



# **LOUTH GAA**

## **STRATEGIC REVIEW**



## INTRODUCTION

It gives me great pleasure to present to you our report for the Louth GAA Strategic Review 2020. Our remit was to assess where we are as a county, where we want to go and set out how we plan to get there.

Excellent work goes on at all levels of GAA in county Louth, however it is evident that further development and change is required to bring Louth GAA to a place where we feel it belongs.

I was asked to undertake this review by chairperson Peter Fitzpatrick and we began the process in May 2020. The first task was to assemble a steering committee who not only had knowledge of Louth GAA but also expertise in their review area. I would like to thank Francis McMullen who acted as planning coordinator and worked tirelessly on the process. I would also like to acknowledge the work of Shane Lennon, Bob Doheny, Barry Watters, Bronagh McGrane, Colin Kelly, Mark Byrne and Ciaran Sloan. They contributed tremendously to this review and were ably supported by very active subcommittee members.

Our guiding principle was to gather as much information as possible before making any recommendations and we were delighted with the huge response and participation in our surveys, focus groups, interviews and all the interactions we had with various stakeholders.

We hope you find value in the work that we have done and support our recommendations to help Louth GAA become more successful in the future.

**Derek Crilly,**  
Development Officer Chontae An Lú,  
Strategic Review Lead.





# Teachtaireacht ón Cathaoirleach

## Message from the Chairman

I am truly honoured and delighted to present to the Louth GAA Strategic Review. We are experiencing one of the most challenging times in our organisation's history, one that has been felt deep in our communities and grass roots. It has provided an opportunity to reflect on previous strategies and put a focus on generating improvements in areas that are essential to the development of our games, players and clubs at a local level.

Under the stewardship of Development Officer Derek Crilly and Operations Manager Francie McMullen, this review looks at ways Louth GAA can make realistic changes to its fortunes both on and off the field.

This is an exciting and ambitious plan that reflects six key focus areas, namely Primary and Post Primary School, Games Development, Academy and Player Pathway, PR/Communications, Finance and Fundraising and Infrastructure.

It outlines realistic and attainable objectives for Louth GAA in the coming years, whilst placing emphasis on us all working together both at Management Committee level and Club level, to face our challenges and achieve success both on and off the pitch.

The review itself was conducted over a 5-month period and took the form of both sub-committee's and public consultation with Louth GAA members. By encompassing these two areas a broad snapshot of opinion from within Louth was obtained. The Review set out recommendations around some of the following areas;

**Schools** - The further development of the Club/School link and the building of a successful Regional Schools Academy structure would increase both standards and participation levels simultaneously.

**Games Development** - The restructuring of resources within the County to look at development from various stages, Child, Youth, Academy Squads and a Player Pathway. The streamlining all of these areas to create a coherent structure within Louth that ensures players can achieve their potential at both Club and County level.

**Club** - To not only boost the overall standard of player within clubs but also increase retention, with a particular emphasis on urban clubs. To assess all levels of club fixtures program and make necessary changes to account for varying standards.

**Commercial** - To realise the benefit of becoming self-sufficient from a Commercial viewpoint. Controlling all activity in this area to ensure Louth GAA are following best in practice protocols where possible. This will be done by developing both a Commercial and Fundraising Arm of the County Board, who will work in partnership to maximise all revenue creating opportunities.

**Branding** - To improve all levels of Public Relations and Communications within Louth GAA. Develop Brand "Louth GAA" to become an attractive proposition for all stakeholders.

I want to thank the members of our Steering Committee; Derek Crilly, Francie McMullen, Bronagh McGrane, Mark Byrne, Shane Lennon, Bob Doheny, Ciaran Sloan, Barry Watters and Colin Kelly who worked tirelessly over the last number of months to develop and compile this plan. Our collective challenge moving forward will be the implementation of this plan and I look forward to working with you all closely in 2021 to achieve our goals.

**Peter Fitzpatrick**

Cathaoirleach

Coiste Chontae Lú





## **STEERING COMMITTEE**

**DEREK CRILLY**

Review Group Leader

**FRANCIE MCMULLEN**

Planning Coordinator & Finance Fundraising

**SHANE LENNON**

Games Development

**MARK BYRNE**

PR/Communications

**COLIN KELLY**

Academy Squads

**CIARAN SLOAN &  
BARRY WATTERS**

Player Pathway

**BRONAGH MCGRANE**

Primary & Post Primary Schools

**BOB DOHENY**

Infrastructure & Facilities



#### **ACADEMY & PLAYER PATHWAY**

Ciaran Sloan  
Colin Kelly  
Barry Watters  
Bevan Duffy  
Stephen McDonnell  
Cathal Ryan  
Gerard Smyth

#### **FINANCE & FUNDRAISING**

Francie McMullen  
John Haughney  
Aidan Halpin  
Jim McEneaney

#### **PRIMARY & POST PRIMARY SCHOOLS**

Bronagh McGrane  
Colin Heaphy  
Liam Shevlin  
Colin Ryan  
Christine Carolan  
Decky Byrne

## **LOUTH GAA REVIEW SUB COMMITTEES**

#### **INFRASTRUCTURE & FACILITIES**

Bob Doheny  
Sean McClean  
Clodagh McClean  
Brendan Kerin  
Fehin Quinn

#### **GAMES DEVELOPMENT**

Shane Lennon  
Anthony Durnin  
Eoghan O'Neill  
Brian Og Corr  
Karl O'Connor

#### **PR/COMMUNICATIONS**

Mark Byrne  
Colm Corrigan  
Dan Bannon  
John Savage  
Ogie Harmon  
Dalton McNamee



