

**Social Inclusion Measures Working Group**  
Meeting Report, 3<sup>rd</sup> of February, 2003, Knocklofty House.

**Present:** Alan Curtis, Michelle Butler, Tina Kennedy, Mary FitzGerald, Eoin O'Neill, Paula Mulrooney, Betty Coughlan, Claire Hartley, Kate O'Reilly, Ellen O'Reilly, Catherine Leamy, Sinéad Carr, Phil. Costigan, Bridget O'Keefe, John Devane, Mick Cummins, Andrew Mahon, Declan Rice, Sean McSweeney, Fionuala McGeever, Tess Collins, Oliver Clancy.

**Chair:** Seamus Moore

**In attendance:** John Quinn, Eileen Horgan, Ann Ryan, Pat Holland.

**Decisions/Actions Summary:**

*Committees:*

The SIM and the Social Programme Management Group are to merge to provide a more effective response to the needs of the socially excluded. The next meeting would examine Early School Leaving

*Rapid:*

The committee agreed that AIT's would submit their final plan in the Winter but that interim plans would be forwarded to SIM for either April 7<sup>th</sup> or July 7<sup>th</sup> meetings. Individual projects could be approved by the Director and an agency representative, if thought appropriate, before these meetings.

*The Travelling Community:*

1. Council Traveller Consultative Committee to take on representatives of agencies, Forum, travellers etc with the aim to have broad-based discussion on social inclusion (Sinead Carr)
  2. Community/Voluntary Forum to review possibility of it being a vehicle for cultural awareness training and to prepare members for participation in accommodation plan discussion (Brigid O'Keefe)
- Agencies working with travelling community to assist them to make informed decisions regarding their accommodation needs and the implications of these decisions.

*Community and Voluntary Sector staff-turnover:*

Claire Hartley, through the CDP network, would

1. Highlight the issues and investigate why the county traditionally has paid lower than other counties in the South-East to
  2. Investigate links with Co. Co., Partnership and other pay scales
  3. Research, funding availability, terms and conditions
- and return to the SIM with a report addressing primarily the issue of poor retention rates, rather than salary rates

**1 Amalgamation of Committees (SIM and SPMG)**

The Committee agreed to implement the proposal (circulated) to amalgamate the Social Programme Management Group and the Social Inclusion Measures Working Group, under the title of SIM Working Group, to provide more effective responses to the socially

excluded in the community. The committee would work to the guidelines of the task force 18<sup>th</sup> December, 2001.

## **2 RAPID**

It was agreed that the RAPID Area Implementation Teams would proceed with their work programmes as previously agreed but that any projects requiring funding from the National Development Plan should be included in a second interim plan which could be forwarded to SIM for either its April 7<sup>th</sup> or July 7<sup>th</sup> meetings. The final comprehensive plans will also look at community development and public and community service integration issues in December, 2003. The need to be realistic about projects was also noted.

The meeting also agreed that John Quinn and the appropriate agency representative should examine a proposal from the Tipperary Rural Travellers Project and other projects, if appropriate, endorse them on behalf of the SIM as a Rapid project

## **3 Social Inclusion Service Provision Review – The Travelling Community**

See attached reports from agencies.

### Discussion Points

1. Ellen O'Reilly said that she had been on the Haywood Road halting site for 14 years but that promises of better accommodation had not come through (Sinead Carr noted that there had been delays and changes of plan but that the proposal was now going ahead).
2. Several speakers noted the need for accommodation as a primary one but the point that social attitudes underlay the difficulty in providing accommodation was also made.
3. Racism was generally packaged as something else. Understanding and changing attitudes is vital.
4. The County Council Traveller Accommodation plan will be revised in the next few months and the process will examine where the old plan was not successful, and why and what is needed now. The help of the other agencies and the traveller support groups and travelling community would be needed. It was hoped to include the Travelling community as a sub-set in the general Housing List. Accommodation targets had not been met due to various factors, systems, opposition from the general community, availability of land, changing traveller needs and dwellings being sought on a one-by-one basis.
5. Should we consult re: traveller accommodation. Consultation was a legal requirement for halting sites and not consulting had been counter-productive in the past.
6. All agencies and communities have a role to play in 'inclusion' of the travelling community in planning for their area.
7. A local forum is needed to look at needs and implications of responding.
8. The Health Board will support the Council in the plan process.
9. The delivery of awareness programmes is vital and the Forum may be interested in this. Cultural providers might also be interested and funds might be available.

