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DEPARTMENT OF RURAL AND  
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
STATEMENT OF STRATEGY 2017-2020

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**An Roinn Forbartha  
Tuaithe agus Pobail**  
Department of Rural and  
Community Development



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## MINISTER'S FOREWORD

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In his speech to Dáil Éireann on 14 June 2017, An Taoiseach, Leo Varadkar T.D., announced the establishment of the Department of Rural and Community Development, and I am honoured to have been given the responsibility to lead this new Department in its mission to help build vibrant, sustainable communities across the country.

The Taoiseach's decision to establish the Department is an important one for rural communities. It underlines the Government's commitment to ensuring that the economic recovery can be felt by every community and that we build greater resilience for the future.

My Department's role is to facilitate economic development through the creation of jobs and the infrastructure required to support those jobs, and to support our communities to become sustainable and desirable places to live, work and raise families.

In addition to the schemes and programmes delivered by this Department, we will work with our colleagues across Government to deliver policies and initiatives that take a holistic approach that considers the needs of all communities, regardless of location or demographics.

Project Ireland 2040 offers the opportunity to do this through the National Planning Framework and the National Development Plan, and my Department looks forward to furthering rural renewal across the country through the establishment of a Rural Regeneration and Development Fund.



It is also incumbent upon us to ensure that the rural and community agenda is given due consideration in the formulation of other priority initiatives in the Programme for Partnership Government such as the Action Plan for Jobs.

This Statement of Strategy lays out details of the work my Department will be engaged in over the next three years to achieve these goals, and I look forward to working with Minister of State Sean Kyne and with the officials in the Department, in addition to local authorities, community and voluntary bodies and other stakeholders to meet the objectives and targets identified in this Strategy.

Michael Ring T.D.  
Minister for Rural and Community Development

## SECRETARY GENERAL INTRODUCTION

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It is my pleasure to present the 2017-2020 Statement of Strategy for the Department, the first since its establishment in the summer of 2017.

The new Department combines the Regional and Rural Affairs Division of the former Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs and the Community Division of the former Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government. The Department also takes on the oversight of the Charities Regulator.

Our mission statement is ***“To promote rural and community development and to support vibrant, inclusive and sustainable communities throughout Ireland”***.

This Statement of Strategy lays out our vision as to how we will design and implement policies that will empower communities, including those facing economic or social disadvantage to unlock their full potential. The implementation of two key policy documents will underpin the Department’s work in the coming years.

The Action Plan for Rural Development seeks to change the narrative around rural Ireland and emphasise its contribution to the economy and to our identity. The Plan focuses on both the economic and social development of rural Ireland and the regions.

The Framework Policy for Local and Community Development in Ireland sets out national priorities and a framework for a cross-government approach to improving engagement between national and local government and local communities in the planning, delivery and evaluation of policies and interventions that affect them.

The Statement reflects the priorities laid down by the Minister for Rural and Community Development and the Government as a whole, with particular focus on the commitments set out in the Programme for a Partnership Government.

As a new Department, we are also focused on building efficient, resourceful structures and supporting strong governance within our organisation and its agencies. This will enable us to make good our commitments and responsibilities while developing a client-focused culture that ensures we deliver excellent services to the public.

We have sought input into the Statement from a wide variety of stakeholders, and have also sought, and received, submissions from community and voluntary bodies, our colleagues in other Departments, our staff, and members of the public. Our thanks are due to all who made these submissions, which have been given due consideration in the preparation of this Statement.

I look forward to working with Minister Ring, Minister of State Kyne, and all my colleagues in the Department, to deliver on the objectives set out within this Statement of Strategy over the coming years.

Kevin McCarthy

Secretary General

## OUR MISSION

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***“To promote rural and community development and to support vibrant, inclusive and sustainable communities throughout Ireland”***

### **Our vision**

Our vision is that all communities will have the opportunity to grow and develop economically and socially. To help bring this about, the Department will work across Government to:

- Create the conditions to support increased economic opportunities and local employment in all areas of the country
- Deliver schemes and programmes that support the revitalisation of towns and villages
- Improve access to services and social networks that ensure a high quality of life
- Enable communities disadvantaged by location or social issues to reach their full potential now and in the future
- Support all communities to be able to have a voice in shaping their own futures and addressing their common goals

### **Our remit**

This Statement of Strategy sets out the Department’s mission and goals over the coming three-year period, and provides the framework for more detailed policy and implementation planning across the Department.