## **RESEARCH METHODS ONLINE SURVEYS**

Total – 670

- Club managers – 14
- Child Strand Coach – 54
- Youth Players – 70
- Youth Strand Coach – 81
- Club adult player – 214
- Coaching Officers – 25
- Primary School Teacher – 59
- Post Primary School Teacher – 40
- Intercounty Players (Past and Present) -113

## **EXISTING REVIEW GROUPS**

- Ex Intercounty Player Group
- Fixture Review Group
- Referee Review – Sean McClean
- Urban Review Meetings

## **CONSULTATION AND DISCUSSIONS WITH FOLLOWING GROUPS AND INDIVIDUALS:**

- Youth Games Programme Workgroup 2020
- Current and ex Intercounty Players
- Louth Minor Board
- Louth CCC







## PRIMARY SCHOOLS

### OBJECTIVES

**TO ENHANCE THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CLUBS AND PRIMARY SCHOOLS  
AND PROMOTE AN ACTIVE CLUB/SCHOOL LINK PROGRAMME**

TIMELINE	SHORT TERM	MEDIUM TERM	LONG TERM
<b>SPECIFIC ACTION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Set up a forum for urban clubs who may have multiple schools in their local area. This is to be facilitated by County Board to come to an understanding and arrangement on how to manage this situation effectively to the benefit of all parties concerned.</li><li>Encourage clubs to appoint a Primary School Liaison Officer to communicate directly with Primary Schools and assess their needs and to co-ordinate engagement.</li><li>Trial a club school link in a mix of schools (urban and rural) to assess viability</li><li>Host a festival day in schools to coincide with registration in the Spring time and another in June to end the school year with full GAA festival day.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Offer financial supports for clubs wishing to pursue a club school link.</li><li>Provide a template based on the trial for schools and clubs to follow in order to set up a club school link.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Review club school link and make improvements when required</li></ul>
<b>AREA RESPONSIBLE</b>	Coaching & Games Committee to facilitate  Clubs to appoint school liaison  Coaching & Games Committee & PR & IT Committee	Coaching & Games Committee /County Board	Clubs/Schools/Coaching & Games Committee



## OBJECTIVES TO INCREASE AWARENESS AND UPTAKE OF THE GAA 5 STAR CENTRE

TIMELINE	SHORT TERM	MEDIUM TERM
<b>SPECIFIC ACTION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To contact all schools prior to the beginning of the academic year and ensure all schools are informed about the 5 star centre programme</li> <li>To publicise the schools who already have the 5 Star Centre flag or are currently taking part in it in local media and on social media</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To increase the number of schools completing the 5 Star Centre programme and to assist those schools and follow up with them to ensure they can complete it</li> <li>Publicise in local papers etc schools receiving their flag as a ceremony type occasion with attendance of county player etc</li> </ul>
<b>AREA RESPONSIBLE</b>	Coaching & Games Committee  Coaching & Games Committee Schools & PR & IT Committee	Coaching & Games Committee  PR & IT Committee

## OBJECTIVES LAUNCH A GAA AFTER SCHOOL COACHING ACADEMY ON A REGIONAL BASIS

TIMELINE	SHORT TERM	MEDIUM TERM
<b>SPECIFIC ACTION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invite all children who wish to take part in an afterschool coaching programme from 4th, 5th and 6th class which will be run regionally and will replace the 6th class academy which can be run in 4 areas in the county such as post primary schools.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Get sponsorship/funding to get a t-shirt per child who takes part in programme</li> <li>Organise for the children to play at half time of home National League games/local championship games etc.</li> </ul>
<b>AREA RESPONSIBLE</b>	Coaching & Games Committee	Coaching & Games Committee  Finance Committee



## PRIMARY SCHOOLS cont.

### OBJECTIVES

**TO SUPPORT SCHOOLS WITH THE NEEDS THEY REQUIRE,  
INCLUDING COACH EDUCATION**

TIMELINE	SHORT TERM
SPECIFIC ACTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To encourage clubs to tie in with their local schools for use of facilities (this will tie in with Club School Link)</li><li>• To hold more coaching courses/CPD courses for teachers specific for primary school which can be used as Croke Park Hours</li><li>• To provide schools with fixtures as early as possible to allow school management to organize transport, cover etc.</li></ul>
AREA RESPONSIBLE	Coaching & Games Committee

### OBJECTIVES

**TO ENCOURAGE MORE PARTICIPATION WITHIN PRIMARY SCHOOLS**

TIMELINE	SHORT TERM
SPECIFIC ACTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• More fun localized blitz/tournaments</li><li>• Coaching at younger age groups within the schools</li><li>• Enhance relationship with Cumman na mbunscoil- Games Development Officer committee</li></ul>
AREA RESPONSIBLE	Coaching & Games Committee





## SECONDARY SCHOOLS

### OBJECTIVES TO ENHANCE THE DEVELOPMENT OF 1ST YEAR PLAYERS

TIMELINE	SHORT TERM
SPECIFIC ACTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Set up a structured 1st year competition</li><li>• Run 2 blitz competitions, one at the beginning of the year and one at the end to allow for participation in GAA</li></ul>
AREA RESPONSIBLE	Coaching & Games Committee

### OBJECTIVES TO IMPROVE THE DEVELOPMENT OF HURLING

TIMELINE	SHORT TERM
SPECIFIC ACTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To contact all schools and invite them to a 1st year blitz</li><li>• To track what schools have hurlers in them and offer additional support in terms of coaching</li><li>• To organize a TY hurling Programme to allow schools to try hurling</li></ul>
AREA RESPONSIBLE	Coaching & Games Committee Coaching & Games Committee, Schools & PR & IT Committee



