

# Development/Business Plan

## **Why Plan**

In community and voluntary organisations people can be so busy with the day-to-day work that it is easy to forget the overall picture.

Planning means your organisation/group have to take a step back from the immediate, and look to the long or medium resources and priorities, providing a sharper focus and purpose to the organisation.

## **Development/Business or strategic plan? – what's the difference?**

**Development Plan** - a plan which outlines a proposed project(s)/ideas.

Voluntary Groups often make the mistake that they are only development groups, however once an organisation offers a service or employs staff for which they receive an income, whether through grants or the provision of a service, then their organisation has progressed from a development project to a business.

**Business Plan** - a project idea that has progressed to a service/business for which it can obtain an income or funding.

The board may still be voluntary but the service/business is now receiving an income through its service or grants and has day-to-day expenditure, staff overheads etc.

**Strategic Plan** - once the business is established, strategic plans are often put in place to ensure the development/growth of that service/business. This is to ensure that the service/business is strategically growing in today's market and it would involve management of staff and the committee.

Whether development, business or strategic, planning is the process of clarifying what an organisation is about, deciding what is and is not, a priority for use of resources and setting out a clear direction and concrete goals for the future.

## **Time period of Plan**

Generally a Plan is developed for a substantial period of time, i.e. three or five years. Within the time span of the plan programmes of work for shorter periods of time, usually one year, are drawn up according to the objectives set down in the plan. These work programmes are then reviewed at various points in the plan's time frame.

## **Benefits of Development/Business /Strategic plans:**

- Clarifying the mission and overall purpose of the organisation/group

This is a sample document. No party should take any action based upon the contents of this material without consulting the relevant legislation and, where appropriate, seeking professional advice or assistance.

- Developing a vision for the future of the organisation/group
- Assessing the impact on the organisation/group of current and future developments, both internal and external
- Reviewing priorities and how resources are targeted
- Ensuring that everyone in the organisation are all coming from the same view point
- Providing the main focal point of a group's priority, thereby saving duplication in work
- Identifying what actions must be taken in order to maximise your chances of success.

All plans will assist groups in grant application. A good plan should cover all questions asked by a funding agency, thereby projecting a first impression of a professional, efficient, effective group profile.

### **Who should write the Plan.**

Preparing a business plan can be time-consuming process, requiring research, commitment and dedication. Ideally the plan needs involvement from all members of the committee, thus ensuring each member will be able to convey the enthusiasm and commitment that is needed for the success of the project.

### **Presentation**

- A plan should be no less than 20 pages but no more than 50.
- First impressions are important; take time to ensure that spelling and punctuation are correct and that pages are numbered.
- Lengthy detailed information can be included in the appendices.
- The final version should preferably be written by one person, for consistency of punctuation etc.

## Suggested Titles

### ➤ **Front Cover:**

This should show a photograph of your service if possible, the name and address of your group, name of the service/business (if different), the type of service/business and the date of the plan.

### ➤ **Index/Content Page:**

Use of an index/content page not only enables readers to find their way around the plan, it also helps to make the plan look more professional. A well-structured index will show at a glance what the document contains and where various information about your business can be found.

### ➤ **The Plans:**

Insert any architectural drawing you have (if any). This will act as a visual aid for your reader prior to the reading of your proposal.

### ➤ **Profile of the Board of Directors:**

Your Business plan should demonstrate that you and other key members of your team have the ability to operate a successful service/business. You should show their names and a brief description of their skills and abilities.

### ➤ **Executive Summary/Proposal:**

This is a brief synopsis of the rest of the document. For this reason it can only be written once the plan has been completed. The purpose of the summary is to give the reader an overview of the service/business, enabling them to review the rest of the plan knowing precisely what your service/business is looking for.

This section should allow the reader to appreciate the amount of funding you are looking for and its purpose. It also needs to reflect your enthusiasm, encouraging the reader to continue in their reading.

### ➤ **The Promoters/Introduction:**

A description about your group; how you were formed, your achievements to date etc. It should focus upon the factors that have led to the need for the new service/project and outline how you will meet that need.

