

Meeting Notes of South Tipperary Social Inclusion Group held on Monday 14th September 09.

Present: Tess Collins, Marie Boland, Cora Horgan, Phil Shanahan, Sheila Comerford, Carmel McKenna, Bridget O'Keeffe, Dan Fox, Donal O'Hallorhan, Sean McSweeney, Jarlath Fallon, Antje Hogan, Gerry Hickey, Angela Joy, Patricia Wall, Clare Curley, Jim Cass(Chairperson), Mark Ryan, John Devane, Liam O'Brien, Ann Ryan

Apologies: Pat Holland, Margo Hayes, Kathleen Prendergast, Fionuala McGeever, Sinead Carr

1. Introductions, Adoption of Minutes and Matters Arising

The Chair opened the meeting and a round of introductions was held. Meeting notes were agreed.

Proposed: Phil Shanahan, Seconded: Cora Horgan. No matters arising as most issues coming up on the agenda.

2. Sub group reports

Elderly services report:

Antje Hogan outlined the conference 'Elderly Services – Managing Change in a Challenging Environment' which is to take place on 3rd of October. Antje encouraged members to attend. Conference brochure attached

Disability plan report:

Ann gave an update on actions developed since last report including:

County Council: Access Audit Complete. Implementation Plan Agreed and many of the works have started. 2008 – Parking and Footpaths in Clonmel, Tipperary Town, Cashel and Carrick complete. A Large proportion of works for County Hall has been completed and all works for County Hall will be completed by 2009. Work is commencing on any priority work re Cashel Civic Offices. Work on web site to make it more accessible has included installation of browsealoud software which lets clients hear the words on the web site. The 2009 plan includes carrying out works re footpaths and carparking in Clonmel, Kilcash, Cahir, Ardfinnan, Fethard, Tipperary and Cashel. Works have been notified to Gavin Cullen(Access Officer) who has notified Donal O'Hallorhan, South Tipperary Disability Forum. Works have also been identified for Clonmel Borough Council office for 09 and early 2010. Works on 3 Burial Grounds has been identified. Funding has been identified for all these projects in 09 and 2010. South Tipperary County Council in conjunction with NCBI and Tipperary Institute are working on easy read version of Councils major policy documents. Work on web site to make it more accessible has included installation of browsealoud software which lets clients hear the words on the web site.

Gold Star update: Gold Star Project - achievements to date Sept. 2009

- Logo Designed by young people – erected on all approach routes to the town
- Launch of Disability awareness cards – displayed locally – Chamber of Commerce printed the Do's and Don'ts on the back of letterhead paper
- Public Access Audits – South Tipperary County Council - STDGF consult
- UCC Diploma course running in Cashel – 28 graduates 08, 2008-2010 course commenced with 26 new participants
- People with disabilities trained to deliver GSDAT (Gold Star Disability Awareness Training) in the community – 130 local participants to date.
- Partnership between Tipp Institute, DFI, HSE and people with disabilities on GSDAT
- Promotion of www.accessireland.info website in Cashel
- Awareness programme designed by people with disabilities being delivered in local primary and secondary schools
- Gold Star Guidelines booklet being developed – Gradient award system being designed for Gold Star Status – (publication 2010)
- Transport survey – promote sharing of resources

- Photography competition – highlighting illegal use of accessible spaces and general universal access issues – Schools caption competition to be held as part of this project.
- Tourist access audit conducted with Irish Times Go Magazine 2009
- Sharing of resources/mainstreaming/Youth Service & Nagle Centre
- Invitations to other Town Councils and Family Resource Centers...etc have been received to deliver presentations on the Gold Star programme, including Galway City Council, Carlow CoCo, Hospital Family Resource Centre, Limerick.
- Engineer participating in 'wheel-about' with Gold Star volunteers
- 'A Day in The Life of Persons with Disabilities' – hosted at Halla na Feile
- Nagle Centre – participants working to design the boxes and install them in public buildings, shops, restaurants...etc
- Comhairle Na N'og: Children with disabilities included this year 2009 in partnership with South Tipp CoCo and TRYS and the Gold Star Programme – number of participative workshops being set up to help integrate the groups
- Winners of 2008 Community and Enterprise section of South Tipperary Entrepreneurial Awards

Future plans

- Publication of Guidelines booklet
- Initiation of Gold Star application process amongst service providers in the community
- Application for the Taoiseach Awards in October 2009
- Working with Junior Minister John Moloney, TD., to promote the programme nationally.
- Roll-out of Gold Star programme in other Towns in South Tipperary.
- On-going awareness raising and disability awareness training in the community & schools

The members welcomed work to promote the programme nationally.