## **SECONDARY SCHOOLS CONT.**

### **OBJECTIVES**

**TO SUPPORT SCHOOLS WITH THE NEEDS THEY REQUIRE, INCLUDING COACH EDUCATION**

<b>TIMELINE</b>	<b>SHORT TERM</b>
<b>SPECIFIC ACTION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To encourage clubs to tie in with their local schools for use of facilities, this can be done with assistance of coaching and games</li><li>• To hold more coaching courses/CPD courses for teachers specific for post primary school which can be used as Croke Park Hours</li><li>• To provide schools with fixtures as early as possible to allow school management to organize transport, cover etc.</li><li>• To give specific workshops to enhance the development of school teams of specific areas such as nutrition, strength and conditioning etc</li></ul>
<b>AREA RESPONSIBLE</b>	Coaching & Games Committee

### **OBJECTIVES**

**TO ENCOURAGE MORE PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL TEAMS**

<b>TIMELINE</b>	<b>SHORT TERM</b>
<b>SPECIFIC ACTION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To encourage clubs to tie in with their local schools for use of facilities, this More fun localized blitz/tournaments</li><li>• Coaching at younger age groups within the schools</li><li>• Enhance relationship with Cumman na mbunscoil- Games Development Officer committee</li></ul>
<b>AREA RESPONSIBLE</b>	Coaching & Games Committee

# OBJECTIVES

**TO ENHANCE PLAYING STANDARDS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS TO ALLOW OUR PLAYERS COMPETE AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL POSSIBLE**

TIMELINE	SHORT TERM	MEDIUM TERM	LONG TERM
<b>SPECIFIC ACTION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creating a criterion to identify 3 or 4 schools to compete in Leinster A</li> <li>• Continue Combined Schools</li> <li>• Run a pilot Leinster A program in Ardee Community School</li> <li>• Underage club competitions finish in the middle of September to allow players to focus on school's football</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff members assisting with the rolling out of the program with 2nd Years 2021/22</li> <li>• Schools compete in Leinster A&amp;B underage competitions</li> <li>• Teacher education fund</li> <li>• Recruiting/promoting players in 5/6th class to attend the 3 or 4 football schools</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working towards schools competing in senior Leinster A championships</li> <li>• Scholarship agreements/opportunities with Colleges/Universities for our players to avail off once schools get to A level standard</li> <li>• Move schools' focus from Louth competitions to Leinster A competitions</li> </ul>
<b>AREA RESPONSIBLE</b>	County Board, Secondary School Principals & Coaching & Games Committee	County Board, Principals, Teachers & Coaching & Games Committee	Clubs/Schools/Coaching & Games County Board, Secondary School Principals & Coaching & Games Committee





**RECOMMENDATIONS CHILD STRAND**

**OBJECTIVES**

**TO PROVIDE A STRUCTURED CHILD STRAND FIXTURES PROGRAMME THAT MEETS THE NEEDS OF CHILDREN**

TIMELINE	SHORT TERM
SPECIFIC ACTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Full Master Schedule available from January including Early Season, Official Blitz Dates, All County Blitz Dates and End of Season Games Under Lights</li><li>• Under 10 and Under 11 to get at least 14 official blitz dates plus their All County Blitzes</li><li>• All County Blitzes- raise profile ie Social Media, County Players, set up of pitches, at least 3 GDAs in attendance to help with smooth running.</li><li>• Clubs should offer at least a 4 week programme to their kids during winter months which could be facilitated by GDAs. Activities such as Basketball, Athletics, Fun Games</li><li>• Coaching and Games to run quarterly meetings to upskill club coaching officers and keep them informed on upcoming events and projects.</li><li>• Annual Óg Sport/Go Games Workshop for new and existing coaches highlighting the ethos and rules and regulations of Go Games and Og Sport blitzes.</li></ul>
AREA RESPONSIBLE	<p>Coaching &amp; Games Committee</p> <p>Coaching &amp; Games Committee , PR &amp; IT Committee, Local Media</p>





## RECOMMENDATIONS YOUTH STRAND

### OBJECTIVES

**PROVIDING A PROGRAMME OF FIXTURES FOLLOWING THE GUIDELINES SET OUT BY THE TURAS PATHWAY THAT WILL FOCUS ON THE DEVELOPMENT AND RETENTION OF PLAYERS**

TIMELINE	SHORT TERM
SPECIFIC ACTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full Master Schedule of all fixtures from U12 up to U17 to be available from January</li> <li>• Games Manager to sit on Coiste Na nÓg and Coiste Iomana Committees</li> <li>• Og Sport and Coiste na nÓg to form sub committee to work on grading for U12</li> <li>• U13, U15 and U17 are the primary competitions</li> <li>• U14 competition will be run on a regionalised format in a designated shorter window in the schedule with modified rules and playing numbers</li> <li>• Team registrations to be submitted to Coiste na nÓg in designated window. Additional registrations can be submitted in second registration window.</li> <li>• Independent teams must apply to Coiste na nÓg and should only be entered in situations where teams are unable to field on their own. Clubs encouraged to enter on their own where possible to maximise number of player who are playing GAA in Louth.</li> <li>• Unlimited substitutions across all leagues. This is to encourage teams to give game time to ALL players as recommend by TURAS player pathway. Aim to implement guaranteed game time as rule for 2022.</li> <li>• Target of 12-16 games at U13, U15 and U17</li> <li>• Clubs with large playing numbers encouraged to enter second/third teams in lower divisions. (Player grading system required)</li> <li>• Modified rules in league games at both 13s and 15s to encourage skill development - 2 touch</li> <li>• Coiste na nÓg to have representative on County Management</li> </ul>
AREA RESPONSIBLE	<p>Coaching &amp; Games Committee</p> <p>Coaching &amp; Games Committee , PR &amp; IT Committee, Local Media</p> <p>Coiste Iomana</p>



