



An Roinn Dlí agus Cirt,  
Gnóthaí Baile agus Imirce  
Department of Justice,  
Home Affairs and Migration

## **Drogheda Implementation Plan**

### **Final Progress Report**



## INTRODUCTION

Following its establishment in 2021, the extended term of the Drogheda Implementation Board came to an end on 31 December 2024.

The Drogheda Scoping Exercise was commissioned by the Minister for Justice, Helen McEntee 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 Services, and published in January 2021. The Drogheda Implementation Board was established to oversee the implementation of the report ‘Drogheda: Building a Bridge to a Better Future’ and is an example of how the government is prioritising building stronger, safer communities.

Significant progress has been made on the 74 recommendations as set out in the Drogheda Report Implementation Plan. These recommendations fell 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.

Other recommendations in the report covered areas relating to: drug use; youth and community development facilities; services for children and young people; education and training; arts, culture, sport and recreation, local authority organisation and services; local infrastructure and assets; employment, enterprise and development; and ethnic and racial issues.

During 2024, strong progress continued to be made in implementing actions identified in the Drogheda Implementation Plan, including:

### **Addressing Crime**

- Expansion of An Garda Síochána South Louth jurisdiction to include the South of Drogheda (for example Dublin Road/Grange Rath area).
- Relaunch of See Something Say Something (April 2024) and Ask for Angela (December 2024) campaigns.

### **Drug Use**

- The Red Door Project secured funding from the HSE for Social Worker and Project Worker posts to the end of 2026. Funding for family support practitioner extended by Tusla for 2025.
- Drive Co-ordinator recruited and located in HSE offices, Drogheda.
- A Dual Diagnosis and Trauma Informed Communities programme is delivered in 2024 funded by the Department of Health and HSE and delivered by DCU Recovery Programme.

## **Youth and Community Development**

- Louth Local Development have taken on a lease from Louth County Council to open a Community House in Rathmullen which was officially opened in October 2024.
- A number of direct community engagement projects have been delivered including the “Southside Voices” and “Our Place” initiatives, which will continue into the long term with support from organisations such as Louth Local Development and Louth County Council.
- Resources provided to Louth ABC to deliver Early Talk Boost to 13 early learning centres in Drogheda.
- Appointment of architects by Louth County Council to progress the Moneymore Townland Community Hub project to progress to Part 8 planning stage.

## **Arts, Culture, Sport and Recreation**

- Sport Ireland provide funding for three years to delivery Meath and Louth Local Sports Partnership’s Driving Change Through Sport “*SportUile*” project. Further resourcing is being provided by Louth and Meath local authorities. The project was officially launched by the Minister for Sport and Physical Activities, Thomas Byrne T.D. in November 2024
- Funding of €11m was approved for LMETB under the Large Scale Sport Infrastructure Fund for a Sports Arena at St. Oliver’s Community College, Rathmullen in collaboration with Drogheda Wolves.

## **Employment, Business and Enterprise.**

- A programme manager is now in post for Drogheda Digital Innovation Hub and Boyne Innovate Programme is up and running.

## **Local Infrastructure and Assets**

- The Department of Health and the HSE secured funding in December 2024 to expand the Slaintecare Healthy Communities programme to four additional areas including Drogheda for 2025.

## **Ethnic and Racial Issues**

- The first Traveller Pride Week event was held in Drogheda, supported by Drogheda Implementation Board, Louth Local Development and Youth Work Ireland Louth in June 2024
- The HSE secured funding of €200k, through the Department of Health, to deliver a Traveller Primary Healthcare Unit in Drogheda. Louth Local Development (LLD) were the successful applicant for this contract to support Traveller families directly and connect mainstream health services with Traveller Community Health Workers. LLD have recruited a coordinator for this project who will support the recruitment and selection of Traveller Primary Healthcare Workers.

Over the lifetime of the Board 70 individuals have been employed in response to the Drogheda Report Implementation Plan; 23 of these are permanent posts whilst a number of others are funded on a long term basis by a variety of government departments and statutory agencies. In addition, over €31m was committed in funding either to support these posts or for capital projects.

The Drogheda Implementation Board was always envisaged as a time bound programme of work, and its ultimate legacy will be the partnerships forged and the collaborative ways of working it has established among the relevant agencies across Drogheda. The commitment, hard work and time shown by all those involved in the work of the Board clearly demonstrates how new connections and collaborations can contribute to better outcomes for local communities.

Local Community Safety Partnerships are being established across the country under the Policing, Security and Community Safety Act 2024, which commenced on 2 April 2025. It is recognised that every community is different and has different problems and issues. Each partnership will develop and implement a Local Community Safety Plan tailored to the specific needs of that area.

It is anticipated that the new Louth Local Community Partnership will be established shortly, and it will continue to ensure a collaborative approach to enhancing the wellbeing and safety of the community in Drogheda.

## 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 met on nine occasions over the lifetime of the Board.</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>	

The Board 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 [www.droghedaimplementationboard.ie/about/board-membership/](http://www.droghedaimplementationboard.ie/about/board-membership/)

Since establishment the Board met 27 times. Attendance and engagement rates by members remained high with an average attendance rate of 80% over the lifetime of the Board.

LMETB provided hosting and administration supports to the Board, including employment of a full-time Coordinator. This Coordinator was appointed in 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 75 individuals representing 32 stakeholder organisations were 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 90 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 were held in 2024 in January and September attended by members of all five structures (Board and four subgroups). At these meetings members collectively carried out a review of action delivery and identified successes, challenges and priorities.

Funds of €150,000 in 2021, €250,000 in 2022, €350,000 for 2023 and €207,987 for 2024 were secured by the Department of Justice through Dormant Accounts Funding (DAF) to fund elements of specific actions in addition to the establishment and running of the Drogheda Implementation Board.

