

Northside Partnership SICAP Strategy 2018 – 2022

Introduction

Northside Partnership is a Local Development Company with the key strategic objective of addressing social exclusion and poverty.

Its modus operandi for addressing poverty reduction has been assisting individuals who have never worked or who are unemployed back into the active labour force. Northside Partnership is aware of the complexities of effectively supporting individuals who are distant from work and who have multiple blockages such as poor educational attainment, health issues, complications from past actions, addiction, homelessness or a lack of role models in their lives. It requires a multi-layered and time intensive approach in order to assist individuals' progress into work that is sustainable and suitable for the person. In some cases, assisting the individual to participate more fully in society and have a better quality of life will be an ideal outcome.

Northside Partnership is also aware that disadvantaged individuals tend to come from disadvantaged areas. While Northside Partnership has worked in its catchment area since 1991, helping multiple individuals' progress through the education system and into employment, it is aware that the areas of disadvantage that existed in 1991 remain disadvantaged today. Many of the individuals who have been assisted in progressing to further education have now left the area. This has been personally beneficial to them, but detrimental to the areas that they come from. The failure of society to fully address issues of poverty and social exclusion has resulted in intergenerational poverty in our catchment area.

Northside Partnership has seen much progress over the last 26 years. A well developed community and voluntary sector is now in place, providing a wide range of services and supports; particularly in disadvantaged areas. Within the Lot 2.3 Northside, the sector is comprised national or regional organisations that deliver services locally as well as many smaller community based organisations. While these smaller organisations are advantaged in their grassroots connection and ability to engage and influence the community, they often struggle to secure adequate resources to sustain their activities. Furthermore, increasing requirements with regard to compliance place an inordinate burden on such organisations and many have insufficient knowledge or expertise to fully address compliance requirements. Clearly there is a need for more fundamental reform, environmental improvements and a more comprehensive approach to tackling poverty. Northside Partnership sees SICAP and the five-year programme as an opportunity to analyse and address these issues in the long-term. While SICAP will require some amendments to working methodologies, administration and thought processes, it does offer an element of freedom to look more strategically at issues. SICAP remains an important programme, but due to lack of resources, the programme alone is not enough to bring about the fundamental changes that are necessary in the urban areas that suffer from disadvantage. This is why it is important to ensure an integrated approach to changing the local environment. Thus the direction outlined in this strategy will inform and

underpin the development of annual Action Plans across all programmes implemented by Northside Partnership.

Northside Partnership as an Organisation

Northside Partnership is a company limited by guarantee with charitable status. It is on the governance code journey and has a strong Board of Directors. It carries out regular reviews of its operations. Following the SICAP process, it will continue with this review and complete a five-year strategic plan. Northside Partnership has reviewed its vision, mission statement and its value statement. These are outlined below.

Northside Partnership Vision Statement

Northside Partnership believes in a fair and equal society where people have opportunities and choices to enrich the quality of their lives.

Northside Partnership Mission Statement

Northside Partnership works together with individuals, groups, families and businesses to bring about positive changes in people's lives and communities in north east Dublin.

Northside Partnership serves as a bridge between our local community, the state and the private sector. This enables us to secure resources and create opportunities for people to access education, training, employment, enterprise, family supports and youth programmes.

Northside Partnership Value Statement

Northside Partnership provides integrated supports that are guided by the following values:

- Respect
- Equality
- Empowering people
- Meeting identified needs
- Delivering quality services
- Honesty and integrity
- Working in partnership
- Confidentiality

Strategic Approach

The strategic approach adopted by Northside Partnership will entail:

- A cross company integrated services approach
- A number of key strategic objectives
- A methodological approach to implementation that includes
 - Issue based activities
 - Area Based activities
 - Cross cutting issues

The clear focus to Northside Partnership's work under will be on the most disadvantaged areas and the most disadvantaged people. It will concentrate on those individuals that have least services available and the lowest level of state supports.