## YOUTH GAMES PROGRAMME U-12 TO U-20

	UNDER 12	UNDER 13	UNDER 15	UNDER 17	UNDER 19/20
Turas Guidelines	- Continue to allow players to explore all positions	- Continue to allow players to explore all positions - Developing the player's fundamental and technical skills in decision making environment	- Players beginning to become accustomed to specific positions but must still be challenged to playing a variety of positions - Consolidation and refinement of skills acquired so far	- Consolidation and refinement of skills acquired so far - Players beginning to become accustomed to specific positions but must still be challenged to playing a variety of positions	- Retention of players and preparation for adult football
Modified rules for Football Game Emphasis	Two Plays in league matches	Two Plays in league matches	Two plays in league matches		
Max Playing Numbers	13-a-side	13-a-side	15-a-side	15-a-side	15-a-side
Match duration	60 mins (4 quarters)	60 mins (4 quarters)	60 mins (4 quarters)	60 mins	60 mins
Target minimum game time	2 quarters	1 quarter	1 quarter		
Substitutions	Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited
Max Pitch Size Football	20m-20m lines, full width	20m-20m lines, full width	Full pitch	Full pitch	Full pitch
Max Goal Size	15' x 7'	15' x 7'	Full size	Full size	Full size
Ball Size	4	4	5	5	5
Kickout	From the hands	From the hands	From a tee	From a tee	From a tee
Target number of games	12 - 14	14 - 16	14-16	14- 16	10 - 12
Desired Coaching Qualification	Award 1	Award 1	Award 1	Award 1	Award 1

## RECOMMENDATIONS ADULT GAMES DEVELOPMENT

**PROVIDE A STRUCTURED AND CONSISTENT PROGRAMME OF FIXTURES THAT MEETS THE NEEDS OF ADULT CLUB PLAYERS AT VARIOUS LEVELS**

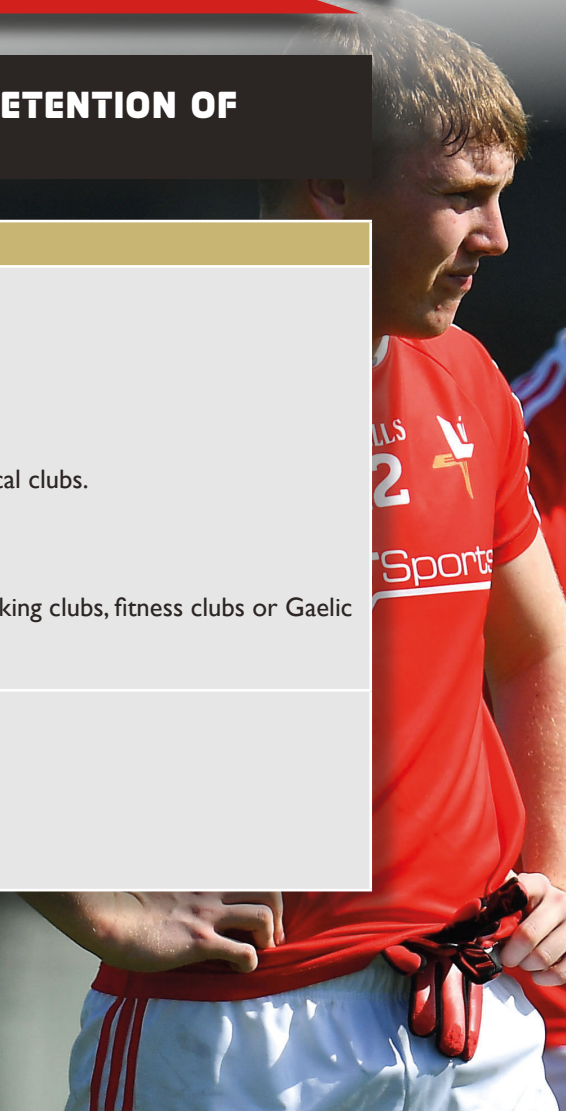
TIMELINE	SHORT TERM
SPECIFIC ACTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Release a clear and concise Master Schedule by end of January</li><li>• Trial an Amalgamation competition when the county team are playing in championship</li><li>• Allow club 2nd teams to gain promotion to Division 3. No first team can get relegated to Division 4.</li><li>• Assist referees to improve the standard</li><li>• Organise an U19/20 competition providing 10-14 games</li><li>• Introduce unlimited substitutions at Division 4, 5 and 6 to encourage clubs to give game time to younger players</li><li>• Assess changes from Central Council re spilt season and design a programme of fixtures around this that provides adequate games for both club and county players.</li><li>• Run the Club Championship in a block as per 2020 and examine support for finish on day policy up to an including 1/4 final</li></ul>
AREA RESPONSIBLE	County Board & CCC