## 2. ADDRESSING CRIME

2.1	<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>‘Operation Stratus’ is an ongoing 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. In addition, a Divisional Drugs Unit with dedicated resources 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.</p>	

2.2	<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>The Greentown Project trial sites are progressing in two locations in the State to develop approaches to wrap around support for vulnerable children. In January 2024 the Greentown Programme was extended for a further three years. 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, with a view to facilitating their disengagement from such criminal networks. Extern have also presented an intensive family support pilot which they are delivering in the Drogheda area. This pilot is funded by the Department of Justice.</p>	

2.3	<b>Continue – and increase, where appropriate – resourcing (e.g., staff, training, minibuses) to the two Youth Diversion Projects (CABLE and BOYNE GYDPs), to facilitate their work.</b>
<p>The CABLE and Boyne Youth Diversion Projects are funded directly by the Department of Justice. Both projects are on two-year funding agreements that are renewable. 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.</p> <p>For 2025 the Department of Justice has allocated funding of €367,612 funding to Boyne YDP and €588,425 to Cable YDP. In 2021 there was additional funding of €25,000 to Boyne YDP and €66,000 to Cable YDP for the purchase of mini-buses. In 2022 the Department provided a further €35,000 to Boyne YDP towards the purchase of the minibus and €75,000 under the Youth Diversion Strategy to deliver early intervention Supports and Family Supports primarily to Youth Diversion referrals on the southside of Drogheda. In 2023 Cable YDP received additional funding of €66,000 from the Dept of Justice for a full time Early Intervention Worker who will work with children aged 8-11 in North Drogheda. For 2025 the Department also allocated an additional €91,260 for the New Choices programme to be incorporated into the Cable YDP. The Department of Justice continue to engage with both Youth Diversion projects.</p>	



<b>2.4</b>	<b>Ensure continuing/strengthening of community policing – particularly in the town centre and suburban areas.</b>
<b>Current Status</b>	
<p>The Drogheda Community Policing Team has had a significant role in addressing this action. 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 help the community gain an understanding of sector areas through the <a href="#">Garda Website</a> and on the dedicated <a href="#">Louth Garda Facebook Page</a>. The regular deployment of the Garda Community Engagement vans has given and will continue to give a more visible presence in the town centre and suburban areas.</p> <p>An Garda Siochana in Drogheda continue to implement Operation Tairge – principally detailing with Retail Crime and elements of Anti Social Behaviour in the vicinity of busy shopping centres and streets.</p>	

<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>JARC is a strategic multi agency initiative involving an intensive, highly collaborative approach to the supervision and rehabilitation of prolific repeat offenders. The JARC Drogheda project became operational in Q4 2023 and is focused on those with convictions relating to drugs/illegal substances. The JARC National Coordination Team which coordinates and supports operational responses will continue to oversee the Drogheda project.</p>	

<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>
<p>The Probation Services resources on the Louth Team, which includes the Drogheda catchment area, were increased in 2021. The delivery of community sanctions is a key aspect of the work carried out and continues throughout the following years in partnership with other relevant community-based services. The Probation Service will continue to review resource levels for the Louth team.</p>	

2.7	<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 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 Fund has since been renamed the Community Safety Fund (CSF) .</p>	
<p>The CSF had an initial allocation of €2m in 2022, which increased to €3m in 2023, and further increased to €3.75m in Budget 2024. In Budget 2025, the fund was further increased to €4m.</p>	
<p>Organisations from the Drogheda area who were successful with applications include Foróige (the New Choices project), the Red Door Project (Prison Links Worker), Connect Family Resource Centre (Building Community Resilience) and the Drogheda Women &amp; Children Refuge (Finding Safety). Family Addiction Support Network also secured funding (Trauma in the Community)</p>	

2.8	<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>
<p>Pending the roll-out and evaluation of the Community Access Support Team (CAST) project in Limerick an Interagency Networking and Information Session took place in Drogheda on 21 November 2023. This involved 40 attendees with 25 services represented by 45% Statutory Services and 55% Community and Voluntary Sector. A number of potential local interventions were identified.</p>	
<p>One such local response involves the below three-pronged approach:</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Education</b> – Delivering training and resources directly to AGS members in the area.</li> <li>• <b>Communication</b> – Quarterly meetings between the HSE and AGS at strategic and operational level have been reestablished. Networking and information sharing days between AGS and HSE senior management have also been reinstated with the first session to be held on 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2025 attended by supervisory ranks in AGS and HSE in Louth and Meath.</li> <li>• <b>Community Awareness</b> – A large scale community awareness campaign was delivered in September 2024 in partnership with the Resource Officer for Suicide Prevention (ROSP) to coincide with suicide prevention and awareness month. In addition to the HSE and An Garda Síochána a wide variety of community stakeholders supported the campaign, including Drogheda United, Drogheda Chamber, LOVE Drogheda Business Improvement District, the Network of Services for Young People in Drogheda, Connect Family Resource Centre and retailers and hospitality venues throughout the town.</li> </ul>	

<b>2.9</b>	<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>An Garda Síochána realigned the boundary of the old Drogheda and Ashbourne Garda Districts to incorporate areas in the South of Drogheda into the new Louth South Community Engagement hub. This went live on 28th January 2024. Members of An Garda Síochána Drogheda continually engage in a proactive manner with businesses, schools and the Southgate area to make the community aware of this change. These changes allow for more logistical efficiencies as Drogheda will now be the District Headquarters for residents and premises north of the new boundary. This action has been completed and has been the source of positive feedback.</p>	

