



Public Accounts Committee

Members' briefing

- Appropriation Account 2021: Vote 42 Department of Rural and Community Development
- Relevant aspects of Chapter 6: Central Government funding of local authorities, from the Report on the Accounts of the Public Services 2021.

30th March 2023



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1. Introduction

This briefing has been prepared to assist members of the Public Accounts Committee Oireachtas Committee at the planned meeting of Thursday 30th March 2023 to consider:

- the Appropriation Accounts for the Department of Rural and Community Development for 2021, and;
- relevant aspects of Chapter 6: Central Government funding of local authorities, from the Report on the Accounts of the Public Services 2021.

The briefing paper sets out the following:

- Section 2 provides general information on the Department, including its establishment in mid-2017, how it has developed since establishment, its corporate functions, its mission, its goals, and the bodies under its aegis.
- Section 3 provides information for 2021, regarding expenditure and key points relating to delivery in 2021.
- Section 4 briefly outlines Departmental funding to local authorities.
- Appendix 1 provides high level details of allocations and expenditure in 2021. Appendix 2 provides that allocation and expenditure information at a subhead level. Appendix 3 provides an overview of allocations and expenditure in 2022. Appendix 4 details funding allocations for 2022 and 2023 for comparison purposes. Appendix 5 provides detailed information on sub-heads and the schemes supported by this funding.

2. General information on Dept. of Rural and Community Development

Background

The Department of Rural and Community Development was established following a decision announced by An Taoiseach to Dáil Eireann on 14 June 2017, and an amendment to the Ministers and Secretaries Acts of 1924 to 2013, passed by the Oireachtas on 19 July 2017.

The Rural Development and Regional Affairs functions of the former Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs; and the Community functions of the former Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government, were transferred to the new Department. In addition, oversight of the Charities Regulator was transferred from the Department of Justice and Equality.

Subsequently, in January 2018, responsibility for the Community Services Programme (CSP) moved to the Department. The CSP supports community organisations to provide local services through a social enterprise model, providing a contribution towards the cost of staff. It typically supports organisations to meet local service gaps and provide access to services and facilities that would otherwise generally be unavailable within the community. In September 2020, our policy functions were again widened, with the addition of responsibilities for the Islands, which transferred from the former Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

At end of 2021, there was a total of 172 staff (84 in Dublin, and 88 in Ballina and regional locations) in the Department, with a full time equivalence of 166 staff. Achieving this staffing level represented a significant challenge for the Department, with 109 staff originally transferring to the Department at establishment.

Corporate supports & Governance

Since its establishment in July 2017, the Department has continuously strengthened its corporate capacity in order to deliver on its mandate and support the individual units that administer schemes and programmes for rural and community development. Key aspects of this include:

- An **Audit Committee**, which comprises a majority of non-executive members, and is a key part of arrangements to provide advice and assurance to the Accounting Officer on discharging

responsibilities for internal financial controls. This Committee oversees the work of the Internal Audit function, including its resourcing and competencies, its schedule of work, audit reports, compliance with Internal Audit standards and other matters as appropriate. It provides advice to the Accounting Officer on governance in the Department, including risk management and internal controls. It liaises, as appropriate, with the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General, and reviews the Appropriation Account and such other reports by the C&AG as may arise. The Committee is independent in the performance of its functions and does not exercise any executive or managerial function.

- The **Internal Audit Unit** (IAU) assesses areas that are specifically requested by the Audit Committee and/or the Accounting Officer. The IAU's expertise and independent approach is used to identify and specify issues, assess the current position and evaluate approaches to risk and internal controls in these areas. The IAU service is set up within the Department as a separate independent unit reporting directly to the Secretary General and is overseen by the Audit Committee.
- The **Inspection, Compliance and Business Development Unit** manages and implements annual inspection and control programmes for the Department's Exchequer and EU co-funded schemes. It also provides policy, governance and compliance supports to scheme managers.
- The **Finance Unit** provides regular expenditure updates and finance reports to senior management, Management Board and Ministerial Management Board. The Unit also works closely with other Units in terms of monitoring and managing the Department's funding allocations, including both programme expenditure and administration expenditure. The Finance Unit also incorporates an **evaluation function** which has completed a number of focussed policy assessments on Departmental schemes, helping to foster a culture of ongoing monitoring and evaluation within the Department, and supporting evidence informed decision making within the Department.
- The **Risk Management Framework** consists of a Risk Committee and line units' risk management activity. Full membership of the Risk Committee, which meets quarterly, comprises Management Board members, Finance Officer, Head of Compliance, Internal Audit,

and Head of Human Resources. The role of the Risk Committee is to aid the Department in embedding risk management and overseeing its risk function, including identification, assessment and mitigation steps, and determining the parameters for escalation of risk/further examination. The Corporate and Strategic Development Division provides supports to the Risk Committee by coordinating the preparation and review of risk registers across the Department.

- The above structures on audit, inspection, governance, compliance, evaluation and risk, help to provide assurance that public funding is invested as it should be. The Department is committed to the ongoing development and implementation of effective governance and control arrangements.

Mission and Goals

The Departments mission is *“To promote rural and community development and to support vibrant, inclusive and sustainable communities throughout Ireland”*

The Goals of the Department are to:

1. Advance the economic and social development of rural areas, including the offshore islands
2. Contribute to and support national regional development objectives
3. Support empowered, inclusive and resilient communities and a thriving volunteer culture
4. Enable the community, voluntary, charity, philanthropic and social economy sectors to contribute fully to civil society
5. Foster and maintain a high performance culture and organisation to achieve our mission in the interests of all communities

To achieve these goals, work is completed within the Department in three programme areas:

- A. Rural development, regional affairs and the islands;
- B. Community development, and:
- C. Charities Regulatory Authority.

The work and expenditure under these three areas for 2021 are covered in Section 3 of this document. Appendices 1 and 2 provide details of allocations and expenditure in 2021.

Bodies under the aegis of the Department

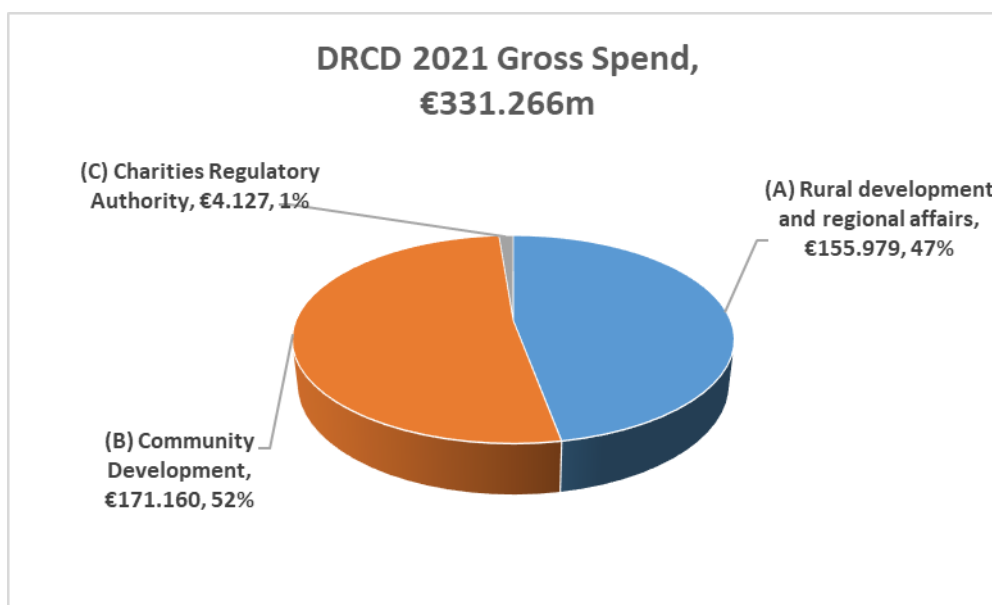
The bodies under the aegis of the Department are:

