



Cork Equal & Sustainable Communities Alliance,
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Cork Local Government Committee
Floor 3,
Civic Offices,
City Hall,
Cork

Re: Submission to Cork Local Government Committee

Dear Mr. Smiddy,

I am writing to you on behalf of CESCA in relation to the invitation to submissions to the Cork Local Government Committee.

Background to CESCA

CESCA is an alliance of community and voluntary groups in Cork city who have joined forces to better address issues of disadvantage in the city. This alliance - *Cork Equal and Sustainable Communities Alliance (CESCA)* – sees 14 diverse groups in Cork city, who share a common goal of social inclusion and social justice, working together as part of this innovative new partnership. By working together, CESCA is facilitating the effective pooling of resources and expertise and helping to achieve cost savings by maximising existing resources and addressing gaps in service provision. This new and innovative way of doing business will harness and protect the vast experience and excellent work of these front-line organisations that are at the heart of social inclusion services in Cork city.

CESCA members include a range of community groups in Cork city including Ballyphehane / Togher Community Development Project (CDP), 'Before 5' Family Centre, Churchfield Community Trust, Cork Gay Project, LINC Advocating for Lesbians and Bisexual Women in Ireland, Mahon Community Development Project (CDP), Mayfield Community Development Project (CDP), Meitheal Mara, NASC (Irish Immigrant Support Centre), Northside Community Health Initiative Cork (NICHE), Social and Health Education Project (SHEP), Traveller Visibility Group (TVG) and Cork YMCA. CESCA is supported by the HSE's Social Inclusion Services Cork.

More information on CESCA is available at www.cesca.ie



Submission from CESCA to the Cork Local Government Committee

The primary geographical focus of CESCA is Cork city and all CESCA members have strong working relationships with Cork City Council. In addition some of the organisations in CESCA provide services to both Cork city and county and in this regard have strong working relationships with Cork County Council.

We recommend that the work of the Cork Local Government Committee would take cognisance of the following:

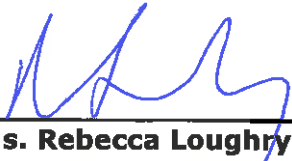
- The client / service user should be the starting point in any development or restructuring of services. It is critical to ensure that service delivery is enhanced and does not suffer during as a result of any change process.
- We recommend that the Cork city boundary is extended to incorporate those communities currently on the border between the city and county to improve access to services and address the needs of urban disadvantaged communities. Some of these are particularly disadvantaged and include a number of housing estates occupied by local authority tenants in the northwest, north east and south of the city such as Fairfield Meadows, lus na Meala, Dun Ard and Lotamore and Lehenaghmore. In these areas there are examples where services for the areas all available in county towns and villages that the residents have no access to as they live and identify with a nearer urban community.
- The policy decision in regard to the boundary will have a direct impact on disadvantaged communities whether these are geographical communities or communities of interest such as the traveller community, immigrants and asylum seekers, LGBT community etc. This is to do with access to resources, having voices heard and needs met within any structure that emerges. Whatever decision is made it should be cognisant of local people, local democracy, striving for excellence, citizens feeling empowered, connectivity between the citizens and the seat of power etc. People on the margins generally lose out as their voice may not be heard in these debates.
- Any proposed reform should include a Poverty Impact Assessment to ensure the interests of marginalised groups are addressed in the process.
- It is important that learning is shared across both City and County Councils to ensure that models of good practice are used to inform developments.
- A strong service user strategy based on meaningful engagement and two way communication between service provider and service user is important and should be central to any future developments.
- The findings of the Cork City Profile launched in 2014 should be an important resource to the work of the Cork Local Government Committee.



We would welcome the opportunity to participate in any further consultative events that may be organised in relation to the work of the Cork Local Government Committee.

Should you require any further information please let me know.

Yours sincerely,



Ms. Rebecca Loughry

**On behalf of
CESCA.**