<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>
<p>Following an evaluation of a pilot CCIA carried out in Drogheda in 2023 it was decided that alternative approaches were worthy of consideration. One such approach is the community led initiative by local residents in Moneymore “<i>Our Place</i>” which commenced in 2024 and seeks to address serious issues affecting their local community. This resulted in a positive response from Louth County Council details of which are set out in Action 8.5 below. It also entails a series of scheduled quarterly meetings between residents and officials of Louth County Council which are designed to seek to address local concerns.</p>	

<b>2.12</b>	<b>Explore the implementation of a ‘See It. Say It’ scheme in Drogheda, in relation to anti-social behaviour.</b>
<p>An innovative ‘See Something Say Something’ confidential text alert service which will allow residents and visitors to Drogheda to instantly report incidents to Gardaí was launched in Drogheda. From 1st October 2023 members of the public can report anti-social or suspicious behaviour anonymously and for free by texting DROGHEDA to 50555. A further briefing / information seminar was held between all stakeholders towards the end of 2024 to refresh the aims and objectives of the scheme. It is monitored on a daily basis at Drogheda Garda station. This action has been completed.</p>	

2.13	<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>
<p>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.</p> <p>A series of training and other events to raise awareness of Adverse Childhood Experiences have taken place and been attended by practitioners in Drogheda since 2022. The Tusla and Louth Local Development ABC Programme teams have worked collaboratively with the Drogheda Implementation Board structures to build on these initial activities and developed a plan for building a community resilience network with a trauma informed approach in this area. This activity is closely aligned with Action 6.5.</p> <p>HSE CHO8 provided funding of €35,000 to the Dublin North, North East Recovery College and Core Ireland to deliver a community capacity building project “Developing a Trauma Informed Community Response to Dual Diagnosis” in Drogheda and the North East region. This project commenced in 2024. Two workshops and 2 Open Dialogue sessions were held which were very well attended following which Train the Trainer sessions were held in October 2024.</p>	

### 3. DRUG USE

3.1	<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>
<p>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. The HSE have confirmed funding for social worker and project worker posts to the end of 2026. A Family Practitioner post is also supported by Tusla funding to the end of 2025. In addition, the Red Door Project team were successful in securing funding through the Community Safety Innovation Fund to employ a Prison Links Worker from 2025-2027.</p>	

<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>
<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 needle and syringe exchange programme to operate from the Red Door Project (see action 3.7) funded by the HSE. 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 people who use drugs and require safe injecting equipment .</p>	

<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>
<p>Additional once off funding was allocated by the HSE Midlands Louth Meath to FASN in May 2022 amounting to €9,365. 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.</p> <p>Following discussions in October 2023 regarding a projected deficit for 2023 the HSE agreed in December to provide some additional once-off funding of €26,078 to cover the anticipated shortfall.</p> <p>FASN were also successful in securing €44,084 funding under the Community Safety Innovation Fund in 2023. In addition, the Drogheda Implementation Board provided financial support in 2024 to FASN to develop a new Strategic Plan for 2025-2029.</p>	

<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>
<p>The HSE review of Addiction Services in the Louth and Meath CHO8 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 Section 39 funded services across the region which was completed in Q4 2022 following which the new NERDATF Strategy was finalised in Q2023 which will form the basis for the collective work of its members. A new regional strategy will be developed following the publication of the new National Drug Strategy in the summer of 2025.</p>	

<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>
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. The Department of Justice will continue to fund the DTC liaison Case Worker post until Q3 2025.	

<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>
<p>Positive cooperative relationships are currently in place between agencies working in the substance use field in Drogheda. The National Drug Rehabilitation Framework (NDRF) eLearning module was completed in 2022. There are regular meetings of the HSE Clinical Quality and Safety Committee (CQSC) for HSE Addiction services, as well as NE-RDATF sub group meetings which take place quarterly. These sub-group structures further enhance interagency collaboration and networking. CHO8 and NERDATF continue to engage with service provides to further strengthen interagency collaboration and cooperation.</p> <p>The HSE and NERDATF commenced an initiative focused on Dual Diagnosis Awareness and Train the Trainer workshops. The purpose of this initiative is to build community capacity around dual diagnosis in the north-east area. This project commenced in 2024.</p>	

<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>
The HSE secured funding to support the employment of two posts - Drug & Alcohol Workers, with an additional Outreach Worker post secured. The posts operate across the Louth/Meath area and support the provision of a mobile needle and syringe exchange programme, harm reduction, key working and interagency care planning. A fixed needle and syringe exchange programme is operational from the Red Door since May 2023. The HSE Addiction Service continue to fund the cost of the Needle Exchange paraphernalia, and the costs associated with the insurance of the service. The HSE Outreach workers will continue to work collaboratively with the team in the Red Door.	

<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>
<p>The HSE and NERDATF commenced an initiative focused on Dual Diagnosis Awareness and Train the Trainer workshops at the start of 2024. The purpose of this initiative was to build community capacity around dual diagnosis in the north-east area. With a training for trainers' element, the NE-RDATF expects to be able to continue to provide the community workshops and facilitate the "open dialogue foras" on an ongoing basis, using the skills of both frontline practitioners and those with lived experience.</p>	

<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>
<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 DRIVE lead has been in post since June 2022.</p> <p>The NE-RDATF planned to establish a regional interagency DRIVE implementation group to lead on the roll out of DRIVE across the north-east region, in tandem with the launch of the national awareness campaign and the commencement of the national training for trainers programme. This is now scheduled to happen in Q1 of 2025. Partners identified for the DRIVE implementation group include representatives from the An Garda Síochána, family support services, local authorities community safety partnerships, frontline drug services, family resource centres, and other NE-RDATF stakeholders.</p> <p>In response to the Drogheda Report and Implementation Plan the Department of Health allocated resources for a regional DRIVE lead, to be based in Drogheda and covering the counties of the North East Region. Following a recruitment campaign this post was filled in Q4 2024.</p>	