The remit of the Department includes supporting rural and community development in all communities across Ireland. This will involve a mix of policy initiatives and actions to improve the economic development of both rural and urban areas, and to address gaps in meeting the social needs of those areas.

### **Co-ordination of rural and community policy**

Rural and community development is a Government priority that involves work being undertaken by a large number of Departments and State agencies.

The co-ordination of responses across Departments to the needs of rural Ireland and local communities and the development of policy designed to further the economic and social advancement of these areas of society will be a key function of our Department.

This will be done through collaboration with our Government colleagues at all levels, up to and including Cabinet Committees and Ministerial engagement, with the objective of ensuring that Government policy takes a holistic approach that considers all communities, regardless of location or demographics.

## THE OPERATING ENVIRONMENT

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The Department of Rural and Community Development was established following a decision announced by An Taoiseach, Leo Varadkar, to Dáil Eireann on 14 June 2017, and an amendment to the Ministers and Secretaries Acts of 1924 to 2013, passed by the Oireachtas on 19 July 2017.

Rural Development and Regional Affairs functions of the former Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs and Community functions of the former Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government were then transferred to the new Department.

In addition, oversight of the Charities Regulator was transferred from the Department of Justice and Equality.

The Department will oversee gross expenditure in excess of €220million in 2018, and a staff complement of almost 200 across locations in Dublin, Ballina and other regional centres. There are a number of challenges ahead as the unique circumstances associated with the set-up of a new Government Department are navigated, notably being able to continue our ongoing programme of work while putting in place our operating systems and procedures.

The establishment of the Department comes at a critical time. Ireland has recovered strongly from the very difficult economic circumstances of recent years. The challenge now is to continue to lay the foundations for long-term sustainable development in rural Ireland, while also offering tangible supports to communities across the country, particularly those that are vulnerable, disadvantaged or socially excluded. It is particularly important that, as a society, we draw on and develop national rural and community resources to sustain continued national progress.

This Department will play an important role in that task, both in terms of its own duties and commitments under the Programme for a Partnership Government, and in helping to coordinate the actions of other relevant Government Departments and agencies.

In addition to these commitments, the Department will continue to contribute to other Government priorities and to respond to challenges facing the country over the lifetime of this Statement. These include:

- Economic growth and addressing imbalances in the recovery to date
- Brexit and its potential impacts on Irish economy and society
- Regional development and the National Planning Framework
- National Development Plan 2018-2027
- Local Government reform
- EU and other international developments
- Adapting to and utilising advances in technology

In addition, a number of principles guide all Departments in the current environment, including:

## **Partnering effectively**

- We will build and maintain positive partnerships with our key stakeholders to ensure we maintain consistency and quality in our performance, and value for money to the public.
- We have a cross-government mandate that involves engaging at every level of Irish society, from citizen to central government, and our ambition is to build a culture of co-production with those stakeholders, defined<sup>1</sup> as “Delivering public services in an equal and reciprocal relationship between professionals, people using services, their families and their neighbours”.

## **Adapting and Innovating**

- Change is an integral element in Irish society and in its public service development and is reflected in both the policy goals of the Department and in the way we seek to best fulfil those goals.
- The Action Plan for Rural Development and the Framework Policy for Local and Community Development in Ireland have both set the path for further changes to the way we design and deliver services for communities.
- The Department will also continue to be committed to the process of ongoing Public Service Reform, via the framework provided by the Civil Service Renewal Plan and the Public Service Plan, Our Public Service 2020.

## **Governing well**

- Full details of policies and procedures relating to the Department, including compliance, procurement, audit and data protection guidelines, are available in our Corporate Governance Framework, which is published on our website.
- A Risk Committee will prepare and maintain a risk register as part of an overall strategy for risk management within the Department.
- We will also work with the bodies under our aegis to support the implementation of the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies.
- The Department is committed to maintaining compliance with general fiscal rules and to expenditure ceilings set under the fiscal framework. This demands demonstrable strategies for achieving value for money and for working to ensure improved systems of resource allocation.
- The Department will implement its public sector duty under Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act to eliminate discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and treatment, and protect human rights. The Department will address equality in its strategic planning, policies and practices, and its annual reports.
- The Department is subject to the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act and to the Access on Information on the Environment (AIE) regulations and must meet all statutory requirements in relation to answering FOI and AIE requests. Information on how to make an FOI request is published on the Department’s

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<sup>1</sup> Boyle and Harris, 2009 – The Challenge of Co-production

website together with postal and email addresses to which these requests can be sent.