- The Western Development Commission (WDC) is a statutory body that was set up to promote both social and economic development in the Western Region (Donegal, Leitrim, Sligo, Mayo, Roscommon, Galway and Clare).
- Water Safety Ireland (WSI) is the statutory body established to promote water safety in Ireland. It operates under the aegis of the Department and seeks to educate people in water safety best practices and develop public awareness campaigns to promote necessary attitudes, rescue skills and behaviour to prevent drownings and water related accidents.
- The Charities Regulatory Authority (the 'Charities Regulator') is an independent statutory body which was established on 16th October 2014 pursuant to the Charities Act 2009. The key functions of the Regulator are to establish and maintain a public register of charitable organizations operating in Ireland, and to ensure their compliance with the Charities Acts and the Charities Governance Code.
- Pobal works on behalf of Government, with communities and local agencies, to support social inclusion and local and community development. Pobal operates under the aegis of DRCD, given its remit for community and local development and its involvement in national social inclusion programmes. While the Department has a governance and oversight role in respect of the company, it is worth noting that Pobal also administers programmes on behalf of other Government Departments. For example, administering childcare programmes for the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, which comprises over 75% of its overall financing and work activities.

3. Summary of Activities and Expenditure in 2021

Overview of spend in 2021

Throughout 2021, the Department continued to deliver for communities and rural areas through a coherent suite of supports and investment. In 2021, a total of €331.266 million was spent across three strategic programmes: rural development, community development, and charities regulation.



| €, m | REV Allocation ¹ | Spend ² | Variance |
|--|-----------------------------|--------------------|---------------|
| A – Rural Development and regional affairs | 177.648 | 155.979 | 21.669 |
| B – Community Development | 168.773 | 171.160 | -2.387 |
| C – Charities Regulatory Authority | 4.606 | 4.127 | 0.479 |
| Total Gross Spend | 351.027 | 331.266 | 19.761 |

In 2021, €156 million supported the **rural development and regional affairs programme**. This programme is capital intensive, with 83% of this expenditure invested in capital programmes including LEADER, the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund, the Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS), Town and Village Renewal, Rural Broadband and the CLÁR programme.

¹ REV Allocation and spend figures for 2021 do not include €13.18m capital carry forward from 2020, for use in 2021. This funding was fully used in 2021, on Rural Regeneration and Development (€11.78m) and for the Islands (€1.4m), bringing total spend to €344.45m.

² In addition, €16.86 million was carried forward from 2021 for use in 2022.

Community development spending is primarily current in nature. In 2021, 87% of the total €171.2 million spent under this programme area supported a range of current programmes. This delivered vital support for communities across the country under the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP), the Community Services Programme (CSP), the Scheme to Support National Organisations (SSNO), the Seniors Alert Scheme (SAS) as well as other supports for the community and voluntary sectors.

Spend on the **Charities Regulatory Authority** is all current in nature. In 2021, there was expenditure of €4.1m in this area.

With regard to delivery in 2021, there were ongoing challenges with regard to delivery of capital projects in the context of continued public health restrictions and later in the year supply chain issues and the emergence of construction materials inflation. The Department has structures in place to closely manage capital spend throughout the year and proactively reallocated funding to areas where expenditure could take place. It also worked closely with local government to maximise delivery across all capital programmes, and continuously emphasised the vital importance of capital programme delivery, in particular in the context of driving the economic and social development of rural Ireland.

Key points in 2021

Key points with regard to delivery across all programme areas in 2021 include:

- Overall expenditure of €331.27m was achieved, which represented a saving of €19.76m (or 5.6%), relative to the budget allocation of €351.027m.³ €16.86m of this saving was carried forward for use in 2022 (and was fully used in 2022). The savings primarily related to the Rural Regeneration and Development area, and were mainly due to the impact of COVID-19 restrictions which delayed projects under construction and also delayed new projects entering the construction phase.

³ In addition to this €331.3m expenditure, an additional €13.18m carried over from 2020 to 2021 was fully spent in 2021 (on A.7 Rural Regeneration and Development, €11.78m and A.8 Islands, €1.4m). This additional €13.18m is included in expenditure figures referenced in the below paragraph regarding key point in 2021.

- Expenditure within Programme A, Rural Development, Regional Affairs and the Islands amounted to €156 million, with use of carry forward increasing overall spend in this area to 169 million. Key expenditure areas included:
 - the LEADER Programme, with spend of €56 million in 2021, with over 4,000 locally led rural development projects supported by the end of 2021.
 - the Town and Village Renewal Scheme, with spend of over €24 million in 2021, including a focus on town centre building regeneration, support for remote working hubs, and the introduction of a new streetscapes measure to help improve the visual appearance of towns and villages across Ireland.
 - the Local Improvement Scheme, with total spend of almost €21 million, improving around 600 small non-public roads across rural Ireland
 - the Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme, with spend of €9.5 million on outdoor recreation infrastructure in rural areas, helping to provide local amenity and support rural tourism growth.
 - the CLÁR Programme, with a spend of €4 million on projects within designated CLÁR areas.
 - The Rural Regeneration and Development Fund, with spend of €24 million on capital projects in towns and villages with a population of 10,000 or less, and rural areas across Ireland. This area was particularly impacted by the Covid-19 restrictions due to the larger scale and longer lead in times of these projects.
 - Spend of almost €9 million relating to offshore Islands. This covered subsidising transport services to offshore Islands, and also related to works on Island roads, piers and public facilities. It facilitated 40,897 passenger ferry sailings carrying 407,051 passengers to our off-shore islands. Cargo services carried over 38,000 tonnes of materials in the same period. While the Covid-19 pandemic impacted passenger numbers the continued support of the Department ensured services were maintained throughout.
 - 2021 also saw publication of Our Rural Future, the government's Rural Development Policy 2021-2025 was published in March 2021. The policy provides a blueprint for the sustainable development and investment in rural Ireland over five years to 2025. In addition, progress with rolling out the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund continued, with funding of €84.5 million approved for 25 projects nationwide.

- Expenditure within Programme B, Community Development, amounted to €171 million, and supported areas including the following:
 - the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP), with €45 million in expenditure to support Local Development Companies across Ireland to complete work with marginalised individuals (over 26,000 people) and the groups that represent them (over 2,600 such groups).
 - the Community Services Programme, under which funding of almost €49 million was spent to provide support to over 400 social enterprises in 2021, mainly through a contribution towards staff costs. This programme helped to maintain community services throughout 2020 and 2021, with many CSP organisations providing vital supports for communities and people most impacted by the pandemic.
 - Supports for the community and voluntary sector, totalling €17.5 million which included funding for the Scheme to Support National Organisations (€5.94m), Supports for Volunteering (€5.5m), the Seniors Alert Scheme (€2.3m – supplemented by €3m from the Dormant Accounts Fund), and Public Participation Networks (€2.45m). Again these supports were particularly important in 2020 and 2021 in terms of assisting organisations and communities to navigate the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic.
 - The Covid-19 Stability Fund, which utilised an allocation of €10 million to help support smaller community groups deal with costs incurred during the pandemic and to meet costs involved in re-opening facilities.
 - 2021 also saw continued implementation of Sustainable, Inclusive and Empowered Communities (the 5 year strategy to support the C&V Sector in Ireland) and of the National Social Enterprise Policy.
- Expenditure within Programme C, Charities Regulatory Authority, amounted to €4.13 million and this met the costs of the regulator to carry out its statutory functions and to achieve its goal of regulating the charities sector in the public interest so as to ensure compliance with the law and support best practice in governance, management and the administration of charities.