Northside Partnership's key focus has always been on getting people into employment as a means to address poverty. This focus will continue going forward however attention will also be given to people who are under employed and in assisting individuals out of low income or part time employment into more sustainable employment. Sustainability of employment is important for addressing structural poverty. It will allow people to make more long term plans for themselves and their families.

Cross Company Approach

Northside Partnership delivers a wide range of programmes beyond SICAP. It has a significant Local Employment Service, Jobs Club and a sizeable Tús Community Work Placement programme that is embedded into an array of community organisations. It is supportive of a number of community employment programmes and has a significant Area Based Childhood Programme (Preparing for Life) based in Darndale. In addition Northside Partnership provides educational interventions to promote school retention in the most disadvantaged areas, education supports to promote progression to third level, a youth leadership programme, enterprise supports and a number of community based health initiatives.

Northside Partnership has continued to work as much as practically possible in an integrated fashion and avoid the silo effect that funding streams often force organisations to follow. SICAP, and the *distance travelled model* being adopted to track beneficiary progression, allows more freedom for an integrated approach to be developed. It will allow the individual and community organisations to have different interventions from different programmes. This will particularly help to progress those individuals most distant from the labour force to deal with issue and blockages that prevent them progressing into employment. Northside Partnership has also followed the approach of "Any Door Will Do" where its clients or the clients of other organisations can receive interventions necessary from those best placed to deliver them. Northside Partnership is collaborative by its nature and will work with other organisations to provide interventions and avoid duplications of services.

Key strategic objectives

Northside Partnership has identified 5 key strategic objectives. These are:

1. Supporting Progression to Employment
2. Integrated service delivery and collaborative working
3. Promoting equality and tackling poverty
4. Supporting community organisations that deliver key services
5. Developing social and community infrastructure

Employment

As stated earlier, getting individuals into employment is a key objective of Northside Partnership. Northside Partnership sees assisting individuals into employment as the main intervention to tackling poverty for individuals and families. A job itself with an income is important, but the culture of work and the creation of role models within disadvantaged areas and families is also critical. Under this strategy Northside Partnership will seek to assist low income earners and those on part time work from disadvantaged backgrounds to progress to more sustainable and better employment.

Integrated Service Delivery and Collaborative Working

SICAP will be embraced by Northside Partnership as part of an all company approach to tackling social exclusion and poverty. The first iteration of SICAP took time to develop and integration into other operational programmes was initially slow. This is now in place and will support the integration of the second iteration of SICAP with Northside Partnership's LES, Tús, and other associated programmes.

Northside Partnership will work with other service providers, NGOs and community based organisations in an open and collaborative way. It will utilise the services offered by others and seek to have individuals referred to Northside Partnership for SICAP interventions and to other specialist organisations for key supports. It will work with an array of organisations to develop programmes and actions to make the critical interventions and identify missing services from the area for both individuals and community organisations.

Equality and Tackling Poverty

Poverty is predominantly focused in a number of particularly disadvantaged areas. It is also particularly prevalent with individuals who have low educational attainment, who have experienced challenging family backgrounds and who have no or limited history of work. Disadvantage is not blind to other categories including gender, ethnic backgrounds, language skills, age (young and elderly), lone parents, ex-substance abusers and sexual orientation.

Under SICAP Northside Partnership will address these key areas of disadvantage. It will primarily focus on the delivery of its actions and interventions in areas of disadvantage and to individuals who display characteristics of social exclusion, whatever these may be. Northside Partnership will develop programmes and key interventions (outlined in its Annual Plans) that will be focused on groups of individuals who are particularly disadvantaged such as:

The Travelling Community – Northside Partnership will work with neighbouring Local Development Companies to make joint interventions

Women in enterprise – Northside Partnership has run women only enterprise programmes in the past. Less women tend to go for self employment and women only enterprise groups have tended to work more effectively for women

Lone parents – Northside Partnership will work with its partner organisation Doras Buí to make key interventions with those who are parenting alone, and with women in crisis pregnancies who are on their own

Disadvantaged Young people – Northside Partnership will work with young people, particularly those who have left school early and whose skill set is low, to enter the labour market and to skill them up to be resilient for life

Disadvantaged Children and Families – Northside Partnership will work with Doras Buí, Aster Family Support and the statutory services to identify a role for Northside Partnership and its partners to assist those who are ready for SICAP interventions

New Communities – The profile of Northside Partnership area does not identify new communities as a significant portion of the population. It is Northside Partnership's experience on the ground that there are more non-Irish born citizens living in the area and particularly in Clongriffin and Belmayne. The census may not be accurate in this regard. Building has commenced in both of these areas and it is expected that more new communities will be attracted there. This is an issue that Northside Partnership will have to engage in over the coming five years.