- The Department is also committed to providing quality services in Irish and/or bilingually to all of its customers. A Scéim Teanga/Irish Language Scheme will be prepared in accordance with Section 15 of the Official Languages Act 2003, setting out commitments on behalf of the Department and staff to develop services to our customers through Irish and to identify areas for future enhancement.
- As part of its commitment to providing a quality customer service, the Department intends to produce a Customer Charter in line with the public service's Customer Charter Initiative.

Our work is also guided by the Vision, Mission and Values of the Civil Service.

#### **VISION:**

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- To provide a world-class service to the State and to the people of Ireland.

#### **MISSION:**

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- To offer objective and evidence-informed advice to Government, respond to developments, and deliver Government objectives while striving to achieve optimal outcomes in the long-term national interest.
- To serve citizens and stakeholders efficiently, equally and with respect, in a system that is open, transparent and accountable.

#### **VALUES:**

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- A deep-rooted public service ethos of independence, integrity, impartiality, equality, fairness and respect.
- A culture of accountability, efficiency and value for money. The highest standards of professionalism, leadership and rigour.

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## OUR STRATEGIC GOALS

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1. Work across Government to advance the economic and social development of rural areas in order to enhance the quality of life for people who live in rural Ireland.
2. Contribute to enhanced regional development, with a view to strengthening the potential of all regions to contribute to economic recovery.
3. Support local communities to develop, empowering them to identify their needs and aspirations and providing them with the opportunities, skills and confidence to influence, shape and participate in decision-making processes which affect them.
4. Support the Community, Voluntary and Charity Sector to strengthen its capacity to contribute to civil society and support the growth and development of philanthropy.

These goals will be achieved through the following enablers, which are expanded upon below:

### **1. Strengthening our policy making**

- We will ensure that the work of the Department is guided by a robust policy framework which integrates our programmes, is evidence-informed and supports cross-government policy initiatives.

### **2. Improving service delivery**

- We will target the Department's wide range of schemes and supports to maximise outcomes, while continuing to review and assess our performance in ensuring we are providing the best services to our stakeholders and the general public.

### **3. Increased monitoring, evaluation and research**

- We will strategically evaluate all the work of the Department on an ongoing basis, using all available data and research, to ensure that the impacts of our work on communities are fully understood.

### **4. Enhanced engagement**

- We will seek to develop our interactions with a wide range of enablers, from building a co-productive relationship with community groups and local authorities to working with other Departments, agencies and members of the public to help unlock the potential within communities.

### **5. Building and developing our organisation**

- By investing in our people
- Through better communication
- By developing our systems and procedures

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## STRENGTHENING OUR POLICY MAKING

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Project Ireland 2040 (National Planning Framework and National Development Plan 2018-2027) the Action Plan for Rural Development and the Framework Policy for Local and Community Development in Ireland, provide the main policy basis for the Department's work, and reflect a shift towards a more pro-active approach to rural and community development.

They introduce a more strategic and co-ordinated approach across Government to these objectives, supported by tangible actions.

In concert with these policy documents, the Department will continue to explore new areas of policy to supplement and advance ongoing work across Government.

Our work will include:

- Developing community involvement
  - o Supporting the Community and Voluntary sector
  - o Encouraging local democracy and active citizenship
  - o Enhancing the reputation of stakeholders in the Community and Voluntary sector by aiding improvements in governance standards
  - o Promoting social inclusion
  - o Working in partnership with stakeholders, including the Local Government sector, in the development and implementation of policy.
- Rural and regional economic development
  - o In addition to the existing economic and social development policies within the Action Plan for Rural Development, the Department has a key role to play in a number of key cross-government pillars, notably the Action Plan for Jobs and the National Planning Framework.
- Brexit
  - o As the impacts of the United Kingdom's decision to leave the European Union become clearer, we will continue to work with our colleagues in Government to ensure that the effects of Brexit on Ireland are minimised.
  - o We will also maintain cross-border engagement with relevant officials in Northern Ireland and in the UK on Brexit issues, and on progressing all-island cooperation in general.
- Sustainable quality of life
  - o The Department plays a key role in assisting communities to develop the local amenities that lift towns and villages from merely places of residence to sustainable places to live.

