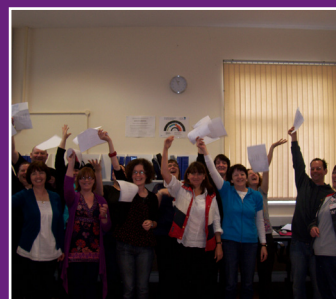




Coiste Gairmoideachais Chontae Dhún na nGall County Donegal Vocational Education Committee

ANNUAL REPORT 2011



1 Introduction



1.1 Vision & Mission Statement

The Vision for Co Donegal VEC

Our Vision

'Excellence in a quality, learner-centred education service'

Our Mission Statement

'To promote, offer and support accessible and inclusive learning which enables students to empower themselves to reach their full potential'

Members of the Co Donegal Vocational Education Committee 2011

Clr Barry O'Neill Chairperson
Clr Martin Farren
Clr David Alcorn
Clr Michelle Bradley
Mr Peter Cutliffe
Clr Brendan Byrne
Clr Dessie Larkin
Mr Francis Mc Daid
Clr Ian Mc Garvey
Clr Elizabeth Mc Intyre
Clr Pdraig O' Dochartaigh
Clr Patrick McGowan

Vice-Chairperson
Clr Joe Doherty
Ms Sinead Gillespie
Clr Jimmy Kavanagh
Clr Jim Lynch
Mr Oliver Mc Devitt
Clr Philip Mc Glynn
Ms Bernie Mulhern
Mr Alan Thompson
Clr Jack Murray
Ms Mary Ellen Orpen
Ms Marietta Heraghty

Contents

1	Introduction	1
	1.1 Vision and Mission Statement	2
	1.2 Foreword from Co Donegal VEC Chairperson and Chief Executive Officer	4
	1.3 Overview of Service Provision	5
	1.4 Map	6
2	Education Plan	7
	2.1 Provision and Development of Services	7
	2.2 Overview Provision Participation Numbers	8
3	Theme 1 Teaching & Learning	10
	Priority 1 Programmes and Support Services	10
	Priority 2 Skill Development	14
	Priority 3 Capital Development Programme	15
	Priority 4 Positive Relationships	21
	Priority 5 Accreditation	23
	Priority 6 Guidance Services	23
	Priority 7 Creativity and Entrepreneurship	24
4	A Progressive & Accountable Organisation	25
	Priority 8 Programmes and Support Services	25
	Priority 9 Skill Development	25
	Priority 10 Capital Development Programme	31
	Priority 11 Positive Relationships	31
	Priority 12 Accreditation	33
	Priority 13 Guidance Services	33
	Priority 14 Creativity and Entrepreneurship	34
	Priority 15 Conflict Solution	35
	Priority 16 Organisational Structures to Meet Roles	35
5	Using Information Technology	38
	Priority 17 ICT Strategy	38
	Priority 18 Technological Support	38
6	Working In Partnership	40
	Priority 19 Public Relations	40
	Priority 20 Partnerships	40
	Priority 21 Youth Services Provision	43
7	Highlights	46
8	Appendices	51

1 Introduction



1.1 Forward from Chairperson & Chief Executive Officer

It is with great sadness that this foreword for the 2011 Annual Report was not completed by Former CEO, Ms MaryAnn Kane due to her early and untimely death in 2012.

We remember her fondly for her role in Co Donegal VEC as Teacher, Principal, Education Officer and finally, as CEO from 2009 until her sad passing in August 2012.

We convey appreciation and pay tribute to the dedicated team in the Administrative Offices, the Schools, Colleges and Centres who supported Ms Kane in her role as CEO and in particular while she fought her illness.

On a personal level, MaryAnn was a great colleague and will be missed by the Staff in the organisation here at Ard O'Donnell, in the Schools, Colleges and Centres and by the wider community. MaryAnn participated in many committees and working groups, both at regional and national level, in particular the Association of Chief Executive Officers and Education Officers.

We also convey appreciation to Staff, Students, Learners, Members of the Committee and the wider community for their contribution and participation in the delivery of services for the continued success of the organisation highlighted in this sixth Annual Report.

We wish for continued success of the organisation and the positivity to embrace the organisational challenges to come in 2012.



Clr Barry O'Neill
Chairperson



Mr Shaun Purcell
Chief Executive Officer



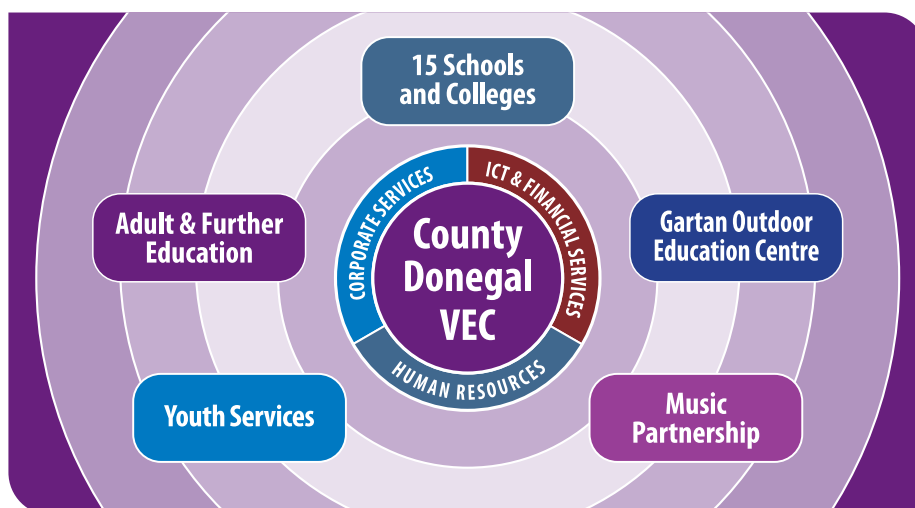
Ms MaryAnn Kane R.I.P
Former CEO

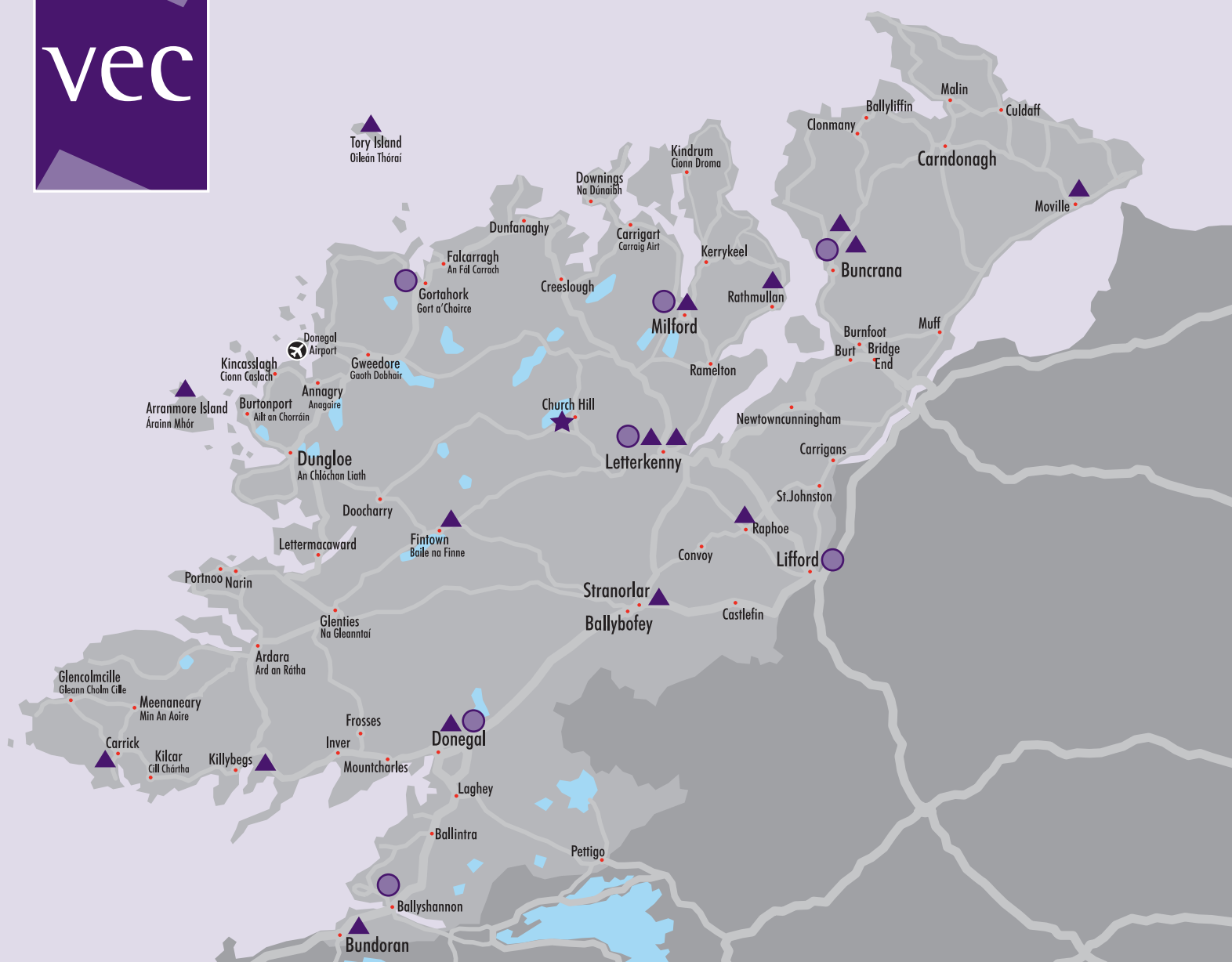
1 Introduction



Overview of VEC Service Provision

- 15 Schools and Colleges, 5 of which are Gaelcholáistí and 2 Island Schools in Arranmore and Tory Island.
- 7 dedicated wholetime Adult Education & Training Centres including 1 in the Gaeltacht area, in Buncrana, Donegal Town, Gortahork, Letterkenny, Ballyshannon and Milford, delivering Youthreach, BTEI, VTOS, Community Education, Adult Literacy and Adult Guidance Programmes with Childcare support facilities located in 4 adjoining Crèches;
- Gartan Outdoor Education Centre – 87 acre site providing outdoor education to the County
- Music Education Partnership – provision of music and vocal tuition to all ages through the Schools and Colleges and throughout the County
- The provision of a Drugs & Alcohol Diploma Course in partnership with the University of Limerick to Counties, Donegal, Leitrim & Sligo through its Co-ordinator based in Co Donegal VEC
- Requirements under the Department of Children & Youth Affairs including, School Completion Programme; National Education Welfare Board and the Home School Community Liaison Scheme.
- Obligations and responsibilities for the provision of the Youth Services Programme throughout the County under the Youthwork Act via its Youth Officer.
- Working in Partnership with Donegal Sports Partnership, and with the Children's Services Committee in the development of strategies for the County





△ VEC Second Level Schools in County Donegal

Abbey Vocational School, Donegal Town
 Carrick Vocational School, Carrick
 Coláiste Ailigh, Leitir Ceanainn
 Coláiste Chineál Eoghain, Buncrana
 Coláiste Phobail Scoil Colmcille, Oileán Thórai
 Crana College, Bun Chranncha
 Deelee College, Raphoe
 Errigal College, Letterkenny
 Finn Valley College, Stranorlar
 Gairmscoil Chu Uladh, Beál an Átha Móir
 Gairmscoil Mhic Diarmada, Árainn Mhór
 Magh Éne College, Bundoran
 Moville Community College, Moville
 Mulroy College, Milford
 St Catherine's Vocational School, Killybegs

○ Adult Education & Training Centres

Ballyshannon
 Buncrana
 Donegal Town
 Glengad
 Lifford Youthreach
 Gort a' Choice
 Letterkenny
 Milford

☆ Outdoor Education

Gartan Outdoor Education Centre,
 Church Hill, Letterkenny

2 Education Plan



2.1 Planning & Developing Service Provision

The Education Plan arises from the provisions of Sections 9 and 30 of the VEC (Amendment) Act, 2001 whereby the Chief Executive Officer is charged with drafting a 5 Year Plan for the organisation directed by the Strategy Development Team.