#### 4. YOUTH AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FACILITIES

<b>4.1</b>	<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>
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<b>4.2</b>	<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>
Louth County Council have agreed to be the lead on the delivery of the Moneymore Community Hub with a view to utilising the Department of Rural and Community Development Community Centres Investment Fund. A Project Implementation Team consisting of Moneymore Townland Community Hub CLG members and key Louth County Council staff has been established. This group meet on a regular basis to progress project delivery. Contracts have been signed with architects Van Dijks to assist with a Part 8 application to be prepared for spring 2025.	
<b>4.3</b>	<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>
Louth Local Development secured the lease on 80 Rathmullan Park from Louth County Council to be used as a community facility on the south side of Drogheda. The Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme (SICAP) and Area Based Childhood (ABC) Programme with collaborative partners formally opened the Community House in Rathmullan Drogheda on Thursday 24th October 2024. This is a significant development for Louth Local Development as the service is centrally based in a community that experiences multiple levels of socio-economic deprivation and the effects of generational trauma. The new Community Service will work with local residents by using a collaborative and interagency responsive and resourceful approach.	

<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>
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. An application for planning permission was submitted in December 2024.	

<b>4.5</b>	<b>Agree an action plan for enhancing youth and community development capacity, particularly on the South side of Drogheda</b>
Louth Local Development (LLD) opened their flagship Haymarket offices on the south side of Drogheda in July 2023 which provide additional and bespoke space for community engagement and development. As referenced in 4.3 above LLD secured a lease on 80 Rathmullan Park from Louth County Council which was officially opened in December 2024 which will facilitate the delivery of a wraparound interagency programme in a community that has experienced significant trauma.	



SICAP Network of Youth Services and Place Based Leaders and the Area Coordination Team are local Networks supported by the Education and Community Development Officer in LLD. In November 2023 a large Community Safety and Wellbeing event was co-delivered by Drogheda Implementation Board and LLD SICAP programme in Ballsgrove on the southside of Drogheda.

Drogheda Implementation Board provided funding for a collaborative project 'Southside Voices' involving services and residents in the Rathmullan area. An output of the project was the production of a graphic capturing the assets and needs in the area. This graphic is displayed in the community house and other services in the area and serves as a 'roadmap' for the provision of programmes, training and other supports to the Rathmullan community.

The Drogheda Youth Officer, a post secured via LMETB submission to the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth Affairs for a dedicated Youth Officer for the Drogheda area in response to the Drogheda Implementation Plan has been in post since September 2022 and continues to work in partnership with key stakeholders to define and research the current youth specific requirements to be addressed generally and for the Drogheda area.

<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>
<p>The Place Based Leadership Development Programme (PBLDP) completed in May 2023. €20,000 of seed funding has been allocated by the Department of Rural and Community Development to facilitate Drogheda participants in forming a cross sectoral network of residents, community organisations and statutory services to address social inclusion and enhance community leaders to be responsive, proactive, informed and solution focused. The connection with PBLDP participants from Darndale has resulted in a number of collaborative events including the Young Leaders Podcast which showcased how young people can become leaders in their own community.</p> <p>The Place Based Leaders Drogheda (PBLD) network has gone from strength to strength in 2024. Since June the group members have attended the Trauma Summit Training in Belfast, and in October the group coordinated to support the delivery of No Wrong Door, a short documentary on Drogheda services for young people that promotes a culture of support seeking among young people which reached an audience of well over 2500 young people in the community.</p> <p>Footsteps Young Leaders group, an offshoot of the IFI funded Footsteps programme hosted by Connect Family Resource Centre, was established in 2023. The Footsteps Young Leaders group have undertaken Foróige leadership for Life Programme and have led out on a number of</p>	

initiatives including a Halloween event in the Moneymore area to raise funds for the Moneymore Townland Community Hub. LLD's SICAP programme continues to provide capacity building supports to this group including training in establishing a local youth group in collaboration with the LMETB Youth Officer.

<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

5.1	<b>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.</b>
<p>A Child and Family Support Network (CFSN) Coordinator is in post for South Drogheda. The CFSN membership consists of all the services in the area that support children and families – including community organisations, social workers, and schools. Louth Parent Hub, a collaborative project led by LLD's ABC programme and supported by Túsla and Louth CYPSC, is an online interactive hub providing access to information on services and supports for families in Louth and was launched on 5 December 2023. In 2024, there were two successful applications for two new home visiting posts in Drogheda, bringing the total number up to four. Louth ABC (LLD) have also received funding to further scale up the delivery of Early Talk Boost, speech and language development programme in Preschool and Early Learning Centres in the Drogheda area. Four services have been trained and supported to deliver this programme as part of a three year implementation plan, which is also aligned to action 5.6.</p>	
5.2	<b>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.</b>
<p>As noted in previous reports 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. This document was updated regularly and used by constituent members to identify priorities and track delivery of interventions.</p>	
5.3	<b>Urgent consideration should also be given to how the various youth services could be more coordinated and supported.</b>
<p>Youth Officers play a crucial role in supporting, developing and monitoring their local youth services. On foot of a successful submission to the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth a dedicated Youth Officer post for the Drogheda area was approved in 2022. The Youth Officer is engaged with all major networks of services supporting young people in the area as a convenor or active participant and has played a key role in supporting both Drogheda UBU programmes which are now successfully funded for the duration of the current UBU Cycle (2024-2026). The Youth Officer has also produced several important research and consultation pieces to inform ongoing and future applications to increase resources in the Drogheda area.</p> <p>The SICAP Network of Services for Young People in Drogheda is a SICAP community development lead network that is co-chaired by the SICAP Youth and Education Co-ordinator and the Education and Community Development Officer. This network is effectively working in</p>	

collaboration with all the Youth Services in the Drogheda area. Subgroups for specified projects have also formed collectively in 2024. These projects have included, Don't Pour Your Dreams Away, Universal Youth Clubs and Youth Connect Fest Drogheda (2nd year running January 2025).