Other issues in 2021

The 2021 Appropriation Account SIFC notes the issues with regard to projects under the Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS) for which Mayo County Council sought and received payment for a number of projects under the scheme which were not completed, contrary to the conditions of funding. As noted in the SIFC, subsequent inspection by the Department's audit function identified this issue with regard to one project. Further inspections and discussions with Mayo County Council ultimately identified 10 projects for which funding was claimed despite works being either not commenced or not substantially complete. The total value of approvals was €2.4 million, with €2.2 million drawn down for the relevant projects.

A full review was completed by the Department, including an assurance of full disclosure of all issues by Mayo County Council. Following this review, funding for 4 projects was de-committed, with 5 projects allowed to proceed, and 1 further project allowed to proceed in part. On the basis of this agreement, €1.26 million was returned to the Department, which was made up of €1.1 million which had been claimed inappropriately for the de-committed projects, and a €161,400 sanction on the council. This outcome sought to balance the needs of the communities concerned with the need to ensure the local authority was sanctioned appropriately for their actions.

The Department notified both LGAS and NOAC of these issues. It has also put additional oversight arrangements and controls in place. For example, increased inspections are in place for ORIS projects in Mayo prior to payment being made and the Department has supported capacity building within local authorities, including a particular focus on Mayo County Council. It is worth noting that more than 250 project inspections, over 2021 and 2022, have taken place throughout the country across the Departments schemes and no similar issues have arisen.

4. DRCD funding to local authorities

This information is provided in the context of Chapter 6: Central government funding of local authorities. All funding provided to local authorities is from the Departments Voted funds for programmes and schemes, and is accounted for within the Departments appropriation account and is subject to the Departments financial controls.

In 2021 funding from central government to local authorities totalled €5.8 billion. The Department of Rural and Community Development provided €192.78 million of this, which represents 3.3% of the overall central government funding provided. As such, while the funding represents a small proportion of overall local authority funding, it represents a very significant proportion of the DRCD budget, with many of our key schemes either delivered or supported by the local authorities.

The most significant funding areas include:

- €46.9 million to local authorities in respect of the LEADER programme. This funding is then used by the relevant local authorities to (i) directly pay the project promoters delivering projects within their areas, and (ii) to reimburse each local development company for their role as implementing partners delivering the LEADER programme on the ground.
- €41.7 million to local authorities for the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) — this aims to support disadvantaged individuals with lifelong learning and labour market supports, and to address social equality and exclusion issues. The funding is then provided by local authorities to relevant Local Development Companies within their areas to complete work under SICAP.
- €20.8 million for the local improvement scheme which funds local authorities to complete improvement works to non-public roads in rural areas.
- Funding for a range of rural regeneration and development investments including under the RRDF, Town and Village Renewal and ORIS, which totalled €58 million (including €11.78 of deferred surrender from 2020).
- Funding under community development schemes such as the community activities fund (€9 million), libraries development (€7.1 million), the community enhancement programme (€4.5 million), and public participation networks (€2.0 million).

The table overleaf provides detail of total funding by local authority in 2021.

Table of DRCD funding to local authorities in 2021:

| Local Authority Name | Amount Paid |
|---------------------------------|--------------------|
| CARLOW COUNTY COUNCIL | 4,115,598 |
| CAVAN COUNTY COUNCIL | 6,716,986 |
| CLARE COUNTY COUNCIL | 6,177,545 |
| CORK CITY & COUNTY COUNCIL | 13,859,980 |
| DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL | 9,752,327 |
| DUBLIN CITY COUNCIL | 12,410,785 |
| DUN LAOGHAIRE/RATHDOWN CO CO | 1,661,066 |
| FINGAL COUNTY COUNCIL | 3,628,070 |
| GALWAY CITY & COUNTY COUNCIL | 8,735,042 |
| KERRY COUNTY COUNCIL | 7,175,482 |
| KILDARE COUNTY COUNCIL | 4,481,338 |
| KILKENNY COUNTY COUNCIL | 6,264,217 |
| LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL | 5,479,460 |
| LEITRIM COUNTY COUNCIL | 4,068,571 |
| LIMERICK CITY & COUNTY COUNCIL | 8,776,601 |
| LONGFORD COUNTY COUNCIL | 6,086,380 |
| LOUTH COUNTY COUNCIL | 5,014,701 |
| MAYO COUNTY COUNCIL | 8,007,077 |
| MEATH COUNTY COUNCIL | 6,196,827 |
| MONAGHAN COUNTY COUNCIL | 8,414,838 |
| OFFALY COUNTY COUNCIL | 4,824,585 |
| ROSCOMMON COUNTY COUNCIL | 5,716,306 |
| SLIGO COUNTY COUNCIL LOCAL | 4,885,040 |
| SOUTH DUBLIN COUNTY COUNCIL | 3,083,449 |
| TIPPERARY COUNTY COUNCIL | 9,239,538 |
| WATERFORD CITY & COUNTY COUNCIL | 6,215,176 |
| WESTMEATH COUNTY COUNCIL | 8,591,838 |
| WEXFORD COUNTY COUNCIL | 7,130,321 |
| WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL | 6,073,520 |
| | |
| Total | 192,782,662 |

Appendix 1 – Allocation and outturn for 2021

| REVISED ESTIMATES 2021 | REV 2021 Allocations | | | REV 2021 Outturns | | | SAVINGS POSITION | | |
|---|----------------------|---------------|---------------|-------------------|---------------|---------------|------------------|---------------|---------------|
| | Current | Capital | Total | Current | Capital | Total | Current | Capital | Total |
| A - RURAL DEVELOPMENT, REGIONAL AFFAIRS & ISLANDS | 26.70 | 150.95 | 177.65 | 26.41 | 129.57 | 155.98 | 0.30 | 21.37 | 21.67 |
| B - COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT | 151.08 | 17.70 | 168.77 | 149.39 | 21.77 | 171.16 | 1.69 | -4.07 | -2.39 |
| C - CHARITIES REGULATORY AUTHORITY | 4.61 | 0.00 | 4.61 | 4.13 | 0.00 | 4.13 | 0.48 | 0.00 | 0.48 |
| GROSS EXPENDITURE | 182.38 | 168.64 | 351.03 | 179.92 | 151.34 | 331.27 | 2.46 | 17.30 | 19.76 |
| | | | | | | | | | |
| D. APPROPRIATIONS-IN-AID | 13.04 | 29.99 | 43.03 | 47.80 | 33.78 | 81.58 | 34.76 | 3.79 | 38.55 |
| NET EXPENDITURE | 169.34 | 138.66 | 308.00 | 132.12 | 117.57 | 249.69 | -37.22 | -21.09 | -58.31 |

In addition to the above figures, a capital carryover of €13.18 million, carried over from 2020 to 2021 was fully utilised, with €11.78 million in expenditure within A.7 Rural Regeneration and Development, and €1.4 million in expenditure within A.8 Islands. This brings total gross expenditure for 2021 to €344.45 million.