The Plan sets out the following:-

- The **Objectives** of the VEC
- The **Priorities** of the VEC
- The **Measures to be adopted** to achieve the identified objectives



The Strategy Development Team which is represented by Senior Management across the service, submits an annual Service Plan based on the objectives contained in the Education Plan to the Minister for Education & Skills.

Following the end of the duration of the 2010 plan, the Strategy Development Team compiled and submitted the 2011-2015 Plan for the next five years called "Ag Obair le Cheile".

The 2011-2015 consultation process identified the need for the organisation's second Plan to be concise, relevant and focused, taking into account the current political, economic, social, cultural and technological climate and identified 21 key priorities under four key themes.

Key Themes

1. Teaching and Learning
2. Accountability
3. Information Technology
4. Working in Partnership

2 Education Plan



2.2 Overview Provision Participation Numbers

Figure 2.1
Total number of Learners
in 2011 by Sector

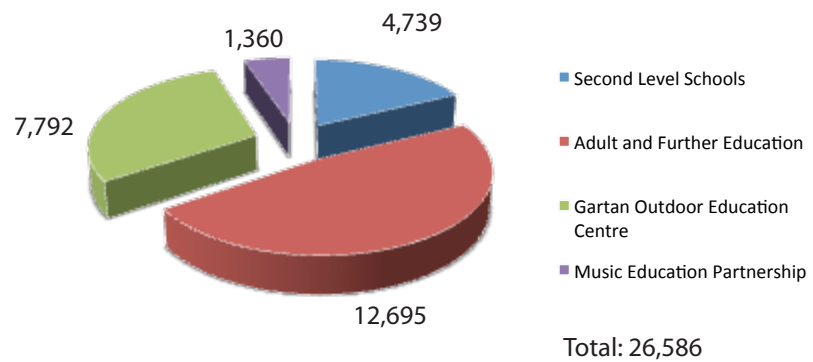
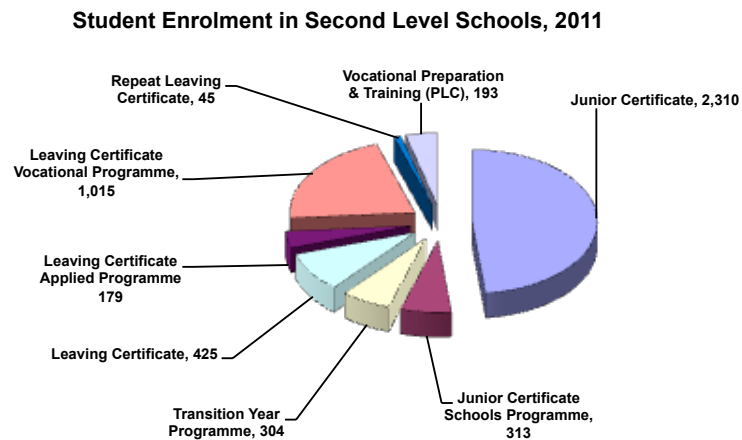


Figure 2.2
Student Enrolment in
Second Level Schools and Colleges 2011



2 Education Plan



1.4 Adult Education Participation Figures 1998-2011

Figure 2.3
Co Donegal VEC Adult
Education Learner Enrolment
Numbers 2011

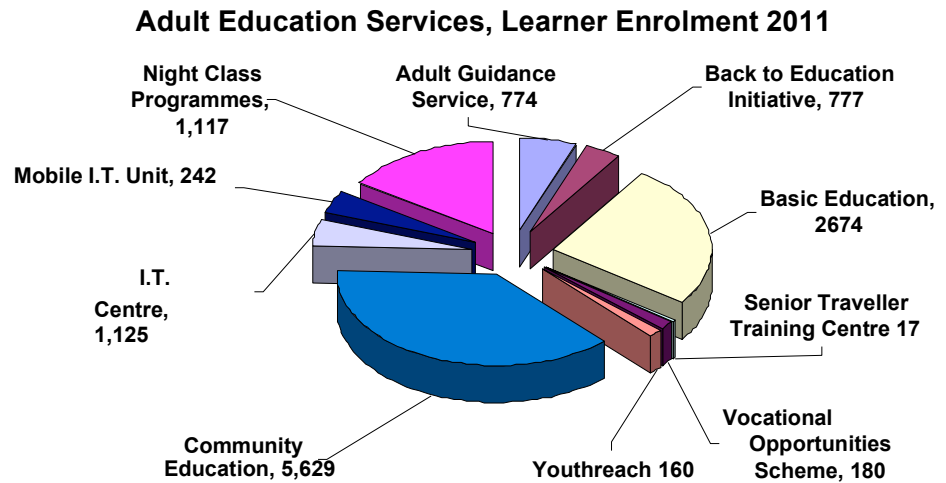
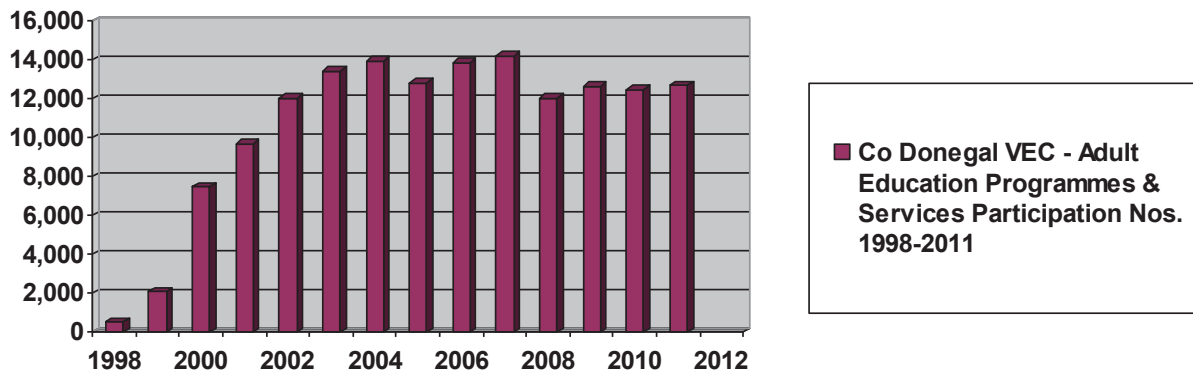


Figure 2.4
Co Donegal VEC Adult Education Services
Participation Numbers 1998 - 2011





Priority 1

Other Educational programmes and support services that meet the rapidly changing needs and individuals society and the economy.

- Moville Community College: offered Adult Education Courses in First Aid, SAGE and further developed its FETAC department
- Magh Éne College: introduced new Post Leaving Certificate Course, Pre-Nursing and Veterinary Assisting at FETAC Level 5
- Three schools continued their involvement in the Instructional Leadership Programme national initiative: St. Catherine's Vocational School, Moville Community College and Magh Éne College
- Gairmscoil Chú Uladh introduced a new Sign Language course into Transition Year
- Gairmscoil Mhic Dhiarmada took part in the Accelerated Reader Initiative. A Home School Community Liaison Co-ordinator was appointed
- St Catherine's Vocational School introduced FETAC Level 6 in Early Childhood Care and Education to provide progression route for learners having completed FETAC level 5
- Coláiste Phobail Colmcille: introduced a certified ISL course throughout the school
- Abbey Vocational School: appointed a Positive Behaviour Liaison Teacher
- Crana College: had Agricultural Science examined for the first time in the Leaving Certificate Examination while Deelee College also introduced this as a new subject
- Polish has become a Leaving Certificate subject at Leaving Certificate level in Errigal College. Errigal College also saw the opening of the new ASD Unit
- Coláiste Chineál Eoghain: introduction of Music and Physics at Senior Cycle. Homework Club also introduced.
- Finn Valley College carried out a review of the LCVP and LCA Programmes. Provision of Evening Course for parents in Mathematics at the college.
- The Music Education Partnership continued provision of individual and group instrumental and vocal tuition. The Service expanded the number of performing groups to include a Jazz Ensemble and Youth Choir.
- VTOS: offered a range of programmes to include ICT and a Course in Caring. The Leaving Certificate is also offered in its Letterkenny Centre.
- The ITTC Centre provided FETAC Level 4 Major Employment Skills for people with disabilities
- The Community Education Service increased number of Gardening Courses due to demand for people to gain expertise in growing their own produce. More Community Radio Courses were requested in 2011.
- BTEI: offered provision of its courses to 777 students in 2011, an increase of 56% from 2010. Additional funding secured through the Government's Job's Initiative enabled an increased range of programmes including Youthwork, Renewable Energies, Childcare, Healthcare, Leaving Certificate, Marine Engine Operations, Horticulture, Media Production.



Programmes were provided in 13 community locations across the county. Programmes were allocated at times to suit the local demand. Bringing education directly into the community has proven invaluable and uptake has been increasing year on year as a result.

3.1 Education & Psychological Services provided:-

• Support to staff

Formal professional development and informal support were offered directly to teaching staff in the five Youthreach centres and in seven of the post-primary schools and colleges which included the following:

- Developing procedures for formal assessment
- Providing training in literacy and numeracy test batteries
- Developing whole-school approaches to discipline and classroom management
- Developing and reviewing Individualised Education Plans
- Developing strategies for dealing with young persons who have specific learning difficulties
- Facilitating integration of students with special educational needs
- Interpretation of cognitive functioning and language assessment profiles
- Reviewing Critical Incident Plans
- Reviewing referral documents from schools/HSE into Youthreach centres

• Support to Students and Learners

The presenting problems of young people referred for assessment were diverse in nature but can broadly be categorised under Special Educational Learning Needs or Social, Emotional Behavioural Difficulties. During the year, seven centres made referrals for psychological interventions. Support for students and learners in some cases required extended networking with Health and other services. In particular, close collaborative work was undertaken with colleagues in the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS). Individual post-assessment support was provided to five young people over a period of time ranging from five to eight weeks. These interventions involved solution-focused problem solving strategies and cognitive behavioural therapy approaches.