<b>5.4</b>	<b>Ensure the completion of the review of Strengthening Families Programmes already provided and follow through as appropriate.</b>
As discussed in previous Progress Reports, 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. This action is deemed to be closed.	

<b>5.5</b>	<b>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.</b>
<p>This action is aligned to the Service Audit outlined in action 5.2 above. The Subgroup's review of this audit identified a gap in counselling and mental health provision for young people in the Drogheda area. Some targeted specialist interventions have been provided through Connect Family Resource Centre (FRC) on the Northside of the town. 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. Resources were also provided through the Drogheda Implementation Board Small Grants Scheme to develop a Nurture room in Aston Village N.S. and specialist Therapeutic Play resources to pupils impacted by trauma in St. Bridget and St. Patrick's N.S.</p> <p>Foróige submitted a successful application in 2022 to the Community Safety Innovation Fund for "New Choices", an individualised youth work led alternative learning programme for young people aged 10-16 who have dropped out of school or at risk of doing so. This successful programme continues to be supported by the Department of Justice.</p>	

<b>5.6</b>	<b>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>
A recommendation was made for the inclusion of a new action and prioritisation of early intervention approaches by the Family Support, Children, Young People and Education Subgroup to the Board with a presentation by members of this working group. Since the ratification of this action, a number of interventions have been delivered including the resourcing of a Nurture Room in Aston Village N.S. through the Drogheda Implementation Board small grants scheme; allocation of funding by Tusla for the post of Family Support Worker in The Red Door Project; and the piloting of the Early Talk Boost speech and language intervention in St. John's National School in Rathmullan by Louth Local Development's ABC	

Programme. Louth ABC have also delivered Early Talk Boost to 13 early learning centres in the Drogheda area.

## 6. EDUCATION AND TRAINING

6.1	<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>
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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 from September 2022 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 three 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.

6.2	<b>Explore the potential for more apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programmes in Drogheda, and specifically through DIFE.</b>
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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 commenced in the new Drogheda College on 10 July 2023.

In April 2023 LMETB secured approval to deliver a Dental Nurse Traineeship in Drogheda Institute of Further Education (DIFE). The two year Level 6 Traineeship is approved by the Irish Dental Council and has an annual intake of 30 student places.

<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>
<b>Current Status</b>	
<p>Operation Encompass, as it operates in the UK, is a joint police and education early information and safeguarding partnership enabling schools to offer immediate support to children experiencing domestic abuse. Under the Third National Strategy on Domestic, Sexual and Gender Based Violence, the Department of Justice, in consultation with other departments and agencies, has committed to examine the potential application of an approach on the lines of Operation Encompass in an Irish context. Ireland has a different administrative landscape to the UK, including the existence of a dedicated child and family agency. In depth consideration is ongoing.</p>	

<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>
<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 planning application has been lodged by LMETB in respect of this facility.</p> <p>A number of engagements took place across 2022 and 2023 between senior LMETB management and interested Third Level providers. In July 2023, a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between Dublin City University (DCU) and LMETB was 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>Following the signing of the MOU a Memorandum of Association (MOA) was signed in September 2023 allowing 12 places at DCU’s School of Nursing to be ringfenced for nursing studies graduates from DIFE. The five-year Agreement will benefit students who graduate from DIFE’s pre–university nursing studies course beginning with the class of 2023/24, subject to certain criteria being met. In 2024, there were reserved places in DCU for education (15), science (17), and law (13). Negotiations are ongoing in relation to reserved places for business (17).</p> <p>An articulation agreement signed between DkIT and DIFE in Q4 2024 will allow Further Education students from DIFE and other educational institutions in LMETB who have gained specific mapped qualifications and academic attainments to gain advanced entry into year 3 of certain Degree courses in DkIT.</p>	

6.5	<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 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. The team commenced delivering training in Q4 2023 to a mix of community organisations and key statutory partners in Q4 2023.</p> <p>Louth ABC have delivered three community-based programmes and have rolled out a programme of training to six primary schools in the Drogheda area.</p>	



## 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>
<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 marginalised groups and those living in areas of disadvantage.</p> <p>Funding has been secured of €200k p.a. for three years to facilitate the resourcing of three posts in Louth and Meath Sports Partnerships to lead out on a community sport-led collaborative approach “Driving Change through Sport” to community safety and wellbeing for the Drogheda area. Further resourcing is being provided by Louth and Meath local authorities. This programme, <i>SPortUile</i>, was launched on 20<sup>th</sup> November 2024 in the Lourdes Stadium, Drogheda by Minister for Sport and Physical Activity, Thomas Byrne T.D. Priorities include the provision of a wide range of opportunities to participate in sport and the development of sports youth leadership and specific community mentorship programmes. The recruitment process for these posts will commence in Q1 2025.</p>	

<b>7.2</b>	<b>Explore opportunities for developing a centre of sporting excellence in Drogheda.</b>
<p>Funding of €11m was approved for LMETB under the Large Scale Sport Infrastructure Fund for a Sports Arena at St. Oliver’s Community College in collaboration with Drogheda Wolves. A planning application has been lodged with Louth County Council and a decision is expected in Q1 2025.</p>	