➤ **Profile of your area:-** Consider all of the following subjects:

**Map or area:**

- *Parish*
- *Ordinance Survey Map*
- *Catchment area of service*

**Brief history of area:**

- *How area got its name?*
- *Why.*
- *Physical Attributes e.g. Castle, Archaeological Site/s.*

**Physical resources:- Infrastructure - primary facilities etc.**

- *Roads.*
- *Rail.*
- *Transport.*
- *Schools.*
- *Shops.*
- *Nearest Towns.*
- *Health services in the area.*
- *Facilities amenities in the area, e.g. shop, credit union etc.*

**Population:**

**General Demographic Data:** Population: trends re: increases & decreases including numbers of:

- *Older people.*
- *Travellers and other ethnic groups.*
- *People parenting alone.*
- *People in public rented housing / remote.*
- *Rural areas.*
- *People with a disability.*
- *Numbers under 25 and 65.*
- *Numbers caring for young or older people.*

**Education:**

**Types of Schools:** in your catchment area,

- *Schools attendance rates.*
- *Expected child intake over the next 3-5 years.*

- % of those leaving school before the junior certificate.
- % attaining the junior certificate.
- % attaining leaving certificate.
- supports for young parents.
- opportunities to re-enter education.
- Access supports for 3<sup>rd</sup> level aspirants.
- Extent and quality of adult education provision in the area.

**Housing:**

**Consider:** all types of housing developments:

- Private Owner occupied.
- Private rented.
- Public owner-occupier.
- Public rented.
- Social or co-operative provided.
- Future housing developments.

**Available Services:**

- Childcare Services.
- Training / Education.
- Overview of Transport services.
- Health.
- Cultural / Leisure.
- Special / Additional services, e.g. those for people with literacy needs and / or disability needs.

**Health Services:**

- Access to Health service outlet.
- Number of GPs in the area.
- Numbers of public health nurses.
- Numbers of social workers.

**Community - Community Activity: Community Esteem:**

- Number of community groups.
- Number of tenants / residents associations.
- % of residents attending community groups / facilities.
- % of residents feeling involved in their community.
- Community provided services: Credit Union in the area, summer project in the area.

### **Economic Activity - Direct impact & Economic Development:**

*What do the population do to earn a living? Pay attention to unemployment levels - consider retraining /employment:*

- *Numbers on the live register.*
- *Numbers unregistered but seeking work.*
- *% of population working in full-time and part-time employment.*
- *% on social employment and jobs initiative schemes.*
- *% on long-term sick or disability benefit.*
- *Households headed by an unemployed person.*
- *Levels of underemployment.*

### **Deprivation:**

*Is the area-designated disadvantage - Cluaid housing, Partnership area, Clár area.)?*

### **Your service Market Analysis:**

#### **Methodology: Literature Review:**

- *Any statistical information, market research which is available - Consultations with key individuals and groups Survey-Questionnaire, public meetings etc.*
- *Present services/business offered, actual and prospective , who they are, pricing etc.*
- *Your present service/business or prospective share of the market.*
- *Your Customers, actual and prospective, who they are?*
- *Your services/business future growth prospects?*
- *SWOT(Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) Analysis of your proposed Service/Business.*

### **Conclusion:**

*This should show a short clear and concise review of your findings of your Market Analysis*

#### ➤ **The service/business:**

- *The Site/Facility.*
- *Service to be provided.*
- *Benefits to the Community - Training, employment etc.*

#### ➤ **Mission Statement:**

*A mission statement is the core message of the service/business purpose and what it stands for. The people within the service/business should identify with the mission statement and communicate the core purpose clearly and vividly to people outside.*

➤ **Ethos/Vision statement:**

The ethos/vision of the service/business is the set of beliefs, principles, philosophy or values that guide the work.

➤ **Aims**

The aims are the broad, general statements of what your service/business hopes to achieve. The aims set the priorities for the service/business.

The aims should:

- Come from the mission.
- Be limited in number.
- Show a clear direction.
- Be focused on intended outcomes.
- Be integrated.
- Be realistic and achievable.

➤ **Objectives**

Objectives are specific statements of the outcomes the service/business plans to achieve. The objective is deciding on a structured approach to realising the aims of the service/business.

It says:

- What will change or be achieved.
- In what way/by how much.
- When/by what date.
- When it will be reviewed.

➤ **Development stage:**

Set Targets and Time Frames:

The Development plan details how the objectives will be achieved

For each objective it should identify key tasks and assign responsibility for implementation. It should also set time scales and targets:

- What will be done.
- How it will be done.
- By whom.
- With what resources;
  - Human resource: volunteers, staff and management.
  - Physical: premises, location, equipment.
  - Funding

➤ **Budget/Operation Cost:**

A budget is a financial plan for the period of the work programme showing total projected income and expenditure. Costing of each area of work is difficult but it is important because it helps ensure that the plan is realistic and achievable.