Males – The last economic crisis created a collapse in employment in the construction industry. The vast majority of individuals who lost their employment were males and this remains as a specific target group, particularly young males who, if not engaged early, will have long term difficulties in getting employment.

People with Disabilities – In 2016 Northside Partnership piloted a very successful programme, funded under Dormant Accounts, to support Individuals living with Autistic Spectrum Disorders. Under SICAP Northside Partnership will seek to build upon this success and find additional mechanisms to progress this area of work.

In short Northside Partnership will develop programmes that address the issues that allow poverty to exist and to target key areas of disadvantage with tailor made interventions. It will address inequality of opportunity and access in its programmes.

Supporting Key Community Organisations that Deliver Key Services

Northside Partnership's catchment area now has a wide range of community organisations of various sizes and capacity. While Northside Partnership recognises the importance of all of these bodies and supports many of them in the area, it has a number of partner bodies with whom it works closely to ensure there is a strong level of social infrastructure in the area. Many of these key organisations support the smaller and more vulnerable local organisations who are trying to deliver quality services.

The Key bodies which Northside Partnership works with and whom it delivers higher level supports service to include:

- **Community Law and Mediation** – delivery of free legal and mediation services to local individuals
- **NearFM** – Local Community Radio station who also provide training in production and interviewing skills
- **Northside Counselling Service** – a community based counselling service that delivers free counselling from qualified counsellors who work on a voluntary basis
- **Northside Homecare Service** – provision of homecare interventions to elderly, infirm and disabled persons
- **Doras Buí** – who work with people parenting alone and who are in crisis pregnancies. They work with families and children in a supportive and caring way
- **Speedpak** – A social enterprise company established by Northside Partnership in the mid 1990s with the objective of delivering real work experience in a real work environment.
- **Darndale Village Centre** – developed with URBAN funding Darndale Village centre is now a hive of activity with multiple organisations including Northside Partnership working out of it delivering much need interventions to local people
- **Aster Family Support** – Supports families in crisis
- **Coolock Development Centre** – is a community based organisation that manages the Coolock campus, rents rooms and operates an enterprise centre
- **Northside Centre for the Unemployed** – a community based organisation offering a range of occupational training programmes for long term unemployed individuals

Developing Social and Community Infrastructure

While the catchment area has many community organisations, those areas that are most deprived have little or no community infrastructure. When compared to wealthy areas the most deprived areas have poor social provision.

Northside Partnership is aware from its work in disadvantaged areas that there is a need to develop community and social infrastructure to make the area a better place to live and work, to normalise life, but most of all to enhance the provision of much needed services in the area for disadvantaged individuals. This will include:

Childcare – there is a shortage of affordable childcare provision in the area. The largest provider of community childcare, Jigsaw in Darndale was almost closed a few years back. Many of the other facilities are small and struggle to be sustainable. They have a significant compliance onus. There is a shortage of places for people in the area and this inhibits women and lone parents returning to or entering the work force.

Counselling – there are two community based counselling services, both short of funding and both with long waiting lists of clients. Again both of these organisations assist individuals to address their mental health needs and allows them to function fully in society.

Family Resource Services – Northside Partnership runs a substantial parenting programme. This has been focused on Darndale and the surrounding areas. Aster Family Support and Doras Buí also deliver key services into the area. The area is very large and many parts of it do not have quality services.

Arts Centres – The area is devoid of arts infrastructure. The lack of a coherent arts strategy in the area has left it without an important cultural asset. Northside Partnership will work with Dublin City Council and arts organisation to develop and implement an arts strategy for the area.

