



SLIGO

Public Participation Network



Vision For Community Wellbeing



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What is Community Wellbeing?

Although we often think about wellbeing in terms of good physical and mental health, it can also describe the wider conditions we need as individuals and communities to have a better quality of life, a healthier environment and increased prosperity.

This Wellbeing Vision contains an overarching vision for County Sligo and a vision for each community wellbeing “domain” or aspect.

These wellbeing domains are:

- Social & Community Development
- Economy & Resources
- Participation, Democracy & Good Governance
- Values, Culture & Meaning
- Health (physical & mental)
- Environment & Sustainability



How we developed Our Vision for Community Wellbeing

The Sligo PPN Vision was developed using a variety of consultation and engagement methods;

1) Official Community Wellbeing Workshop

Sligo PPN hosted a facilitated workshop with Dr Harriet Emerson in the Radisson hotel in February 2020.

During the workshop attendees were given the opportunity to review and map the current assets in their communities and then to look at the wellbeing vision categories to detail what they felt would be important for their community's wellbeing.



2) Targeted Consultations and engagement sessions (in person)

PPN staff and representatives held a series of consultation sessions to try and target individuals who may not be comfortable engaging with the formal wellbeing workshops. Details of these sessions can be found in the Masters Index which accompanies this vision.

3) Targeted Consultations (online)

While the bulk of the consultation was complete prior to the 2020 Lockdown, the PPN did have to undertake a number of online engagement sessions to ensure that there were no gaps in representation

4) Online Survey 'Life in Sligo' – Open to all

Processes

Once all the core data was compiled, Sligo PPN devised 2 key consultation documents:

- The Masters Index : a direct record of all the feedback gathered across the various consultation processes
- The Thematic Issues document : all the consultation data grouped by key theme.

These documents were sent out for review by PPN Staff to the PPN Secretariat and Reps.

Two consultation sessions were then held between Dr Emerson and PPN representatives to review and finalise the drawing together of this information into this Vision for Community Wellbeing. In the normal course of things, these review sessions would have taken place in person but, due to Covid restrictions, were conducted online.

Our Vision for Community Wellbeing in County Sligo

Sligo is a place where we can be well and live fulfilled lives. We all invest in maintaining a strong community where everyone is valued and we support one another. Our diversity enriches life here and we celebrate the interwoven cultures, heritage and vibrant artistic life that thrives here. We have a strong, diverse and sustainable economic sector that provides good work opportunities, and excellent education and training is locally available. We are active partners with local government and state agencies, in all decisions that affect us, ensuring our people and our businesses are supported with well-planned infrastructure, services and facilities. We understand our interdependence with our precious natural environment; we strive to live sustainably and enjoying the unique opportunities provided in this spectacular location.

Community Wellbeing and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

In 2015 the members of the United Nations agreed the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This sets out “a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future. At its heart are the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which are an urgent call for action by all countries - developed and developing - in a global partnership. They recognize that ending poverty and other deprivations must go hand-in-hand with strategies that improve health and education, reduce inequality, and spur economic growth – all while tackling climate change and working to preserve our oceans and forests.” In other words, these goals define the world we want. Ireland has signed up to these goals, as has Sligo PPN, and this is part of recognising that we all have a part to play in achieving this future. For this reason, it is crucial that the PPN aligns what the member groups are seeking for Sligo with what they want to see across the world and make clear how they relate to one another. The first step is to be aware of the 17 SDGs (see Fig.3 overleaf) and then look at how each relates to the community wellbeing headings. Remember that both the community wellbeing headings and the SDGs impact on one another. The PPN is looking to ensure that in working towards its Vision, it will also be making a positive contribution towards achieving the SDGs.



The Domains of Wellbeing

**What our community
said they wanted to see
for Sligo**

1.0 Social and Community Development

There is great diversity amongst the people of Sligo, where each one of us is respected, valued and included. This is a friendly place where people interact positively, and we all enjoy a good quality of life.

People of all ages volunteer enthusiastically in the community so that we can all thrive and this work is supported through the provision of dedicated spaces and facilities, good levels of accessible funding, and streamlined administration requirements for community activities. Our community groups network well together and have strong relationships with agencies, sharing information and collaborating effectively. We invest in inclusive and best practice community development to ensure that no-one is marginalised.

