

# GUIDANCE FOR GOOD GOVERNANCE Across National Hub Network

The Community Enterprise Association Ireland (CEAI) and the Western Development Commission's Connected Hubs team have launched the first 'Guidance Handbook for Good Governance', to strengthen and bolster the governance integrity and oversight of community enterprise centres and hubs across the National Hub Network.

**T**his new handbook will offer best-in-class governance guidance intended to support the boards, staff and volunteers of the several hundred centres and hubs across the National Hub Network. CEAI and the Western Development Commission's Connected Hubs team have long recognised the necessity of establishing a strong governance framework to ensure long-term sustainability and effectiveness of the network throughout Ireland.

The handbook encompasses essential elements such as ethical guidelines, operational protocols, decision-making processes, and mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation. It also aims to provide a strong governance foundation for centres and hubs to operate with integrity, facilitate effective collaboration, and maximise their impact on communities.

Siobhán Finn, CEO of CEAI, said that the guidance handbook will support their community enterprise centres and enterprise hubs within the Network in the drive towards excellence and sustainability while fostering an environment of trust, co-operation and shared learning across the wider Hub Network.

"By providing our members with a comprehensive set of best practices, guidelines, and tools, we aim to strengthen the boards and leadership of our CLG community, offering assurance that they can navigate the complexities of service offerings and strategic delivery with confidence and integrity.

"Together, we can forge a path towards effective governance, robust decision-making, and long-term success. We aim to positively shape a future where ethical leadership and sound management principles define the new standard of performance excellence for our community. We look forward to future opportunities for working with the WDC's Connected Hubs team to deliver on the forthcoming National Hub Strategy."

## FUTURE HUB DEVELOPMENTS

Stephen Carolan, Manager of the WDC's National Hub Network Programme, said: "This guidance handbook will help to ensure that current and future hub development is undertaken with a clear understanding of the governance requirements involved in developing and running hubs today.

"One of the core tenants of the Connected Hubs programme is to facilitate knowledge sharing and best practice across the Network. This handbook is an example of how a challenging area can be addressed in a way that provides ease of understanding for decision makers involved in the hub sector.

"The National Hub Network is being viewed as an international exemplar in the future of work arena, and it



*Pictured at the launch (l-r): Siobhán Finn, CEO of Community Enterprise Association Ireland (CEAI); Michael Brougham Enterprise Ireland; Gary O'Meara, Chairperson of CEAI and CEO of Meath Enterprise; Tina Gannon, Enterprise Ireland; Stephen Carolan, Connected Hubs – National Hubs Network Programme Manager, Western Development Commission; Colm O'Neill, Regional Enterprise, Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment; Geraldine O'Neill, Department of Rural and Community Development; and Pauline Leonard, Regional Development Executive, Western Development Commission.*

is essential that it continues to be underpinned by strong governance structures. Connected Hubs and CEAI will be key drivers of the forthcoming National Hub Strategy, and so early collaboration on this project has been a beneficial experience for both organisations."

The decision to develop this handbook came about under the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between both organisations. CEAI and Connected Hubs anticipate that the launch of this handbook will not only enhance the reputation of the National Hub Network but also help to attract additional stakeholders, investors, and partners who share the common vision of promoting sustainable community development.

Visit <https://connectedhubs.ie/publications.html> to view the report.