From the gross savings of €19.76 million outlined above, €16.86 million was carried over from 2021 for use in 2022, with €11.86 million used for Rural Regeneration and Development and €5 million for the new Communities Centre Investment Fund. All funding carried forward for use in 2022 was utilised.

Appendix 2 – 2021 Allocations and Outturn by Programme Area

| REVISED ESTIMATES 2021 (€ millions) | REV 2021 Allocations | | | 2021 Outturns | | | SAVINGS POSITION | | |
|---|----------------------|---------|--------|---------------|---------|--------|------------------|---------|--------|
| | Current | Capital | Total | Current | Capital | Total | Current | Capital | Total |
| V42 - RURAL & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT (GROSS) | 182.38 | 168.64 | 351.03 | 179.92 | 151.34 | 331.27 | 2.46 | 17.30 | 19.76 |
| A - RURAL DEVELOPMENT, REGIONAL AFFAIRS & ISLANDS | 26.70 | 150.95 | 177.65 | 26.41 | 129.57 | 155.98 | 0.30 | 21.37 | 21.67 |
| A.1 - ADMINISTRATION - PAY | 6.04 | 0.00 | 6.04 | 6.43 | 0.00 | 6.43 | -0.39 | 0.00 | -0.39 |
| A.2 - ADMINISTRATION - NON PAY | 0.96 | 0.18 | 1.15 | 0.47 | 0.03 | 0.50 | 0.49 | 0.15 | 0.65 |
| A.3 - WESTERN DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION | 2.17 | 0.00 | 2.17 | 2.15 | 0.00 | 2.15 | 0.02 | 0.00 | 0.02 |
| A.4 - RURAL SUPPORTS | 7.24 | 16.00 | 23.24 | 7.10 | 24.83 | 31.93 | 0.14 | -8.83 | -8.68 |
| A.5 - LEADER | 0.00 | 44.00 | 44.00 | 0.00 | 55.95 | 55.95 | 0.00 | -11.95 | -11.95 |
| A.6 - REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT | 1.95 | 1.12 | 3.07 | 1.93 | 1.91 | 3.84 | 0.02 | -0.79 | -0.77 |
| A.7 - RURAL REGENERATION AND DEVELOPMENT | 0.00 | 87.00 | 87.00 | 0.00 | 46.23 | 46.23 | 0.00 | 40.77 | 40.77 |
| A.8 - ISLANDS | 8.34 | 2.64 | 10.98 | 8.33 | 0.62 | 8.95 | 0.01 | 2.02 | 2.03 |
| B - COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT | 151.08 | 17.70 | 168.77 | 149.39 | 21.77 | 171.16 | 1.69 | -4.07 | -2.39 |
| B.1 - ADMINISTRATION - PAY | 4.39 | 0.00 | 4.39 | 3.30 | 0.63 | 3.93 | 1.09 | -0.63 | 0.46 |
| B.2 - ADMINISTRATION - NON PAY | 0.88 | 0.15 | 1.03 | 0.38 | 0.05 | 0.43 | 0.50 | 0.10 | 0.60 |
| B.3 - SUPPORTS FOR COMMUNITY & VOLUNTARY SECTOR | 17.54 | 0.00 | 17.55 | 17.54 | 0.00 | 17.54 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| B.4 - SICAP - LOCAL/REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT SUPPORTS | 45.07 | 0.00 | 45.07 | 45.07 | 0.00 | 45.07 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| B.5 - LOCAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEES | 2.41 | 0.00 | 2.41 | 2.40 | 0.00 | 2.40 | 0.01 | 0.00 | 0.01 |
| B.6 - SUPPORTS FOR DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES | 5.23 | 1.27 | 6.50 | 5.23 | 1.27 | 6.50 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| B.7 - DORMANT ACCOUNTS MEASURES | 10.07 | 2.50 | 12.57 | 9.98 | 2.50 | 12.48 | 0.09 | 0.00 | 0.09 |
| B.8 - PROGRAMME FOR PEACE AND RECONCILIATION | 4.32 | 2.65 | 6.97 | 4.32 | 2.65 | 6.97 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| B.9 – WATER SAFETY IRELAND | 1.18 | 0.00 | 1.18 | 1.18 | 0.00 | 1.18 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| B.10 - LIBRARY DEVELOPMENT AND ARCHIVE SERVICE | 1.10 | 6.63 | 7.73 | 1.10 | 6.63 | 7.73 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| B.11 – COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENT PROGRAMME | 0.00 | 4.50 | 4.50 | 0.00 | 8.05 | 8.05 | 0.00 | -3.55 | -3.55 |
| B.12 - COMMUNITY SERVICES PROGRAMME | 48.89 | 0.00 | 48.89 | 48.89 | 0.00 | 48.89 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| B.13 - C&V COVID STABILITY FUND | 10.00 | 0.00 | 10.00 | 10.00 | 0.00 | 10.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| C - CHARITIES REGULATORY AUTHORITY | 4.61 | 0.00 | 4.61 | 4.13 | 0.00 | 4.13 | 0.48 | 0.00 | 0.48 |

In addition to the above figures, a capital carryover of €13.18 million, carried over from 2020 to 2021 was fully utilised, with €11.78 million in expenditure from A.7 Rural Regeneration and Development, and €1.4 million in expenditure from A.8 Islands. This brings total gross expenditure for 2021 to €344.45 million.

From the savings outlined above, €16.86 million was carried over from 2021 for use in 2022, with €11.86 million used for Rural Regeneration and Development and €5 million for the new Communities Centre Investment Fund.