• Support to Parents

Assessment work undertaken with students aimed to support parents both formally and informally by providing professional pre-assessment briefings and post-assessment feedback together with recommendations regarding the needs of the referred young people. Review meetings were also held throughout the year with parents to chart the progress of students with Special Educational Needs. Collaborative meetings were also held between School/ College/Centre management and parents to plan post-school/Youthreach transitions to work or further study for young people with special educational needs.



Student Support Services

The Student Support Services Section of Co Donegal VEC provides educational support through Corporate Services in the form of grant aid to Donegal students attending School/College/University in the Republic of Ireland, Northern Ireland, England, Scotland and Wales.

Funding is provided under the three Schemes as follows:-

(i) Vocational Education Committee Scholarship Third Level Maintenance Grant Scheme (VEC) covers students attending approved honours degree courses in third level Institutions, including Universities. It also caters for students pursuing honours degree courses in Institutes of Technology, students pursuing Higher National Diploma courses in Northern Ireland, students progressing to approved degree courses in Northern Ireland, students progressing to approved degree courses in third-level Institutions in other EU member States and students pursuing post-graduate courses in Ireland.

(ii) Third Level Trainee Maintenance Grant Scheme (TLT) covers two year Higher Certificate and three-year Ordinary Degree courses, pursued in the Institutes of Technology.

(iii) Post-Leaving Certificate Third Level Maintenance Grant Scheme (PLC) covers approved Post-Leaving Certificate courses of at least one-year duration run in approved PLC Centres throughout the country. The Student Support Section provides support and guidance to the public by attending Fairs, Career Days and Open Days and providing Information Talks to Leaving Certificate students and their parents.

The total number of grant forms received for the 2011 academic year amounted to 3,138 These forms are categorised under various headings as shown in below.

Student Support Services Section 2011/2012 Annual Report Stats

Applications Received

No of Applications

Funding Awarded - Level 7 Courses	1269
Funding Awarded - Level 8 or higher Courses	876
Funding Awarded - Level 5 and 6 Courses	159
Cancelled	409
Not Eligible	261
Sent to DCC	164
Total number of applications received	3,138

In total 3,138 grant applications have been received, of which 2,304 were successful in being awarded funding Figure 3.2.2 shows the number of grants awarded and the level of course under which each has been approved

**Type of Grant****No of Awards**

Adjacent 100%	387
Adjacent 75%	11
Adjacent 50%	18
Adjacent 25%	7
Adjacent Special Rate	417
Non Adjacent 100%	529
Non Adjacent 75%	16
Non Adjacent 50%	28
Non Adjacent 25%	17
Non Adjacent Special Rate	438
Fees Only	436

Total number of awards made**2304****3.2.2 The Student Support Services User Group**

The Student Support Services User Group which comprises seven other VECs throughout the country have jointly introduced a new Student Support software package which will continue to review, upgrade and improve efficiency and effectiveness to meet requirements.



Priority 2

Integrate generic skill development within all education programmes

- A Whole School Approach to Literacy has been developed in a number of colleges including, Moville Community College, Coláiste na Carraige, Magh Éne College, Deelee College with Finn Valley College introducing the DEAR Programme and Coláiste Chineál Eoghain added Literacy & Numeracy Plans to subject departments. Staff have received training in Literacy and Numeracy in a number of locations including Deelee College
- DEIS Plans are undergoing continual review in Errigal College with ICT classes also being undertaken by each year group
- Investment in ICT was also a factor in Crana College including the installation of interactive projectors, e-portal and computer generated reports
- Coláiste Phobail Colmcille: students from Tory Island took part in a radio production which they composed, edited and performed
- St Catherine's Vocational School introduced ECDL into the Transition Year programme
- Study Skills modules were offered for students in both Coláiste Chú Uladh and Magh Éne College
- Mulroy College: introduced mixed ability teaching for Junior Cycle
- Coláiste Mhic Dhiarmada provided an After-School Coder DoJo Computer Programme in conjunction with the local development and employment agency.
- The ITTC Centre: provided Basic Maths and English skills to all Learners participating in all Contract Training Programmes.
- The Donegal Adult Learner Guidance Service: delivered the *Winning New Opportunities Programme* within VTOS and BTEI groups. The Programme builds confidence and skills in preparing for jobsearch and interviews using cutting edge techniques to help participants turn negatives into positives and to build the capacity to confidently embrace self-promotion.
- In 2011, BTEI began the process of establishing a panel of specialised Tutors to deliver the broad range of certified courses.

Priority 3

Maintain and enhance quality standards across all education programmes and Schools, Colleges and Centres

- A number of Department of Education and Skills' Subject Inspections were undertaken, including Incidental Inspections in Schools and Colleges: Magh Éne College in Science; Coláiste na Carraige, Deelee College and Crana College in DCG; Mulroy College in Woodwork/Construction; and Finn Valley College in English.
- Management Leadership and Learning /Whole School Evaluation Inspections were also undertaken by the Department Inspectorate in Moville Community College and Errigal College.
- All Schools and Colleges have commenced work on the School Self-Evaluation process.
- Quality Assurance training was provided for all staff in the ITTC Centre.



Figure 3.5

National Qualifications Framework (NQF)



Capital Development Programme

In keeping with the objectives of the Education Plan, the Committee continues to improve the physical teaching and learning environment in all its schools, colleges and centres through a comprehensive Capital Development Programme.

Finn Valley College, Stranorlar

New School of 3,452 m² – on Committee's 6.79 acre site at Drumboe Lower

Substantial Completion of the new Finn Valley College Building was achieved on Friday 5th September 2011. The School opened its doors to the Staff and Students for the first time on Monday 8th September 2011.

This marked a significant milestone in the combined efforts by the relevant parties to ensure that adequate and modern permanent accommodation was provided for Finn Valley College which had up to that point remained on the existing and restricted site at Lower Main Street, Stranorlar from 1939.

Coláiste Ailigh, Leitir Ceanainn

Provision of New School of 3,854m² for 350 pupil place school under the methodology of the Public Private Partnership Provision (PPP)

Following analysis of Tenders received for the construction of a number of Schools under 'Schools Bundle 3, the consortium BAM PPP were appointed as preferred tenderer.

Following their appointment, BAM PPP commenced immediately with the process of applying for Full Planning Permission/Fire Safety Certification/Disability Access Certification for each of the Schools in the Bundle 3. It is envisaged that construction of the new Coláiste Ailigh Building will commence in the late Spring/early Summer of 2012.

Deele College, Raphoe

Provision of additional permanent accommodation

In January 2011, the Department of Education and Skills approved of a revised long-term Projected Enrolment of 550 pupils for the College. The Minister for Education and Skills advised of the extension and refurbishment project to progress to Brief Formulation Report/Schedule of Overall Accommodation and into Architectural Planning during 2011.

In September 2011, the Department of Education and Skills confirmed the delegation of responsibility for the delivery of the Project to Co Donegal VEC on a 'Devolved' basis, subject to:-



1. The new accommodation to be completed by September 2014
2. The new accommodation to be delivered within an agreed overall project cost.
3. Co Donegal VEC entering into a Service Level Agreement with the Department of Education and Skills for the delivery of this devolved project.

The Service Level Agreement, inclusive of Project Brief and Budgets were formally signed in December 2011. The Procurement of the Design Team will begin in early 2012.

Coláiste na Carraige (formerly Carrick Vocational School)

Request for Additional Accommodation

Following an application to the Department of Education and Skills, and subsequent visit by the Department's Senior Inspector, the Department, approved of an all-in grant of €100,000 for the Design & Construction of:-

- 1 x 55m² Learning Support Room, and
- 2 x 10m² Pastoral Offices

Following receipt of the above grant approval, Co. Donegal VEC subsequently procured the services of a Consultant Architect to provide Design & Contract Supervision Services for the project. Planning Permission has been sought for the new accommodation and it is envisaged that the project will proceed to Tender and Construction during 2012.

Crana College Buncrana

Proposed Campus Development in Buncrana involving Crana College, Buncrana, Gaelscoil Bhun Cranncha and Coláiste Chineál Eoghain, Bun Cranncha

The Department of Education and Skills has continued to advise that the progression of the site acquisition for the proposed Campus Development would be considered in the context of the Department's Multi-Annual School Building and Modernisation Programme and that it would not be possible to give an indicative timeframe for the progression of the Site Acquisition. The Committee will continue to engage with both the Department of Education and Skills and Donegal Co Council to progress this topic during the 2012 year.

Errigal College, Letterkenny

Establishment of an ASD Unit

Following confirmation by the NCSE (National Council for Special Education) in March 2011 that a Post Primary ASD Unit will commence in the School from September 2011, the Department of Education and Skills approved an all-in grant of €330,000 for the Design & Construction of an ASD Unit at the College.

Following receipt of the above grant approval, Co Donegal VEC subsequently procured the services of a Consultant Architect to provide Design & Contract Supervision Services for the project. Planning Permission has been sought for the new accommodation and it is envisaged that the project will proceed to Tender and Construction during 2012.



Gairmscoil Chú Uladh, Beál an Átha Móir

Request for Additional Accommodation

Following an application to the Department of Education and Skills, the Department approved of an all-in grant of €200,000 for the Design & Construction of:-

- 2 x 49m² General Classrooms
- 3 x 10m² Pastoral Offices
- 1 x 22m² Principal's Office

Following receipt of the above grant approval, Co Donegal VEC subsequently procured the services of a Consultant Architect to provide Design & Contract Supervision Services for the project. Planning Permission has been sought for the new accommodation and it is envisaged that the project will proceed to Tender and Construction during 2012.

Gairmscoil Mhic Diarmada, Árainn Mhór

Replacement of dilapidated prefabricated classrooms with permanent accommodation

The construction of the new permanent accommodation was completed in the Summer of 2011. The new accommodation compliments the existing permanent accommodation on site and is an important addition to the educational facilities at the School.

Moville Community College

Phase II of Permanent Accommodation – Area of Accommodation 2,775 m²

The outstanding balance of permanent accommodation namely 2,775m² from the 5009 m² approved in 2001 continues to be the subject of ongoing correspondence and discussions with the Department of Education and Skills. A revised Form SLE (Application for Capital Funding for Major Capital Works for Second Level Schools) was issued to the Department of Education and Skills in September 2010.

On foot of receipt of the above application, the Department subsequently increased the Band Rating of the project from 2.5 to 2.2 in October 2011, in accordance with its Amended Criteria for Prioritising Large Scale Projects (Primary and Post Primary)

The Committee is committed to liaising with the Department of Education and Skills to ensure that the balance of Permanent Accommodation is provided at an early date on site.