We are all well-informed of activities within our community and about issues that affect us. There is widespread understanding amongst residents and the broader Sligo community, the County Council and other agencies, that sectors within our community have different and often specific needs, that will change over time (youth, families, new residents, the elderly, women, those living with disabilities, single people, Travellers, and so on). Community groups and agencies work together to plan for these and provide the infrastructure, facilities and services that are needed, using joined-up thinking to ensure that the best possible options are chosen and maximum benefits are achieved for the community.

There is an excellent variety of housing provided across the County that supports well-integrated communities, and is affordable, so that everyone has a comfortable home. All aspects of our lives (work, recreation, community, etc.) are facilitated through an integrated, user-friendly transport network. Support for green transport initiatives and an excellent public transport system reduces isolation, connects rural and urban areas, and enables us to get about and be active.

There is a great variety of recreational opportunities that we are all able to participate in and good facilities for these. Together we plan and work to ensure the areas where we live are attractive, accessible and foster great community engagement.

People in Sligo are respectful and care for one another. This, along with great community policing, means that it is a safe and relaxed place to live.

In Sligo everyone is part of the community and has the ability to achieve the life that they aspire to.

- 1.1 Diversity is celebrated in the community here and individuals, groups and activities reach out to involve others and are actively inclusive.
- 1.2 New residents experience Sligo as a friendly place.
- 1.3 There are good facilities and services that support families and those with young children.
- 1.4 Young people in our community know that they are valued. They actively participate in decision-making that affects them and are well supported with dedicated services that address all areas of their wellbeing, excellent recreational opportunities, and committed volunteers and youth workers.
- 1.5 Women in Sligo enjoy equal access to employment, including as elected representatives, with equal pay, facilitated by strong family supports within the community and flexible working arrangements. They are well-catered for with dedicated health care and effective at organising together to support one another.
- 1.6 People with disabilities and carers are consulted about their needs and involved in how these are considered and addressed in the provision of all public services and spaces, to enable them to participate fully in all aspects of life in Sligo.
- 1.7 Our public buildings, spaces and towns and villages are fully accessible. Planners and service providers consult with people with disabilities in order to understand and address their needs.



2.0 Work, Economy & Resources

Across Sligo we have a sustainable economy that cares for and supports our people and our environment. We recognise, value and protect the unique attributes and strengths of Sligo, which are at the heart of developing resilient and high quality futures for everyone.

We have a diverse range of commercial and social enterprises that are supported with excellent, affordable and integrated, green transport and communications infrastructure. Across the County there is a variety of affordable space for development and growth of businesses, using different models of production and working. There are a range of business development supports. The local economy is thriving and has minimal carbon footprint.

Our economy ensures there is a range of good, flexible, jobs available and we have tailored supports for those seeking work to access these. Information, education and re-training opportunities are widely available and participation is assisted with advice, childcare, financial and other supports. From school, throughout our lives, education enables us to reach our potential and we ensure that no-one is left behind. We design services to facilitate people to engage in work and maintain a good quality of life.

There is a sustainable tourism offering, with visitors attracted by our stunning, unspoilt and not overly-commercialised environment; including coastline, mountains, lakes, and forests, which are enjoyed by all in the community. Sligo is renowned for its creative and artistic activities which bring people to the area that help support this thriving sector.

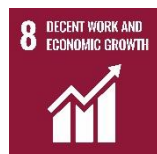
Family farming in Sligo generates good livelihoods through producing top quality, high value and diverse, organic foods. Our agriculture is sustainable and farmers support for biodiversity and care for natural resources is rewarded.

Across Sligo we have created and maintain attractive places for people to live in integrated communities, with rural and urban areas well-connected through low carbon transport networks that support people working and living in all areas.

Volunteering and initiatives to support our communities are recognised, valued and supported.

- 2.1 We lead the way in the development of green technologies, infrastructure and production, building strong expertise amongst the local workforce.
- 2.2 We make the most of our coastal and scenic location to advance research and understanding of these environments and we ensure that they can be enjoyed in safe and sustainable ways.
- 2.3 We are future-focused in planning and business supports and actively engage with and listen to young people about the future world of work and life.

