

## Monaghan Municipal District

### Vision for Community Wellbeing Workshop Inputs (3<sup>rd</sup> March 2020)

#### Social and Community Development

How can we be an inclusive community where we support each other and ensure no one is left out? What are the important social services and facilities we need to live well from childhood to old age?

##### **Inclusive and connected community**

- Genuinely inclusive communities.
- Welcome in various languages.
- Making connections within the community; a role for a community ambassador to greet and co-ordinate with newcomers.
- Training and awareness of other cultures.
- No mistrust of new people/ cultures.
- A place where there is more intergenerational contact.
- A place where there is equality and inclusion and access to the community for all.
- Intergenerational activities – an untapped resource.
- Digital inclusion; skills development for older people and youth learning from each other, sharing and story-telling.
- Connections; community games. Life span of 0 to 101 years should be involved.
- Young and old – to continue our Irish hospitality.
- More community events.
- Church/ religion.

##### **Safety**

- Street safety
- We want our communities to be safe and secure.
- Where a range of supports are available to victims of domestic violence including crisis accommodation.
- Where women, children and men are safe in their own home and in the wider community.
- Safe areas for youth and children.

##### **Supports for healthy and well communities**

- Investment in communities to respond to drug issues specific to their area.
- Families to be supported as service users in their own right.
- Implement UN Sustainable Development Goals at regional and local levels, especially Goal no.3 to ensure health and wellbeing for all at all ages.
- More mainstream funding for systemic issues.
- Accessible peer-led family support groups

##### **Youth**

- Resources for young people; central community centres to play pool, etc.
- We want our community to be a safe place where children have an opportunity to play in a natural environment.

- Positive leadership; students being responsible and having agency.
- Young people to be more active and involved.
- Community centre “hub”

### **Sport**

- More financial support and structures/ facilities for sport.
- More sharing of resources and “joined up thinking”.

### **Education**

- Third level education available in Monaghan.
- A more educated community.

### **Volunteering**

- More recognition for volunteers (remuneration)
- An increased investment; remove barriers for funding small groups.

### **Employment**

- More employment opportunities if we want a future for our children.

### **Housing**

- Housing for all
- Sheltered accommodation for the elderly.

## Work, Economy and Resources

How can our communities thrive economically, with good jobs, and supports for enterprise, business and for people not in work? What resources do we have and are they use effectively without causing harm to social and environmental sustainability?

### Infrastructure

#### Communications

- Good broadband services now.

#### Transport

- Safe walking
- Safe cycling
- More Local Link services

#### Housing

- Build social housing.
- Improved housing infrastructure.
- Housing security
- Housing for life; mixed housing development including sheltered accommodation.

### Education and skills

- Supports for training and apprenticeships.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> level education.
- A skills auditor; for people with disabilities or mental health issues, someone to identify abilities rather than disabilities.

### Reduced inequality

- Plan to eradicate poverty.
- Investment in poverty hot spots.
- More inclusive work environment for people with disabilities and mental health issues.
- Valuing social contributions versus the “high skilled” workforce e.g. mother vs high tech professional/ footballer, etc.
- Equal pay for equal work.

### Support for enterprise

- Enterprise hubs.
- Mobile working pods.
- Subsidised start-up premises.
- More local enterprise.
- Build the not-for-profit sector.
- Support local food.

## Participation, Democracy and Good Governance

What is necessary to ensure that our local government structures support the wellbeing of our community for this and future generations? What is necessary to ensure that we have a voice in the decisions that affect us, and that all voices are being heard?

### Local Government

#### Role of Local Authority

- Reform Local and National government so that TRs are policy makers and not problem solvers/ messenger boys or girls for local issues that Local Government should have the power to resolve.
- Our Local Government should have power to affect the provision of local health, education, housing, policing etc. at local level.
- More control on local issues.
- Less politics/ party politics.

#### Respect for community representation

- There needs to be more recognition for elected community representatives versus elected representatives.
- Expectations on community representatives is phenomenal and they are taken advantage of in relation to filling the gaps where State agencies should be providing.

#### Openness and transparency

- Local Council meetings; would they ever stop slapping themselves on the back and offering condolences.
- More access to Council meetings; televise these to show what actually happens.
- More transparency in decision making.
- More consultation and liaising with the public.
- Watchdog at Council meetings.
- Publish reports ever 3 months of where our money is spent each year, giving details (social housing, community projects, etc.)

#### Elected representatives

- Clarity and increased awareness of the role of Councillors.
- Opportunities/ workshops / forums created to meet councillors to talk about community issues.
- Councillors stop coming and shaking hands and getting photo opportunities. Come and be involved, know your community.
- Councillors are often very out of touch with the issues of local communities and groups, particularly in relation to insurance costs, etc.
- Not enough female elected representatives.
- Increased participation of women by enabling women's participation. Quotas don't go far enough, more work needs to be done.
- Our decision makers could be more accountable for representing their communities.

#### Involving young people

- More youth involved in decision making.
- Young people could be more involved in decision-making, policy making, etc.
- More youth involvement in projects for and around youth.

- The voice of young people needs to be present.
- Youth Council (Foroige, MACRA, schools, etc.)
- Young people are active in social and political life.

#### Participation in democracy

- Greater voter participation.
- More voter registration needed.

#### **Volunteers and community groups**

- More support for volunteer workers.
  - Acknowledgement of local and volunteer work by the Local Authority.
  - Red tape simplified around grants, insurance, etc.
  - Monaghan to be the leader in the field of public participation.
  - More encouragement for volunteering and community work.
  - Volunteering should be valued with credits given towards their pension.
  - Better timeframes for applying for grants, making submissions, etc.
  - More support for local voluntary groups regarding governance protocols, etc.
  - Communities to be valued and respected and empowered to respond to their local drugs issues.
  - No real partnership with community and voluntary sector at the government table regarding drugs issues. The Department led decision without consultation with the community and voluntary sector. We need a cabinet minister from the Taoiseach's office to sit on an oversight committee on a Drugs Strategy.
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- Assess needs rather than legislation.

