such plans.	Work is progressing and will be ongoing for the duration of the Plan	Louth County Council

<b>9.6</b>	<b>As part of strategic planning for the development of the Town, explore ways in which to develop and promote Drogheda as a healthier and welcoming town.</b>	
<b>Current Status</b>		
<p>Fáilte Ireland continue to work closely with Louth local authority, as their delivery partner, and other key stakeholders such as Drogheda Business Improvement District to further the Fáilte Ireland Destination Experience Development Plan ethos which is about revealing the landscape, exploring the destination, wandering through time on ancient routes, trails pathways and blueways. This applies equally to their urban centres. All the development projects are about finding new and exciting ways to explore the tourism assets. Projects such as industry hubs/clusters and the destination town will create a sense of arrival. The Urban Animation Project referenced in action 9.3 is an element of this objective.</p> <p>Work is ongoing on the visitor orientation plan linking all the heritage assets along the axis of the old town walls, currently being rolled out with interpretation. Four concept options for an attraction of scale have been market tested and are being refined. A Business Plan has been developed for two refined concepts.</p> <p>Louth County Council Operations and Community sections continue to work with a variety of stakeholders. A collaboration between Louth County Council, Drogheda and District Chamber of Commerce, Drogheda Business Improvement District, Drogheda Tidy Towns and the Mayor of Drogheda was launched in Q4 2022 to respond to issues relating to litter in the town. #LookingGoodDrogheda is an initiative of the business community of Drogheda to improve the town's appearance. These collaborative efforts resulted in a significant improvement in</p>		

Drogheda’s standing in the Irish Business Against Litter (IBAL) report moving from a grade of ‘seriously littered’ and 39th out of 40 towns in the 2022 survey to ‘clean to European norms’ and 27th out of 40 in the 2023 survey.

In October 2022 it was announced that Louth County Council were successful in their application for a Night-Time Economy Advisor for Drogheda. The Night-Time Economy Advisory’s role is to drive and support a more sustainable night-time economy, working with business, communities, residents, venues and artist to create a more vibrant nightlife for all in a safe and sustainable way. As of Q2 2023 Louth County Council are in the process of recruiting and appointing the Advisor and they are expected to be in post by Q3 2023.

<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Body</i>
Roll-out of the Fáilte Ireland Destination Experience Development Plan	Work is progressing and will be ongoing for the duration of the Plan	Fáilte Ireland
Louth County Council, Drogheda BIDs, and Drogheda Tidy Towns to continue to develop initiatives to promote Drogheda as a healthier and welcoming town	Ongoing	Louth County Council, Drogheda BIDs, Drogheda Tidy Towns
Appointment of a Healthy Ireland Coordinator	Complete	Louth County Council

## 10. EMPLOYMENT, ENTERPRISE AND DEVELOPMENT

<b>10.1</b>	<b>Local Authority and other relevant stakeholders - consider possibility to develop a new business and technology park on the North side of Drogheda.</b>	
<b>Current Status</b>		
<p>In June 2021, IDA Ireland acquired a new landbank on the north side of Drogheda, Co Louth. This land acquisition is part of IDA Ireland’s long term strategic plans to position Louth and the wider North East region to compete for FDI investment. The necessary site works are to be delivered within the current IDA Ireland strategy timelines. The acquisition of this landbank is part of IDA Ireland’s overall property programme which is supported by the Government through the Department of Enterprise, Trade &amp; Employment.</p> <p>A multidisciplinary team has been appointed by the IDA to the Drogheda Advanced Building Solution project and this review is ongoing and progressing well.</p> <p>Following a presentation by James Boyle, Regional Manager, IDA to Drogheda Implementation Board members in November 2022 a presentation was received from Aidan McKenna, Enterprise Ireland Director of North East Region to members at their May 2023 meeting so as to facilitate a deeper understanding of enterprise activity and opportunities in the area.</p>		
	<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>
	IDA to deliver on site works on the new land bank on the North Side of Drogheda. IDA consultants are currently working on design & procurement requirements.	Work is progressing and will be ongoing for the duration of the Plan
	Under the new IDA Regional Property Programme, IDA will progress the delivery of advanced building solutions in Drogheda-	2021-2024
		<i>Responsible Body</i>
		IDA
		IDA

