



Kildare Interagency Integration Committee

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, 23rd February 2023 at 11.30 a.m. via Microsoft Teams

Attendance: Attached

1. Minutes:

The minutes of the meeting of the 8th of December 2022 were approved and adopted on the proposal of Brian O’Gorman, seconded by Anne Myler.

Cllr. Breslin welcomed the new members, Lorraine Kennedy (KCC) Kenneth Reilly (KCC) and Patrick Monahan (CKLP) to the first Kildare Interagency Integration Committee meeting of 2023.

Cllr. Breslin noted the apologies.

2. Chairpersons Address:

Cllr. Aoife Breslin noted the first year anniversary of the invasion of Ukraine and thanked all KIIC members for their continued support and particular the work of Mary Hennessey and her team in County Kildare Leader Partnership and the HSE.

Cllr. Breslin thanked Kildare County Council Director of Services for Community Marian Higgins and Senior Executive Officer for Community Paula O’Brien for organising the Aras building to be lighted up with the Ukrainian colours, noting Ireland as an open policy country.

3. Q1 2023 Implementation Report:

Q1 2023 Report circulated to all members prior to meeting. Justin Parkes of the HSE reported that the HSE were available seven days per week and a GP available five days per week at the Citywest Hotel. HSE staff are available at 58 locations around the county helping with the Ukrainian crisis. Justin noted that this also included HSE staff present and assisting at the Abbey in Athy and Celbridge Manor. GPs are also on the phone and at clinics across County Dublin. Justin finally noted that the HSE were responding as best they can to the highest presenting need.

Mary Hennessey (CKLP) noted that everyday, circumstances are changing re – Ukraine crisis and County Kildare Leader Partnership are managing as best they can. Zoryana Pshyk thanked Mary and her staff at CKLP and the KIIC for their help and work throughout this crisis.

Zoryana Pshyk of Maynooth University noted that the Kildare Integration Network were starting to connect post-pandemic and that new Ukrainian members have joined and the Women’s Integration Network in Athy were doing good work also. Zoryana noted that parents of Ukrainian and Russian students

were contacting her explaining that their children were struggling to integrate in to school. Zoryana suggested that KIIC could work to educate parents of school students to help these children feel more comfortable in school. Cllr. Breslin supported Zoryana and offered her help to write a letter to the schools in Kildare with advice on how to integrate Ukrainian and Russian students in to the Irish education system.

Naas Community Garda Gary Cogan offered an update on hotels and Migrant centres. Garda Cogan noted the need for An Garda Síochána to gain access to the list of new Migrant centres opening so they can better respond when needed. Justin Parkes told Garda Cogan that he will try to get the list. Cllr. Aoife also noted the lack of information about the new Migrant centres opening. Justin Parkes noted that the public are now informed of the centres after they open, this is in response to the recent protests around the Country re – the new Migrant centres.

Mary Hennessy informed the KIIC that an Integration Worker has still not been employed and that funding is needed for this position to be filled at CKLP.

Cllr. Vanessa Liston requested an update on the letter to the Department of Justice and IPASS about improving communication and providing supports for Asylum Seekers. Cllr. Breslin confirmed that the letter is written and on the way to the Minister.

4. International Protection Community Houses:

Niamh Conaghan of County Kildare Leader Partnership reported that English language classes have begun for Ukrainians in Ballymore Eustace. Niamh noted that the community in Ballymore Eustace have been fantastic and welcoming to the Ukrainians who have moved in to the village.

Niamh noted that there are one-one supports available to people in Direct Provision. Currently, there are 22 people in DP in Newbridge which is supported by SICAP and these 22 people are ready to find work.

Mary Hennessy (CKLP) reported that Beth Kinyua has started English language classes in Monasterevin and English language classes are also available in Newbridge Parish centre.

Mary Hennessy also reported there are currently 400 people staying at Celbridge Manor which is made up of 100 homeless, 300 family members and some unaccompanied men. Work is being done to support all 400 people.

Niamh Conaghan noted that the Abbey in Athy residents have begun moving out to various locations around Ireland.

Cllr. Aoife Breslin noted to the KIIC members that "If we know what is happening around the Kildare Communities, the work can be achieved."

Cllr. Breslin asked Niamh Conaghan that if there is accommodation being secured for people in Direct Provision? Niamh noted that Peter McVerry Trust are currently compiling a list of people looking for houses locally.

Cllr. Vanessa Liston asked the KIIC if services can be wider around Kildare for the homeless and Migrants? Mary Hennessey confirmed to Cllr. Liston that she will ask Justin Parkes of the HSE if this can be achieved.

Garda Gary Cogan noted that An Garda Síochána are anxious to come and make connection to the groups in Direct Provision and Migrant Centres once these groups make connections to their local supports.

5. Ukrainian Emergency Response Update:

Mary Hennessey (CKLP) reported that there are currently 40 Ukrainians in Burt House and 25 Ukrainians in Monasterevin. Mary noted that more information is needed on Maynooth's Ukrainian housing.

Mary noted that there has not been much contact with Liffey Lodge in Newbridge but the residents have been invited to take part in English Language classes. Mary finally noted that there will be a "Helping Irish Hosts Roadshow" at the Keadeen Hotel in Newbridge on March 22nd. This event will see Ukrainians and their hosts families talking about their experiences over the past year.

Emma Berney (Tusla) requested information on the current structures of the Ukrainian response in Kildare. Mary confirmed to Emma that she will seek an answer from CKLP CEO to get an answer. Emma Berney noted that a formal approach was sometimes needed. Cllr. Breslin agreed with Emma and confirmed that a lot of work was being done around the county but the response to the Ukraine emergency needs to be structured and collaborative.

Cllr. Vanessa Liston stated that the Community Recognition Fund is €807,000 for Kildare. Cllr. Liston asked on how this money is spent. Cllr. Liston wants to make sure that the benefit of the fund is amplified. Lorraine Kennedy of Kildare County Council confirmed that KCC will make contact with Community Groups and make a decision on where the fund is spent.

6. Any Other Business:

Naas Community Garda Gary Cogan noted that awards were handed out to some Maynooth University students studying Criminology for their work within the local community. Garda Cogan congratulated these recipients.

Zoryana Pshyk thanked every member of the KIIC for the work carried out since the invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. Zoryana noted that there has been propaganda spread around Social Media about hosting Ukrainians. Cllr. Aoife Breslin noted that the more positivity shared on Social Media, the more it will silence the propaganda and stated that all International Communities should be given positive support. Zoryana asked how Kildare can be trained in trauma response and suggested work can be done around this. Zoryana confirmed that she is proud to live in Kildare and be part of the Kildare Interagency Integration Committee while noting that the KIIC should think about how it can educate people on marginalized communities and welcomed ideas.

Mary Hennessey (CKLP) commended Anne Myler for making Kildare's library services available in 14 different languages.

Cllr. Aoife Breslin closed the meeting by stating that County Kildare welcomes everyone from every community.

The meeting ended.

7. Dates of Next Meeting:

The next meeting will be held in person on May 16th 2023 at the Kildare County Council Boardroom.

