**Cover Letter**

Healthy Waterford aims to improve health and well- being of all who live and work in Waterford City and County. We aim to reduce health inequality by promoting healthy living and providing supportive environments. Healthy Waterford recognizes that our health is affected by the places that we live, work and play and we believe that creating health is a shared responsibility. As such all organisations and sectors in Waterford have a role to play in creating a healthy Waterford. We aim to work with organisations and sectors to improve the quality of life for everyone. The Healthy Waterford Steering Committee is the Health and Well- Being Sub Group of the Waterford LCDC. It is an inter- agency group and the membership is made up of representatives from the HSE- Health Promotion and Health and Well- Being, Waterford City & County Council, Waterford LCDC, Waterford Age Friendly Alliance, Waterford Area Partnership, Waterford Sports Partnership, Waterford Institute of Technology, Waterford CYPSC and the Waterford Community Health Network.

**Overarching feedback on the Plan as a whole**

All and all the draft Dev Plan is an impressive document, identifying key strategic aims that look to a brighter Waterford. There are two key points that Healthy Waterford would like to address that we feel are imperative to be included.

**Health and Wellbeing- Explicitly named**

Health is not explicitly named in this document and Waterford’s commitment to improving the health and well-being of its people and communities through reducing health inequalities is not clear: we feel it needs to be. While it is present through out it is not named explicitly. At present there are a number of key frameworks that are being implemented in Waterford that directly work to improve the health and wellbeing of our people. Waterford has a strong commitment to improving health and reducing inequalities and this should be evident from the very beginning of the plan. Other key commitment areas are named- economic growth, placemaking, housing, transport etc and Health should be named as clearly as those. The reader should be clear on the long-term commitment of Waterford to improving health when they read this report.

Waterford is a member of the Ireland Healthy City and County Network - and has been for many years. Waterford is also a Healthy City under the WHO. In addition to this there are three new frame works being implemented in Waterford City and county- all which commit to improving health and wellbeing of people and communities and reduce health inequalities: Healthy Communities (lead agency is HSE and WCCC through the LCDC ), Active Cities (Waterford Sports Partnership) and Active Travel (WCCC – Active Travel team). These three frameworks as well as Healthy Waterford are all long-term programmes with significant funding and commitment for Waterford for the next number of years. This report should demonstrate Waterford’s clear commitment to achieving these outcomes. The reader should be clear of this commitment from the outset.

**Social Determinants of Health**

When we refer to “health” we refer to it in the broader context- not just regarding medical model health; we refer to the social determinants of health which recognise the many different things we elements in our lives that impact our health and wellbeing. The Social Determinants of Health are:

1. Economic Stability
2. Social and Community Context
3. Neighbourhood and built environment
4. Access to health care
5. Education

It is great to see that throughout the draft each of these key areas are often discussed. There are key strategic aims and actions set out to address each of these areas. However- at no point are these key areas brought together, names as the social determinants of health and discussed how, combined, they impact the health and well- being and indeed the quality of life of our citizens. It is the recommendation of Healthy Waterford that a brief discussion on the social determinants of health be included in the documents to set the context and make the explicit connection between the impact of improving these key areas and the improving of health and well- being. Improving these areas reduces health inequalities. This is discussed through out the document but there is no explicit link named of made. It is recommended that it is.

**Where can this be included**

The suggestion would be that this information could be included in the opening chapters- most suitable the Vision and goals. If the commitment is made clear there and the context set then as the reader progresses through the document they will be able to link the key strategic actions back to the determinants of health as they understand them.

**Support for submissions**

Waterford Sports Partnership is a member of the Healthy Waterford Steering Committee and to that end Healthy Waterford supports the suggestions and feedback offered by the WSP in relation to activity and exercise in their submission.