3 years Income & Expenditure including:

- Running Cost.
- Staffing Cost - Wage Analysis etc.

➤ **Management/Organisational structure:**

The service/business needs to ensure that the necessary structures are in place for the implementation of the programme/service.

The organisation structures are the agreed ways of organising for the work to be done. They should include the shape of the service/business, the roles within it, the rules, policies and procedures. They should define who is accountable to whom, for what.

Structures are how the staff, management, volunteers, and other resources including money, equipment, premises, are organised in order to achieve the agreed outcome.

- Constitution/Memorandum & Articles of Association.
- Committee Structure.
  - Roles and responsibility of the committee
  - Staffing Structure.
  - Recruitment Policy.
  - Job Descriptions.
  - Roles and Responsibilities of staff.
  - Training and Development.

➤ A brief explanation on how your group determined your services/business structure.

➤ **Appendices:**

- Constitution/Memorandum & Articles of Association.
- Policies & Procedures.
- Community Development History.
- Proposed leasing arrangement/Site details.
- Map.
- Questionnaire.
- Detailed results of Questionnaire.

## How to use the completed Plan

At the end of this process your service/business will have a comprehensive plan. However it is only effective when it is used.

- It should be a "living" relevant document.
- It should be constantly referred to within the service/business.
- It should be followed and adapted discussed and checked continuously.
- It should be used with all funding applications.

This plan should be used within the service/business by management, staff and volunteers to guide their work process. This plan is an effective tool, giving a comprehensive overview of the service/business, and it should be used with any funding application.

SAMPLE

## **Additional information to consider**

### **What type of service do you want to offer?**

This decision should be based upon the needs of the area - what type of service does the area need? Therefore a comprehensive **Feasibility Study/Business Plan** needs to be undertaken by the Managing Committee to obtain this information. This can be ascertained by the following methods:

### **The Survey:**

These forms can be drawn up by the group to gain the information necessary to apply for funding.

### **Example of some questions that could be used:**

- Would you use a pre-school facility if it were available?
- How many children do you have in the following age-groups?
- What would you use if it were available – Full-day care/playgroup morning or afternoon/school-age childcare service etc.
- How many days a week would you use the facility?
- How many hours a day would you use the service?
- Please indicate start and finish times for the Crèche/nursery that would suit you?
- Why would you use this service ?
  - Return to work
  - Return to full-time education
  - Return to full time training
  - Social reasons
  - Other

**Public Meeting:** Questionnaires can be distributed.

### **Area Profile:**

- Number of families in the area/new or potential housing developments to establish projected population growth. Contact RCCC for information on existing childcare services within an area.
- Number of schools in the area.
- Number of pre-school and school-age children in the area.
- Sources of employment.
- The family unit – number of people parenting alone in the area.
- The number of people on the live registrar in your area.
- Any other unusual characteristics of the area.

**Market Research:** Not only is it essential to find out about your potential customers and what they require, but you must also see what other services in the area are providing?

**NCIP Analysis of Level of Disadvantage** - the social economic and demographic profile of the area.

**What is the profile of the parents using the service?**

- Are both parents in full employment and could more access work / training than now?
- Policy for including parents who are marginalized and how the group actively targets them. - Publicity, word of mouth, PRO on committee? PHN, doctors surgery.
- Are any of the parents on VTOS, CE schemes, Back to Work initiative or some other training.

**Objectives of the service** - does it aim to expand in future, how does it address quality, how can it be made affordable for low income only - tiered structure of payment.

**Services to be provided.**

- Opening hours - (Pre-school & After-school)
- Does the fee structure reflect an awareness/encourage access by the marginalized/disadvantaged/children with specific requirements to access the service?
- Number of children.
- Age range of children.
- How does the service support children with special requirements or of ethnic diversity?
- How will the service provide childcare that will enable those who are marginalized to be included?
- Does the service hold places for children referred from the HSE?
- Needs analysis - (details of research carried out into the needs/levels of disadvantage in the local area.)
- Focus on disadvantage.
- Assistance for parents to gain access to employment or training, especially those who are marginalized.