Appendix 3 – Provisional 2022 Outturn for DRCD

| FURTHER REVISED ESTIMATES 2022 (€ millions) | FREV 2022 Allocations | | | 2022 Outturns (PROVISIONAL) | | | SAVINGS POSITION (PROVISIONAL) | | |
|--|-----------------------|---------------|---------------|-----------------------------|---------------|---------------|--------------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| | Current | Capital | Total | Current | Capital | Total | Current | Capital | Total |
| V42 - RURAL & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT (GROSS) | 194.80 | 193.90 | 388.70 | 202.32 | 170.06 | 372.38 | 7.52 | -23.84 | -16.32 |
| A - RURAL DEVELOPMENT, REGIONAL AFFAIRS & ISLANDS | 33.13 | 169.22 | 202.34 | 28.40 | 140.43 | 168.83 | -4.73 | -28.78 | -33.51 |
| A.1 - ADMINISTRATION - PAY | 6.63 | 0.00 | 6.63 | 6.25 | 0.00 | 6.25 | -0.38 | 0.00 | -0.38 |
| A.2 - ADMINISTRATION - NON PAY | 0.92 | 0.10 | 1.01 | 0.64 | 0.03 | 0.67 | -0.28 | -0.06 | -0.34 |
| A.3 - WESTERN DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION | 2.27 | 0.00 | 2.27 | 2.32 | 0.00 | 2.32 | 0.05 | 0.00 | 0.05 |
| A.4 - RURAL SUPPORTS | 12.52 | 18.36 | 30.87 | 9.26 | 25.08 | 34.34 | -3.26 | 6.72 | 3.47 |
| A.5 - LEADER | 0.00 | 52.00 | 52.00 | 0.00 | 51.98 | 51.98 | 0.00 | -0.02 | -0.02 |
| A.6 - REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT | 2.26 | 1.12 | 3.38 | 1.19 | 0.71 | 1.90 | -1.07 | -0.41 | -1.48 |
| A.7 - RURAL REGENERATION AND DEVELOPMENT | 0.00 | 93.00 | 93.00 | 0.00 | 58.51 | 58.51 | 0.00 | -34.49 | -34.49 |
| A.8 - ISLANDS | 8.54 | 4.64 | 13.18 | 8.74 | 4.12 | 12.86 | 0.20 | -0.52 | -0.33 |
| B - COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT | 157.07 | 24.68 | 181.75 | 169.56 | 29.62 | 199.19 | 12.50 | 4.94 | 17.44 |
| B.1 - ADMINISTRATION - PAY | 4.74 | 0.00 | 4.74 | 4.80 | 0.00 | 4.80 | 0.06 | 0.00 | 0.06 |
| B.2 - ADMINISTRATION - NON PAY | 0.79 | 0.06 | 0.85 | 0.49 | 0.02 | 0.51 | -0.30 | -0.04 | -0.34 |
| B.3 - SUPPORTS FOR COMMUNITY & VOLUNTARY SECTOR | 28.34 | 0.00 | 28.35 | 33.78 | 0.00 | 33.78 | 5.44 | 0.00 | 5.44 |
| B.4 - SICAP - LOCAL/REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT SUPPORTS | 51.07 | 0.00 | 51.07 | 56.06 | 0.00 | 56.06 | 5.00 | 0.00 | 5.00 |
| B.5 - LOCAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEES | 2.41 | 0.00 | 2.41 | 2.31 | 0.00 | 2.31 | -0.09 | 0.00 | -0.09 |
| B.6 - SUPPORTS FOR DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES | 4.33 | 3.17 | 7.50 | 4.33 | 3.17 | 7.50 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| B.7 - DORMANT ACCOUNTS MEASURES | 9.90 | 2.67 | 12.57 | 9.89 | 2.41 | 12.30 | -0.01 | -0.26 | -0.27 |
| B.8 - PROGRAMME FOR PEACE AND RECONCILIATION | 4.32 | 2.65 | 6.97 | 3.79 | 4.68 | 8.47 | -0.53 | 2.03 | 1.50 |
| B.9 – WATER SAFETY IRELAND | 1.18 | 0.00 | 1.18 | 1.39 | 0.00 | 1.39 | 0.21 | 0.00 | 0.21 |
| B.10 - LIBRARY DEVELOPMENT AND ARCHIVE SERVICE | 1.10 | 6.63 | 7.73 | 1.05 | 4.35 | 5.40 | -0.05 | -2.28 | -2.33 |
| B.11 – COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENT PROGRAMME | 0.00 | 9.50 | 9.50 | 5.00 | 15.00 | 20.00 | 5.00 | 5.50 | 10.50 |
| B.12 - COMMUNITY SERVICES PROGRAMME | 48.89 | 0.00 | 48.89 | 46.67 | 0.00 | 46.67 | -2.22 | 0.00 | -2.22 |
| C - CHARITIES REGULATORY AUTHORITY | 4.61 | 0.00 | 4.61 | 4.36 | 0.00 | 4.36 | -0.25 | | -0.25 |

A capital carryover of €16.86m from 2021 to 2022 was fully utilised with spend of €11.86m in A.7 RRD and €5m for B.12 CEP (CCIF).

€14.5m has been carried over from 2022 to 2023, with €10.5m for A.7 RRD and €4m for B.12 CEP (CCIF).

Appendix 4 – FREV 2022 & REV 2023 allocations by Programme Area

| Programme/Scheme Area | FREV 2022 Allocations | | | REV 2023 Allocations | | | Change in total |
|--|-----------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|
| | Current | Capital | Total | Current | Capital | Total | |
| V42 - RURAL & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT (GROSS) | 194,798 | 193,900 | 388,698 | 197,981 | 231,000 | 428,981 | 40,283 |
| A - RURAL DEVELOPMENT, REGIONAL AFFAIRS & ISLANDS | 33,126 | 169,216 | 202,342 | 34,894 | 166,716 | 201,610 | -732 |
| A.1 - ADMINISTRATION - PAY | 6,630 | 0 | 6,630 | 7,477 | 0 | 7,477 | 847 |
| A.2 - ADMINISTRATION - NON PAY | 915 | 96 | 1,011 | 885 | 96 | 981 | -30 |
| A.3 - WESTERN DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION | 2,266 | 0 | 2,266 | 2,382 | 0 | 2,382 | 116 |
| A.4 - RURAL SUPPORTS | 12,516 | 18,356 | 30,872 | 12,351 | 19,856 | 32,207 | 1,335 |
| A.5 - LEADER | 0 | 52,000 | 52,000 | 0 | 46,000 | 46,000 | -6,000 |
| A.6 - REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT | 2,260 | 1,120 | 3,380 | 2,260 | 1,120 | 3,380 | 0 |
| A.7 - RURAL REGENERATION AND DEVELOPMENT | 0 | 93,000 | 93,000 | 0 | 95,000 | 95,000 | 2,000 |
| A.8 - ISLANDS | 8,539 | 4,644 | 13,183 | 9,539 | 4,644 | 14,183 | 1,000 |
| B - COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT | 157,066 | 24,684 | 181,750 | 157,984 | 64,284 | 222,268 | 40,518 |
| B.1 - ADMINISTRATION - PAY | 4,742 | 0 | 4,742 | 5,344 | 0 | 5,344 | 602 |
| B.2 - ADMINISTRATION - NON PAY | 790 | 64 | 854 | 761 | 64 | 825 | -29 |
| B.3 - SUPPORTS FOR COMMUNITY & VOLUNTARY SECTOR | 28,344 | 1 | 28,345 | 19,844 | 1 | 19,845 | -8,500 |
| B.4 - SICAP - LOCAL/REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT SUPPORTS | 51,066 | 0 | 51,066 | 53,266 | 0 | 53,266 | 2,200 |
| B.5 - LOCAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEES | 2,405 | 0 | 2,405 | 2,405 | 0 | 2,405 | 0 |
| B.6 - SUPPORTS FOR DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES | 4,333 | 3,167 | 7,500 | 6,233 | 1,267 | 7,500 | 0 |
| B.7 - DORMANT ACCOUNTS MEASURES | 9,897 | 2,673 | 12,570 | 9,897 | 2,673 | 12,570 | 0 |
| B.8 - PROGRAMME FOR PEACE AND RECONCILIATION | 4,317 | 2,650 | 6,967 | 4,317 | 2,650 | 6,967 | 0 |
| B.9 - WATER SAFETY IRELAND | 1,179 | 0 | 1,179 | 1,424 | 0 | 1,424 | 245 |
| B.10 - LIBRARY DEVELOPMENT AND ARCHIVE SERVICE | 1,102 | 6,629 | 7,731 | 1,102 | 6,629 | 7,731 | 0 |
| B.11 – COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENT PROGRAMME | 1 | 9,500 | 9,501 | 1 | 21,000 | 21,001 | 11,500 |
| B.12 - COMMUNITY SERVICES PROGRAMME | 48,890 | 0 | 48,890 | 52,390 | 0 | 52,390 | 3,500 |
| B.13 – ESF SOCIAL INNOVATION SUPPORTS | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1,000 | 0 | 1,000 | 1,000 |
| B.14 - UKRAINE SUPPORTS – COMMUNITY RECOGNITION FUND | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 30,000 | 30,000 | 30,000 |
| C - CHARITIES REGULATORY AUTHORITY | 4,606 | 0 | 4,606 | 5,103 | 0 | 5,103 | 497 |

Appendix 5 – Detailed information by sub-head/scheme area

DEPARTMENTAL PAY & NON-PAY ADMIN COSTS

For 2021 the Department had a pay allocation of €10.579m and a final pay outturn of €10.394m. This covered payroll and associated costs for 166 FTE staff. The Department had a non-pay administration allocation of €2.252m with a final outturn of €0.937m. The significant admin savings related mainly to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on staff training costs, and travel and subsistence costs – as well as lower than expected building maintenance costs and use of external consultancy.