Summer Works Scheme 2011

Co Donegal VEC submitted 7 Applications to the Department of Education and Skills under the above Scheme. In two separate Press Releases in March and April 2011, the Department of Education and Skills, announced details of projects approved under the Summer Works Scheme.

Details of the Projects approved for Schools under the aegis of Donegal VEC are listed hereunder:-

	School	Project	Budget Approved € (inc Fees & VAT)
1.	Deele College, Raphoe	Roofing Works	28,488.00
2.	Errigal College, Letterkenny	Electrical Works	46,192.00
3.	St. Catherine's Vocational School Killybegs	Electrical Works	166,438.00

Emergency Works Grant – Projects Approved in 2011

The following applications were approved by the Department of Education and Skills under the Emergency Works Grant (EWG) during 2011:-

	School	Project	Budget Approved € (inc Fees & VAT)
1.	Adult Education and Training Centre, Buncrana	External Plastering	33,230.00
2.	Carrick Vocational School	Water Caloifier Works	15,202.00
3.	St. Catherine's Vocational School Killybegs	H.E. Room Works	20,040.00



Better Energy Workplaces (SEAI)

As part of an overall application to the SEAI, led by Co. Kildare VEC and the Transforming Public Services Unit of the IVEA, 2 schools under the aegis of Co Donegal VEC i.e. the Abbey Vocational School, Donegal Town and Errigal College, Letterkenny, were successful in being granted funding to undertake works under the above programme.

The overall application to the SEAI included 26 Schools and Centres from 10 VECs and 2 National Schools. The scope of the works involved at both schools included the following:-

1. Errigal College – Upgrade of existing Light Fittings to more energy efficient alternatives
2. Abbey Vocational School, Donegal Town - Upgrade of existing Light Fittings to more energy efficient alternatives and external cavity wall insulation.

In addition, and as part of the above works, both Schools were provided with a highly innovative ICT power management component.

Due to the innovative nature of the project, 80% of the overall funding was approved/provided by the SEAI. The remaining 20% was funded from VEC funding sources. The projects involved were focused on maximizing energy savings.



Priority 4

Promote positive relationships using a 'restorative practices' approach

Focus on Restorative Practice*

In 2011, Co Donegal VEC was awarded €100,000 from the Peace III programme to run a two year project to further embed restorative practice in post-primary schools, Youthreach centres and youth work organisations across the county. Co Donegal VEC has been involved in such practice for many years and Peace III has provided the county with a great opportunity to work towards Donegal as a restorative county for young people and consolidate this practice.

The project has three elements:-

1. Training

One hundred staff from across the participating organisations were trained by the University of Ulster's Restorative Practice Team in November 2011, to enable them to further the use of Restorative Practice methods in their work.

2. Research

The research element, which is also being carried out by the University of Ulster's Restorative Practice Team (Dr Derick Wilson, Tim Chapman and Hugh Campbell) is seeking to ascertain where the Youthreach Centres, Schools and Youth Services are in terms of the use of Restorative Practice as a means of resolving conflict situations and restoring relationships and to develop a method of measuring and evaluating progress towards embedding Restorative Practice in these centres/organisations throughout the lifetime of the project. Areas covered by the research include, for example, levels of exclusion, attendance and absences, incidences of bullying, racism, disruptive behaviour, drug use, verbal/physical abuse etc. In 2012 they will be able to avail of a modest amount of funding to be used as they see necessary to embed practice into their centres amongst staff and young people.

3. Organisational activity

All five Youthreach Centres, along with fourteen post-primary schools (including the VEC's own Crana College; Errigal College; Finn Valley College; St Catherine's Vocational School, Killybegs; Magh Éne College, Bundoran; Gairmscoil Mhic Diarmada, Arranmore Island; Gairmscoil Chú Uladh, Béal an Átha Móir and Mulroy College), Donegal Youth Service and Foróige have embarked on the project to embed restorative practice into their centres over the next two years.

The project will come to an end through a closing conference which will share learning from the project in May 2013.

* (This Project is supported by PEACE III Programme managed for the Special EU Programmes Body by Donegal County Council)

- Restorative Justice training was undertaken in a number of Schools and Colleges, including Errigal College, Crana College, Gairmscoil Mhic Dhiarmada, Finn Valley College, Coláiste na Carraige and Magh Éne College
- Finn Valley College saw the restructuring of the Pastoral Care Team with a revised Care Team model implemented
- Deele College was involved in the Berlin Wall Project in conjunction with Strabane District Council
- Big Sister Big Brother Mentoring Programme for students is also operating successfully in Coláiste Chú Uladh and Magh Éne College
- Mulroy College have introduced a *10 minute* registration class to enhance the provision of pastoral care.





Priority 5

Proactively promote the option of accreditation as part of programmes provided by Co Donegal VEC

- OCCR Accredited ICT programme was introduced into Transition Year in Magh Éne College
- Moville Community College offered its Transition Year Students First Aid while also offering a FETAC Award for Moderate GLD Students
- SNAs completed a First Aid programme in a number of Schools and Colleges including Mulroy, Finn Valley and Magh Éne Colleges
- Gairmscoil Chú Uladh Students received external validation for courses completed in: First Aid, Sign Language, Safe Driving and Food Courses with St Catherine's Vocational School Students being recognised for Sign Language & First Aid
- A number of Schools and Colleges saw Students receive Awards as part of their completion of the President's Award with Gaisce including, Gairmscoil Chú Uladh, Magh Éne College, Errigal College and St Catherine's Vocational School Killybegs
- Coláiste Phobail Colmcille students received awards from Fáilte Ireland as well as a successfully completed Online Health and Safety Course
- Cross border KEY & LET Programmes were successfully completed with Students receiving recognition for their work in, St Catherine's Vocational School, Finn Valley College, Magh Éne College and Moville Community College
- Two students from Coláiste Chineál Eoghain undertook the Mathematical Enrichment Programme at NUI Maynooth while the Irish Computer Society awarded Coláiste Chineál Eoghain F1 team 3rd place in Ireland.

Priority 6

Consolidate the provision of guidance services provided to students

- The Whole School Guidance Programme is under continual review and development in all VEC Schools and Colleges with Boards of Management approving Guidance Plans and Evaluations carried out on an on-going basis.
- The Donegal Adult Learner Guidance Service provides comprehensive ongoing and pre-exit guidance to adults on VEC adult education programmes and pre-entry guidance to those considering programmes of education and training delivered by external providers.



Priority 7

Stimulate a spirit of creativity and entrepreneurship in all Schools, Colleges and Centres

- Transition Year and Leaving Certificate Vocational Programmes undertaken in each School and College has students successfully completing Work Experience Placements in partnership with local employers
- Many Schools and Colleges compete in the County Enterprise Programme which involved Students setting up and running their own Mini Company. Those involved include, Coláiste Ailigh, St Catherine's Vocational School, Coláiste Chineál Eoghain, Abbey Vocational School, Errigal College and Magh Éne College
- Errigal College also boasts a proud tradition of excellence with Students taking 3rd place at the BizSim competition
- Deelee College visited Donegal Creameries while also involved in a Work Shadowing Module and the Junior Achievement Ireland Banking/Saving Programme
- Gairmscoil Chú Uladh, Coláiste na Carraige, Magh Éne College and Errigal College worked with the local branch of AIB in the Build a Bank Initiative
- Art Students in Crana College were involved in 'Creative Engagement' and also the 'Rivers of the World' project with the British Council in London. Three teachers from Preciuos College, Uganda spent three weeks in the College
- Moville Community College also had students successfully take part in the NAPDs Creative Engagement Programme as well as Junk Couture
- St Catherine's Vocational School, Killybegs had students participate in Young Social Innovators and the Young Scientist programmes
- Many Schools and Colleges took part in the Young Scientist Exhibition with students from St Catherine's Vocational School, Magh Éne College, Coláiste Ailigh and Gairmscoil Chú Uladh exhibiting their projects
- New modules delivered such as Thermal Insulation Level 5 to cater for local industry demands to Students in the ITT Centre
- The Music Education Partnership provided instrumental and voice tuition in 10 VEC Schools, Colleges and Centres around the county.



Priority 8

Adapt the Structures and Systems of the Organisation to enable it to carry out its new and enhanced functions

- A number of Schools and Colleges have installed e-portal to enhance the ability of the school to manage information relating to Students. A number of key duties in Schools and Colleges have been reassigned to take account of a number of changes. During 2011, a further cohort of Schools and Colleges joined the Part-Time Teacher Online Claim system.

Priority 9

Review the legislative/governance requirements underpinning Co Donegal VEC and ensure the implementation of the outcomes of this process

- Co Donegal VEC is governed by relevant legislative requirements and through Committee meetings and related meetings of Sub-Committees (Boards of Management, Finance and Audit, Adult Education Board and Youth Sub-Committee). The organisation implements all necessary actions to ensure compliance with legislative and governance requirements laid down by the Department of Education & Skills
- The following Audits were carried out during 2011: Comptroller & Auditor General (C&AG) Audit of Accounts for 2010; The VSSU (Vocational Support Services Unit) Internal Audit (General); Training Workshops (2) on Transfer of School Based Bank Accounts to VEC; Peace III Inspections- Donegal County Council and SEUPB.
- Of particular importance during 2011 was the transfer of School Based Bank Accounts to the VEC.
- A meeting of the Section 29 Appeals Sub-Committee was held during 2011. This Sub-Committee processes appeals to Expulsions, Refusals to Enrol and Suspensions in a school or college under the Education Act, 1998.
- During 2011 the Health & Safety Sub-Committee regularly met to review the Health & Safety Policy of Co Donegal VEC as part of corporate governance. A report is being prepared for submission to Committee stage.



Corporate Governance – Financial Report

Overview

Finance Strategy

The objective of the Finance Function is to support the Committee in the achievement, within Budget, of objectives set out in the Service Plan. Finance Support includes decision making support, corporate control of public money, transaction processing and Statutory Accountability.

Statutory Accountability

Strict accountability requirements apply to the VEC. These requirements include the preparation of Annual Accounts in a format prescribed by the Department of Education and Skills and the Audit of these Accounts by the Comptroller and Auditor General. Financial Control Systems based on detailed Policies and Procedures are in place to ensure compliance with these requirements and to ensure the effective achievement of objectives.

Comments on Performance

The Finance Division managed and administered 90 Programme Budgets of recurrent expenditure totalling €54.15 million and a similar number of Capital Projects, in association with the Committee's Building Services and Estates Management Section, totalling €5.41 million, a total spend of €59.56 million. The continued pattern of decrease in approved budgets presented major challenges for Budget holders in the delivery of services.

Donegal VEC employed a total of 1,417 staff making it one of the largest Employers in the County.

Payments totalling €5.439 million were processed in favour of 880 students who attended recognised Third Level Colleges in Ireland and the UK together with 161 students who attended Post Leaving Certificate (PLC) Courses in Second Level Schools throughout the County.

Payments totalling €2.6 million were processed in favour of Trainees attending the various Programmes under the Further and Adult Education Services such as Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme (VTOS), Youthreach (YR) and Senior Traveller Training Centre (STTC) together with a wide range of courses provided on a Contract Training basis on behalf of FÁS.