<b>10.2</b>	<b>Explore ways to develop productive links – in terms of promoting employment opportunities – with appropriate third level institutions.</b>	
<b>Current Status</b>		
<p>As outlined under action 6.4 LMETB have been engaging with a number of tertiary education providers leading to a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with Dublin City University. This MOU is a first step to developing employment oriented third level education pathways in Drogheda.</p> <p>Drogheda Institute of Further Education, the largest provider of Further Education and Training (FET) in the North East Region, is at the forefront of facilitating improved participation and progression of FET Students to Higher Education. DIFE launched 10 new full-time courses in November 2022, with a critical part of the development being engagement with local industry to facilitate collaboration, networking and employer linkages for integrated work placements. DIFE also seeks to provide innovative new routes to employment opportunities through strategic partnerships with industry. In April 2023 their innovative Amazon Web Services Data Technician programme was shortlisted for ‘Best Industry Academic Collaboration’ Education Award, while the College received the ‘Best Provider of Further Education in Ireland’ award for the third time.</p> <p>All Enterprise Ireland work is focused on their clients and creating an ecosystem to support both them and entrepreneurship in general. Since 2016, the Dundalk Institute of Technology (DkIT) has engaged in Enterprise Ireland programmes which support Innovation and Research and Development (R&amp;D) in Irish industry and has received just over €3.1 million in funding.</p>		

Under the Regional Enterprise Development Fund, Border Enterprise Development Fund and Regional Enterprise Transition Scheme, Co. Louth has secured in total over €11.5m for 6 innovative enterprise focused projects.

As detailed in previous reports a wide variety of Enterprise Ireland funded programmes and initiatives delivered through DkIT are available to relevant Enterprise Ireland clients in Drogheda, examples of same outlined below:

**New Frontiers**

Since January 2022 DkIT has ran two New Frontiers Entrepreneur Development Programmes Phase 1 which had 30 participants. Of these 30, one participant came from the Greater Drogheda Area.

Since May 2022 DkIT has ran two New Frontiers Entrepreneur Development Programmes Phase 2 – of which there were 22 participants. Of these 22, two participants came from the Greater Drogheda Area.

**Innovation Vouchers**

In 2022 DkIT secured voucher projects with two Drogheda companies.

- dConnect & Connected Health and Wellbeing Cluster

In terms of both the dConnect project and the Connected Health and Wellbeing Cluster initiative DkIT has engaged with Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital staff on EIT Health iDays (student innovation days as part of an EU project funding through EIT) and HSE staff based in Drogheda on the eHealth Embark accelerator.

Our Lady of Lourdes hospital and RSCI are also engaged on the Connected Health and Wellbeing Cluster. Industry membership based out of Drogheda includes BD, aCGT Vector / GMAC Pharma, EVB Sport and MyLo.

**THRIVE Programme**

The THRIVE programme participated in the Womens Enterprise Day panel for LEO Louth and Meath which was held in City North in October 2022 with a large audience from Drogheda area. Three participants on the programme are based in Drogheda. THRIVE also worked closely with M1 Drogheda Chamber Skillnet Project Managers to inform and promote the THRIVE programme and secured funding stipend over two funding rounds.

**CREDIT Tech Gateway**

The CREDIT Tech Gateway engaged with the Accelerate Green Bord Na Mona accelerator programme launched at the Mill Enterprise Centre and managed by Resolve Partners based in Drogheda (late 2021 early 2022).

LMETB received €4.6M under the Border Enterprise Development Fund, and a further €1.4m under the Regional Enterprise Transition Scheme, to establish the National Advanced Manufacturing Training Centre of Excellence in Dundalk, Co. Louth. This will develop and pilot the application of skills foresighting in collaboration with training and technology specialists. The project contributes to addressing the disruptions impacting the future of work and provides a pipeline of skilled, innovation ready talent of current and future workers to border region employers. It will enhance the employability of learners in high skill and high reward sectors in the border region. The AMTCE ran nine courses on 3D concrete printing for 66 learners between June and November 2022. Both theory and practical elements of these courses were held in Drogheda.