## Culture, Values and Meaning

What is needed to ensure that everyone feels, and actually is, included and valued, and that our different values and cultures are respected and nurtured? What are the important parts of our culture that we want to hand on to future generations?

### The type of community we are

- The people are warm and welcoming.
- Monaghan people care.
- We have a strong sense of community.
- Monaghan people help those in trouble and don't judge. They are compassionate to all.
- We value the sense of belonging to a community.
- We embrace change.
- We are charitable and quick to help those in need.
- Everybody knows each other; it's a close community and no-one feels like a stranger.
- Family and friends are an important support network.
- Family life is important to us for all the support it gives the individuals within the family.

### An inclusive and multi-cultural community

- We are an inclusive society built on respect.
- We respect all cultures and traditions.
  - Translators/ interpreters
  - National holidays
- We value all our cultural stories and use them to build new stories that give a sense of belonging to everyone.
- Nobody gets isolated due to stigma from association with substance misuse.

### Having a voice

- Everyone has a voice.
- Everyone is valued; young people, older people, women, the unemployed, etc.

### Preserving our heritage

- We value our heritage.
- Townland names are preserved and the names of crossroads.
- We promote the old traditions; wakes, St. Brigid's crosses, foods, May Day, ceili-ing, storytelling, music, dialects, language, cures.

### Community action

- Volunteering building social capital within our communities.
- Empowering communities to flourish.
- Monaghan people give back.

### Enterprising people

- Our entrepreneurial spirit and small business/ self-employed tradition.
- Our farming community.

### Education

- We have great schools.

## Health (Physical and Mental)

How can all members of our community enjoy the best possible physical and mental health? What about people with special needs, older people and carers?

### Physical and mental health services

- Fully resources medical and mental health services provided locally, timely, efficient, out of hours, affordable.
- Reinstate Monaghan hospital
- Expanded facilities in community hospital.
- Locally based maternity services
- Pre and post-natal care.
- Home birth support services.
- Supports for people with substance misuse and the families impacted.
- Respite for family carers

### Crisis response

- Crisis beds and accommodation in Monaghan, both clinical/ medical and emergency/ homeless,
- “Walk in” crisis centre, community facing 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days/ year.

### Supports for youth

- 24 hour supports and services for youth and additional resources and training to existing community supports.
- Supports, services and initiatives that support young people to develop healthy relationships.

### Community supports and services

- Fully resourced community hubs with counselling, addiction, supports and services, “Conversation Cafés” that are non-clinical.
- Intergenerational community hubs in every housing estate.
- A safe environment to talk about our mental health, without judgement, whenever and wherever. No stigma.
- More affordable and flexible childcare, “drop in” creches, etc.
- Resourcing local voluntary and community groups.

### Outdoor and recreation opportunities

- Nature based activities for children and families; forest walks, community gardens, free play, etc.
- Park Run
- Sanctuary Run
- Develop more safe walkways/ greenways (light them in winter)
- Make your Ceili initiatives more widespread.
- Extend “Faith and Light” initiatives
- More arts clubs.

### Supports for older people

- “Village” initiative for supported living; with a shop, church, social area and your own front door.

- Additional supports for elderly people to stay in their own homes; more than basic needs, social needs too, etc.

### **Education**

- Educating children on health and wellbeing
- School-based education around physical activity.
- Parenting courses about raising resilient children.

*(Not agreed: No cars in town centres)*

## Environment and Sustainability

How do we value our natural environment and man-made heritage? What can be done to conserve, protect and restore these? How can we interact with the environment in a sustainable way and hand it on to the next generation in a better state?

### Recycling

- A clear recycling policy for households and industry.
- A common policy for recycling in retail in Monaghan.
- Reduction and recycling of garments.
- Recycling plastic bottles for money. There's a machine in Carrickmacross. We should have a local option.
- More bottle banks.

### Waste management

- Absence of roadside litter.
- Address dog waste.
- Reduce waste - not increase recycling.
- Not having all bin options; 2 bins for most, blue and green only.

### Minding nature

- Less grass cutting
- Maintain green areas and amenities.
- Biodiversity, regeneration and carbon sequestration.
- Re-wet the bogs.
- Waste areas are planted with natural wild grasses on a much higher scale and this is led by the Local Authority.
- Native trees are planted on a much greater scale and managed as a sustainable forest.
- All towns in the County are "edible towns" where communities are planted with a greater ratio of useful rather than ornamental plants.
- No pesticides used.

### Agriculture and food production

- Support local produce.
- Return to planting crops for food consumption
- Farming practices adapted to reduce negative impacts on the environment from slurry spreading, hedge cutting, high stock levels and water pollution.
- No pesticides.

### Pollution

- Air quality is not damaged through burning of fossil fuels, car emissions, emissions from industry.

### Community involvement

- Education to community groups on how to be self-sufficient.
- Allotments and community self-sufficiency through sharing.
- Policy of redistribution of usable "waste" to community groups.
- Invest in communities by empowering them and supporting them in solving their own issues, social environment.

## **Transport**

- More electric car charging points.

## **Energy**

- Private (individual's) energy generation that can be sold back to the grid
- Clear renewable strategy; a 5-10year plan.
- Community based renewable energy; wind turbines, shared energy, etc.
- Mentor to the various energy schemes.

## **Taking action**

- The government to implement the UN Sustainable Development Goals => Local Authorities  
=> Community and families. It's everyone's responsibility.