**Recruitment**

**Consider:**

- Number of people the group assisted through childcare/to gain access to employment or training in the past? (Provision of a placement for person from Community Employment scheme, number of working parents using the service).
- Does the group employ staff without prejudice? (Recruitment policy)
- What training does the staff have to deal with disadvantage and minority groups. (Module on FETAC Level 5 to do with special needs, is equality and diversity incorporated through the course).

### **Other Considerations:**

Does your service overlap, cause duplication or lead to displacement of existing childcare facilities in you locality?

- Where are the children coming from?
- Need for keeping own identity.
- Number of new housing and social housing in area.
- New housing in other areas.
- Number of young families on benefit.
- Consultation which has taken place to date, e.g. RCCC, PHN, Parents.
- Other support mechanisms being used, e.g. FÁS, HSE, CLP. RCCC.
- How do you address the issue of quality in your service?

### **Representation on the management committee.**

- How does it reflect the make up of the community?
- Is it open - are people invited onto it?
- What skills, e.g. management/POBAL administration/childcare/care work are on the committee already?

# Sample Questionnaire

1. Do you have Children                      Yes                       No

(If your answer is no - we would appreciate if you would please answer any questions which may apply in the future)

2. Please state what ages they are?

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Have any of your children special needs?                      Yes                       No

If yes – please elaborate

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Please tick the catchment area that best represents where you live

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Enter name of surrounding villages

5. Please tick the box(s) below that best represent your current childcare arrangements

	Hours per	Days	Days per week	Cost per week
Family member	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Crèche	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Childminder	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
In own home	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Playschool	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Montessori	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**6. Are you happy with your current childcare arrangements in the following?**

Quality	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No*	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cost	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No*	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reliability	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No*	<input type="checkbox"/>
Flexibility	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No*	<input type="checkbox"/>

**\*If No, how could this be improved:**

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**7. If suitable childcare were available to you would you take up ?**

	Yes	No
Further education/training	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Part time work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Full time work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other – please specify below:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comments \_\_\_\_\_

**8. Which of the following suits your requirements?**

Full day care	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sessional Care	<input type="checkbox"/>
School Age Childcare	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other- please specify below:	<input type="checkbox"/>

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**9. What times would best suit your childcare requirements?**

(i.e. 7am to 6pm, 10am – 1.00pm)

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**10. Are there any activities that you would particularly like to see included in your childcare service? Please give details**

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**11. Do you have access to transport - should you wish to send your children to a childcare facility?**

Yes  No

***Thank you for your help.***

## Sample School Age Childcare Questionnaire

**1. Do you work?**

Full time

Part Time

No

**Your Partner?**

Full time

Part Time

No

**2. If so, what distance to you travel?**  miles

**3. Do you have Children**

Yes

No

(If your answer is no - we would appreciate if you would please answer any questions which may apply in the future)

**4. Please state what age they are?**

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**5. Do any of your children have special needs/disability?**

If yes – please elaborate



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**6. Please tick the box(s) below that best represent your current childcare arrangements**

	Hours per Days	Days per week	Cost per week
Family member	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Crèche	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Childminder	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
In own home	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Playschool	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
After/Before School hrs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**6. Are you happy with your current childcare arrangements in the following?**

Quality	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No*	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cost	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No*	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reliability	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No*	<input type="checkbox"/>
Flexibility	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No*	<input type="checkbox"/>

**If No, how could this be improved:**

**7. If suitable childcare were available to you, would you avail of it?**

	<b>i. Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
Further education/training	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Part time work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Full time work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other – please specify below:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comments \_\_\_\_\_

**8. Which of the following suits your requirements?**

a. Full day care	<input type="checkbox"/>	8.00am-6.00pm
b. Breakfast Club(prior to scho	<input type="checkbox"/>	8.30am-9.30am
c. Sessional Care	<input type="checkbox"/>	9.30am-1.00pm
d. After school	<input type="checkbox"/>	2.00am-6.00pm
e. Other- please specify times :		am- pm

9. Would you use the School Age Childcare services (Afterschool /Summer Club) if they were provided within your child's N.S. School?

Yes

No

10. What times would best suit your childcare requirements?

(i .e. 7am to 9.30am. 2pm – 6.00pm)

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11. Are there any activities that you would particularly like to see included in your childcare service? Please give details

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12. Should you wish to send your children to a childcare facility do you have access to transport?

Yes

No

*Thank you for your help.*