<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>
<p><b>Boyne River:</b> Louth County Council in partnership with Failte Ireland have been exploring the potential development of Drogheda as a tourism destination. In 2023 Louth County Council engaged consultants to carry out an analysis of the tourism assets in Drogheda. Failte Ireland followed in 2024 with the engagement of consultants to carry out a study on what actions are required to develop, co-ordinate and improve the natural assets of Drogheda. In 2024 Failte Ireland developed a visitor placemaking strategy in partnership with Louth County Council which examines place making in Drogheda from a visitor perspective. It considers how the town centre could be enhanced while also fulfilling its significant potential for growth as a destination town and how Drogheda can better live up its role as a gateway to the River Boyne and the Boyne valley destination beyond. The report is in final form.</p> <p>An application for planning permission was submitted by Drogheda Port Company in 2024 for a pontoon on Boyne River which is awaiting decision.</p>	

**Boyne Valley Drive:** 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 proposition that will become a 5000 year journey through time. The project will focus on the development of 14 product/geographic clusters, 4 infrastructure initiatives & 5 key industry clusters across the Boyne Valley. An action plan for the wider Drogheda catchment Cluster was completed in 2023 and is currently being activated. The development of a food trail and evening economy initiatives are central to this.

During 2024 the Paul Hogarth company was appointed to lead a multi-disciplinary team to deliver full specifications and designs for a number of Boyne Valley Drive Infrastructure & Cluster projects to RIBA Stage 4. Design work is underway in relation to public travel arrival experience development, wayfinding and trail development in Drogheda and experience development at nearby Baltray & King Williams Glen, Townley.

Failte Ireland continue to support the work of tourism clusters across Louth and Meath. In Drogheda the cluster delivered a mid-summer festival and failte Ireland supported a pilot transport initiative running from Drogheda hinterlands into the town during the festival.

**Boyne Valley Trails:** 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 & Boyne Valley Walking festival, to avail of the natural, cultural and heritage landscape in Drogheda and its’ vicinity. Boyne Valle Trails has also received funding from Failte Ireland to further develop the Boyne Valley Walking Festival as an attractor to Drogheda and the Boyne Valley.

**Boyne Greenway and Navigation Restoration:** Following publication of the Emerging Preferred route for the greenway and the conclusions of the Boyne Navigation Feasibility Report, work on gathering information to inform the preliminary design of the Greenway has continued. Environmental and topographical surveys are currently ongoing and tenders for a Ground Investigation contract have also been received and assessed. Site work for the ground investigation should commence in Q1 2025. Meath County Council has also written to Waterways Ireland regarding the restoration of the Boyne Navigation and provided them with a copy of the feasibility report undertaken on behalf of the Council. They are considering if the project aligns with the vision and objectives set out in their 10 year plan and if they are in a position to develop the scheme further.

in September 2023, An Bord Pleanála refused permission for the proposed greenway between Drogheda and Mornington. Meath County Council have since considered the reasons for refusal and the also the proposals contained in the National Cycle Network Plan – Report 2023 (NCNP). The NCNP includes a cycle route between Drogheda and Balbriggan which is identified as Corridor 81 in the plan. Like the other corridors considered in the report, Corridor 81 has a significant width but it is noted that the report states that there is a preference for the coastline corridor due to the potential scenic value this would provide.

Given Meath County Council’s objective to carry out the design of cycle infrastructure in accordance with the GDA Cycle Network Plan, which also contains a cycle route between

Drogheda and the Fingal Boundary analogous to Corridor 81, the Council has written to the TII to request funding to begin the process of identifying route options and developing a preferred scheme. The initial response from the TII was positive and Meath County Council are awaiting the publication of the TII's 2025 grant allocations to confirm whether or not the funding will be available in 2025 to begin the development of the scheme.

**7.4**

**Explore the possibility of making the Drogheda Leisure Park available to the public as a community facility in the Drogheda area.**

Drogheda Leisure Park is a premises on the Southside of Drogheda owned by a private consortium. The 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.

**7.5**

**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.**

A working group was established to review this action consisting of subgroup members and others with expertise including the Director of Droichead Arts Centre and the Drogheda Youth Officer which identified that a peer led, locally focused model with coordination support and sustainability built in, is the best fit for the need in Drogheda. The Driving Change through Sport initiative *SportUile*, noted in Action 7.1 includes the creation and supporting of role models as a priority action and will form part of their action plan.

**7.6**

**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.**

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, outdoor fitness area, conversion of old storage area to new multipurpose room and additional accessible toilets, which have now been completed. As noted in action 7.1 a 'Driving Change Through Sport' proposal was developed by Louth and Meath Local Sports Partnerships. This programme, *SportUile*, was launched on 20<sup>th</sup> November 2024 in the Lourdes Stadium, Drogheda by Minister for Sport and Physical Activity, Thomas Byrne T.D. As outlined in Action 4.4 a design team has been appointed to submission by LMETB for the phased development of a sports and community changing/meeting block at Drogheda Institute of Further Education (DIFE) was successful and a design team has been appointed to this project.

## 8. LOCAL AUTHORITY ORGANISATION AND SERVICES

8.1	<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>
<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 number of joint meetings of Drogheda and East Municipal districts continue have been held 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>	

8.2	<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>
<p>The requirement for a Joint Plan for Drogheda between Meath and Louth County Councils remains a priority and an objective in the National Planning Framework 2040, Regional Spatial Economic Strategy for EMRA Region and in both respective County Development Plans.</p> <p>While it was not legally possible to progress with the statutory making of a joint local area plan for Drogheda due to legal challenges associated with the Meath County Development Plan, Louth and Meath County Councils did publish a joint Issues Paper for the proposed Plan, following which there was a period for public consultation and submissions were invited. Both local authorities are finalising a joint report on the submissions received to this Issues Paper and this will inform the new Drogheda area plan. In addition, both Councils are continuing to prepare the local transport plan with a draft Local Transport Plan due for June 2025.</p> <p>Under the provisions of the new Planning and Development Act 2024, it is unlikely that the joint local area plan will be made for Drogheda. However, the Planning and Development Act 2024 has introduced new provisions (when the relevant Sections of the 2024 Act are commenced) where under Section 73 of the Act, it is a requirement to develop a Coordinated Area Plan (CAP) for Drogheda. This CAP will be developed following the adoption of the new County Development Plans in both County Louth and Meath following their adoption in Q3 / Q4 2027.</p> <p>Under the provisions of the 2024 Act, East Meath area will not require a statutory Urban Plan but will be provided for in a written statement and zoned map similar with the current provisions of the Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027.</p>	

