

trade unions  
employers and business organisations  
agriculture and farming organisations  
local government  
state agencies  
community and voluntary organisations  
local development

County/City Development Board

A New Vision for  
our Counties  
and Cities





There has been phenomenal growth in the range and complexity of public services provided locally over the past decade or so, as the public service re-shapes itself to cope with new and emerging local needs. Some of these services are provided under the guidance of the local government system; others by new local development agencies operating parallel to the local government system; and still more by central Government and its agencies. All this effort is admirable, but the sum of the individual effort is not always apparent. It needs co-ordination and leadership to avoid overlaps and, indeed, to identify and meet the needs not currently being met.

The County/City Development Boards represent a new way for the public service to think and operate. They draw on the traditional Irish concept of *meitheal* - of working together. The Boards bring together all players locally - the public sector agencies, the social partners and, most important, local communities and the voluntary sector to seek common cause in developing their cities and counties.

I look forward to a new era, where local communities and their elected representatives can shape and influence public policies affecting them.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Noel Dempsey". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Noel Dempsey, T.D.,  
Minister for the Environment and Local Government



## Introduction

In an innovative initiative the Government has established new structures in each county and city. These structures are known as County or City Development Boards. The formation of these Boards has come about on the recommendation of a Task Force chaired by Noel Dempsey T.D., Minister for the Environment and Local Government. The Task Force remains in place to oversee and support the process at national level. The Boards will be led and supported at local level by the county or city local authorities.

## What is the County or City Development Board?

The County or City Development Board will bring together for the first time the key players at local level to engage in a process of long-term planning for the county or city for the next ten years. The process will allow areas to plan for the future in an integrated way covering public services delivered locally, for example, health, education, community development, recreation, infrastructure and employment. The Board will operate in a spirit of partnership with decisions being made by consensus. Extensive consultation with key stakeholders will take place.

local government local development state agencies social partners

## Why are County and City Development Boards being established?

In every county and city there is a wide range of bodies working on behalf of the community: local government, the State agencies such as the VECs, the health boards and FÁS, and local development agencies such as area partnership companies, county enterprise boards and LEADER groups. Each in the main operates in accordance with their own mandate and functions. Each seeks to serve the community better.

But much more could be done if all these agencies and bodies operating locally were given the opportunity to come together and agree a common approach at local level. The Boards have been set up to integrate the work of local government, State agencies and local development bodies.



### What will the County or City Development Board do?

A key role of each Board is to develop and oversee the implementation of an agreed Strategy, a 'shared vision', for the Economic, Social and Cultural Development of the county or city. The Strategy will encompass all public services delivered locally. The Board will also promote and encourage the co-operation and participation of all key local players.

The Strategy will have a ten-year vision, but will be broken into 3-5 year targets. Each Strategy will be a broad framework for public services and local development in each county and city area. It will have agreed targets for the city or county and will identify the agencies responsible for achieving these. It is expected that Strategies will be in place by early 2002. But from the very beginning, the Boards will foster inter-agency co-operation on plans and initiatives between member organisations.

A Director of Community and Enterprise and support staff have been appointed by each county or city council to assist each Board in preparing and overseeing implementation of the Strategy for Economic, Social and Cultural Development.

### Who is represented on the County or City Development Board?

Members of the Board are drawn from the four sectors:

- local government: county or city councillors (the chair of the council and the chairs of the council's strategic policy committees), the county or city manager, and one urban councillor/town commissioner
- social partners: representatives drawn from the business and employers, agriculture and farming, trade union and community and voluntary sectors
- representatives from the State agencies operating locally, e.g. health boards, VECs, Gardaí, Enterprise Ireland, FÁS, Teagasc, IDA Ireland, regional tourism organisations, Údarás na Gaeltachta
- local development: members representing the county/city enterprise board, area partnership companies, ADM-supported community groups and LEADER groups

### **Involving Local Communities**

Consultation with local communities is recognised as an important element in the process. The Boards aim to involve local communities in the process of developing the 'shared vision' for their area. There will be extensive consultation through new community and voluntary fora, comprising community and voluntary organisations in the area. The fora, which are represented on the Boards, will facilitate two-way communication and provide a mechanism whereby everyone can have his/her voice heard in relation to the preparation of the Strategy. They also enable communities to provide and receive advice and feedback on an ongoing basis. As well as that, there will be working groups or committees linked to the Board, which will deal with certain aspects of the Board's work and of the County or City Strategy. These groups might, for example, look at tourism promotion, promotion of the Irish language, youth affairs, rural transport, and so on.

### **Will County and City Development Boards make a difference?**

**Yes!** The County and City Development Boards represent an opportunity for:

- all sectors of the community to come together and agree a blueprint for the development of the county or city
- improved co-ordination of public services at local level and ensuring that these meet the real needs of citizens
- maximum impact of individual groups' efforts through co-operation and co-ordination
- building on the experience and insight which all Board members will bring to the process
- emphasising the need to involve local communities in decisions about their own futures
- meaningful involvement by those who feel marginalised in our society and a vehicle to tackle social exclusion issues in a co-ordinated way
- an agreed vision for the future

### **Where can you get more information?**

Further information about the County or City Development Boards is available from:

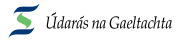
- Your local Director of Community and Enterprise at your County or City Council
- Task Force Secretariat, Local Government Policy Section, Department of the Environment and Local Government, Custom House, Dublin 1. Tel (01) 888 2700 or LoCall 1890 20 2021, extension 2700 or 2102
- The County or City Development Board website at [www.cdb.ie](http://www.cdb.ie)

County/City Development Board

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