PROGRAMME A - RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

A.3 WESTERN DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

(2021 Estimate €2.166m – Outturn €2.150m)

The aim of the Western Development Commission (WDC) is to promote and encourage economic and social development in the Western Region, which covers counties Donegal, Leitrim, Sligo, Mayo, Roscommon, Galway and Clare.

It encourages the development of the Western economy based on sustainable development of the Western Region's strength and resources. The WDC operates the Western Investment Fund (WIF) which contributes to the development of the region by investing through equity or loans (but not grant aid) in business start-up, growth-oriented small and medium enterprises and in community-based measures to encourage enterprise development.

The WDC has also been designated the lead agency in the development and roll-out of Connectedhubs.ie, the National Hub Network. The Development of this Network is a key action contained in **Our Rural Future**, and the **National Remote Working Strategy**. The Hub Network provides a shared online platform for hub users and managers that will provide a number of applications, including a booking facility for clients and an integrated suite of hub management tools, such as invoicing and scheduling applications for the hub managers.

A.4 RURAL SUPPORTS

(2021 Estimate € 23.243m – Outturn €31.928m)

In 2021 the Rural Supports subhead was allocated €16m in capital funding to support the Local Improvement Scheme (€10.5m) and CLÁR (€5.5m), and it provides €7.2m in current funding supports the Walks Scheme and other rural recreation measures including Rural Recreation Officers (€4.6m in total), Town Masterplan Supports (€2m) and funding to support rural and social enterprise policy development and implementation (€0.4m). The sub-head also provided €100,000 for the Tidy Towns competition and associated supports. The increase of expenditure of €8.685 million relative to the estimate related to increased funding for the LIS scheme which was funded from savings under the A.7 RRD subhead.

A.5 LEADER

(2021 Estimate €44m – Outturn €55.954m)

The LEADER programme is part of Ireland's Rural Development Programme (RDP) which is co-funded by the EU and the Exchequer. It has been in operation since 1991 and has supported thousands of projects from local community groups and businesses which, amongst other objectives, promote economic development, social inclusion and the protection of the rural environment. This funding is co-financed by the EU at a rate of 63%. The programme is administered at local level by Local Action Group (LAGs) across the country, who are responsible for selecting and awarding LEADER funding to projects within their own geographical area. A feature of the LEADER programme is that it is based on a community-led local development, bottom-up approach to rural development. The in expenditure of €11.954 million relative to the estimate provision was due to a ramp up in demand as the programme moved towards completion.

A.6 REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

(2021 Estimate €3.070m – Outturn €3.836m)

This subhead supports Broadband Officers in each local authority (to assist the rollout of the National Broadband Plan (NBP)), delivery of broadband connection points (BCPs), implementation of the recommendations of the Mobile Phone and Broadband Taskforce, current supports for the National Hub Network and the Atlantic Economic Corridor Initiative, and Digital Innovation Programme which supports innovative digital projects within local authorities. The increase in funding of €766,000 relative to the

original estimate was due to additional funding under the Digital Innovation Programme and was funded from savings elsewhere.

A.7 RURAL REGENERATION AND DEVELOPMENT

[2021 Estimate €87m (RRDF €55m, T&V €20m, ORIS €12m) plus Capital Carryover of €11.78m) giving total allocation of €98.78m] - Outturn was €58.011m].

The Rural Regeneration and Development sub-head had a total provision of €98.78m million for 2021, inclusive of a €11.78 million deferred surrender from 2020. This is part of the Project Ireland 2040 commitment to invest €1 billion to support the regeneration and development of rural towns, villages and outlying areas.

There are three strands to this funding, firstly, the **Rural Regeneration and Development Fund**, which seeks to support ambitious projects of a large-scale strategic nature which have the potential to be transformative for rural economies and communities. The investment from the Fund aims to deliver key impacts in rural Ireland supporting sustainable communities, economic development, job creation and regional growth. More recently, the Fund has been aligned with the objectives of **Our Rural Future**, the whole-of-Government policy for rural Ireland for the period 2021-2025.

In particular, the Fund is aimed at supporting such projects in rural towns and villages with a population of less than 10,000, and their outlying areas. Proposals to the Fund are generally not limited in terms of sector, with tourism, enterprise, community development and other areas all potentially supportable, though the proposal must be strategic, large-scale and ambitious in nature, capable of delivering economic or social benefits commensurate with that scale. Funding is awarded on a competitive basis and proposals submitted to the Fund undergo an extensive assessment process.

Category 1 are large infrastructure projects that are ready to commence, with planning and other consents in place. There is a minimum funding request of €500,000. Category 2 projects are those which require support for further development to ready them for Category 1 status. There is no minimum or maximum funding request.

Secondly, the **Town and Village Renewal Scheme** (TVRS) is designed to rejuvenate small rural towns and villages throughout Ireland. The scheme is delivered through Local Authorities on the basis of project proposals emerging from local community groups. In 2021 this scheme had two elements – the standard

Town & Village Renewal Scheme which prioritised tackling dereliction and supporting efforts to bring vacant properties back into use, particularly for remote working, town centre living and as multi-purpose spaces, and a specific Connected Hubs call for proposals. The primary objective of the Connected Hubs Call was to support and compliment the development of a National Hub Network, which is a key action of – Our Rural Future and the National Remote Working Strategy.

Thirdly, the **Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme** (ORIS) provides funding for the development and/or enhancement of new and existing outdoor recreational infrastructure in rural areas such as cycle ways, walking trails, blue ways and mountain access routes.

There was a shortfall in expenditure of €40.769m under this sub-head which reflected the impact of Covid-19 public health restrictions on delivery of these capital projects. The savings were used to fund additional delivery under LEADER (€11.95m), LIS (€8.69m), the Community Enhancement Programme (€3.55m) and the Digital Innovation Programme (€0.7m). In addition €15m was carried forward for use in 2022 and was fully utilised in 2022.

A.8 ISLANDS

[2021 Estimate €10.983m plus Capital Carryover of €1.4m (giving total allocation of €12.383m) – Outturn €10.353m]

The transfer of responsibility for islands to DRCD from the former Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht occurred in September 2020. This subhead funds initiatives and measures aimed at supporting the social, cultural and economic development of our populated offshore islands to ensure their survival as viable communities. Key activities include ensuring access for island communities and the maintenance and upgrade of island infrastructure, working with the relevant local authorities. DRCD subsidises life-line transport services for inhabited offshore islands. Transport services for 19 islands are subsidised by the Department under various agreements covering passenger ferry (including road transport in some cases), cargo ferry and air transport services. These islands are in counties Donegal, Mayo, Galway and Cork. A programme of contract renewal is ongoing for these services. The shortfall of expenditure of €2.03m relative to the estimate was largely due to delays in delivery of capital works, again impacted by the pandemic and with particular challenges for the islands given their remote location.