## RECOMMENDATIONS URBAN

### OBJECTIVES SUPPORT CLUBS IN URBAN AREAS WITH RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION OF PLAYERS

TIMELINE	SHORT TERM
SPECIFIC ACTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Each Club to have an active club school link</li><li>• Coach recruitment key and supported through formal and informal Coach Education</li><li>• Organise regular Internal and External Super Game Centres in clubs</li><li>• At Óg Sport Level, the first 4/5 fixtures in the year are ran on a localised basis creating rivalry between local clubs.</li><li>• At UI2, UI4, UI6 competitions, Urban clubs are grouped together for early stages.</li><li>• Make the club an attractive option that parents want to bring their kids to... possibly coffee mornings, walking clubs, fitness clubs or Gaelic 4 mothers</li></ul>
AREA RESPONSIBLE	<p>Coaching &amp; Games Committee</p> <p>Coaching &amp; Games Committee, PR &amp; IT Committee, Local Media</p> <p>Coiste Iomana</p>





## RECOMMENDATIONS REFEREEING

### ENHANCE THE QUALITY OF REFEREEING TO IMPROVE THE GAME IN LOUTH AND HELP REFEREES REACH THEIR POTENTIAL

TIMELINE	SHORT TERM	MEDIUM TERM	LONG TERM
<b>SPECIFIC ACTION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agree on a 3 year plan with referees and clubs</li> <li>• Provide the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regular Fitness Assessments</li> <li>Work with DkIT on Training and Assessment plans</li> <li>Access to Darver and Nutritional support</li> <li>Ongoing Rules Review using outside testers</li> <li>Regular courses – including umpires</li> <li>Talks from external intercountry referees and assessors</li> <li>Video analysis of games from refereeing point of view</li> <li>Club nights – start of year and around rule changes</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing review of programme</li> <li>• Advanced fitness and training programmes for referees who want them</li> <li>• Introduce clear pathways and referee level for classifications</li> <li>• Recruit more umpires- how can we help clubs do this</li> <li>• Club fees to offset costs involved – initially €100 per clubs</li> <li>• Improved and additional resources (Equipment, gear, expenses)</li> <li>• Look for main sponsor for referees</li> <li>• Young whistlers in schools and clubs</li> <li>• Regular course – Recruitment/Fitness/Rules/ Administration</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• External review of programme – survey to clubs/players/public</li> <li>• Elite programmes and assistance for category A and National referees</li> <li>• Set recruitment targets</li> <li>• Set targets for advancement</li> </ul>
<b>AREA RESPONSIBLE</b>	County Board Referees Committee	County Board Referees Committee	County Board, Referees Committee





## ACADEMY SQUADS

### OBJECTIVES TO HAVE AN ACADEMY STRUCTURE IN PLACE WHICH ENSURES THE DEVELOPMENT AND RETENTION OF OUR PLAYERS

TIMELINE	SHORT TERM	MEDIUM TERM	LONG TERM
SPECIFIC ACTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Coaching Structure to change which will include a staff member</li><li>DKIT S&amp;C Interns with each squads</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Induction day were gear is handed out plus development kits</li><li>Educational fund to improve interns and coaches</li><li>Access to support staff (Academy nutritionist, Academy lifestyle coach)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Ensure there are standardized structures in place for player and coach continued professional development and education</li></ul>
AREA RESPONSIBLE	County Board & Coaching & Games Committee	County Board & Coaching & Games Committee	County Board & Former/Current Players

## RECOMMENDATIONS LOUTH PATHWAY U17/20 AND SENIOR

### OBJECTIVES

**ENSURE A CLEARLY DEFINED PATHWAY FOR OUR ELITE PLAYERS AND PUT IN PLACE STRUCTURES TO ENABLE THEM TO REACH THEIR POTENTIAL AS A CLUB AND COUNTY PLAYER.**  
**SUPPORTS IN PLACE TO ALLOW COUNTY TEAMS COMPETE AT A HIGHER LEVEL ON A CONSISTENT BASIS**

TIMELINE	SHORT TERM	MEDIUM TERM	LONG TERM
<b>SPECIFIC ACTION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>County board policy that 15% of Senior and U20 squads must be players just out of U20 and U17 levels respectively.</li> <li>Greater emphasis placed on the U20 squad, allow for longer preparation period and early appointment of the manager so they can watch Club U19 and Club Championship season</li> <li>Players play for their own age first to allow structured development.</li> <li>Any expenses to be paid in a structured and agreed protocol to remove disagreements.</li> <li>Stockpile of equipment in Darver to ensure adequate access for all squads in both codes.</li> <li>DKIT/Louth GAA scholarship program to continue and a collaboration on S&amp;C so players are involved in a yearly plan</li> <li>Introduction of U-20 Hurling Squad</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Official gear allowance available at the start of every year for all squads with U17/20s getting the same amount of gear. Players to wear Louth GAA gear at training - rebrand to have standardised colour for training gear</li> <li>Greater access to support staff at U17-Senior (e.g. nutritionist, psychology, performance analysis, athletic development)</li> <li>Clubs to identify and invest in CPD for club member/professional employee to oversee Athletic Development in their club from U14/15 up to Senior and implement a yearly plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Louth Player Support Group in place. This group would be a point of contact for players looking for work, career advice, dealing with college players, have a voice on any changes to club senior fixtures. This would be in place separate from any management team</li> <li>Consistently competing for Leinster titles at U17s &amp; 20s</li> </ul>
<b>AREA RESPONSIBLE</b>	County Board, Manager & Players	County Board, Managers, Players, Coaching & Games Committee, Clubs	County Board & Former/Current Players



## RECOMMENDATIONS PR & COMMUNICATIONS

### OBJECTIVES

### TO IMPROVE PR, MEDIA RELATIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS WITHIN LOUTH GAA AND RELEVANT STAKEHOLDERS