<b>8.3</b>	<b>LCC to consider ways to ensure greater Council presence, visibility and engagement in Drogheda.</b>
<p>Louth County Council led the redevelopment of Drogheda Civic Offices on Fair Street, a €12m project that consisted of the complete refurbishment and creative re-use of two existing unoccupied protected structures, the old Community Services building and the former Borough Chamber. The Civic Offices were officially opened on 2nd September 2024.</p> <p>Considerable other visible public realm works have been completed during 2023, including the refurbishment of the pedestrian Dominic's and de Lacy Bridges and the re-design of the space on St Peter's Hill.</p>	

<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>
<p>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 and matters arising relating to dumping and illegal burning of refuse.</p>	
<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>
<p>Louth County Council in response to "Our Place" a community led initiative in Moneymore have agreed to a number of measures to address the resident's concerns. These include the granting of an additional community house, allocations to vacant houses, compulsory purchase orders for 3 privately owned vacant houses, more tidying up of green area from Moneymore to Laurence's Park. Work has commenced on multi-use games area. Additional playground pieces will be installed and traffic wardens will be deployed to patrol to help aid parking/traffic flow issues.</p> <p>A considerable of works was also agreed to by Louth County Council in response to issues raised under Southside Voices including the allocation of additional space for a community garden in the Rathmullan area.</p>	

<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>
<p>Rolling voids are a feature of managing a stock of more than 4000 social housing units in the County. Most long-term voids are now returned to service. See 8.5 above in relation to specific measures in Moneymore.</p>	

8.7	<p><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></p>
<p>Louth County Council have engaged with the residents of both Moneymore and Castle Manor in relation to this issue. It has now been agreed that the “gap” provides an excellent Active Travel Route and plans and specifications have been drawn up to permanently and securely open this route. This project will have provision for CCTV oversight along with natural passive surveillance but more importantly will provide a safe route to school for children in the locality. In December 2024 Louth County Council made a Compulsory Purchase Order on part of the lands concerned which is required to bring the project to completion.</p>	

## 9. LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND ASSETS

9.1	<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>
<p>The construction of the Port Access Northern Cross Route has been a strategic objective of Louth County Council for over 20 years. The benefits include opening new areas for housing construction (circa 8,000 units ) in North Drogheda, a direct route from the M1 motorway to the port removing vast numbers of HGVs from the North Quay Drogheda, allowing the construction of new housing/office and retail spaces in the port area and greatly improving the quality of life for Drogheda residents, workers and visitors to the town.</p> <p>Phase 1 of these works linking the Rosehall Roundabout to the new Ballymakenny Road Roundabout was opened in February 2024. Construction of the second phase 2 has commenced and is expected to be completed by the end of 2025. A funding application for the third phase, which will cross the Dublin/Belfast rail-line, was submitted in 2024.</p>	

9.2	<b>Local Authority (and others as appropriate) progress the West Gate Vision plan for Drogheda Town centre</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.</p> <p>A public realm team is in place to manage this project and a design team has been procured to progress the plans. Designs were completed and presented to elected members of Louth County Council in Q3 2022 and a submission was lodged with An Bord Pleanála in Q4 2023. A further application will be made to the Urban Regeneration Development Fund subject to planning permission being secured.</p>	

9.3	<b>Local Authority clarify what the Fáilte Ireland ‘Destination Town’ designation can bring to Drogheda, and how this can be progressed accordingly.</b>
<p>Drogheda was identified as a Tourism Destination Town by Louth County Council which is recognition by Failte Ireland in terms of the town’s enormous potential as a key destination for tourists in the future. Louth County Council received €500,000 support from Failte Ireland for development in this regard and developed an orientation, signage and wayfinding trail, which is now complete and in place. In addition, Louth County Council secured funding of €1.2m from Failte Ireland for a three-year Urban Animation Project in Drogheda, branded as <u>Lú</u> Festival of Light.</p>	
9.4	<b>As part of this, establish Fáilte Ireland presence/tourist information office in the Town.</b>
<p>Louth County Council recruited a Tourism Officer for County Louth who will be present in the Tourist Office in the Tholsel on a regular basis. Refurbishment works at the Tholsel are ongoing.</p>	

<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>
<p>Louth County Council purchased this building. A €3 million grant was awarded to Louth County Council in April 2024 who will also match that funding to extend and refurbish the Dominican Church to create a new library space. The funding will be delivered through the Libraries Capital Programme 2023-2027 following the council's application in 2023.</p> <p>The Dominican Priory was up to recently used to house Ukrainian refugees.</p>	