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## IMPROVING SERVICE DELIVERY

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The Department is committed to the success of all its current programmes, schemes and commitments under the Programme for Partnership Government and will strive to ensure that all current and future policies are delivered fully and to maximum effect.

Our first priority is to ensure better alignment, consolidation and integration of programmes across the Department, while we will also focus on cross-Departmental and whole-of Government approaches with a view to achieving greater impact and effectiveness in the delivery of our supports to communities.

To facilitate this we will:

- Design and deliver programmes which have, as a core objective, the best possible impact on citizens and communities, including the business community.
- Take a leadership role by continuing to implement the policy points set out in Project Ireland 2040, in the Action Plan for Rural Development and Framework Policy for Local and Community Development and by acting as a steward for our agencies and stakeholders to access and roll out their schemes and programmes.
- Align our work with our colleagues in other Government Departments
  - o The Department acts in concert with colleagues across a wide range of Government Departments and looks forward to further opportunities to deliver on key Government policy objectives including, but not limited to, the Action Plan for Jobs, the National Planning Framework and the National Broadband Plan.
- Consolidate our current programmes and schemes
  - o There are strong synergies between many of the schemes undertaken by both the Rural and Community Divisions of the Department. There is considerable potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness with which these schemes are delivered and to move towards the creation of an overarching policy framework for the delivery of schemes across the Department.

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## INCREASED MONITORING, EVALUATION AND RESEARCH

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The outcomes of the Department's policy and initiatives will be carefully reviewed to better understand the impacts and effectiveness of our work. We also recognise that there is an increasing need to use existing data to support better decision making and the effective provision of a range of services, including new digital services.

We will:

- Monitor the delivery of our schemes and programmes on an ongoing basis with progress on the implementation of strategic priorities set out in this Statement of Strategy reflected in our annual reports, in addition to more regular reports detailing progress under the Action Plan for Rural Development.
- Commit to an ongoing strategic evaluation of our programmes and schemes and utilise new and existing research.
- Examine available data provided to the Department and its agencies in order to:
  - o Learn more about the sectors of Irish society targeted by specific programmes and policies and the impact of those programmes on life in those communities.
  - o Support better decision-making and strengthen policy making.
  - o Enhance local planning and delivery.
  - o Improve the ways in which we measure outputs to provide data that can support better outcomes across Government.

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## ENHANCED ENGAGEMENT

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The Department provides a key conduit between Government and a range of national, local and community organisations, in addition to having a mandate to play a key role in the cross-Government commitment to supporting the economic and social development of rural parts of Ireland.

We aim to do this through:

- Developing our links with the community and voluntary sector.
  - The Department has a critically important interface with the community and voluntary sector. Our ambition is to firmly establish the role of local organisations and to promote increased co-operation between stakeholders at all levels.
- Building relationships with community groups that encourage participation at local level.
  - The Department will facilitate the co-development of responses to rural and community development issues, supporting the role of volunteering and the development of community-led social supports via Public Participation Networks and Local Community Development Committees and other local organisations.
- Involvement in cross-government policy-making.
  - The Department of Rural and Community Development is in a position to make key contributions to influence policy and to ensure that our approach to working with communities is reflected throughout Government.
- Continued engagement with local authorities, our agencies and other key stakeholders of the Department. The Department will also continue developing its relationships with relevant stakeholders in Northern Ireland and at EU level.
- Developing relationships with the research community, academia and business representatives to inform policy and practice.

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## BUILDING AND DEVELOPING OUR ORGANISATION

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The Department has been given a significant mandate but also faces many unique challenges as a new organisation established in July 2017. Formative work is ongoing, including managing the logistical processes involved in establishing a functioning new Department operating with staff divided almost equally between locations in Dublin and Ballina, with additional staff based in other regional centres. This includes building the organisation's corporate capacity and a significant staff recruitment process.

### INVESTING IN OUR PEOPLE

Our staff are, without question, our most important and valuable resource. We must give them the best support we can through effective learning and development supports, peer supports and mentoring. Experienced staff will also require appropriate training and upskilling to transition to their new roles and to be supported in their management duties. We recognise the value and key contribution made by our staff in delivering on our goals and in serving communities.