Donal O'Hallorhan informed the committee that the Disability Forum had requested meetings with the area engineers on an area basis. Donal informed the group that some of these meetings had happened already and had proved to be very successful and the Disability Forum acknowledged the role that Pat Slattery, Director of Service, has played in linking the forum in this process.

Ann also informed the group that as part of the Comhairle na nOg project in South Tipperary, she was working with Ann Bradshaw and TRYS to develop an integrated project with children with disabilities and young people from Cashel youth centre over the October mid term with a view to having more young people with disabilities participating in the Comhairle process.

Traveller Interagency Report

ISSUES:

Visiting Teacher

Reply to letter forwarded to Department of Education by South Tipperary Co. Council Pat McSitríc stated the following:

“The South Tipperary caseload area has been reassigned as follows (family numbers as of March 2009 but to be confirmed):

- Littleton, Ballinure (23 families) - to Dr. Marian Browne Visiting Teacher Traveller ,North. Tipperary
- Tipperary Town, Dundrum, Cashel (31 families) to Mid-Western Office Visiting Teacher Traveller team - Visiting Teacher Traveller name to be confirmed shortly
- Cahir, Bansha (12 families) to Southern Regional Office Visiting Teacher Traveller team - Visiting Teacher Traveller name to be confirmed shortly

- Clonmel, Carrick-on-Suir, Killenaule, Fethard (29 families) - included in new Waterford/South. Tipperary (East) Visiting Teacher Traveller caseload - post offered and position to be filled end September/early October.

The Visiting Teacher for Travellers will begin to engage with their new families and schools in the very near future, if not already in some cases”

Issues:

- Number of young children not attending school at present due to the recent cutbacks.
- Not sustainable for 4 different workers to achieve consistency given the dispersed areas suggested.

Action: Letter to issue to Department of Education highlighting the issues and requesting who the representative is that will be representing Department on the Interagency Forum.

An Bord Snip

Dissatisfaction to An Bord Snip’s recommendation to massive cuts in funding for Community Development Programmes and Traveller Community Development **Programmes.**

Commitment from Statutory Bodies

Mgt. Casey informed the meeting that Marius Cassidy, FAS spoke of their commitment to education and training for the Traveller Community in South Tipperary. He stressed that in order for real progression to take place within Fas funded training and education programmes that commitment from other statutory agencies is required.

Traveller Interagency Projects Update

Update provided on main projects currently in progress

- Men’s Project in Cashel
- Men’s Development Work
- Comhairle Traveller Project

Tipperary Rural Project Worker

Eugene O’Donnell was successful in his interview for the Tipperary Rural Traveller Project and is due to commence on the 15th September 2009.

Horse Project

Lead Agency to be identified.

Phil Shanahan had queries regarding aspects of Horse Project and it was agreed that a meeting be arranged with Ger Walsh to discuss role of lead agency.

Garda Siochana

It was noted that Garda Aine Donnelly has been appointed Juvenile Liaison Officer for Clonmel, Carrick-on-Suir and possibly Tipperary Town.

County Childcare

Gerry Hickey gave an update as follows:

- Collated information on the Traveller childcare survey currently being analysed.
- Committee received €5,800 grant from FAS for 2009 in relation to subsidised childcare Training and Social Care.

- STCCC require Traveller Representatives to produce a leaflet which will incorporate the new free pre-school year.
- Pilot Traveller Awareness Programme to commence in September 2009.

Safety & Security Report

Bon Fire Actions

- Clonmel pilot – Environmental Awareness Officer working with Residence groups to increase awareness of how householders can get rid of rubbish for free in the months prior to Halloween
- Soccer Development Officer to try and organise Soccer activities for kids on evenings around Halloween
- Clubs, youth organisations, community houses being encourage to organise events around Halloween as alternative to bonfires.