<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>
<p>The Department of Health and the HSE secured funding in December 2024 to expand the Slaintecare Healthy Communities programme to four additional areas including Drogheda for 2025. The aim of the programme is to improve the long-term health and wellbeing of the most disadvantaged communities by taking a place-based approach that enables targeted support based on community needs and assets. The programme is a partnership with the HSE, local authorities, local communities, statutory, voluntary and community groups.</p> <p>Louth County Council were successful in their application for a Night-Time Economy Advisor for Drogheda in 2022 who is driving and supporting a more sustainable night time economy working with business, communities, residents, venues and artists to create a more vibrant nightlife for all in a safe and sustainable way.</p> <p>The Port Access Northern Cross Route currently under construction will greatly improve the quality of life for Drogheda residents, workers and visitors to the town.</p> <p>Faite Ireland continue to work closely with Louth Local Authority, Drogheda Business Improvement District to further the Destination Experience Development Plan. The Urban Animation Project mentioned in 7.3 above is an element of this plan.</p> <p>Faite Ireland also sit on the Tourism Cluster for Drogheda which is chaired by Drogheda BIDs and includes businesses, Drogheda Chamber, Droichead Arts, the Mill, the Louth Tourism Officer and the Night-time economy advisor. The role of the cluster is the promotion and development of tourism in Drogheda.</p>	



## 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>
<p>In June 2021, IDA acquired a new landbank on the north side of Drogheda as part of the IDA Ireland's long term strategic plans to position Louth and the wider North-East region to compete for FDI investment.</p> <p>A planning application for the proposed Advanced Building Solution has been submitted to An Bord Pleanála and a decision is awaited.</p>	

<b>10.2</b>	<b>Explore ways to develop productive links – in terms of promoting employment opportunities – with appropriate third level institutions.</b>
<p>A wide variety of Enterprise Ireland funded programmes and initiatives delivered through DkIT are available to relevant Enterprise Ireland clients and to entrepreneurs in Drogheda. These include New Frontiers, Innovation Vouchers, Connected and Wellbeing Custer, dConnect, Credit Tech Gateway, Thrive4Women Programme and DkIT research.</p> <p>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.</p>	

<b>10.3</b>	<b>Explore potential for enterprise initiatives and job creation in the agri-food sector</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 opened in May 2023 which saw the development of 9 individual food units and production labs.</p> <p>The Centre of Food Culture, Boyne Valley is the first national Centre for Food Culture and builds links between stakeholders - locally, nationally and internationally. Co-funded by Louth and Meath local authorities. The Centre embeds food culture into festivals in the Drogheda area.</p>	

<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>
<p>As outlined in Action 2.4 Community Gardai have been assigned to dedicated sectors within communities in both urban and rural locations in the District. A member of the Drogheda Community Policing Team have been assigned as a specific point of contact for the Business Community. An Garda Siochana Drogheda continue to liaise closely with the Business Improvement District Scheme Committee and are associated with the Public Flag Initiative for Drogheda Town centre. Community Garda foot patrols in the town centre are maintained and the Garda Community Engagement van is a regular feature in West Street.</p> <p>Ask for Angela , a safety campaign that allows people to discreetly signal if they feel unsafe on a date or a night out was launched in 2022 and re-launched in December 2024 in association with the Vintners Association, Restaurants Association, Taxi Federation, Love Drogheda Business Improvement District and Drogheda Chamber.</p> <p>See Something Say Something, as outlined in action 2.12 above, is another Community Safety Initiative aimed at reducing the impact of anti-social behaviour in Drogheda. Both these initiatives are working well and are monitored and will continue to be monitored by an Inspector in the Drogheda area</p>	

<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>
<p>The Drogheda Digital Hub, (<a href="https://droghedadigitalhub.ie">https://droghedadigitalhub.ie</a>) funded under the Border Enterprise Development Fund, was developed by Louth County Council with Drogheda Enterprise Centre CLG, The Mill Enterprise Hub (The Mill) and supported by Enterprise Ireland. The project has been awarded €587,600 in funding 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. The Programme Manager has taken up position and a contractor has been appointed to commence work on fit out with a view to opening in Q3 2025.</p> <p>As part of the Drogheda Digital Hub initiative, the Boyne Innovate Programme was launched in 2024 and continues in 2025. It is designed to empower technology entrepreneurs, whether at an early stage or just beginning their journey, with the necessary tools, support, and guidance to evolve their ideas into market-ready ventures.</p>	

<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>
<p>A Joint Louth Meath Integration Forum was established and a work plan on the delivery of the strategy agreed. The joint Migration Forum hosted an event in November 2023 in the Glenside Hotel, County Meath, just outside Drogheda. This event was very well attended by members of the migrant community from across Louth and East Meath and showcased services and supports available in the area. Integration teams have been established in both local authorities to work with International Protection Applicants, people with Refugee status and beneficiaries of Temporary Protection. A public consultation to inform the development of a new national strategy for migrant integration was launched in October 2023 which when published will inform the work of the integration teams going forward.</p>	

<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>Integration Teams in each local authority continue to monitor and seek to address any racial tension issues that may arise.</p>	

<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>
<b>11.5</b>	<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>
<p>A Traveller and Roma Community Development Officer is employed in Louth Local Development (LLD) for the purposes of developing capacity for these communities. Following positive collaboration and outreach work by the Louth Local Development (LLD) Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) Community Development Officer, two Traveller women groups in the Drogheda area formed and received extensive support. One of these groups, consisting of 14 women from the local Traveller community in Drogheda were recruited for the Traveller primary Healthcare Project (see below).</p> <p>The other Group Mincéir Drogheda has established a Traveller peer support group in Drogheda with a particular focus on supporting young travellers. As part of Traveller Pride Week in Drogheda in 2024 this group, supported by Drogheda Implementation Board, organised and delivered an event in collaboration with Louth Local Development and Youth Work Ireland Louth with a particular focus on the voices of young Travellers in the Drogheda area.</p> <p>The HSE secured funding, through Dept of Health, of €200k to deliver a Traveller Primary Healthcare Unit in Drogheda. LLD were the successful applicant for this contract to support</p>	

Traveller families directly and connect mainstream health services with Traveller Community Health Workers. LLD have recruited a coordinator for this project who will support the recruitment and selection of Traveller Primary Healthcare Workers.