

Social Inclusion Measures Working Group
Meeting notes of 7th Nov. , 2005
Held at Minella Hotel, Clonmel, Co. Tipperary

Summary

1. County Childcare Committee action plan 2006, County Volunteering and Cohesion Applications all endorsed
2. Migrant Workers issues: Induction/information issues to be looked at by a CIC committee; Integration issues to be referred to three County Council SPC's for review
3. Elderly Services Working group presented an initial report and will return next April/May.
4. Youth Information Cards project to be funded by VEC.

Present: Antje Hogan, Citizens Information Service, John Quinn, Community and Enterprise, Alan Price, HSE-SE, Phyllis Naughton (Disability Group of the Community and Voluntary Forum), Ronan Mulhall (Dept. of Ed and Science), Tracey Costello (County Childcare Committee), Eileen Condon (Tipperary S.R. VEC), Phil Shanahan CCP, Bridget O'Keeffe, Sean McSweeney Community and Voluntary Forum, Kathleen Prendergast, RAPID, Margo Hayes RAPID, Mark Ryan, RAPID, Mick Cummins, Dept of Social and Family Affairs, Declan Rice, BNS. Eileen Horgan, Community and Enterprise, Ann Ryan, Community and Enterprise, Tina Kennedy , School Completion Programme, Clonmel, Peter Butler, Garda Siochana, Cahir, Billy Doyle (Clonmel Borough Council), Gill Kennedy, Immigrant Council of Ireland, John Devane, Tipperary LEADER, Clare Cashman, South Tipp. Project Network, Ger Walsh, Housing Section, South Tipperary County Council, Colm Purcell, Community Welfare, HSE, Sean McSweeney, Community and Voluntary Forum, Jimmy Hogan, Active Retirement, Kathleen Prendergast RAPID, Clonmel, Tim Molan Cashel Credit Union.

Apologies: Emer Carroll HSE, Carol Moore HSE, Eoin O'Neill (Waterford Youth Service), Deirdre Hennessy (Tipperary Regional Youth Service),

Chairperson: Fionuala McGeever (Tipperary S.R. VEC)

1 and 2 The meeting report of the last meeting was adopted (proposed Tracey Costello and seconded Alan Price). Agenda agreed.

3 Endorsements

- (A) The County Childcare Committee Action plan 2006 was endorsed, proposed Ronan Mulhall, seconded Declan Rice.
- (B) The County Volunteering Application to the Dept of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, as circulated, was detailed by John Devane. There were some 950 voluntary groups in the county which must mean, even if there are some serial volunteers, a huge total of voluntary hours input into the community. It is hoped that additional funding will lead to a new volunteer centre and greater funding overall. Proposed Alan Price, seconded Brigid O'Keeffe.
- (C) Phil Shanahan detailed the County Cohesion Application and noted that the emphasis was on filling the gaps in social inclusion provision in the county. The parallel process of bringing the two LEADER companies and Clonmel Partnership together would take place over the next twelve months. It was hoped to revert to SIM at the end of 2006 with a plan for social inclusion in the county. Waterford LEADER Partnership had indicated that they would not be continuing their social inclusion work in the Carrick-on-Suir area. It was noted that the

process would include a wide consultation and respect towards other bodies in the social inclusion front line but post-January, 2007, we were dealing with a blank sheet. There were no pre-conceived ideas and all would have to be involved with the plan. While there were mixed views regarding the approach taken by the Dept. in this regard, there was a need to concentrate on trying to achieve the best service for the customer and the county. Application endorsed, proposed Mick Cummins, seconded Ronan Mulhall.

4 Migrant Workers Issue Watch:

A report on the main issues re Migrant Workers in the county, as circulated, was noted.