Community Alert and Neighbourhood Watch,

Figures from call monitoring stations indicate that about 80% of calls are social calls, 18% medical and 1% crime related

Good links in place with HSE staff and home help staff who encourage older people to use alarms etc - The need for social interaction is clearly highlighted by breakdown of calls – community alert groups and neighbour hood watch group are now starting to focus on befriending projects

Anti social behaviour

Interagency approach essential

2nd Chance programme working where tenants know they are at risk of losing tenancy.

Where everything else has failed it is important to follow through the legal route and have evictions – 3 cases at the moment in South Tipperary – sends out message and gives confidence to communities

Alternative options for young people and resourcing of youth at risk services essential

The following is an outline of the Youth Worker Issues raised at the recent Safety & Security Partnership: recommends index-linking the number of youth Workers to the number of disadvantaged youth locally and/or the number of School Staff in the area, and to enhance the development of Youth cafes in each RAPID Town.

While some RAPID Towns have a combined School Staff of 200, the Youth Projects struggle with a minimum staff compliment, FAS CE Workers and Volunteer Leaders. Given that 80% of a child's life from 0-18 years is spent OUTSIDE the School gates, it is vital the Community-Based Supports are in place to adequately resource activities OUTSIDE the school gates for this age cohort. Furthermore, Schools disproportionately benefit those who successfully achieve in the education system - conversely, it disproportionately marginalises those for whom education/school is not a good-fit.

South Tipperary County Joint Policing Committee – proposed committee will meet at end of October when nominations are back re membership

Community Policing: The Community Policing in Clonmel has had a huge impact – (feedback from community, Agencies and Gardai at Safety and Security Partnership) in Clonmel. The roll out of Community Policing is essential for the rest of the County.

Drugs: increased intravenous use of Heroin – Helath and Safety issue for staff of Local Authorities and community re disposal of needles is going to be an issue in the future – training may be required – needle exchange projects are being considered to try an eliminate risks from used needles

Ann informed the members that the Safety & Security group had made a **Submission of South Tipperary County Development Board in relation to Garda Síochána Corporate Strategy 2010-2012 (copy Attached)**

Disconnected youth (full report attached)

Jarlath Fallon gave an outline of the key issues.

Home School Liaison position now only in DEIS schools

Threat to Pathways project which covers Clonmel, Carrick and Cahir . There is a significant risk that a further reduction in funding will be made to the 2009 budget, which if implemented, will impact on South Tipperary. There is no assurance that funding will be available for the whole Pathways project for 2010, and there are concerns about its continuation.

In 2008, 96 Early School leavers from Clonmel, Carrick and Cahir, were referred to Pathways.

Visiting Teacher for Travelling Community – As outlined earlier in the report the Sth Tipp. caseload area has been reassigned among a number of teachers and the group has expressed concern about this.

Training Proposed: The group are proposing to organise a training day with Vincent Byrne targeting teachers, youth workers, early school leaving projects. Any contribution to cost of the training would be welcome.

The following discussion arose:

- Jarlath pointed out that the inadequacy of the arrangements re visiting teacher had already been pointed out to him and he would be reporting back on this issue.
- The importance of continued FAS funding for Pathways project

3. **Social Inclusion network (SIN) –**

Phil Shanahan, Tipperary Development Company gave a presentation on the Social Inclusion Networks which were in the process of being developed in Clonmel, Carrick on Suir, Cahir, Cashel, Tipperary Town, Killenaule, Hollyford, Clogheen.

The strategic development of local structures to inform, support and promote social inclusion would assist with developing appropriate local responses in addition to developing much needed county-wide strategies in partnership with agencies who have responsibility for addressing such needs.

Benefits of area based SInS

- Working in partnership with local communities meets many of the stated objectives of the national Local Development Social Inclusion Programme including using community development principles and approaches to social inclusion work.
- Building capacity locally is strategic in ultimately addressing issues of social inclusion.
- Working directly with target groups and communities involves those who know most about their concerns and experiences, and is empowering in terms of involving those with concerns in developing appropriate responses by getting directly involved in bringing about agreed changes.