Effective business delivery requires that we have the right people with the right skills in the right place at the right time to deliver the priorities of the Department. We need to identify the critical workforce issues that need to be addressed over the coming years to enable the Department to deliver its priorities.

A new Human Resources Strategy will be developed to support this Statement of Strategy and this will:

- Identify future resourcing and skills needs and making those accessible to all staff, regardless of location.
- Consider succession planning and talent management in view of the challenges presented by the demographic profile of staff.
- Support the strengthening of professional expertise within corporate functions.
- Develop policies relating to mobility, learning and development, performance management and other issues identified in the Civil Service Human Resource Strategy.
- Promote and enhance staff recognition schemes and recognise the wellbeing of the individual as a key feature in the workplace.
- Create staff networks for sharing of information/knowledge transfer between units and to provide staff with established systems for peer support.
- Continually monitor and update our human resource plans to ensure they are aligned with the Department's changing business priorities.
- Review our monitoring and engagement structures to maximise the impact of staff capacity and participation.

## BETTER COMMUNICATIONS

The Department is keenly aware of the importance of communicating its message, both externally to its clients, customers and stakeholders and internally among its staff and our agencies.

To put in place well-defined and practicable lines of communications, we will:

- Improve communications with the public as well as with other Departments and agencies and all relevant stakeholders.
- Explore the use of all forms of media to increase awareness of the work of the Department and how it can support and impact on our citizens.
- Continue to work with the Government's new Strategic Communications Unit to improve external communications strategies and maximise the effectiveness of the Department's campaigns.
- Continue to focus on and foster good inter-departmental and inter-agency co-operation and to ensure appropriate arrangements are in place for effective communication and the promotion of a shared understanding of priorities and interdependencies.
- Establish greater internal cooperation between business units to bring clarity to the work of the Department for all stakeholders.
- Increase communications with staff internally, through development of an intranet system, staff workshops and other initiatives.

## DRIVING GAINS THROUGH SYSTEMS AND PROCEDURES

One of the fundamental tasks facing a new Department is the establishment of good governance procedures regarding systems and operations.

In addition to Corporate Governance requirements, the Department will adhere to all relevant Department of Public Expenditure and Reform guidelines with regard to financial management, human resources, procurement and financial compliance.

The Department will explore the use of new technology and engage in ongoing analysis to ensure existing technologies are maintained and adapted to achieve maximum efficiency and to improve productivity within the Department.

This will be assisted by our online presence and the move to the Gov.ie platform, which is being led by the Department of An Taoiseach. This transition will require careful management and teamwork as well as ongoing and effective internal communications.

Our ICT services will transition to the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO), a move which will involve collaboration across the Department to implement the change process and to manage the associated risks. The OGCIO has a broad remit which includes leading the implementation of the Public Service ICT Strategy – delivering better outcomes and efficiency through innovation and excellence in ICT - encompassing five pillars, namely Build to Share, Digital First, Data as an Enabler, Improve Governance and Increase Capability.

# ACHIEVING OUR GOALS

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## STRATEGIC GOAL 1: TO ADVANCE THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT OF RURAL AREAS

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### OBJECTIVES

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Unlock the economic potential of rural Ireland and improve the quality of life of people who live in rural areas through a whole-of-Government approach under the framework of the Action Plan for Rural Development.

Contribute to the advancement of long-term sustainable economic and social development across rural Ireland through the further development of policy and the direct delivery of programmes to support rural development.

Improve mobile phone and broadband connectivity in rural Ireland to support economic and social development in all regions.

### ACTIONS

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Oversee the implementation of the Action Plan for Rural Development across Government and publish regular reports on progress in the delivery of the Plan.

Establish a new Rural Regeneration and Development Fund to promote rural renewal over the period of the National Development Plan 2018-2027.

Deliver a range of schemes and initiatives to support rural development, including LEADER, Town & Village Renewal Scheme, Rural Recreation Infrastructure scheme and the Tidy Towns competition.

Review the effectiveness and efficiency of these schemes on an on-going basis.

Publish a National Policy on Social Enterprise and oversee the implementation of the policy.

Develop a robust policy framework for rural and countryside recreation.

Implement the recommendations of the Mobile Phone and Broadband Taskforce Report.

Work with Local Authorities to prepare for, and facilitate, the roll out of high-speed broadband under the Government's National Broadband Plan and to maximise the benefits of broadband for communities and local businesses.