<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Body</i>
Cluster Manager to continue to develop workplans and programmes for specific groups.	Ongoing	DkIT
Establish Credit Technology Gateway in DkIT	Complete	Enterprise Ireland

Roll out Innovation Vouchers initiative	Ongoing	Enterprise Ireland
Develop Innovation Partnership Projects between Companies and DkIT research teams	Ongoing	Enterprise Ireland
Support Commercialisation Fund Projects in DkIT	Ongoing	Enterprise Ireland
Support the development of sustainable new businesses through New Frontiers	Ongoing	Enterprise Ireland
Enhance collaboration between DkIT research teams and industry through the DTIF	Ongoing	Enterprise Ireland

<b>10.3</b>	<b>Explore potential for enterprise initiatives and job creation in the agri-food sector</b>	
<b>Current Status</b>		
<p>The Boyne Valley Food Innovation District is a smart specialisation collaborative for the Mid and North East regions that nurtures food and drink SMEs and talent from across the regions to achieve their commercialisation and scaling potential.</p> <p>The Boyne Valley Food Hub in Navan, which opened in May 2023, will see the development of 9 individual food units and production labs in a continuum of sizes to support opportunities for food entrepreneurs and their staff to interact with each other; facilitating relationships and creating critical mass between businesses and institutions to generate, sharpen and accelerate the advancement of ideas.</p> <p>Meath and Louth local authorities are co-funding the development of the Boyne Valley as a national/international Centre of Food Culture, including the funding of a new Project Manager post and the implementation of Year One of the Centre of Food Culture Operational Plan. A second round of recruitment for the Project Manager post took place in May 2023.</p>		
	<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>
	<i>Responsible Body</i>	
Re-tendering for Boyne Valley Food Hub completed	Complete	Meath Enterprise/ Meath County Council
Centre of Food Culture Project Manager in place	Q3 2023 (Previously Q1 2023)	Meath County Council/Louth County Council
Delivery of Year One Operational Plan for Boyne Valley Centre of Food Culture	2023	Meath County Council/Louth County Council

<b>10.4</b>	<b>Consider ways to reduce the impact of crime and antisocial behavior on business and employment in the Town.</b>	
<b>10.6</b>	<b>Ensure that community Garda foot patrols in the town centre and more widely are maintained</b>	
<b>Current Status</b>		
<p>As outlined in action 2.4 there has been a significant change in the Community Policing Unit in Drogheda. Community Gardaí have been assigned to dedicated sectors within communities in both urban and rural locations in the District. A member of the Drogheda</p>		

Community Policing Team has been assigned as a specific point of contact for the Business Community.

Click here to view Chief Superintendent McGovern discussing the impact this has had in Drogheda.

An Garda Síochána Drogheda continue to liaise very closely with the Business Improvement District Scheme Committee and are proud to be associated with the Purple Flag initiative for Drogheda Town Centre, ensuring high visibility patrols are carried out to reduce opportunities for crime and anti-social behaviour, and to reduce fear of crime and anti-social behaviour. Additional beat patrols take place at peak business times in response to collaboration with BIDs members and the business community.

‘Ask For Angela’ is a safety campaign that allows people to discreetly signal if they need feel unsafe on a date or night out. This initiative was implemented as part of a suite of community safety initiatives by An Garda Síochána and Drogheda Implementation Board December 2022.

An Garda Síochána, Drogheda Implementation Board and a number of community partners such as the Vintners Federation, Restaurant Association, Taxi Federation, Drogheda Business Improvement District and Drogheda & District Chamber of Commerce launched an #AskForAngela campaign in Drogheda in time for the busy festive season.

[Click here](#) to view campaign launch.