- By supporting individuals and groups to work together at local level, resources and expertise can be shared and often enhanced, common visions in relation to social, cultural or economic goals can be developed and the social fabric of the community can be enhanced.
- Ensuring national and county structures link and work locally promotes active citizenship among the local population, enhances capacity and participation in public structures at various levels and actively promotes and builds democracy.
- Finally, building partnerships locally (while requires learning), increases the effectiveness of the work, supports a greater level of cohesiveness and targets increased resources to those that are the focus of the work.

Progress to date:

Four areas were chosen to explore the set up of Social Inclusion Networks – two urban areas: Carrick-on-Suir and Clonmel and two rural areas: Killenaule and Hollyford. Meetings were held with various groups and agencies in these areas to explore the possible make up, role and purpose of such fora. (Please find attached full presentation.)

The group discussed the potential for the SIN to form a county structure that would be linked to the Community & Voluntary Forum. Phil informed the group that she was working with the C&V forum re development of the SIN.

4. **Vulnerable Families** – follow on discussion focusing on value added actions and solutions

Ann outlined some proposed actions since June SIM meeting

Organisation of Family Support Link Day initial ideas

Subject: Social Work Department & Community Groups Initial Family Support Link Day

AIM: To provide a forum where the social work team members and the community groups who provide family supports to network and further develop their working relationships. (possibly an initial CDP& FRC Network and Youth Service Focus)

Working Group Members: Angela Joy, Claire Cashman & Ann Ryan

Venue: Fire Station Clonmel

Date: End of October 2009-09-11 Time From 11am – 1pm finish with light lunch

Ideas / Plan

A follow on from the presentation to the SIM meeting in June re vulnerable families. The idea is to enable as many people to come and go as an information point and networking opportunity.

- Ask Social Work Department, Community Development Projects, Family Resource Centre and the Youth Service providers to have information stands
- Create / develop an opportunity for networking and gathering information – working on this idea.
- Have a presentation from the CDP/ FRC Network , Social work Dept and Youth services @ 12.15
- Discussion and focus on any outcomes/ value added moving forward
- Light Lunch at end
- Evaluation Sheet

Vulnerable families – 800 children on Social workers books in South Tipperary

There are two categories within Social Work Dept

1) Child Protection = where there is a need to protect a child through some intervention which can be varied depending on the situation.

2) Child Welfare = this is where additional support services are put in place for families like parenting skills etc. child welfare has 17 categories as follows:

1. Child with emotional / behavioural problems
2. Child abusing drugs / alcohol
3. Child involved in crime
4. Child pregnancy
5. Physical illness / disability in child
6. Mental health problems / intellectual disability in child
7. Homelessness
8. Unaccompanied minor
9. Parent unable to cope
10. Family member abusing drugs / alcohol
11. Family member involved in Crime
12. Domestic violence
13. Physical illness/disability in family member
14. Mental health problems / intellectual disability in family member
15. Family difficulty re. housing/finance
16. Parent separation / absence/ other disharmony in home
17. Asylum Seekers

Further discussion will be held with the Social Work Department regarding the analysis of the approximately 800 cases highlighted at the last SIM meeting by the HSE Childcare Manager to identify what community and other supports they or their families might be linked to.

Proposed Interreg Project – Family supports

Margo Hayes leading up this project – Interreg office supporting the search for partner.

Currently seeking Welsh Partner – with a view to application being ready for early 2010 call

To strengthen families through home and community based services within the RAPID areas of Tipperary, Clonmel and Carrick-on-Suir (an Welsh areas)

- Increase family support systems and stability and self-sufficiency within families
- Focus on physical and mental wellbeing of the family.
- Link families with formal and informal community resources.
- Provide parenting skills to improve techniques, trust and communication within the family
- Support positive parenting particularly where challenges exist such as addiction, separation, family breakdown, bereavement or children displaying challenging behaviours.
- Supporting parents under stress with the task of raising their children
- Reduce social isolation by linking the parents/families into their community
- Training for volunteers and community workers so that they are equipped to assist vulnerable families

2nd Chance Programme –Tess Collins gave an outline of a number of cases and the types of referrals (report attached) she outlined that there were 50 participants on the second chance programme. In the main they meet with the tenant and refer them to appropriate services where they exist.