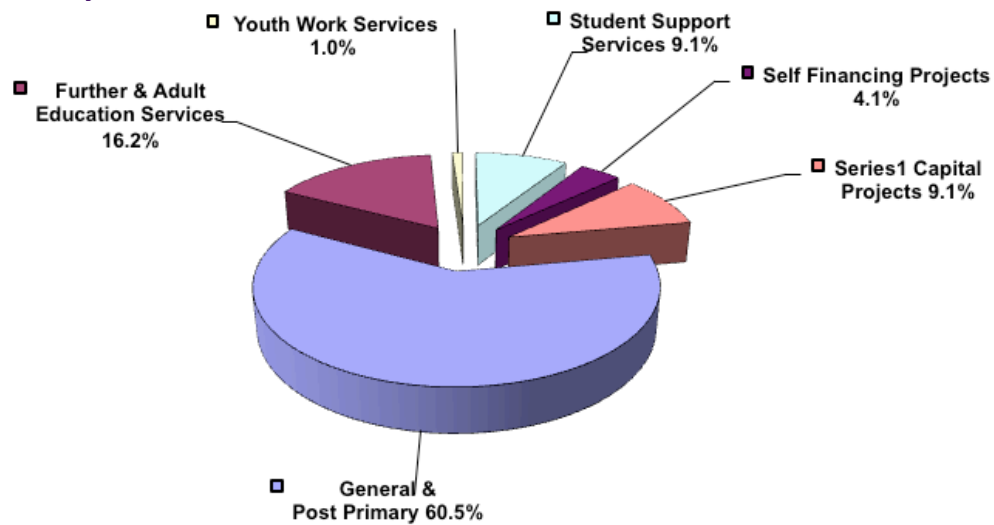
Financial Information

The Audit of Accounts for 2011 is complete and the Accounts have been formally certified by the Comptroller and Auditor General.

The following Table sets out a Summary of Payments for the 2011 Year:

Programme	2011 Expenditure	
	€000	%
General and Post Primary (Running costs of 15 Second Level Schools and Colleges, Adult Education Night Class Programme and VEC Offices)	36,026	(60.5%)
Further and Adult Education Services (VTOS, Youthreach, STTC, Adult Literacy, Community Education, Adult Guidance, Childcare, LMESP etc.)	9,665	(16.2%)
Youth Work Services	573	(1%)
Student Support Services (VEC Scholarships/PLC Grants)	5,439	(9.1%)
Self-Financing Projects	2,445	(4.1%)
Capital Projects	5,408	(9.1%)
Total	59,556	100%

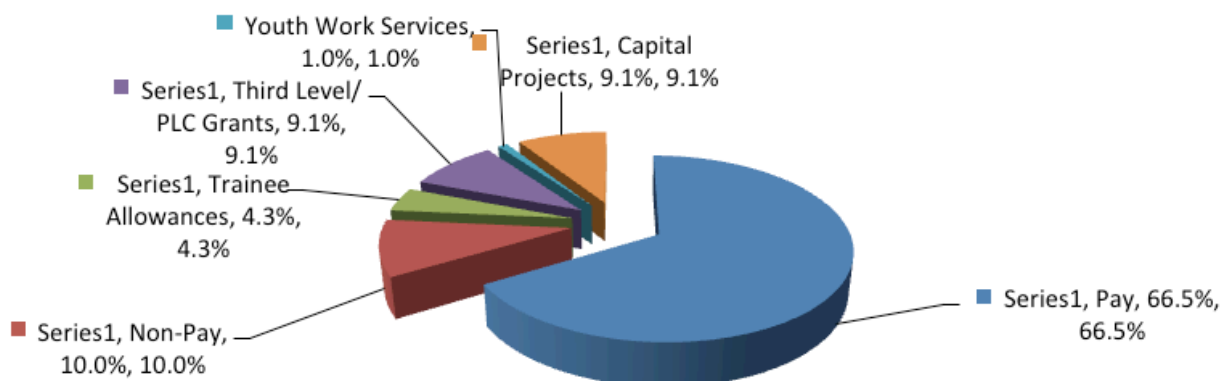
Summary of Payments for 2011



Further analysis of 2011 Payments indicates the following:

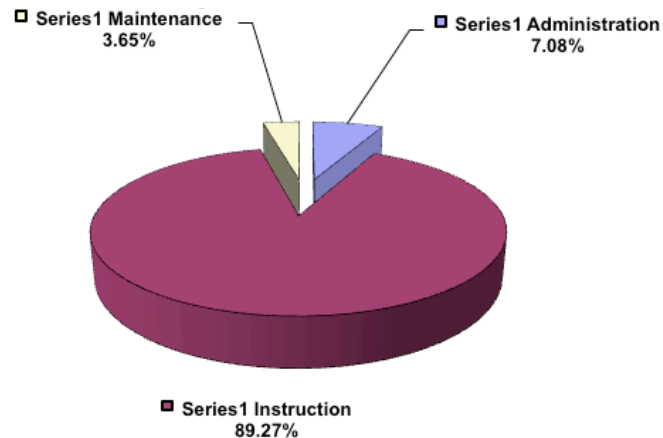
Pay	€39.59million	(66.5%)
Non-Pay	€5.95million	(10%)
Trainee Allowances	€2.6million	(4.3%)
Third Level/PLC Grants	€5.44million	(9.1%)
Youth Work Services	Youth Work Services	(1%)
Capital Projects	Capital Projects	(9.1%)
Total	€59.56million	(100%)

Further Analysis for 2011 Payments



Pay Breakdown 2011

Administration	7.08%
Instruction	89.27%
Maintenance	3.65%



Corporate Governance

The VEC has adopted a Code of Best Practice for Governance. The Code adopted is consistent with the Code set out by the Department of Education and Science in Circular Letter F11/05. The purpose of the Code is to ensure that the Principles of good Governance and Management are applied by the VEC.

In the Finance area, this process is assisted by the appointment of an Audit Committee, a Finance Sub-Committee and an effective System of Internal Financial Control.

Audit Committee

The Audit Committee is composed of 7 Non-Executive Members of County Donegal VEC, all of whom are independent of management under the Chairmanship of Cllr. Jimmy Kavanagh, who had been appointed to this position for the term of the Committee. The Audit Committee is responsible for monitoring the Executive in the carrying out of its functions and provides assurances to the Committee as to the adequacy and effectiveness of the Internal Control processes. It received reports from Management, External Audit provided by the Comptroller and Auditor General and Internal Audit provided by the Vocational Support Services Unit (VSSU) which includes a review of the Policies and Procedures governing the Finance and other functions. The Committee receives Minutes of Meetings of the Audit Committee and has regard to its Annual Report in adopting a Statement of Internal Financial Control (SIFC) and approving the Annual Accounts.

Finance Sub-Committee

The Finance Sub-Committee is composed of eight members including the CEO in an Ex-Officio capacity. It has responsibility for reviewing the Income/Expenditure of the VEC, major Contracts awarded by the VEC and the Financial aspects of the Education and Service Plans respectively. Minutes of the Finance Sub-Committee meetings are received by the Committee for consideration and to assist in providing assurance that the Education and Service Plans are being achieved.



Superannuation and Retirement Benefits

Table 3.2 is a descriptor of the operational details of the Pensions Section for 2011:

Scheme Name: **Local Government (Superannuation)(Consolidation)Scheme, 1998.**

Item	Detail
No of Retirees in 2011	16 Retirees and 1 Death Gratuity
Total No of Retirees	188 (inclusive of above)
No of new enquires in current year	179
No of enquires processed	191
No enquiries in progress up to 31/12/2011	366
Circular Letters and Collective Agreements which impacted on the Pension (Pen) Scheme in 2011.	Implementation of Pro-Rata Revised Integration Pension Scheme CL 2011/01 and CL 0010/2011



Priority 10

Identify specific competencies and expertise of staff members and match these to key organisational skills

- Several Schools and Colleges have carried out reviews of Posts of Responsibility attached to their individual school with regard to the suitability of staff to carry out those duties. Staff delivering the VTOS Programme with particular expertise in a given area, were asked to take the lead on specific initiatives.

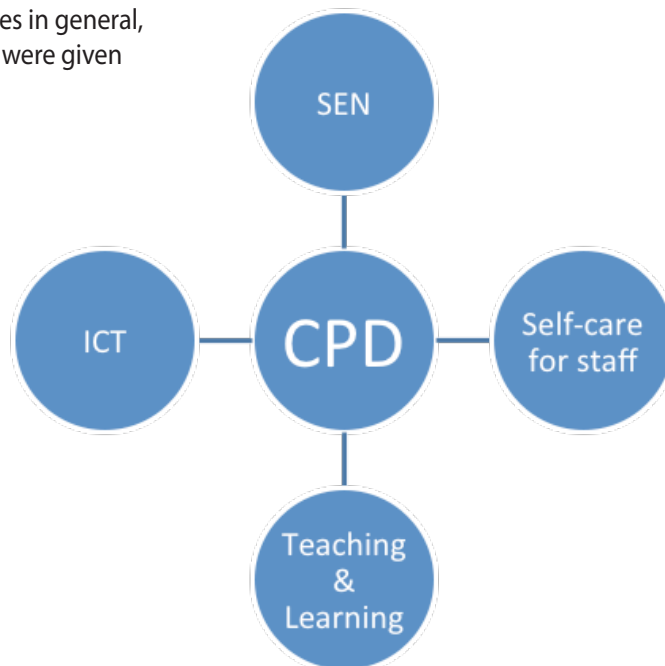
Priority 11

Provide a range of staff learning opportunities to support staff and build organisational capacity to enhance the quality of educational provision

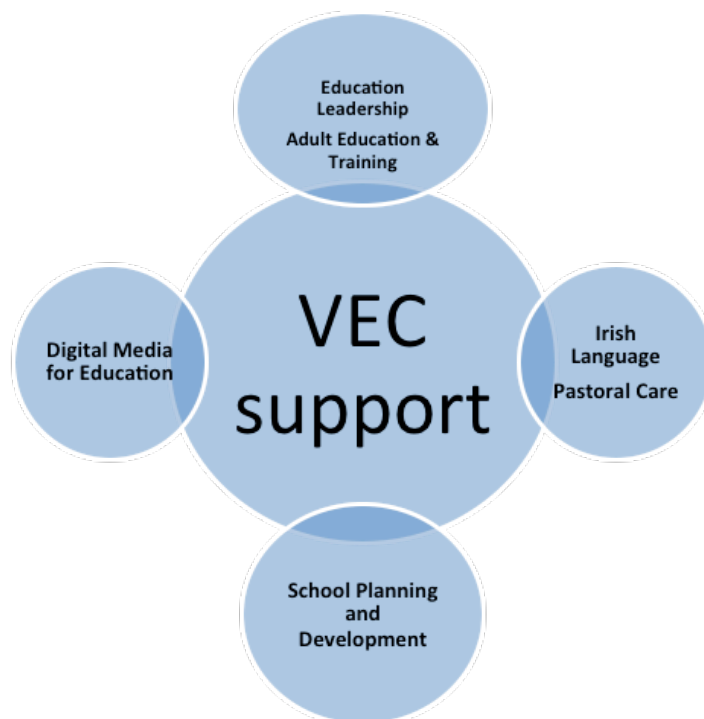
- Examples of Teaching and Learning Continuing Professional Development (CPD) include:

Train the Trainer FETAC Level 6 (VTOS)	Nationally Mandated In service
Child Protection (Music Partnership)	ASD provision
Instructional Leadership	Mental Health & Stress
FETAC Level 3 Training	FETAC Assessment
Student Motivation	Anti-Bullying
LCA Training	Integrating Literacy
E learning	A.S.I.S.T.
Classroom Management	Occupational First Aid
Equality Awareness	NLP training (Learning for Living)
Health & Safety Training	Conducting Skills (Music Partnership)
NFET Training (Entrepreneurship)	Sexual Health Training
Girls Active Training (HSE)	Restorative Practices
Selection Board Training	Sales Pulse Training
Substance Use	Student/Learner Council Training

The graph below summarises in general, the types of support which were given to staff during 2011.