TIMELINE	SHORT TERM	MEDIUM TERM	LONG TERM
<b>SPECIFIC ACTION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Announced intercounty teams earlier in the week</li> <li>Encourage clubs to adhere to panel numbers for Championship games</li> <li>To make club fixture changes available to media at earliest convenience</li> <li>Title of PRO to be changed to Public Relations and Digital Marketing Office</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Appointment of specific PRO's to enhance the promotion of Hurling/Underage/ Schools activities on social media and county website</li> <li>To set up a team of match day personnel for both Inter County and club championship games, to aid the delivery of social media content and match day activities</li> <li>Utilise DkIT student placement programme to enhance the delivery of PR within the county.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To encourage more sponsorship and make sponsors proud to be part of the Louth GAA brand.</li> <li>To make sponsors aware of the benefits of sponsoring Louth.</li> <li>To make our players and management teams known to the public. Make them more marketable.</li> <li>For intercounty league and championship season, utilise LúTV more with weekly updates from management on status of squad (injuries and suspensions) to generate interest.</li> </ul>
<b>AREA RESPONSIBLE</b>	<p>Management Committee and Management Teams Club Secretaries/Club PROS/Louth CCC</p> <p>County PR &amp; IT Committee</p> <p>Management Committee</p>	<p>Management &amp; PR &amp; IT Committee</p> <p>Management Committee County PR &amp; IT Committee,</p> <p>PR &amp; IT Committee &amp; DkIT Officer</p>	<p>Finance Committee &amp; PR &amp; IT</p> <p>Finance Committee PR &amp; IT Committee</p> <p>Management Team &amp; PR &amp; IT Committee</p> <p>PR &amp; IT Committee</p>





## RECOMMENDATIONS INFRASTRUCTURE & FACILITIES

### OBJECTIVES

TO REIMAGINE AND INVIGORATE THE CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE IN DARVER AS A PLACE THAT REPRESENTS WHO WE ARE, AND WHAT WE ASPIRE TO BE

TIMELINE	SHORT TERM	MEDIUM TERM	LONG TERM
SPECIFIC ACTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Renaming of the Centre of Excellence</li><li>Interior works - Use of Colour and photos to tell the story of Louth GAA</li><li>Upgrading of the Walking/Running Track</li><li>Pitches – Resodding where needed, Care regime designed and Proper nets and Netting</li><li>Signage - On the roads to Darver, all pitches named and signed, and all rooms and dressing rooms named</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Development of Outdoor Space - Meeting Area, Picnic tables and Amphitheatre</li><li>Entrance Works – tarmac, fencing and signage</li><li>Internal Building Structure Review</li><li>Exercise equipment along running track.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Upgrade Car park – Tarmac, Markings, Lighting and Covered walkway</li><li>Playground - Build a large Children's playground that's accessible year round</li></ul>
AREA RESPONSIBLE	Development Execution Committee	Development Execution Committee	Development Execution Committee

