

Kilkenny PPN Representative Report on Committee Meeting

Reporting Representatives Name: Paul O’Rahilly, Martin Rochford

Committee: LCDC

Date: 30th January 2026

Time: 10.30am

Venue: Kilkenny County Council Office, John St., Kilkenny

Were you in attendance at the last Committee meeting?

Yes

Did you consult with your Linkage Group /Wider PPN prior to this meeting?

Yes

Please outline the Key Issues discussed at the meeting?

- 1. Oversight and implementation of the Local and Economic Community Plan**
- 2. Derval Howley (HSE Head of Service, Health and Wellbeing) gave a presentation with slides. The slides will be circulated and are quite informative. Below is a summary of what she covered.**

Overview of Sláintecare Health Regions: The HSE was established in 2005. Needs are very different now from what they were then. By 2028 there will be more people over 65 than under 18 in the population – a big change over those years. This is partly because people are living longer, which is a good outcome, but it also means the HSE must deal with more chronic conditions. The total population has also increased significantly, and has become more diverse, leading to changing needs, and also changing expectations.

HSE services are demand-led, but also face budget constraints, which creates challenges as healthcare costs are increasing with advances in technology and medications. As a result health inequalities continue to be seen.

The HSE faces workforce shortages and difficulties in recruiting required skills in certain areas. The HSE is divided between a hospital-based and community-based service. Sláintecare is to bring both these services back under one structure. Needs are very different across the 6 regions in which the HSE is now divided.

Looking at the historical development of the HSE, Kilkenny was part of the South East region, but two local hospitals in Waterford and South Tipperary reported to the South region, creating issues across boundaries. The new region covers the whole area from Waterford and South Tipperary to Ballsbridge in Dublin with a population of 1million.

Update on HSE LECP Actions: Under Goal 7a (1st action), the Chronic Disease hub was established to reduce hospital admissions. This is now well established with over 12,000 patients. The Living Well programme is a free service for people with chronic conditions or those who care for them. The HSE does 20 programmes per year over the 5 counties.

2nd action - The new Community Connector post (similar to social prescribing) was established as a pilot with one post in each region. Carlow-Kilkenny was chosen for the pilot across our area. It focuses on the older population, to facilitate older adults to engage with supports, to avoid isolation, which is common and became a big problem during COVID. The aim is to bring back social connections which lead to better health outcomes. Many older people do not know about supports available in their local communities.

Under Goal 7b, increasing access to mental health supports for Travellers. A weekly woodwork group has been set up to build resilience, confidence and routine connections. Weekly social groups through the social inclusion team to increase awareness around substance misuse, alcohol harm and making safer decisions. Advice is given on health and fitness and nutritional guidance. Campaigns include efforts to encourage conversations about well-being and overcome stigma and shame about discussing mental health issues. Other campaigns targeted women included period poverty and menstrual health education.

Under Goal 9a, again Travellers were identified as a target group, covering suicide alertness training which followed a series of deaths in the Carlow region a number of years ago. The aim was to have all involved agencies come together if such a pattern became apparent.

Other programmes include smoking cessation, “minding your wellbeing”, men’s health including diabetes awareness, targeting men’s sheds and Kilkenny Marts.

Vaccination programmes are aimed largely at elderly adults and babies.

3. Interim Review and Monitoring of LECP Implementation Plan 2025-2026

Anne Marie informed the meeting that as we’re half-way through the second implementation plan (IP) of the LECP, they would be going out to all stakeholders who have actions within the IP to obtain updates on the status of actions which can be reported to the LCDC. There is work ongoing on a new online platform for reporting this which is more user-friendly than the spreadsheets which were used in the past. This will make it easier for KCC to report on outcomes and progress. It is hoped to start that process next month. More information will be given at the next meeting in March.

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4. Healthy Ireland Programme Activities 2026

Janette Boran presented an update on planned activities under the Healthy Ireland Programme for 2026, which the LCDC has oversight on. This is a follow-up of Jeanette's presentation at the December meeting, to give more information on the projects. Funding was due to end in 2025 but a decision was made at HQ to extend the programme for another year. All activities were then extended by a year. One change was allowed and the chosen change was to include older adults.

Details of the programmes and the funding for each will be distributed to all LDCD members. The total fund is €75,000. The programme was proposed and seconded.

5. Citizen Engagement and promotion of Social Inclusion

PPN Report

6. Items for Information and Information Sharing

Local Enhancement Grant 2025 is available to community and not-for-profit (NFP) groups, with €170,000 in total available in grants in the range of €1000 to 5000. Examples of uses of the grants include maintenance of buildings, refurbishment, equipment, parks, playgrounds, biodiversity measures. Closing date is 27th February.

AOB

Aileen McGrath wanted to mention upcoming LEO's Business Support Roadshow planned for 12th February covering help with starting and continuing a business. Details will be circulated to LDCD members and other groups.

Anne Marie also mentioned another grant the Communities and Cultural Facilities Capital Scheme (CCFCS) totalling €250,000 for capital projects ranging from €10,000 to 50,000. Only a small number of grants are made each year to community and NFP groups, covering community and cultural facilities including development of open spaces, walks and parklands, play areas, broad based recreation facilities, community arts projects and enhance the built and natural heritage of the County.

Anne Marie informed the meeting that the SICAP programme will need to be approved by the LCDC. This has been delayed so isn't ready for this meeting and a special online meeting may need to be arranged before the scheduled March meeting for the LCDC to approve the programme.

The council has produced a Grants Booklet for 2026, available online as well as in hard copy.

Any decisions made at the meeting?

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Are there any actions to be taken as result of this meeting? Who by?

No

Did you or another PPN rep make any contributions to this meeting?

Martin Rochford presented the PPN report.

Do you require feedback from the wider PPN/Linkage group on any issues raised? (Specify issue)

Not at present

Are there any issues/difficulties for you as a representative of the PPN arising from this meeting

No

Date of Next Meeting: 27th March 2026

Any other comments:

No

Signed

Signature: Paul O'Rahilly