<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Body</i>
Continue to engage with relevant stakeholders	Ongoing	AGS

<b>10.5</b>	<b>Explore ways to attract or facilitate at least some of the estimated 15,000 people from Drogheda who commute to other locations for work every day back to work in the Town</b>
<b>Current Status</b>	
<p>The development and leveraging of remote work infrastructure is a crucial component to the progression of increased national remote work adoption. Adequate infrastructure must be in place to allow employers and employees avail of remote working opportunities both at home and in hubs. Further developing and leveraging the existing remote work hub infrastructure and the delivery of broadband nationally will be a significant driver in facilitating people to work remotely. Pillar 2 of the National Remote Work Strategy is focused on developing and leveraging remote work infrastructure. The Strategy’s actions are being monitored by the InterDepartmental Group (IDG) on Remote Work chaired by Department of Enterprise Trade and Employment and progress is underway to achieve all actions by their respective delivery dates. The IDG will continue to meet as the year progresses to drive implementation of the Strategy.</p> <p><b>Drogheda Digital Innovation Hub</b></p> <p><a href="https://themilldrogheda.ie/ddih/">https://themilldrogheda.ie/ddih/</a></p> <p>Funded under the Border Enterprise Development fund, the Drogheda Digital Innovation Hub (DDIH), was developed by Louth County Council with Drogheda Enterprise Centre CLG t/a The Mill Enterprise Hub (The Mill) and supported by Enterprise Ireland. This project has been awarded €587,600 in funding against project costs of €734,500 (80%) and is designed to encourage high-potential future oriented tech projects seeking to start and grow, to locate in the greater Drogheda/North East region.</p> <p>The project aims to foster an environment to facilitate these businesses to succeed in the region, through the provision of a bespoke and affordable co-working space in Drogheda town centre complemented with tailored management and mentoring support to facilitate their</p>	

growth and export potential. This project is an opportunity to target ‘post-covid’ commuters, those seeking a career change from employee (commuter) to entrepreneur (in the region) and the ‘Brexit opportunity’ to target UK businesses seeking an EU home will add to the project’s success. It is also an opportunity to attract many technology start-ups located outside the region due to the lack of viable property solutions. The project will also offer entrepreneurs a viable alternative to locating in Dublin city, which has successfully built a reputation as a centre for future oriented technology companies. Of note, the project intends to partner with Dublin BIC on greater support across the Northeast, and specifically target highly skilled commuters to create tech startups via a CommuTECH support programme.

There are 3 elements to this initiative:

1. A pre-accelerator programme to be delivered in Drogheda, aimed at those from the greater Drogheda region. The specification for the first pre-accelerator, ‘Commu-tech’, has been completed with LEO Louth managing the e-tender/ procurement process. The programme will be managed, promoted and driven by the LEO in partnership with the Mill Enterprise Hub. A procurement process for the delivery of the DDIH Pre-Accelerator Programme commenced in December 2022 and tender awarded in Q2 2023.
2. The post of DDIH Programme Manager has been sanctioned and is with Louth County Council HR for recruitment in Q3 2023.
3. Refurbishment of premises in Drogheda Town Centre. A new location, on Narrow West Street has been identified by Louth County Council’s Public Realm team to complement the design of the West Gate Vision. The previous location compromised the greater vision for the WestGate area. Louth County Council have appointed an architect led design team who are overseeing the design and fit out of this premises on Narrow West Street.

Drogheda Chamber of Commerce, Love Drogheda BIDS, and The Mill Enterprise Hub are collaborating on a new strategy to encourage more startups, multinationals and remote workers to base themselves in the wider Drogheda region. They recently completed a remote working and commuter survey to inform the development of this strategy. Drogheda Chamber have developed [www.InDrogheda.com](http://www.InDrogheda.com) to showcase Drogheda to the international business market and attract employment opportunities to the local area.

<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Body</i>
Enterprise Manager to be recruited	Q3 2023 (Original Timeline Q4 2021)	Louth County Council
Refurbishment work to be completed on DDIH Hub	Q4 2023 (Original Timeline Q2 2022)	Louth County Council

<b>10.6</b>	<b>Ensure that community Garda foot patrols in the town centre and more widely are maintained</b>
This recommendation has been grouped with recommendation 10.4 above.	