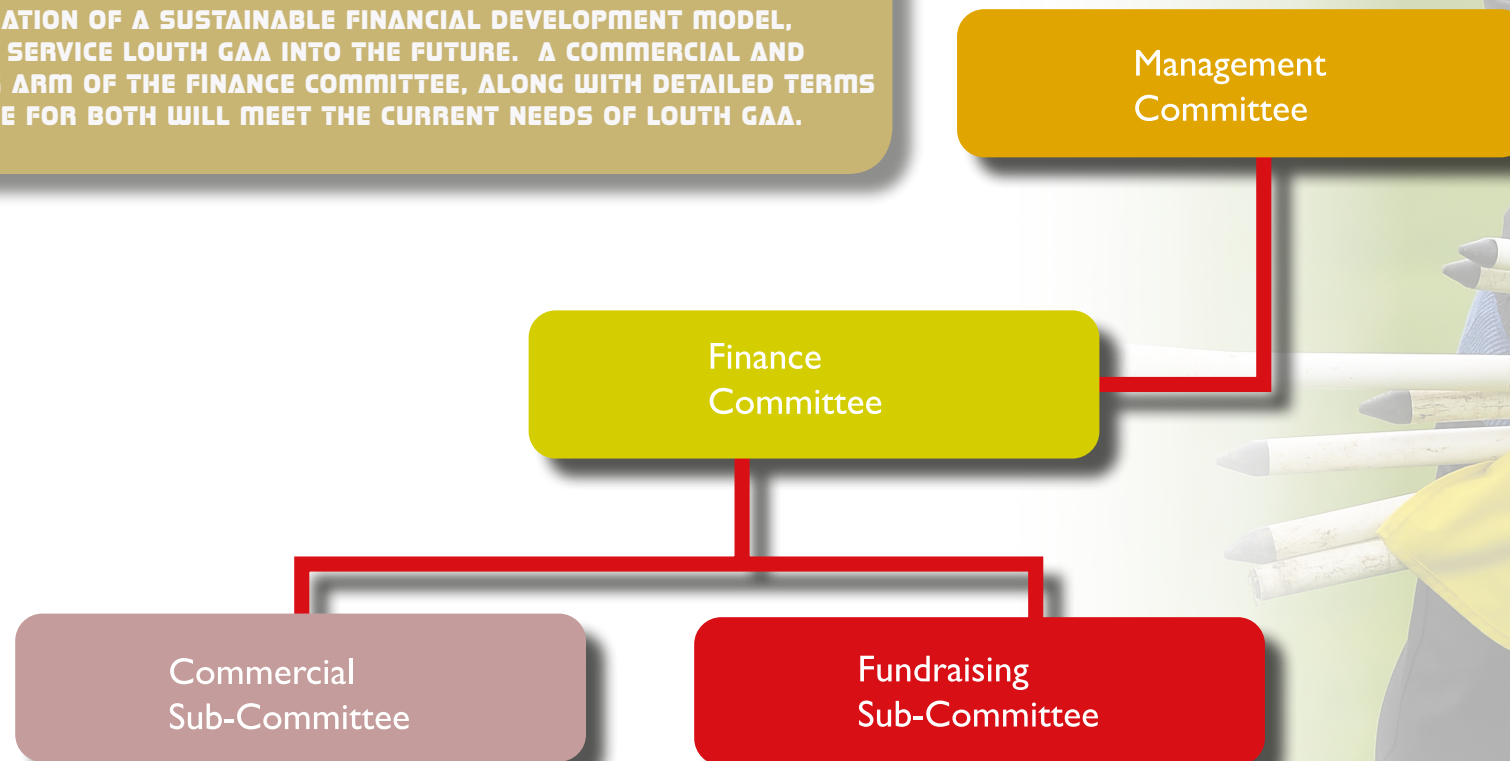




## FINANCE & FUNDRAISING

### RECOMMENDATIONS

AN EXTENSION OF THE CURRENT FINANCE COMMITTEE IS ESSENTIAL TO THE COORDINATION OF A SUSTAINABLE FINANCIAL DEVELOPMENT MODEL, THAT WOULD SERVICE LOUTH GAA INTO THE FUTURE. A COMMERCIAL AND FUNDRAISING ARM OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE, ALONG WITH DETAILED TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR BOTH WILL MEET THE CURRENT NEEDS OF LOUTH GAA.



## RECOMMENDATIONS FINANCE & FUNDRAISING

### OBJECTIVES

### TO DEVELOP BEST PRACTICE COMMERCIAL ACTIVITY WITHIN LOUTH GAA

TIMELINE	SHORT TERM	MEDIUM TERM	LONG TERM
<b>SPECIFIC ACTION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete review of all sponsorable assets available to Louth GAA.</li> <li>Research previous agreements where possible.</li> <li>Develop Brand “Louth GAA” with a vision to promote the County as an attractive investment opportunity for Sponsorship</li> <li>Conduct market research to ascertain market viability of Louth GAA.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To relaunch the new Brand - “Louth GAA” - as the drawing a line under all old activity, moment.</li> <li>Compile list of all potential partners for Louth GAA from a Commercial standpoint</li> <li>Develop a master database for all Business Contacts and dealings within the County. This should be done in a way that makes for the easy and secure transfer of information to all future Committee’s.</li> <li>Propose a Calendar of Commercial Activity within Louth to coincide with Club Louth Calendar</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Procure the best Sponsorship deals possible for all Louth GAA Activity.</li> <li>Ensure all Sponsor agreements are serviced in full and do not impact negatively on any future agreements.</li> <li>Maintain all signage contracts within Louth GAA Stadium to the highest possible standard.</li> </ul>
<b>AREA RESPONSIBLE</b>	Finance & Commercial Committee Co. Treasurer & Operations Manager Commercial & PR & IT Committee Commercial Committee	Commercial & PR & IT Committee Commercial Committee Commercial & Fundraising Committee Commercial & Fundraising Committee	Commercial Committee Commercial Committee Chairperson & Operations Manager Commercial Committee



## RECOMMENDATIONS FINANCE & FUNDRAISING

### OBJECTIVES

### TO DEVELOP A FUNDRAISING ARM WITHIN LOUTH GAA FOR THE BENEFIT OF ALL LOUTH GAA ACTIVITIES

TIMELINE	SHORT TERM	MEDIUM TERM	LONG TERM
<b>SPECIFIC ACTION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify suitable members who will drive fundraising activities within the county</li> <li>Complete review of all Fundraising activities undertaken by other counties and similar organisations.</li> <li>Develop a programme of Fundraising Activities that can be established into annual events</li> <li>Develop supporter's membership brand and entry tiers.</li> <li>Promote existing National Projects that offer financial rewards for Louth GAA (Match day attendances, Season Ticket &amp; Club + Awards).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To relaunch "Club Lú" – the official supporters club for Louth GAA.</li> <li>Development of a Club/County Fundraiser that benefits both parties.</li> <li>Review existing Fundraising Programme and identify additional opportunities where available.</li> <li>Explore concert/festival viability for Darver and new Stadium in Dundalk</li> <li>Develop a master database for all Business Contacts and dealings within the County. This should be done in a way that makes for the easy and secure transfer of information to all future Committee's.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Launch of Club/County Draw.</li> <li>Continually devise ways to ensure Fundraising Activities and Supporters Club offerings are attractive and effective.</li> <li>Monster Fundraising Event established that would act as the Counties largest single source fundraising event.</li> </ul>
<b>AREA RESPONSIBLE</b>	Co. Chairperson & Treasurer  Fundraising Committee & Operations Manager  Fundraising Committee  Finance & Fundraising Committee  PR & IT Committee	Fundraising & PR & IT Committee  Fundraising Committee & Operations Manager  Fundraising Committee  Finance, Commercial & Fundraising Committee  Commercial & Fundraising Committee	Co. Executive, Finance, Fundraising & PR & IT Committee  Fundraising Committee  Finance & Fundraising Committee



# OVERVIEW OF OBJECTIVES



## PRIMARY SCHOOLS OBJECTIVES

- To enhance the relationship between clubs and primary schools and promote an active club/school link programme
- To increase awareness and uptake of the GAA 5 Star Centre
- Launch a GAA after school coaching academy on a regional basis
- To support schools with the needs they require including coach education
- To encourage more participation within primary schools