PROGRAMME B - COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

B.3 SUPPORTS FOR COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY SECTOR

(2021 Total Estimate €17.545m – Outturn €17.542m)

This subhead provides funding for (i) Volunteering Supports (€5.5m) (ii) Seniors Alerts Scheme (€2.3m supplemented by €3m DAF funding), (iii) Supports for the Community and Voluntary Sector (mainly the Scheme to Support National Organisations) (€6.5m), (iv) Supports for Philanthropy and Fundraising (€0.3m) and (v) Support for Public Participation Networks (€2.45m).

Volunteering supports funds a network of 28 Volunteer Centres across the county, it also supports National Organisations such as Volunteer Ireland and Boardmatch. The funding of these organisations is designed to strengthen and foster volunteerism in Ireland, as well as building an infrastructure and support structure to develop the volunteer movement at a local level. The organisations in each county play a central role in facilitating and supporting the development of volunteering in their areas.

Senior Alerts Scheme funds supports the scheme which encourages and assists the community's support for qualifying older people by means of a community-based grant scheme which provides funding towards the once-off cost of purchase and installation of personal monitored alarm systems. As in previous years, additional funding (€3m) was available and utilised in 2021, from the Dormant Accounts Fund, to ensure that demand under this scheme is fully met.

The Scheme to Support National Organisations in the Community and Voluntary Sector (SSNO) is a key element of the Department's support for the role of the sector in contributing to the development of strong and vibrant civil society and in improving outcomes for those most disadvantaged. The scheme provides multi-annual funding towards core costs of national organisations in the sector, with a focus on organisations that provide supports to those who are disadvantaged.

The Community and Voluntary Pillar is funded by the Department to allow members to contribute to policy making as part of the social dialogue process. The 17 members of the Pillar provide input into various consultation processes into Department strategies, both collectively and individually. The Pillar and the Department meet formally twice a year.

PPNs bring together volunteer-led groups in each local authority area from the Community and Voluntary, Environment, and Social Inclusion sectors. Where community representation is to be provided on certain local authority committees (e.g. Strategic Policy Committees, Local Community Development Committees), it must be sourced through the PPN. Over 18,000 groups nationwide are currently registered

with their local PPN. Funding covers the cost of a full time Resource Worker and the costs associated with office accommodation, infrastructure and materials, along with expenses incurred by PPNs in carrying out their activities.

B.4 SICAP & LOCAL/ REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT SUPPORTS

(2021 Estimate €45.066m - Outturn €45.066m)

This allocation mainly funds the **Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP)**, with some very small elements of funding channelled to a number of organisations who deliver local community development supports. SICAP 2018 – 2022 aims to reduce poverty and promote social inclusion and equality by supporting communities and individuals using community development approaches, engagement and collaboration. The work supports disadvantaged communities and individuals including unemployed people, people living in deprived areas, people with disabilities, single parent families, people on a low income, members of the Traveller and Roma community and other disadvantaged groups

Funding is provided to Local Development Companies (LDCs), to allow them to carry out work locally to help disadvantaged individuals and the groups that represent those individuals. The programme is managed at a local level by 33 Local Community Development Committees (LCDCs), with support from local authorities; and the SICAP programme is then delivered on the ground by LDCs. Ireland has 49 Local Development Companies that act as community partners for government agencies and Departments.

Other areas supported under this subhead include support for St Vincent de Paul and Protestant Aid in respect of their work with marginalised communities, with a total of €1.59 million allocated for this use. The subhead received an additional €1 million in 2021 to introduce, on a phased basis, a number of projects similar in approach to Community Development Projects. This funded eight projects promoting an autonomous approach to community work within marginalised communities, including travellers, Roma, and migrant communities.

B.5 LOCAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEES (SUPPORT)

(2021 Estimate €2.405m - Outturn €2.399m)

Funding under this subhead supports the significantly expanded community function for local authorities arising from the Local Government Reform process, namely Local Community Development Committees (LCDCs) and the development and implementation of Local Economic and Community Plans (LECPS).

It includes a contribution towards additional staffing resources required to support the community function in Local Authorities, and supports a capacity development programme for LCDCs. It supports some 60 or so additional posts. This funding also supports the implementation of the Sustainable, Inclusive and Empowered Communities: a five-year strategy to support the community and voluntary sector in Ireland.

B.6 SUPPORTS FOR DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES

(2021 Estimate €6.5m - Outturn €6.5m)

This funding is provided for the regeneration of the Dublin North East Inner City area. In line with the recommendations of the Mulvey Report, funding is provided for projects across a number of themes including tackling crime, improving employment opportunities and improving the physical landscape. Some of the funded initiatives help families affected by addiction issues and drug related intimidation, others cover physical improvements to the NEIC area, community events, and additional community policing to deal with anti-social behaviour. The investment also funds a pilot social employment scheme for 55 staff to work with childcare, youth-work, eldercare and other projects in the NEIC area, and a number of small grants towards projects in other disadvantaged areas.

B.7 DORMANT ACCOUNTS

(2021 Estimate €12.57m - Outturn €12.481m)

The 2021 Dormant Accounts Action Plan was published in November 2020. It approved funding for 46 measures across 10 Government Departments, with total funding of €51 million approved. These measures are delivered by each relevant Government Department throughout 2021 using voted moneys, with the funding then recouped from the Dormant Accounts Fund. Of the €51 million approved, €12.57 million in funding rested with DRCD for the delivery of 7 measures within this Department's vote. The total

allocated in the Dormant Accounts Action Plan slightly exceeds the voted allocation as there are often small underspends on any particular measure in a given year.

| Measure | 2021 Allocation |
|---|--------------------|
| Social Enterprise Measure | €2,300,000 |
| Senior Alerts Scheme | €3,000,000 |
| Targeted Social Inclusion | €730,330 |
| Pre-Social Cohesion Project | €50,000 |
| Supporting public libraries to address disadvantage | €850,000 |
| Participation and Engagement by marginalised and disadvantaged communities in the Local Economic and Community Planning (LECP) Process. | €200,000 |
| Rethink Ireland (formerly SIFI) | €5,500,000 |
| Total | €12,630,330 |

B.8 PROGRAMME FOR PEACE AND RECONCILIATION

(2021 Estimate €6.967m – Outturn €6.967m)

This subhead supports the implementation of the Peace IV Programme 2014-2020 which funds actions that promote social and economic stability in Northern Ireland and the Border Region of Ireland (Cavan, Donegal, Leitrim, Louth, Monaghan and Sligo. The total value of the programme (which can be implemented over an extended period to end 2023) is circa. €270m, including EU funding, and Irish and UK match funding. It is 85% funded by the EU (€229m), with a matching combined contribution of €41m from the Irish and UK Governments (c. €9m and €32m respectively).

Actions are funded under three themes; Children and Young People; *Shared Spaces and Services* and *Building Positive Relations at Local Level*. Funding has supported the implementation of action plans by local authorities in Ireland and Northern Ireland, including the delivery of a number of Capital Shared Spaces initiatives by local authorities and other local and regional groups.

The SEUPB is one of the North-South Bodies established under the Good Friday Agreement. It manages the provision of funding to projects using advanced funding provided by EU and Irish/NI Departments. The SEUPB monitors and evaluates the programme. It oversees the project application process, monitor projects during implementation, verifies project expenditure and makes claims for reimbursement to the European Commission.