In addition members of staff were successful in achieving qualifications in a number of areas including:





Priority 12

Become an equality competent organisation

- A Working Group was established to develop an Equality Strategy for Co Donegal VEC and the draft Equal Status Policy when finalised will be submitted to committee in 2012 for ratification.
- Staff in Youthreach undergo awareness on equality issues which include, anti-racism and sectarianism.
- All Schools and Colleges under the aegis of Co Donegal VEC have an open and transparent Admissions Policy. All Students attending Co Donegal VEC Schools and Colleges have equal access to all subjects. Many of Committee's Schools and Colleges also offer 1st Year Students the option to 'taste' all new subjects for a period of time before making a final decision on subject choice for Junior Certificate. Schools and Colleges promote inclusiveness and offer open access for all subjects to Admissions Policies.

Priority 13

Implement strategies to limit the negative aspects of conflict

- Much work is ongoing in Schools, Colleges and Centres in the area of conflict. Co Donegal VEC has introduced a Restorative proactive approach. Training is being provided in anticipation that this will become fully embedded across the organisation.

Focus on Restorative Practice

- In 2011, Co Donegal VEC was awarded €100,000 from the Peace III programme to run a two year project to further embed restorative practice in post-primary schools, Youthreach centres and youth work organizations across the county. Co Donegal has been involved in such practice for many years and Peace III has provided the county with a great opportunity to work towards Donegal as a Restorative County for young people and consolidate this practice.
- The project has three elements to it— training, research and organisational activity. All five Youthreach centres, along with fourteen post-primary schools (including the VEC's own Crana College; Errigal College; Finn Valley College; St Catherine's Vocational School, Killybegs; Magh Ene College, Bundoran; Gairmscoil Mhic Diarmada, Arranmore Island; Gairmscoil Chú Uladh, Béal an Átha Móir and Mulroy College), Donegal Youth Service and Foróige have embarked on the project to embed restorative practice into their centres over the next two years.
- One hundred staff from across the participating organisations in training, provided by the University of Ulster's Restorative Practice Team in November 2011, to enable them to further the use of Restorative Practice methods in their work. The research element, which is also being carried out by the University of Ulster's Restorative Practice Team is seeking to ascertain where Schools, Colleges and Centres and youth services are in terms of the use of Restorative Practice as a means of resolving conflict situations and restoring relationships, and to develop a method of measuring and evaluating progress throughout the lifetime of the project.
- Areas covered by the research include, for example, levels of exclusion, attendance and absences, incidences of bullying, racism, disruptive behaviour, drug use, verbal/physical abuse. In 2012 they will be able to avail of a modest amount of funding to be used as they see necessary to embed practice into their locations amongst staff and young people. The project will come to an end through a closing conference which will share learning from the project in May 2013.



Priority 14

Actively promote the provision of services through Irish

- As befits a VEC serving a large Gaeltacht area, the Committee continued to improve its Irish language capacity and capability in 2011.
- One-third of Co Donegal VEC's Second Level Schools, Colleges and Centres deliver a service through the medium of Irish. Services are available bi-lingually in its other locations and throughout the Adult Education Service. A range of programmes, courses and events were provided through the Irish language at Gartan Outdoor Education Centre during 2011.
- The Irish Language is promoted as a means of communication with the public and as a means of providing information to the public.
- Enhanced signage was erected at the Committee's Administrative Offices in Letterkenny, both internally and externally, to promote the availability of bi-lingual services.
- The Committee's publications, both online and in print are produced in both Irish and in English, such as Application Forms, its Annual Reports, Education Plan and Courses and Programme Prospectus and Brochures.
- As the first points of contact with the public, Staff providing receptionist and switchboard services within each School, College, Centre and at the Administrative Offices provide basic greeting and answering services in Irish.
- The Committee's corporate website is fully bi-lingual.
- Co Donegal VEC is committed to continued professional development for staff wishing to improve their Irish Language Skills.
- Committee's second Irish Language Scheme 2009–2012 is available at the Committee's corporate website, www.donegalvec.ie
- The Music Education Service provided instrumental tuition through Irish on Tory Island and Arranmore Island as part of the PEACE III Projects.

Priority 15

Develop organisational conflict management systems which take account of alternative methods of conflict resolution

- Co Donegal VEC has for many years advocated alternative methods of conflict resolution. The principles of Mediation and Restorative Justice are applied where conflict arises across the organisation, for both Staff and Students.
- Key members of staff are qualified Conflict Coaches. The Committee has an internal panel of Conflict Resolution Facilitators as well as an external network of professional and practising Mediators and Counsellors.
- (This area is also addressed at Priority 13)

Priority 16

Redefine organisational structures and priorities and promote flexibility in relation to job roles to meet the changing needs

The Human Resources Division of Co Donegal VEC provide support through four distinct work areas namely:-

- Resource and Leave Administration
- Recruitment and Selection
- General HR Operations
- Superannuation/Pensions.

Protective legislation, namely Protection of Employees (Part-time Workers) 2001 & (Fixed Term Workers) 2003 Acts and the resultant collective agreements continued to have significant impact on the operations of Human Resources staff throughout 2011.

Positions	Number of Posts
Teachers (PRPT)	14
Home School Community Liaison Co-ordinator	1
Special Needs Assistants	6
Assistant Principal Posts*	3

* These posts of responsibility were granted by the Department of Education and Skills on an exceptional basis to the Abbey Vocational School, the Committee's largest second level school.

Table 1.1 - Positions Filled in 2011



In addition to the foregoing, resources are also utilised for the filling of Casual and Non-Casual posts that arise in the Committee's Schools/Colleges/Centres. Thirty such posts were filled through Recruitment and Selection procedures in 2011.

Teaching Staff

Defining the number of teachers for Second Level Schools and Colleges involves a process which commences in October of each year, when indicative teacher allocations based on the second level enrolment numbers for the previous school year are forwarded to each second level School/College. Additional teacher allocations are granted by the Department of Education as follows:-

- The appeal process to the Department of Education and Skills initial Allocation as a result of detailed submissions from each School/College in relation to critical curricular shortfalls, this process is ongoing from February to June.
- Application for resources relating to special needs and non-national pupils.
- Additional applications relating to compensatory hours for Programme Co-ordinator Post and Directors of Adult Education, curricular concessions and PLC Programmes.
- Allocations, arising from programmes such as SCP (School Completion Programmes) and DEIS.

Co Donegal VEC's final Teacher Allocation for September 2010 (the school year 2010/2011) was 388.56 Wholetime Equivalents (WTE).

Administrative Staff

Administrative Staff are allocated by the Department of Education and Skills (DES) on the basis of:-

- the agreed formulae contained in the Rochford Report and subsequent agreement on administrative staffing levels in VECs, and,
- on a programmatic basis.

Quarterly Reports are made to the Department of Education and Skills on its approved level of operation in this regard.

Seventy One (71) administrative staff were employed at the Committee's Administrative Offices, Schools, Colleges and Centres during 2011. The level of administrative staff corresponds to 7.08% of the overall Pay Budget.

Support Staff

Support Staff are allocated on the basis of number and size of Schools, Colleges and Centres and the quality/capacity of accommodation utilised in each case. A total of fifty one (51) support staff were employed at Committees Administrative Offices, Schools, Colleges and Centres during 2011. The level of support staff corresponds to 3.65% of the overall Pay Budget.

Work Life Balance and Staff Leave Entitlements

Co Donegal VEC recognises the personal needs and obligations of staff and where possible within relevant guidelines, facilitates various leave entitlements to meet such needs. Figure 1.2 highlights the applications for leave entitlements that were processed for staff during 2011.

Maternity Leave	46
Parental Leave	12
Secondments	3
Carer's Leave	1
Job-Sharing	22
Work-Share	6
Career Break	8

Figure 1.2
Applications for Leave Entitlements

Maintenance of all other staff records include staff absence due to illness, annual leave, compassionate leave, force majeure leave, unpaid leave and the update of personal files in accordance with audit/organisational requirements.

- At Gartan Outdoor Education Centre it is recognised that flexibility is the key to success and all members of staff recognise and subscribe to a culture of flexibility across job roles.



Priority 17

Develop and implement an integrated ICT strategy for Co Donegal VEC

- As part of the ICT Strategy, a Website Working Group was formed in 2011. The purpose of the group was to review the website and implement solutions to make the website more accessible and relevant to all key stakeholders associated with Co Donegal VEC. The group held four meetings during 2011.
- A new website was further developed incorporating views and feedback following a pilot version.
- Greater emphasis placed on the appearance of the website and the structure and user-friendliness of the menus.
- A staff member was assigned responsibility for the Website, which involved liaison with all the Schools, Colleges and Centres to ensure up to date news items were posted on a daily basis.
- The website has been developed to ensure compliance bilingually with the VEC's Scéim commitments under Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiula.
- A special section on the website for a staff intranet has proven beneficial with staff members. Schools, Colleges and Centres continue to upgrade their ICT infrastructure and further embed ICT into teaching and learning in line with available Resources.