## 11. ETHNIC AND RACIAL ISSUES

<b>11.1</b>	<b>All stakeholders – consider the practical implications of the recently (2020) launched Louth Meath Joint Integration Strategy and implement accordingly.</b>	
<b>Current Status</b>		
<p>The Joint Louth Meath Migrant Integration Forum has been established and a work plan on the delivery of the strategy agreed. The Forum meets on a quarterly basis. As the implementation of the joint Migrant Integration strategy was delayed by the Covid pandemic the Forum is reviewing the strategy in order to prioritise actions that can be delivered in the current year. It is anticipated that a new National Migrant Integration Strategy will be in place by the end of 2023. Given this, a proposal to extend the work of the Forum to December 2023 went before the respective Louth and Meath LCDCs and was ratified in January 2023. A programme of work for 2023 was agreed with a particular focus on encouraging new communities to exercise their right to vote in the upcoming local elections.</p> <p>Louth Public Participation Network (PPN) hosted an event in Q3 2022 in partnership with See Her Elected (SHE) focusing on women and diversity in local government. The event was attended by a number of migrant women living in the Drogheda area. This is the first in a series of events being organised by Louth PPN to encourage people from minority backgrounds to engage with local government. One such event, co-hosted by Louth County Council, is planned for Q3 2023 to explain the full local political system; how local politics works here in Ireland; the importance of using your vote; and how to check if you are on the electoral register.</p>		
	<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>
	Implementation of Joint Louth Meath Migrant Integration Strategy	Ongoing 2019-2023
		<i>Responsible Body</i>
		Louth Local Authority/ Meath Local Authority

<b>11.2</b>	<b>Explore and identify any existing or emerging issues of racial tension in the area and agree steps to deal with these.</b>	
<b>Current Status</b>		
<p>The Joint Louth Meath Integration Forum and Local Migrant Integration network continue to engage and act as a channel to identify and seek to address racial tension issues that may arise.</p>		
	<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>
	Continue to monitor the issues through the Joint Louth Meath Migrant Integration Forum and the Local Migrant Integration Network.	Ongoing throughout 2023
		<i>Responsible Body</i>
		Joint Louth Meath Migrant Integration Forum via LCC & MCC

<b>11.3</b>	<b>Plan at oversight group level how to engage with and involve the traveller and Roma communities in the area to a greater extent than currently, to include specific actions.</b>
<b>11.4</b>	<b>LLP to progress actions already identified to engage and build development capacity in the traveller and Roma communities.</b>

11.5	<b>HSE and other partners - build on positive engagement made with travellers and Roma during the course of the public health response to the Covid-19 pandemic.</b>
<i>Current Status</i>	
<p>Opportunities to support Traveller and Roma communities are explored via the Louth Community Development Committee and Louth Local Development's Networks Provision. Addressing such support needs is provided for via the Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme (SICAP).</p> <p>The Louth Local Development SICAP Development Officer is currently establishing links with key agencies and local stakeholders in the development of an engagement approach with members of the Travelling Community. The Louth Local Development SICAP Social Inclusion Manager has been liaising with the HSE to plan and organise a meeting regarding the Primary Health Care Unit in the context of the Drogheda area.</p> <p>A Business Case supporting the need to re-establish the Traveller Health Unit and support structures was prepared in December 2021. This was considered at a HSE Midlands Louth Meath Community Healthcare Organisation (CHO8) Senior Leadership Team meeting in February 2022, with support in principle for the need to re-establish the Traveller Health Unit. In respect of funding for same and to progress matters, it was agreed that in-year (2022) COVID 19 monies would be used to support appointment where possible of key staff (either through HSE or a section 39 organisation or Agency) or align structures across CHO8 to fulfil:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social Inclusion Manager</li> <li>• Community Developmental Coordinators</li> </ul> <p>A General Manager is now the lead in Social Inclusion and work is progressing and the HSE Traveller Health Unit for Louth Meath (THU) has been re-established, meeting every two weeks.</p> <p>Separately, CHO8 has submitted a Business Case in an effort to secure ongoing revenue funding for the Service for 2023 onwards through a HSE-led Initiative to improve health outcomes for other vulnerable groups (including Roma, Migrants and Women), who are currently living in insecure or unsuitable housing. This has provided the CHO with an opportunity to bid for €200,000 funding for development of a Traveller Project for Co. Louth.</p> <p>The HSE has prepared a submission for Estimates Process 2023 for a number of posts for Louth/Meath as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Traveller Health Unit Coordinator for Louth Meath</li> <li>2. Three community Development posts (1.5WTE) for Primary Health Care for Traveller projects in Louth Meath (Navan, Drogheda &amp; Dundalk).</li> </ol> <p>Funding has been approved and negotiations at an advanced stage between the HSE and Extern to employ a Community Development Worker across Louth and Meath. As a part of this agreement, Extern will complete a scoping exercise with a view to establishing a Traveller Primary Health Care Project in Drogheda. This will identify:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• current supports</li> <li>• key stakeholders</li> <li>• resources and budget required and include in proposal &amp; roadmap to establish a Traveller Primary Health Care Project in Drogheda.</li> </ul> <p>It is expected that the plan/proposal for Drogheda would be completed within three month, by the end of Q1 2023. A further update will be provided in the next progress report. Three and six month reviews will be built in to ensure the roadmap/proposal is completed as a matter</p>	