Environment - Northside Partnership has been working with the Dublin Institute of Technology and Dublin City Council to promote the development of the Santry River Greenway. The Santry River Greenway is listed in the National Transport Authority's programme of greenway development. This piece of community infrastructure will provide a linear park, a network of community nodes, a walkway, a cycleway and a biodiversity project. This project will be supported under SICAP and through the Tús Community Work Placement Programme.

Methodological Approaches

In this strategy Northside Partnership will be following three key methodological approaches. These are:

- I. Issue Based Approach
- II. Area Based Approach
- III. Cross cutting Issues

i Issues Based Approach

There are a number of key areas which Northside Partnership will be focussing on in this 5-year strategy. These intertwine with both Goal 1 and Goal 2 of SICAP and are outlined below:

- Employment and Low income
- Education Attainment
- Lone Parents, Families and Children
- Built Environment, Community Facilities and Accessibility
- Citizenship, Empowerment and Advocacy
- Capacity Building for Community Organisations

Employment and Low income

In order to address issues of poverty, Northside Partnership will continue to work with those who are long term unemployed. In addition, Northside Partnership will seek to engage with individuals who are working part time or who have occasional hours. It will seek to engage with those Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) and to assist lone parents, women returners and other disadvantaged groups to progress into employment.

Northside Partnership will continue to work to assist individuals develop their own enterprises and will focus on encouraging more women entrepreneurs to come forward. Northside Partnership is also working with a number of social enterprise and will develop its range of social enterprise supports.

Educational

The key to a good job is a good education. Northside Partnership will work with local schools and parents to ensure that children stay in school, transfer into second level and progress as far as practically possible. It will run programmes that assist people from disadvantaged areas and backgrounds to progress through third level. Northside Partnership will take a life long approach to education and will assist people of all ages to progress into employment through improved education and training. In addition to looking at education as a tool for employment, Northside Partnership will assist and direct its clients and their families to look at education as a leisure activity and as a tool to assist them in terms of personal growth and development and to be more active in society.

Lone Parents, Families and Children

Northside Partnership is delighted to have Doras Buí as a partner organisation. Doras Buí has over 30-years experience working with lone parents, their families and in supporting individuals through crisis pregnancies. Northside Partnership and Doras Buí will work hand in hand to assist lone parents to enter the labour force, progress to education or follow a path that is best suited

to them and their families. Northside Partnership and Doras Buí will both work with Aster family support agency and the Preparing for Life Team in supporting families and their children

Built Environment, Community Facilities and Accessibility

Poor areas have poor places. A poor environment in disadvantaged areas often reinforces the message of poverty upon communities. Some of the schools in the catchment area have bars on the windows. Areas tend to be dirty, poorly provided for and have little active community infrastructure. Northside Partnership will work with a number of partner bodies such as Dublin City Council (DCC), Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT) and local community organisations to address some of these issues, be an advocate for poorer areas and ensure that individuals from disadvantaged areas have access to much needed service provision, either in their local area or with adequate public transport.

Northside Partnership will continue to work with DIT in the promotion and eventual provision of the Santry River Greenway which is also in the Dublin City Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) and is provided for in DCC's Development Plan.

Citizenship, Empowerment and Advocacy

Poorer areas have a tendency to have low voter turnout and do not tend to have strong organisational structures that look after their local areas. The organisational structures that do work in poorer areas tend to be issue based. It is clear to Northside Partnership that a programme of voter registration and education over a prolonged period of time is necessary. It is equally important that local areas and individuals are empowered to take action for themselves and are assisted to have the skill levels necessary. Northside Partnership will work with other local organisations to develop an advocacy function for individuals and communities.