Priority 18

Use new and emerging technologies to support developments in teaching and learning, management of information and communication and collaboration

- In 2011, Schools, Colleges and Centre programmes and services used a range of new and emerging technologies in teaching and learning, management of information and communication and collaboration.
- Major investments in ICT were undertaken in areas such as purchasing:-
 - new data projectors (Coláiste na Carraige, Coláiste Chineál Eoghain, Crana College, Gairmscoil Mhic Diarmada, Gairmscoil Chú Uladh, Mulroy College);
 - Interactive Whiteboards (Coláiste Chineál Eoghain, Errigal College)
 - Visualisers (Coláiste Chineál Eoghain, Deelee College, Errigal College, Mulroy College)
 - PCs and laptops (Coláiste Chineál Eoghain, Gairmscoil Mhic Diarmada and Gairmscoil Chú Uladh).
- Other investments included the installation of an ePortal System (Deelee College, and Moville Community College).
- Staff development on using ICT and blogs and integrating ICT into teaching and learning also took place in a range of locations: (Coláiste Ailigh, Gairmscoil Mhic Diarmada, Magh Ene, Moville Community College, Coláiste Phobail Colmcille, St Catherine's Vocational School and Finn Valley College)



- The use of computer generated reports also began in some locations (Crana College).
- The commencement of use of Cat 6 Cabling to network PCs in Deelee College
- Finn Valley College is now completely serviced by Wi-Fi.
- A number of locations (Errigal and Mulroy Colleges) further developed and made more use of their school websites, while Errigal College also installed electronic noticeboards in the student circulation area and the staffroom.
- The Polish Embassy provided funding to Errigal College for a School Cinema for use during Polish Sunday School classes and by the College community.
- Students from Coláiste Phobail Colmcille took part in a Media course on the operation with the use camera, how to plan, create and edit programmes for TV and radio.
- In the Adult Education Service, the BTEI, Learning for Living and Youthreach programmes introduced a new database system to accurately capture all information on students participating on courses and streamline the complex reporting requirements for some of the programmes.
- The Guidance Service reviewed and implemented new approaches to ICT-based interest and competency testing in relation to vocational choice, while VTOS placed more emphasis on publishing key information on documents on the VEC website. Some staff training in using technology in education also took place.
- Gartan Outdoor Education Centre developed GPS Courses and included GPS where appropriate on navigation courses in the outdoors.
- The Music Education Service used Macs to teach Music Composition, Recording and Editing Techniques during In-service Teachers Summer Courses and during the Donegal Summer School of Music.



Priority 19

Develop and implement a progressive public relations strategy for Co Donegal VEC

- One of the objectives under the five year Education Plan for Co Donegal VEC was to develop a clear public relations strategy in 2012 through a Profile and Branding Working Group.
- In 2011 Schools, Colleges and Services continued with their own individual public relations promotion to develop and promote their profile via:-
 - Regular Articles in the local media
 - Adult Education Annual Fair event.
 - School, College and Centre websites and via the Co Donegal VEC home Website
 - Individual School, College magazines and Youthreach Newsletters to inform local communities of events and activities
 - Open evenings for prospective Parents and Students
 - School and College Musicals and Concerts

Priority 20

Build on relationships with relevant partners including community, voluntary, statutory, cross border and business organisations to work towards shared goals

- During 2011 each School and College continued to work with and expand on a range of local and national partnerships including, PDST, FETAC, HSE, SESS, NCSE, NEPS, NEWB, Millennium Forum, KEY & LET Programmes, Junior Achievement, Gaisce, John Paul II Awards, Parents Associations, Letterkenny Women's Centre, Bluestack Foundation, Downstrands, Partnership Companies, Family Resource Centres, Local Day Centres, St Vincent de Paul, The Samaritans, Ógras, Conradh na Gaeilge, GaelLinn, Road Safety Authority, Gaelscoileanna Teo, Fóras na Gaeilge.
- A number of locations built on their partnership with parents; Errigal College for example provided a number of courses for Parents including Classes in, Irish, Cookery, Living with Teenagers and Restorative Practice.
- A number of schools were involved in their local Schools Completion Programmes (Mulroy College) and with Home School Completion Liaison (HSCL) contacts and also linking with various youth organisations, including Youth Information Centres and the Loft, sports clubs and Donegal Sports Partnership.
- Finn Valley College was at the core of special educational needs development. An integrated approach with a Senior National Educational Psychological Services (NEPS) Educational Psychologist, the VEC's Educational Psychologist and Teachers has been very proactive.
- In the new College Building, the ASD Class is at the centre of school life. Students are regularly involved in fundraising events for external charities.



- Coláiste Phobail Colmcille made an initial introduction to a school in County Tyrone with a view to using its island's remoteness with video-conferencing. It also continued its close co-operation with Lasair, a body that promotes cultural events, music, dance and singing.
- A range of cross-border partnerships also continued and were built upon. For example, Coláiste Chineál Eoghain attended competitions in Lumen Christi Derry, An Chultarlann in Derry, Derry City Library, public speaking and debating with Cumann Gaelach Chnoc na Ros and Sentinus.
- A number of Schools and Colleges worked with international partnerships including Gairmscoil Mhic Diarmada which is twinned with a German School located in Winnipeg near Hanover leading to a number of full-time German Students attending the school once again in 2011.
- Gairmscoil Chú Uladh was involved in a Comenius Programme and European Studies programme.
- Within the Adult Education Service, The IT Training Centre delivered FETAC Level 4 IT Skills as part of the Donegal Local Development Company (DLDC) Training for Volunteers Programme.
- The BTEI programme has built strong relations over many years with a number of agencies including the twelve Family Resource Centres throughout the County, Community Development Programmes, Local Partnership Companies, FÁS, Údarás na Gaeltachta and the Rural Social Scheme. As a result, recruitment has been a collaborative approach and these strong links have proven invaluable in the success of the outreach provision in BTEI.
- The Community Education programme has links with numerous partners and the success of the programme is determined by such links. Examples include FÁS, HSE, Údarás na Gaeltachta, Family Resource Centres, Partnership Companies, the Women's sector and many community projects as well as cross border initiatives such as Deaf Communications Infrastructure Development and Women Into Public Life.
- The 2011 Adult Learner Fair, organised by The Adult Learner Guidance Service, continued to build on the success of previous years and brought together community, voluntary, statutory and cross border education providers to provide education and training information to adults in Donegal.
- Within the Learning for Living programme, a cross-border partnership between Co Donegal VEC and the North West Regional College in Derry, the History Links Project, published a book of writings by participants from Strabane District and East Donegal; "Them Were the Days" which was launched by Mr Joe Mahon of Lesser Spotted Ulster fame.
- VTOS continued its good relationships with employers through job placements



Key Theme 4

Working in Partnership



- Youthreach also continued to build on and expand the partnerships it has in 2011. The County Youthreach Co-ordinator was a member of the County-wide Planning Committee which successfully led to the development of the JigSaw Project (Youth Mental Health) for the County.
- A strong ethos of partnership exists within the Centre for Outdoor Education at Gartan.
 - In 2011, in addition to other, well developed partnerships, Outdoor Education Centre in collaboration with Mountaineering Ireland organised and hosted the first 'Women with Altitude' Mountaineering Weekend Festival, a high profile series of courses and events.
 - The first Letterkenny ranking triathlon, organised by 24/7 Triathlon Club in conjunction with and held at Gartan, was a major event on the sporting calendar. Both events will be run on an annual basis.
- Within the Music Education Service, a range of partnerships exist with Donegal Education Centre, the Regional Cultural Centre, Donegal County Council Public Art Programme, Donegal County Council PEACE III Office, the Donegal Summer School of Music, LYIT, the Irish Association of Youth Orchestras, St Joseph's Brass Band, Strabane, Bready Highland Pipe Band and the IFI/Rural Development Council in Northern Ireland.

- **Limerick Diploma in Drug and Alcohol Studies**

The University of Limerick Diploma in Drug and Alcohol Studies has been taught for the last four years in the North West Region and five years in the University of Limerick campus and Cherry Orchard in Dublin. The programme is managed by a partnership Board which involves the University of Limerick, Co Donegal VEC, North West Regional Drugs Task Force, Health Services Executive West (Donegal) and the Alcohol Forum Ltd.

The University of Limerick Diploma in Drug and Alcohol studies is taught over one academic year. It is designed to provide personal and professional growth and development of skills for a range of individuals who are actively engaged in responding to drug and alcohol issues across the spectrum from prevention to treatment and rehabilitation. The Graduates of the Diploma come from a range of sectors such as psychiatry, medicine, social work, education, community and voluntary, health and justice.



Graduations took place in August in the University of Limerick where all students of the course successfully graduated with a university qualification.



Educational Psychological Services

- The service continues to work closely with many other services and has endeavoured to build on close working ties to facilitate working on shared goals. Regular meetings are held with the National Educational Psychological Services (NEPS) for planning and review of work in VEC Schools and Colleges in conjunction with VEC management. NEPs have also contributed to the SEN (Special Educational Needs) Network for VEC schools.
- The service has also built up a good working relationship with the Health Services Executive CAMHS service, particularly in relation to vulnerable young people involved in Youthreach centres.
- The service also works closely with the NEWB to facilitate, where necessary, the transition of vulnerable young people from schools into Youthreach Centres and to support these transitions.

Priority 21

Provide improved structures for the development, integration and support of Youth Services across the County

• National Quality Standards for Youth Work (NQSF)

- The National Quality Standards Framework (NQSF) is a support and development tool for the Youth Work sector providing a structured framework through which to assess, indicate and enhance Youth Work.
- Two Youth Organisations have completed Year 1 of the process; Foróige including: Donegal Youth Information Centre and the DECK Youth Development Project. Youth Work Ireland: Donegal Youth Service including: Letterkenny Youth Information Centre, Daybreak Programme and the Local Youth Club Development Project. Progress Reports for Year 1 were completed and provided to the Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA). A consultation process was facilitated by the Youth Officer, on behalf of DCYA, on a separate Charter of Quality Standards for volunteer led Youth Clubs and Groups.

• Peace and Reconciliation Programme

- Participation was developed with Youth and Community Organisations in Co Donegal through Donegal County Council/Donegal CDB/Donegal Peace Partnership.
- A FETAC Level 5 Mediation course, for twelve Youth Leaders, was completed in February-March.
- A funding application was made to the Special EU Projects Body through Donegal County Council/Peace Partnership under Phase 2 of the Peace III Programme. Intercultural Training Programme facilitated by NYCI through Donegal Youth Service was completed by fifteen Youth Leaders.
- The Youth Officer is a member of Restorative Practices Working Group for Schools, Youthreach Centres and Youth Organisations. These projects are supported by Peace III Programme, managed for the Special EU Programmes Body by Donegal County Council.

Co Donegal Children's Services Committee

- The Children's Services Committee is responsible for improving the lives of children and families at local and community level through integrated planning, working and service delivery. The Youth Officer, a member of the Co Donegal Youth Mental Health Planning Group was also a participant in the successful application to Headstrong, the National Centre for Youth Mental Health for the JigSaw Project. The Youth Officer is also a member of the Safe and Secure Sub-Group.

- **Local Youth Club Grant Scheme (LYCGS)**
 - €42,880 was administered in small grants to 70 Youth Clubs/Groups across the county under the Local Youth Club Grant Scheme in 2011, for recreational and educational activities; running costs, administration, leader training, purchasing equipment and special informal educational and training programmes. The Local Youth Club Grant Scheme is in recognition of the diverse range of voluntary youth clubs/groups in existence and is broken into two categories Youth Work Club Grant and Youth Activity Club Grant.