B.9 WATER SAFETY IRELAND

(2021 Estimate €1.179m – Outturn €1.179m)

Water Safety Ireland (WSI) has statutory responsibility for the promotion of public awareness of water safety; advancement of education related to the prevention of accidents in water; instruction in water safety; and the establishment of national standards for lifeguards. The Department provides funding towards core operating costs, which is spent on salary and administration costs as well as specific provision for targeted media planning and buying programme to reduce drowning fatalities.

B.10 LIBRARY DEVELOPMENT AND ARCHIVE SERVICE

(2021 Estimate €7.731m - €7.731m)

The subhead supports the development of the public library service, including the development of library infrastructure (buildings) and also come current initiatives under the new Library strategy. The Department provides capital funding of c. €6m per annum directly to local authorities through the Libraries Capital Investment Programme. This funding is normally provided at a 75% rate of aid and matched the by local authorities. Local authorities spend an estimated €150m per annum on libraries (staff, operating costs and some non-capital works which are not supported by DRCD funding).

Capital funding also supports roll out of the *My Open Library* service, which provides self-service access to libraries that is additional to normal staffed hours. Library members can access a *My Open Library* from 8am to 10pm, 365 days a year. The Public Library Strategy 'Our Public Libraries 2022' commits to extending *My Open Library* to at least 100 branches across the country by 2022 and 200 by 2028.

The subhead also provides a contribution to Local Authorities (maximum of 50%) towards the leasing costs of local authorities for 16 public library buildings. It also supports costs associated with the Public Lending Remuneration Scheme which remunerates authors for lending of their books by public libraries.

2021 also saw a particular focus on remote services, and DRCD provided €400,000 funding to purchase an additional 10,000 eBooks and eAudiobooks to meet the rising demand for online services, for which usage was at unprecedented levels during the pandemic.

B.11 COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENT PROGRAMME

(2021 Estimate €4.501m - Outturn €8.048m)

Funding streams under the Community Enhancement Programme (CEP) is targeted towards enhancing facilities in disadvantaged communities. It provides grants to community groups, with the funding targeted at improving facilities in order to address disadvantage, in a manner consistent with each areas Local Economic and Community Plan. The funding is administered locally by Local Community Development Committees (LCDCs) across the country, with support from their Local Authority. Applications for funding can be made to the relevant LCDC.

Typical enhancements under the Programme include minor renovation of community centres and community amenities, improvements to town parks and common areas and spaces, and the purchase of equipment for community usage. The Programme has also supported energy efficient upgrades, development of community gardens, provision of defibrillators, CCTV, and sports and IT equipment

The €4.5 million CEP launched in May 2021, supporting community groups impacted by COVID-19. This iteration of the CEP provided grants towards projects or equipment enhancing facilities (similar to previous years), and also grants for items that would support groups with particular challenges due to the pandemic. Additional capital funding of €3.5m was vired from A.7 RRD later in 2021 to provide additional supports as part of the Community Activities Fund which operated in 2021 to support groups which were facing challenges as they re-opened to people.

B.12 COMMUNITY SERVICES PROGRAMME

(2021 Estimate €48.89m - Outturn €48.89m)

The Community Services Programme (CSP) currently supports c. 420 community organisations to provide local services through a social enterprise model, with funding provided as a contribution to the cost of an agreed number of full-time equivalent (FTE) positions and a manager, where warranted. The Programme focuses on communities where public and private sector services are lacking, either through geographical or social isolation or because of demand deficits. It supports a range of community business and social enterprises to deliver a diverse range of local services and employment opportunities.

It is a fixed annual contribution that must be co-funded by the organisations concerned through revenue generated from their operations. In 2021 the contribution for each FTE position was €19,033 per annum and €32,000 per annum for each manager position. There are around 1,700 FTEs and over 320 managers supported under the programme. Between part-time and full-time positions there are around 3,000 people employed through CSP funding. The 2021 provision was a €2 million increase on the 2020 provision, and it enabled support for additional people and organisations onto the programme and also provide additional supports to organisations to support the retention of staff through the COVID pandemic.

Restrictions due to Covid-19 impacted negatively on a number of CSP supported organisations during this emergency, for example, greatly reducing their ability to raise revenue from the provision of services and hired facilities. The Department and Pobal allowed the maximum level of flexibility possible under this scheme, in order to ensure that organisations can continue to employ their CSP supported staff and support their communities throughout the pandemic.

B.13 COVID-19 STABILITY FUND

(2021 Estimate €10m – Outturn €10m)

In 2020, approximately 600 organisations were supported to continue to deliver vital services to the most vulnerable in our communities, through the Dormant Accounts funded COVID-19 Stability Fund for community and voluntary organisations, charities and social enterprises. In light of the continuing impact of COVID-19 on the ability of Community and Voluntary organisations to generate fundraised and traded income, and increased demand for critical services in many cases, an additional allocation of €10m was provided to the Stability Fund for 2021, with priority given to smaller community organisations who had not received support to date. Demand for a funding call through Pobal accounted for around €4.5m of this funding, and the remaining €5.5m was allocated to community groups through the Community Activities Fund, with funding decisions made by the local community development committees.

PROGRAMME C - CHARITIES REGULATORY AUTHORITY

C.1 & C.2 ADMINISTRATION COSTS (PROG C)

In 2021 €147,000 in payroll and €79,000 in non-pay admin were provided for administrative costs incurred by DRCD associated with management and oversight of the CRA. DRCD provides services including HR and financial services to the CRA and this allocation is set aside to meet these costs within the Department.

C.3 CHARITIES REGULATORY AUTHORITY

(2021 Estimate €4.37m – Outturn €4.08m)

Charitable organisations are a fundamental part of society and provide substantial public benefit in a variety of ways. Ireland has a diverse charity sector with over 11,000 organisations registered as charities, which include public service type organisations such as major hospitals, universities and government services as well as smaller, localised and community-based organisations. Charities receive support in many ways, including by way of volunteering, donations and State funding

In order for the charity sector to prosper and continue to contribute to the communities in which they operate, it is essential that public trust and confidence exists. The Charities Regulatory Authority (“the Charities Regulator”) was established on 16 October, 2014 pursuant to the *Charities Act 2009*. The Regulator is the State organisation responsible for registering and regulating all of Ireland’s charities. The Authority’s strategic priorities are to Strengthen Trust and Confidence in the Charity Sector; Provide Regulation and Protection; Promote Compliance and Engagement; and Enhance Operational and Service Delivery. The Charities Regulator is independent in the performance of its statutory functions. The saving made in 2021 mainly relates to ongoing recruitment challenges for the organisation with staffing numbers somewhat below their sanctioned level.

The Charities Governance Code, which became mandatory in 2020, sets out minimum standards which charity trustees should ensure their charity meets in order to effectively manage and control their operation. From 2021, charities also had to report their compliance with the Code to the CRA. The Code recognises the significant diversity which exists within Irish charities, ranging from organisations with millions in turnover and hundreds of volunteers and staff, to charities which are entirely volunteer-led with very low incomes.

C.4 CHARITIES APPEAL TRIBUNAL (CAT)

The function of the tribunal is to hear and adjudicate on appeals against certain decisions of the Charities Regulator, under Section 45 of the [Charities Act 2009](#). The Tribunal is independent in the performance of its statutory functions. €10,000 per annum is set aside for its work each year.