of urgency. The THU, chaired by the General Manager, Primary Care Covid & Social Inclusion Services, will oversee all of the above.

The Louth Local Development (LLD; formerly Louth Local Partnership - LLP) SICAP Development Officer is currently establishing links with key agencies and local stakeholders in the development of an engagement approach with members of the Travelling Community. The LLD Social Inclusion Manager and SICAP Development Officer in the Drogheda area met with the HSE in Q4 2022 and Q1 2023 to discuss the engagement strategies and potential developments of a Traveller Primary Health Care Team Project within the Drogheda area.

The LLD Social Inclusion Manager attended an interagency Traveller Health Consultations meeting in March 2023 and from this the Local Traveller Health Implementation Plan has been circulated. This plan will aim to strengthen health supports amongst Primary Care Traveller Projects 2022 – 2027 in CHO8. In July the Social Inclusion Manager and Community Development team have been actively collaborating with the HSE in an engagement strategy with local Travellers in the Drogheda area to scope the resources involved for the reinstatement of a Primary Healthcare for Travellers Project in Drogheda.

LLD’s Youth and Education Team have been using a youth work approach to engage with Youth Travellers. Working in collaboration with a number of specialist youth projects in the town including Turning Point – a Foróige programme, Youth Diversion projects in the town and YouthReach they coordinated virtual driving school opportunities referenced in Action 4.5. LLD Youth and Education Team are also working with Turning Point to develop and support the delivery of a QQI Major Award Level 4 Leadership Programme that will focus on building the capacity to develop Community Champions. Participants within this programme will include Youth Travellers.

Five young Travellers from Drogheda received adult guidance supports in the second half of 2022 from the LLD Youth and Education team. These young people have progressed to bespoke training opportunities that were fully funded by SICAP and have received further support to access Third Level Access Grants.

<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Body</i>
<p>In line with the National Traveller Health Action Plan (NTHAP) 2022-2027, CHO8 will Develop and strengthen processes and mechanisms to ensure implementation of relevant NTHAP actions at a regional and local level in partnership with Travellers and Traveller organisations.</p> <p>CHO8 is currently reviewing the functioning and capacity of the Traveller Health Unit with a view to strengthening and standardising representation, membership staffing, resources etc. A further update will be provided in the next progress report.</p> <p>The CHO8 Traveller Health Unit will develop, oversee, and be accountable for the implementation of an action plan which includes the re-establishment of a Traveller Primary Health Care Project in Drogheda (NTHAP 2022-2027 Goal 1 Strategic Action &amp; Goal 4 Strategic Action 43)</p>	<p>2023</p>	<p>HSE</p>