Sustainable: Where the word “sustainable” is used in the document it refers to environmental sustainability. For our environmental to be sustained it requires that, across the globe, we make use of all natural, renewable resources only so far that we can continue to rely on their yields to support life in the future.



3.0 Participation, Democracy and Good Governance

Our vision for Sligo is one where the County Council works in partnership with the communities in the County and are justifiably proud of the high-quality, services and facilities that are provided by both. These rely on effective, forward-looking planning and joined up thinking so that they are integrated and effective, including across other agencies.

The County Council ensures information is made widely available, that it communicates effectively, is accountable and operates transparently. Our community trusts our elected representatives and public officials, who actively undertake ongoing, meaningful consultation with communities which informs what services and supports are provided and how, in order to meet the communities' needs. There are supports in place to ensure that the option to stand for election is accessible to people from across all sectors of society in Sligo.

The extraordinary extent and value of community and voluntary work is recognised in Sligo. Volunteering is acknowledged, encouraged and rewarded. Across the generations we all get involved in community activities and enjoy this.

Supports are provided to minimise governance requirements for community groups and to assist them in adhering to these. There are initiatives to minimise and limit costs related to governance requirements for community initiatives. Assistance is provided to community groups to access grants and funding, with streamlined and efficient systems for application and assessment across multiple years and for speedy decision-making. There is good provision of flexible space and facilities for use by community groups.

From school onwards we all learn about how our local democracy work and about collective decision-making. We support and protect our democracy and community with effective participation in government agencies whose work affects us by all sectors in our society, including youth, and through the provision of good community policing.



4.0 Culture, Values & Meaning

In Sligo, we get to know one another. We are interested to explore and understand each other's culture and we appreciate the diversity in our community. This is a friendly and welcoming place where everyone is included, is able to contribute and feels valued, helping us to build a rich and thriving society.

We preserve and maintain our built heritage, archaeology, landscape and natural environment to enhance our lives, support our livelihoods, and share with others.

Our Local Authority's approach to development of public spaces and places is to work with the community to identify needs and agree how these can be met. Through excellent planning the Council is committed to developing safe, attractive spaces that promote integration across cultures, age and abilities.

We are known for our thriving and very visible arts scene and important, successful creative economy assisted through a variety of excellent cultural facilities and venues, spread across the County. These support music, visual and performing arts, as well as existing and emerging creative sectors which are enjoyed by the local community and attracts many visitors to the area.

Sligo is a supportive and caring place to live. Through a range of community and commercial initiatives, we ensure that no-one is left out or isolated, and that there are a variety of opportunities for people to interact and socialise across the generations. There is a range of recreational activities available for everyone, with particular care taken to ensure that the voices of young people and the elderly are heard, and their needs met.

Our community is based on respect for one another. We have a range of initiatives that ensure it is a genuinely safe place for everyone.

4.1 People from all different cultures belong in Sligo and feel welcome and at home here. We share information about our different cultures throughout the community and celebrate them.

4.2 Government agencies and the County Council consult meaningfully to understand community needs, across different ages and cultures, with particular attention to younger and future generations. They work hard to generate and maintain a vibrant life in all local communities throughout the County, planning to provide for mixed use, mixed housing and cultural and recreational activities.

4.3 Whatever the time of day or night, there are safe transport options, and everyone in the community behaves respectfully to one another.

4.4 Creative and arts sectors enrich our community throughout Sligo and are attractive to visitors. There are supports in place to foster and develop these.

Meaningful consultation or engagement: This Vision is clear that consultations and engagements should only be carried out where they are meaningful. This means that there is a real opportunity for those involved to influence the outcome of the process, decision, policy, plan or whatever is the subject of the engagement. In other words, that they can have an impact. It is also important that the extent to which they can influence the outcome(s) is made clear at the outset of any engagement, so that everyone shares the same understanding and expectations of what is possible.



5.0 Health (Physical and Mental)

In Sligo, we want to live our best lives and all of us are proactively supported to be well and healthy throughout our lives. We plan and design our sustainable communities to enhance life for everyone. There is suitable, attractive housing, inviting villages and towns, and diverse recreation opportunities in our beautiful and accessible surroundings, along with effective integrated transport services, and rewarding education and employment, which all meet the different needs and circumstances within our community.