## SECONDARY SCHOOLS OBJECTIVES

- To enhance the development of 1st year players
- To improve the development of hurling within schools in the county
- To support schools with the needs they require, including coach education
- To encourage more participation in school teams
- To enhance playing standards in secondary schools to allow our players compete at the highest level possible

## GAMES DEVELOPMENT- CHILD STRAND OBJECTIVES

- To provide a structured Child Strand fixtures programme that meets the needs of children

## GAMES DEVELOPMENT – YOUTH STRAND OBJECTIVES

Providing a programme of fixtures following the guidelines set out by TURAS pathway that will focus on the development and retention of players



## ACADEMY SQUADS OBJECTIVES

- To have an Academy structure in place which ensures the development and retention of our players

## PLAYER PATHWAY U17/U20/SENIORS OBJECTIVES

- Ensure a clearly defined pathway for our elite players and put in place structures to enable them to reach their potential as a club and county player.
- Supports in place to allow County teams compete at a higher level on a consistent basis

## CLUB ADULT OBJECTIVE

- Provide a structured and consistent programme of fixtures that meets the needs of adult club players at various levels

## URBAN OBJECTIVES

- Support clubs in urban areas with recruitment and retention of players

## REFEREEING OBJECTIVES

- Enhance the quality of refereeing to improve the game in Louth and help referees reach their potential

## PR AND COMMUNICATIONS OBJECTIVES

- To improve PR, Media relations and Communications within Louth GAA and relevant stakeholders

## INFRASTRUCTURE AND FACILITIES OBJECTIVES

- To reimagine and invigorate the Centre of excellence in Darver as a place that represents who we are, and what we aspire to be

## FUNDRAISING AND FINANCE OBJECTIVES

- To Develop Best Practice Commercial Activity Within Louth GAA
- To Develop A Fundraising Arm Within Louth GAA For The Benefit Of All Louth GAA Activities

## IMPLEMENTATION

We are proposing that the Louth Review Steering Committee will remain in place to ensure the successful implementation of the objectives and specific actions set out in the report. The group will meet on a quarterly basis and report to County Management with a progress report on each of the objectives and actions.

## HURLING RECOMMENDATION

A number of the objectives in the report are applicable to both football and hurling. However, it is evident from our review that more support is required and we recommend that a specific Hurling Review Group be set up in 2021.





## CONCLUSION

Louth is a proud GAA county with many great volunteers involved at all levels that provide hugely important outlets within communities. However, in terms of performance Louth GAA has suffered in recent years, with both the football and hurling teams competing in the bottom tier in the National league.

Despite the poor performances on the field, a recent wave of optimism has spread through the County. The purchase and subsequent granting of planning permission for a new County Grounds is long overdue and has lifted the spirits. The Hurling squad have made strides under the stewardship of Paul McCormack and tasted success, winning the Lory Meagher. The footballers received a huge boost with the appointment of Mickey Harte as manager of the senior squad and an impressive U20 management team was put together. Former Louth star and manager Colin Kelly was recently appointed as Academy Squad Coordinator and has made an impact on those squads already.

To ensure long-term success it is important to put structures in place. We set out to get a thorough picture as to what is happening at all levels and we narrowed this down to key focus areas to include:

- **PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS**
- **GAMES DEVELOPMENT AT CHILD, YOUTH AND ADULT.**
- **ACADEMY SQUADS AND PLAYER PATHWAY**
- **PR AND MARKETING**
- **FINANCE AND FUNDRAISING**
- **FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

We got a huge response with over 650 completed surveys, which was complimented by focus groups, interviews and other informal research methods. In our primary schools, we found a mixture in the level of support they receive from clubs. We must enhance the number of active club school links in the county to supplement the work of GDOs. At secondary level, we must aim to have schools competing at a higher level. We must continue to provide game opportunities at Og Sport level and provide certainty to clubs and parents with a structured games programme from U-7 to U-11.

The change to age grades of U13, U15 and U17 from the GAA has the potential to increase the quality of football at Youth Level. The focus now will be to provide more matches at these age grades on a consistent basis. This presents the challenge of retaining these players beyond 17 years of age, so it is imperative that a meaningful U19/U20 competition is introduced. Clubs must also look to use their second/third teams to help with the transition to adult level.

At county level, we must improve the supports our players receive. The players must have a desire to play for Louth but they must be valued and supported to help them grow as individuals and players. Changes in age grades to U17 and U20 provide a challenge and a robust player pathway must be in place. Not all players will progress to become Senior Intercounty players but they should leave with a good experience from Louth GAA so that they can contribute positively to their club.

As mentioned previously, a huge amount of good work goes in at all levels. We must highlight this through an effective communications strategy. One such example of an improvement in this area is the success of Lu TV to stream the 2020 club championship.



Darver Centre of Excellence is looked upon with envy from outside the county, but is seen in a more negative light from within. The successful hosting of this year's club championship appears to have shown people the value of such a facility. We must build on this and make sure that Darver is a place that is fit for purpose for the development of our elite players and also a welcoming hub for our clubs and the local community.

Success also requires investment. In recent years, Louth has featured at the bottom end of the table for both investment in teams and in commercial income received. The proposal of commercial and fundraising arms should allow Louth GAA increase revenue to support the activities at various levels.

We welcome feedback and input to our report and we fully expect that this will be a live document so as we can adapt to changes that will present themselves in the future.