- **Special Projects for Youth**
 - Annual Reports and Renewal Funding Applications to DCYA including:
 - Daybreak Programme
 - Letterkenny Youth Information Centre
 - Donegal Town Youth Information Centre and Youth Project
 - Foróige Regional Youth Development Scheme

- **Comhairle na nÓg Dhún na nGall/Donegal Youth Council**
 - The Youth Officer is a member of the Steering Group of Comhairle na nÓg. A Successful funding application was made to Peace III Programme to roll out the Chuala Project for Seldom Heard Young People. Chuala is a nine month long project that aims to create more opportunities for young people in Donegal County to have their voice and opinions heard by Donegal Youth Council. Donegal Youth Council want to create a youth forum of young people who currently don't have a voice on DYC, to get involved in the decisions that affect them across the county.
 - The Chuala Youth Forum also worked in partnership with Donegal Youth Council (DYC) to establish the most relevant issues affecting young people in the county and then following a short campaign to raise awareness of the issues will engage decisions makers to discuss the concerns of young people. The Chuala Youth Forum will then feedback to young people through both local gatherings and online.



- **Youth Drugs/Alcohol Education and Prevention Project**

Youth Drugs & Alcohol Service

Funding was provided to develop and support a community wide approach to drugs education and ensuring (i) the involvement of young people in the design and delivery of drugs education programmes and (ii) The involvement of parents. This Programme is funded in conjunction with the North West Regional Drugs Task Force and is implemented by the Foróige Youth Organisation.

7 Highlights



CARRICK VOCATIONAL SCHOOL



School Musical
"The Wizard of Oz"

COLÁISTE AILIGH • LEITIR CEANAINN



◀ Daltaí ó Choláiste Ailigh a ghlac páirt sa Mionmharatón Flora

Scoil nua Choláiste Ailigh ▶



COLÁISTE PHOBAIL SCOIL COLMCILLE • OILEÁN THÓRAÍ



◀ Beartla Rua Ó Flatharta le Lauren Ní Bhaoill, Niamh Ní Dhubhgáin agus Ciara Ní Dhubhgáin le linn na Ceardlainne Drámaíochta.

Ciara Ní Dhubhgáin a bhain teastas ardmholta i gcomórtas "Scríobh Dán" a bhí a réachtáil ag an iris 'Ag Teagasc Béarla' ▶



CRANA COLLEGE • BUNCRANA



◀ Principal Liam Galbraith presenting a token of gratitude to Ugandan teachers Joseph Bernadette and Dorothy for spending a cultural exchange week with Crana College students.

Crana College Girls soccer team who won the Ulster School Cup ▶



7 Highlights



DEELE COLLEGE • RAPHOE



Junk Kouture National Finalists

Trash Couture



FINN VALLEY COLLEGE • STRANORLAR



COLÁISTE CHINEÁL EOGHAIN, BUN CRANNCHA



GAIRMSCOIL CHÚ ULADH, BÉAL AN ÁTHA MHÓIR



Sci Fest 2012

Sign Language



7 Highlights



GAIRMSCOIL MHIC DIARMADA , OILEÁN ÁRAINN MHÓR



Official opening of new classrooms

Clar Radio Gael Linn



MOVILLE COMMUNITY COLLEGE



MULROY COLLEGE



The school tour to Paris in October 2010
Turas scoile go Páras – Deireadh Fómhair 2010

Sew Cool Competition:
Teacher Aisling Mc Ateer. National Competition where Junior Certificate Crafts in Home Economics were submitted for creativity. Denise Mc Geehan Runner up and Shannon Sweeney 2nd place



MULROY COLLEGE



Football Association of Ireland Senior B-
Ulster final Senior Girl's Soccer
- Ulster Winners 2010/2011 Senior Girl's Soccer team from Mulroy College were crowned Ulster Girl's Cup winners on the 14th Dec 2010 for the third year in succession.

All Ireland which was won February 2012



7 Highlights



ST. CATHERINE'S VOCATIONAL SCHOOL • KILLYBEGS



Ciara McCarthy
Finalist Doodle for Google March 2011

ADULT LEARNER GUIDANCE



Adult
Learner
Fair



COMMUNITY EDUCATION SUPPORT SERVICE



Stone Feature

Stone Wall (In conjunction with FAS there was stone wall replaced at the Community Education Office in Ard Scoil na gCeithre Máistir)



COMMUNITY EDUCATION SUPPORT SERVICE



Community Education Seminar 2011, Siobhan Coughlan, Patricia Britton, Maeve Mc Garvey, John Loneragan (speaker) Trisha Mc Guinness, Crona Gallagher.

Building of polytunnel in Ranafast by Horticulture group.



7 Highlights



COMMUNITY EDUCATION SUPPORT SERVICE



Arranmore Island TY students who completed ISL (Irish Sign Language) Unit 101 with their tutor Kevin Mc Cauley.

YOUTHREACH CENTRES



Ballyshannon learners Millie and Niamh at participating in a cookery skills class at Donegal Manor as part of their summer programme.

Lifford learners Pól Mc Garrigle, Stiofan Hoynes, Andrew Walker and Debra Mc Ginley with their bronze Gaisce awards



YOUTHREACH CENTRES



Youthreach learners cooking in teams from each centre as part of the Youthreach Masterchef competition which took place in December 2011.

Gortahork Youthreach learner Aine Doohan being presented with her award for the overall winner of the Young Driver's Cross-Border event 2011, at the Gortahork Presentation of Awards day by Harry Rutherford, Chairperson of the Northern Ireland Road Safety Council and Eamonn Brown, Donegal County Council Road Safety Officer.



vec

8 Appendices



Appendices

8 Appendices



8.1 Appendix 1

8.1.1. Members of Co Donegal VEC Audit Committee

Chairperson - Clr Jimmy Kavanagh	Mr Francis McDaid,
Mr Peter Cutliffe	Clr Philip McGlynn
Clr Martin Farren	Clr Elizabeth McIntyre
Clr Dessie Larkin	

8.1.2. Members of Co Donegal VEC Finance Sub-Committee

Chairperson Clr Pádraig O'Dochartaigh	Clr Ian McGarvey
Clr David Alcorn	Ms Bernie Mulhern
Clr Michelle Bradley	Mr Alan Thompson
Clr Joe Doherty	Ms MaryAnn Kane, Chief Executive Officer (Acting) (Ex-officio)

8.1.3. Adult Education Board

Mr Gerry Bennett	Association of Principals of Secondary Schools
Ms Maureen Kerr	Donegal County Council (Library Service)
Ms Mary Crossan	St Johnston & Carrigans Resource Centre
Ms Aideen Doherty	County Development Board (Community and Enterprise Unit)
Mr Anthony Doogan	Association of Principals & Deputy Principals (PDA)
Mr Charlie Gallagher	Association of Community & Comprehensive Schools
Mr Colm Gallagher	VEC Representative
Mr Patrick Hannon	SIPTU
Ms Edith Marley	Irish Business and Employers Confederation (IBEC)
Ms Lorraine Murray	FÁS Training Centre
Mr Tom McArdle	Department of Social & Family Affairs
Mr James Mc Brearty	VEC Representative
Mr Art Mc Grath	Teagasc
Ms Dolores Mhic Gheidigh	VEC Adult Literacy Service
Mr Alan O'Baoid	Údarás na Gaeltachta
Ms Anne Sheridan	Health Services Executive
Ms Cróna Gallagher	Co Donegal VEC
Dr Martin Gormley	Co Donegal VEC
Ms MaryAnn Kane	Co Donegal VEC

8 Appendices



8.2 APPENDIX II - Schools/Colleges/Centres

Schools & Colleges

Abbey Vocational School, Donegal Town
Coláiste Ailigh, Leitir Ceannain (Gaelscoil)
Coláiste Chineál Eoghain (Gaelscoil)
Coláiste na Carraige (formerly Carrick Vocational School)
Coláiste Phobail Scoil Colmcille, Oileán Thóraí (Gaelscoil & Island School)
Crana College, Buncrana
Deele College, Raphoe
Errigal College, Letterkenny
Finn Valley College, Stranorlar
Gairmscoil Chú Uladh, Béal an Átha Móir (Gaelscoil)
Gairmscoil Mhic Diarmada, Arranmore Island (Island School)
Magh Éne College, Bundoran
Moville Community College
Mulroy College, Milford
St Catherine's Vocational School, Killybegs

Adult Education & Training Centres/ Youthreach

Adult Education & Training Centre/Youthreach - Ballyshannon
Adult Education & Training Centre/Youthreach – Buncrana
Adult Education & Training Centre - Donegal Town (Drumcliff)
Adult Education & Training Centre - Donegal Town (Ard Scoil na gCeithre Máistir)
Adult Education & Training Centre/Youthreach - Gort a'Choirce
Centre for Education - Senior Traveller Training Centre/Youthreach - Letterkenny
Adult Education & Training Centre – Letterkenny
Youthreach Centre – Glengad
Youthreach Centre - Lifford
Adult Education & Training Centre -Milford

8 Appendices



8.3 APPENDIX III – Abbreviations & Key Reference

Parent –	refers to Parent or Guardian
Student –	refers to Student/Trainee/Learner
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CDB	County Development Board
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
BTEI	Back To Education Initiative
DES	Department of Education & Science
DEIS	Delivering Equality of Opportunity In Schools
EO	Education Officer
FETAC	Further Education & Training Awards Council
GCCC	Government Construction Contracts Committee
HACAP	Hawkeye Area Community Action Program, Inc
HSE	Health Service Executive
IVEA	Irish Vocational Education Association
JCSP	Junior Certificate Schools Programme
LCA	Leaving Certificate Applied
LCVP	Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme
LET	Leárgas Programme
LDS	Leadership Development for Schools
LGBT	The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transge < http://www.gaycenter.org/ > nder
LMESP	Local Music Education Service Partnership
LYIT	Letterkenny Institute of Technology
NBSS	National Behavioural Support Services
NCSE	National Council for Special Education
NEPS	National Education Psychological Service
NEWB	National Education Welfare Board
NUI	National University of Ireland
PLC	Post Leaving Certificate
SESS	Special Education Support Service
SDPI	School Development Planning Initiative
SLSS	Second Level Support Service
SNA	Special Needs Assistant
SPHE	Social, Personal and Health Education
STTC	Senior Traveller Training Centre
TLT	Third Level Trainee Third Level Maintenance Grant Scheme
TUI	Teachers Union of Ireland
VEC	Vocational Education Committee
VTOS	Voluntary Training Opportunity Scheme
WSE	Whole School Evaluation



Coiste Gairmoideachais
Chontae Dhún na nGall

County Donegal Vocational
Education Committee

Administrative Offices

Ard O'Donnell
Letterkenny
Co. Donegal

T 074 916 1600
F 074 912 2439
info@donegalvec.ie
www.donegalvec.ie

The Annual Report 2011 compiled by:
Ms Anne McHugh, Ms Jacqui Dillon, Ms Eileen Dennison & Dr. Sandra Buchanan