All of us actively look out for and support one another and the neighbourliness and friendliness that we value through individual and community initiatives that ensure everyone is valued and included, whatever their situation or abilities, and all of us know that we are safe. We value and support carers, provide respite care and ensure they are not isolated.

When we are ill, we have timely access to expert health care and services that are well-resourced, affordable, and that are available as close to the community as is possible. This is true for both our physical and our mental health services, which are planned and provided sensitively to people's needs. There is excellent support for rehabilitation and effective services for those dealing with addiction.

- 5.1 We are all well-informed and educated throughout our lives about all aspects of health and well-being, and how we can ourselves maintain the best health and support others to be well.
- 5.2 We all understand the importance of good mental health and learn how to support and protect it from a young age, throughout our lives. There is no stigma associated with mental health issues. We are all familiar with the excellent mental health services and supports that are available to everyone, as they are needed.
- 5.3 We have a dedicated centre with comprehensive services relating to women's health and wellbeing, which is accessible to all women.
- 5.4 Our health services recognise the different cultures, beliefs and circumstances within the community and adjusts care appropriately to support the individual.

- 5.5 All aspects of health and wellbeing are considered by our health service, which have strong relationships with community initiatives and use social prescribing to help provide personalised support for people.
- 5.6 Our public and community spaces are all fully accessible and provide safe places for all ages and abilities to be active and stay fit.
- 5.7 Our communities are pleasant, integrated places, where we have a mixed range of homes, good services and infrastructure that we need to stay active, connected and well. Planning and design enables us to adapt as needs and circumstances change through our lives.
- 5.8 We feel safe wherever we are in Sligo and have initiatives to provide assistance to anyone who gets into difficulties.



6.0 Environment and Sustainability

We all understand the critical importance of a healthy and diverse environment for our future and that of generations to come and we are committed and supported to protect and enhance it and to combatting climate change. All of use play an active part in this and we are proud that Sligo is a leader in development of green technology, green business and green tourism.

Our goal is to be a zero waste society and we have a range of measures that help us all to minimise or eliminate waste, re-use, re-purpose or recycle items and responsibly manage any waste created. We conserve energy and aim to meet all our energy needs locally through local community green energy schemes.

Transport networks in Sligo ensure that communities throughout the County are well connected through integrated, green public transport systems that are affordable and frequent. There is widespread infrastructure to facilitate green transport for work and recreation, such as cycle paths, greenways and electric charging points.

We take great care to safeguard our natural environment, resources and landscape. We maintain excellent water quality on land and in the sea, we protect and promote our native species of flora and fauna and all our biodiversity; and look to rehabilitate or rewild damaged or disused areas. Our farmers are a key part of this important work and are rewarded for their positive action. Air pollution is prevented. Everyone can access and enjoy our natural environment.

Excellent, joined up, planning and initiatives support our villages and towns as attractive and thriving places, where there is harmony between old and new buildings that are restored, well-maintained and re-purposed as needed. We actively preserve our built heritage and promote this. Community spaces and facilities are embedded in communities where there is integration of activities and people. We are proud of our public spaces which are all fully accessible and well-kept and we have public services and facilities that enhance our communities. There are indoor and outdoor recreational opportunities provided for all ages and abilities.

6.1 We are all part of an ongoing discussion with government agencies about how we can address climate change and environmental issues and our voices are recognised as important in this.

- 6.2 We are at the forefront of initiatives to reduce waste generation and assist everyone in the community with facilities and services to support this.
- 6.3 In Sligo town and villages around the County there is a real understanding of the need to create and sustain pleasant and vibrant town centres that support community integration and cohesion. The Local Authority works with the community to foster these spaces, which are equally important for visitors to the area.
- 6.4 Sligo is a rural county where transport is of critical importance in all aspects of life. We pioneer affordable, green transport options that enable us to support enterprise, workers and daily life and work consistently to deliver integrated systems that support quality of life for our people.
- 6.5 Positive environmental action by local communities is encouraged and supported to ensure we have a healthy and resilient natural environment which we all appreciate and enjoy.