Key points from the discussion on vulnerable families:

- Addiction is often a common denominator and there are not enough addiction /counselling services

- In the current climate it is unlikely there will be funding to expand services and the focus must be on retaining existing services
- It would be very useful to get some breakdown in terms of information on the 800 cases so that services could be targeted at families
- Prevention is the key – we will always be doing fire brigade work if preventative measures aren't developed – not always focusing on winners – e.g. clubs to be encouraged to put out B team so that kids who don't make the A team get included.

Actions:

- Angela Joy to investigate where South Tipperary is at in terms of establishing the Childrens services Committee.
- Cora to investigate the interagency forum that operates like a interagency case conference in some other counties.
- Organisation of family support link day
- Work on Interreg application
- Angela to ask Social Work Department if they would be able to give us a breakdown of the 800 cases so that we know more about the target group and where to target services and what their community needs might be.

5. Guidelines for Social Inclusion Measures Group 2009 – sub group report and discussion

Phil Shanahan reported on behalf of SIM sub group as follows: .

The Group met twice – July and August. The first meeting provided for much discussion on the role and remit of SIM, its relationship. What has worked well for South Tipperary has been the current open door policy to participation that has resulted in good discussion. It was felt important to hold onto this aspect in any re-formation of SIM. It was noted that there has been consistent attendance across the sectors. Sub Group felt that member's level of participation in SIM and sub groups was based on their goodwill and the resources they had. It was noted that the SIM guidelines were statutory driven especially in terms of membership.

The group debated the optimum membership of the SIM Committee. It considered the feasibility of area based representation and target group representation. It considered the planned development of the 8 area social inclusion networks currently by South Tipperary Development Company and the potential that these networks could provide in the future in terms of representation on SIM. The group was also mindful of the current uncertainties in the sector and the time required developing the networks.

The group recommends the following interim model until such time as new structures are in place.

Recommendations:

All agencies including the community sector should nominate their representatives onto SIM and all should commit to attendance. Requests for nominations should include a letter which outlines the following:

- Importance of nominating a senior person
- Request for named substitute at senior level
- Emphasise the importance of having a reporting mechanism with the organisation/agency to and from SIM.

It would be important that the role of SIM would be clarified to all members at the first meeting following new nominations.

It is recommended that further clarity was needed about the power of authority of SIM and CDB.

Core Members are defined within the guidelines. *Membership should comprise one representative at a senior level as follows- each state agency and government department with a social inclusion remit, operating locally.*

FAS, Garda Siochana, DSFA, HSE, VEC, Integrated Company, Local Authority, CDP, C & V Forum, County Childcare Committee, Elected member who is a member of the County Development Board, Department of Education and Science.

Additional membership as recommended by the working group:

FRC
RAPID

Thematic representation on SIM priorities for the forthcoming 18 month period.

e.g., Youth, Elderly, Travellers, Migrants, Disability etc.,

Members discussed the sub group recommendations and the following points were made:

- A. Sub group tried to operate the same principle across all organisations – 1 rep for each organisation type
- B. Currently the FRC and CDP had one place per organisation on SIM i.e. 7 places
- C. Proofing was done to date by having reps on Programme Management Group e.g. rural proofing was done by farming pillar etc. It was pointed out that do we go down the road of poverty proofing, youth proofing, rural proofing etc and have to have a rep to cover all types of proofing

Action: It was agreed that if any members had any issues, points for discussion they would come back to Ann Ryan (ann.ryan@southtippcoco.ie / 062 64736) before Friday 23rd of October. If there were further issues to be discussed the sub group could reconvene before the next SIM meeting. This item will be further discussed at next SIM meeting.

6. **Impact of cutbacks on member organisations** – Everybody experiencing cuts. It was agreed that SIM could not priorities or campaign for any one organisation over the other. However it was requested that the Director of Services write immediately to the Dept of Finance, to outline the impact of the proposed cuts from a Social Inclusion point of view and the impact and cost of the cuts into the future.

7. **A.O.B.**

Jimmy Cass wished Antje best wishes from the SIM group and thanked her for her significant contribution to SIM.

County Music Strategy: Ann informed the SIM group that a sub group had been formed led by the VEC to put together an bid for funding for a county music strategy. Ann outlined that resources would be needed to complete an audit of music provision and to develop a county music strategy.

Next Meeting is on **9th November** and agenda will include a review of the actions for 2009 and development of work plan for 2010