**Actions:**

1. Council Traveller Consultative Committee to take on representatives of agencies, Forum, travellers etc with the aim to have broad-based discussion on social inclusion (Sinead Carr)
2. Community/Voluntary Forum to review possibility of it being a vehicle for cultural awareness training and to prepare members for participation in plan discussion (Brigid O'Keefe)
3. Agencies working with travelling community to assist them to make informed decisions regarding their accommodation needs and the implications of their decisions.

**4 Staff Turnover in Community Development Projects.**

Claire Hartley introduced a report (circulated)

Discussion points:

- What level of work is appropriate?
- We must not undervalue our professional work
- There is a huge variety of work and skills involved with the jobs
- The Dept. of Finance will not put a salary scale in place
- MABS have an agreed salary scale
- Local Government reform brings more meetings and work
- What defines a success?
- The whole programme is under review at this time
- The funding cycle has now reverted to one year leading to one year contracts
- Turnover may be due to cutbacks and other changes
- Community Development area seen as 'Cinderella area' and marginal
- Voluntary committees and staff may have difficulties in direct negotiations
- Some employees have had to go to the Labour Court
- Factors other than pay can be motivating/demotivating
- Pay scale needed in relation to experience and qualifications

**Actions Agreed:**

Claire Hartley, through the CDP network, would

1. Highlight the issues and investigate why the county traditionally has paid lower than other counties in the South-East to Community and Voluntary Sector staff
  2. Investigate links with Co.Co., Partnership and other pay scales
  3. Research, funding availability, terms and conditions
- and return to the SIM with a report addressing primarily the issue of poor retention rates, rather than salary rates. The report on evaluation was noted.

**5 Actions Watch:** Ann Ryan outlined the report as circulated with the following additions and comments by those attending.

Action 2.2.1 – Amended to read Help to provide equal opportunities for young people in Clonmel through support of the inter-agency strategic plan and to develop school

completion plans and implement the school completion plans in Clonmel and Tipperary Town (Lead Stakeholders: Clonmel Community Partnership, Clonmel Technical Institute and St Ailbe's School).

2.2.2. Strategic Plan, physical disability, Cashel. This action was currently progressing and it was hoped to advertise shortly for project co-ordinator. When appointed, the person would liaise with state agencies, disability groups etc.

2.2.3. Strategic Plan for the elderly: S. Moore is currently seeking funding for the post of co-ordinator.

2.2.4 Support Traveller Community Actions: see note above under RAPID.

2.2.5. Inter-agency initiatives for youth: Discussions had started

2.2.7. Integrated Family Service for Carrick-on-Suir. Construction had started. The Family Resource centre was working with the other family centres in Carrick-on-Suir.

## **6 National Crime Council consultation**

The National Crime Council had asked for a submission to its consultation paper, circulated to members, and a submission had been made. Contributions could still be made to an open forum in the Gresham Hotel, O'Connell Street, Dublin on Monday, February 10<sup>th</sup>. It was intended that the subject of crime and crime prevention would be revisited once the crime task group reports from the three Rapid areas were available.

**7 Topic of next Issue Watch:** Early School Leaving would be the next issue, to be examined at the April meeting. The Clonmel Strategic Plan would be reviewed and stakeholders in the county would be consulted. FAS might be a source of data.

## **8 Any other business:**

Veronica Crowe had started work as the Community Education Facilitator with the VEC and would be dealing with the 'Back to Education' initiative among other things.

## **9 Date of next meeting:**

**Monday April 7<sup>th</sup>, 2.30 pm**

*Attached: Part of draft Social Inclusion Profile of South Tipperary dealing with the Travelling Community and Social Inclusion Service Provision Review (The Travelling Community) as circulated but with additional data presented at meeting.*