Capacity Building for Community Organisations

Under the first iteration of SICAP Northside Partnership commenced a programme of governance support and training for local organisations. The object of this was to ensure that as many organisations as possible could undertake the governance code journey and progress as far as practically possible. Under this strategy this area of work will continue and be enhanced to provide a wider range of supports including technical and compliance supports to ensure local organisations can develop their capacity to deliver services and supports.

ii Area Based Approach

Northside Partnership is committed to work in the most disadvantaged areas in its catchment area. These have been broken down into five categories as outlined below:

- Darndale / Priorswood
- Edenmore
- Belmayne / Clongriffin
- Donnycarney
- Kilmore West

Darndale

Darndale is one of the most disadvantaged areas in the country. Northside Partnership has been active in the area for over 25 years and some considerable progress has been made with

individuals and the development of a strong community infrastructure. Darndale, however has significant service provision from state and local organisations including Northside Partnership. While a lot of individuals have been assisted, many of these have left the area.

Edenmore

Edenmore is divided between two areas, one that is marginally advantaged and the other that is significantly disadvantaged. It has a number of significant community players but a most appalling shopping centre. The area is aging and is need of a strong level of intervention to address social exclusion.

Belmayne / Clongriffin

This area is under construction at present. The development started ten years ago but stalled following the economic crash. This left the area only partly completed and the remainder as a ghost estate. The area has attracted a lot of individuals in to rent properties and is a destination for many individuals from the new communities. This area has not shown up as problematic in the census, but Partnership and city council workers and Cluid housing agency staff have all reported significant emerging problems.

Donnycarney

Donnycarney is an ageing area that is slowly repopulating itself. It has consistently showed up as an area that has large portions of disadvantage. Northside Partnership had a local presence in the area in the past and will develop an action plan for the area in consultation with the other local organisations and community.

Kilmore West

Kilmore West has been constantly disadvantaged over the 25 years Northside Partnership has been working in it. Considerable resources have been invested under SICAP and its predecessor and progress has been made. Work with the schools and the local parish council has been important. A new HSE primary care centre is under construction. Northside Partnership will continue to address issues of employment as well as looking at the service needs for an aging population.

iii Cross Cutting Issues

Running through most of the actions of Northside Partnership are a number of cross cutting issues. These are important to the integrated way that Northside Partnership works internally as well as collaboratively with other organisations, local, regional or national.

Employment

Employment is a key aspect of all of the actions that Northside Partnership engages in. It seeks to make connections to individuals who are unemployed or to families where employment may be an issue. It is not the total focus of Northside Partnership, but is key to achieving successful interventions and addressing poverty.

Partnership working

While Northside Partnership conducts many programmes, it does so in a collaborative way wherever possible. It seeks to engage with partner bodies to ensure that interventions have the most successful outcome. Northside Partnership avoids duplicating the work done by other

organisations. It engages with all local organisations with a view to exchange information of programmes and potential collaboration opportunities. It is keen to refer its clients to other bodies for interventions that are best delivered by them.

Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP)

The LECP was launched after the commencement of SICAP and Northside Partnership has had a significant role in delivering specific actions under the LECP, including a number of joint actions with Dublin City Council and other organisations. Northside Partnership welcomes the overlap of SICAP with the LECP and it will continue to deliver key outcomes that will address poverty and social exclusion.

Supporting Groups

Northside Partnership recognises the importance that local community organisations of whatever size make to their local area and the whole catchment area. The interventions delivered by these groups to whatever target group add to the richness of community engagement and to addressing the causes of poverty. Northside Partnership is keen to support these groups and seeks their support in the delivery of SICAP outcomes. The existence of a local network of organisations has assisted Northside Partnership in conducting local consultation and developing a deep knowledge about the catchment area and its needs. Northside Partnership developed the Northside Community Forum which is now flourishing and which provides a strong voice for the community and voluntary sector locally.

Integration

The theme of integration has a number of components. These include:

- The need to integrate the new communities that are now emerging in Northside Partnership Catchment area and assisting individuals with poor English with language interventions that will allow them to participate in society and to get employment
- The constant need to integrate all programmes operating under Northside Partnerships remit to ensure an all company approach and offer clients of Northside Partnership an integrated service provision
- The need to integrate the work and objectives of Northside Partnership with the other organisations work programmes and objectives so that there is a positive synergy that can assist joint clients and make a significant contribution to enhance the area