Issues/Ideas/Comments

1. Antje Hogan, CIC, noted the need for an inter-agency guide for newcomers to the county. The project was ready to proceed but required funding. The estimated cost is c €15,000 per county.
2. Gill Kennedy, Immigrant Council of Ireland outlined their services to the immigrant community.
 - a. A handbook and fact sheets are available.
 - b. There are definite examples of exploitation of migrant workers
 - c. We need an organised programme/plan of services for migrants
 - d. A new Bill in preparation will co-ordinate all state service providers to immigrants and a new Employer Permits bill will reform the permits area
 - e. Family reunification is a major issue
3. Peter Butler, Garda Siochana, Cahir noted
 - a. They estimated the number of migrant workers at 1800 in the Cahir area
 - b. They had held a meeting and identified the following concerns
 - i. Internet access (easier access and lower cost)
 - ii. English classes
 - iii. Workers rights, entitlements and access to legal services
 - iv. Interest in joining an Garda Siochana
 - v. A central location for assistance with form filling etc
 - vi. SAP does have a staff member to support migrant workers
4. Tim Molan, Cashel Credit Union:
 - a. A real plan is needed
 - b. Integration is a real need
 - c. Migrant workers have no knowledge of the country, few funds, travel difficulties, are lonely, have accommodation issues and often have difficulties with small firms who might not have HR staff.
 - d. We need one shared publication for all counties
 - e. Translation services are important
 - f. Library opening hours are an issue
 - g. Sanctions re breaches of the Working Time Act, for example, are being ignored.

5. Eileen Condon, VEC
 - a. Employers need to fund training and English classes/ work place learning
 - b. Areas with high numbers of migrant workers may have low attendance at English classes, why?
6. Tina Kennedy, School Completion Programme
 - a. The children of migrant children bring additional pressures upon the educational system in that they may need individual tuition but the amount available is one half hour per child per week
7. Ronan Mulhall, Dept. of Education and Science:
 - a. Support is available for educational needs of migrant children.
 - b. The Dept website now has a new link for resources for these needs
<http://www.education.ie/robots/view.jsp?pcategory=10856&language=EN&ecategory=30941>
 - c. The Regional Director is now looking at services in the South-East but it is without doubt one of the major new challenges we are now facing.
8. Alan Price, HSE
 - a. Employers benefit so they should assist the induction process
 - b. The CDB should ask the employers for assistance

The topic was then referred to the CDB for a broader discussion:

From CDB minutes of the meeting later that evening:

'It was agreed to request the Chairs of the County Council's Economic, Housing and Cultural Strategic Policy Committees to review the local policy implications of migrant worker integration and to advise the CDB/SIM on an action plan to achieve migrant worker integration in South Tipperary'.

5 Review of Elderly Services Working Group

The working group has met and eight agencies are represented. There is a clear need for co-ordination at county level. Nine issues and five key themes have been identified.

1. Information and entitlements
2. The need to co-ordinate services, who will do this, who will lead the team?
3. We need a booklet like the Signpost one for the disability sector for the elderly
4. The eight day care centres in the county need to come together in a network with the aim of becoming formal neighbourhood centres for the elderly
5. The Safety and Security scheme (alarms etc) scheme, which was transferred from Dept of Social Affairs to Community, Rural and the Gaeltacht needs to be promoted.
6. It was important to keep considering the elderly not as sick people but in a positive and proactive way.
7. Another issue is the cost of doctors fees for driving licence renewal certificates

The working group will continue its work, to report back in April/May 2006, having secured agency buy-in before proceeding.

6 Any Other Business.

- a. **Report by Maeve Martin, HSE (Youth and Drugs initiatives)**
 - a. The report on the mental health of 2-18 year old children in Clonmel was about to be published.
 - b. It was not just a health issue, emotional and other issues are very clear in some school populations, predominantly in the lower socio-economic groups
 - c. The high quality of the national school system is clear
 - d. Interventions are now starting and are having some effect already
 - e. 38% of the children have used alcohol
 - f. The data in the report must have an impact upon the current examination of schools and the need for additional supports

B Antje Hogan re Youth Information Cards: the VEC would support this proposal to print up cards containing emergency and other important phone numbers and website addresses for use by the youth, their parents and teachers etc.

8 Date of next meeting

6th of February, 2006, 2.00 –4.45pm, Minella Hotel