## STRATEGIC GOAL 2: CONTRIBUTE TO ENHANCED REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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### OBJECTIVES

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Progress the proposal for an Atlantic Economic Corridor (AEC) area along the western seaboard to attract private investment and enterprise and support the economic development of the region.

Support the objectives of the National Planning Framework to achieve more sustainable growth across all regions of Ireland.

Strengthen the role of the Western Development Commission in contributing to regional and national policy objectives.

### ACTIONS

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Work with key stakeholders in the business and public sectors through the Atlantic Economic Corridor Taskforce to develop the Atlantic Economic Corridor proposal.

Communicate the objectives of the Atlantic Economic Corridor initiative to decision-makers to build up awareness of the regional offering in the Atlantic Economic Corridor area.

Ensure that our policies and programmes contribute to the implementation of the National Planning Framework.

Work with the Regional Assemblies and Local Authorities in the development of their Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies and Local Economic and Community Plans.

Engage with the Board and Executive of the Western Development Commission (WDC) to strengthen its role in promoting economic and social development in the Western region and to identify areas for involvement in regional and national policy objectives.

## STRATEGIC GOAL 3: SUPPORT LOCAL COMMUNITIES TO DEVELOP

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### OBJECTIVES

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Engage with stakeholders to develop an overarching vision for the future of local and community development in Ireland

Develop the library service as a vital social support to communities

Enhance the capacity of Local Community Development Committees (LCDCs)

Roll out the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) 2018-2022

Provide supports to severely disadvantaged communities in urban areas to address their specific challenges

### ACTIONS

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Develop a five-year implementation plan for the Framework Policy on Local and Community Development in Ireland

Publish a Strategy for Libraries 2018-2022

Complete the review of Local Community Development Committees (LCDCs)

Develop a programme of supports for LCDCs in their engagement with communities and their management and delivery of Government-funded schemes and programmes

Review the operation of the Community Services Programme

Work with LCDCs, Pobal and Programme Implementers to ensure the smooth rollout and implementation of SICAP 2018-2022

Review the RAPID and Communities Facilities Schemes to optimise their effectiveness in addressing community needs

Contribute to the work of the North-East Inner City Oversight Group in its implementation of the Mulvey Report

## STRATEGIC GOAL 4: SUPPORT THE COMMUNITY, VOLUNTARY AND CHARITY SECTORS

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### OBJECTIVES

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- Expand and support the role of volunteers in civil society
- Encourage active citizenship at local level, through the Public Participation Networks
- Support the growth and development of philanthropy
- Ensure best practice in the governance, management and administration of charities

### ACTIONS

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- Develop a national strategy on volunteering
- Continue to support Volunteer Centres and Voluntary Information Centres
- Review Irish Water Safety regulations
- Develop the capacity of Public Participation Networks (PPNs) in conjunction with the National Advisory Group
- Continue regular engagement with all stakeholders in the Community, Voluntary and Charity sectors
- Explore potential opportunities for collaboration between Government and philanthropy
- Conclude a new contract for Social Innovation Fund Ireland
- Provide strategic and policy oversight for the Charities Regulator
- Amend the Charities Act, 2009

## OUR AGENCIES

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**Charities Regulator**  
[www.charitiesregulator.ie](http://www.charitiesregulator.ie)



The Charities Regulator is Ireland's national statutory regulator for charitable organisations. It maintains a public register of all charitable organisations in Ireland and ensures their statutory compliance. It also promotes and supports best practice in the charitable sector.

**Irish Water Safety**  
[www.iws.ie](http://www.iws.ie)



The Department provides oversight and support to Irish Water Safety in its mission to reduce the number of deaths by drowning, through increased education, instruction and public awareness measures.

**Pobal**  
[www.pobal.ie](http://www.pobal.ie)



Pobal works on behalf of Government to manage and implement a number of publicly-funded programmes designed to improve outcomes for local communities, particularly those encountering social and economic disadvantage.

**Western Development Commission**  
[www.wdc.ie](http://www.wdc.ie)



The Western Development Commission (WDC) is a statutory body that was set up to promote both social and economic development in the Western Region (Donegal, Leitrim, Sligo, Mayo, Roscommon, Galway and Clare). It ensures Government policy is directed at improving the social and economic situation in the region, through support for projects in a wide variety of sectors. It also manages the WDC Investment Fund to provide loans and equity to business and local communities in the West.

## OUR STRUCTURE

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