

Minutes of Meeting for Climate Action and Community Strategic Policy Committee

Held on Monday, 6 December 2021 at 9.30 a.m. via TEAMS

Present:

Cllr. John King, Chairperson
Cllr. James Kelly
Cllr. Pdraig Fleming
Ms. Ann Fingleton, Business/Commercial
Mr. Bobby Delaney, Environment/Conservation

Apologies: Mr. Donal Brennan DOS, Cllr Ollie Clooney, Ms. Ruth Sullivan, Community/Voluntary, Mr. Michael Gorman, Laois PPN, Social Inclusion

In Attendance:

Ms. Carmel McNicholl, Senior Executive Officer, Ms Pamela Tynan, Administrative Officer, Ms Muireann Ní Chonail Arts Officer, Ms. Rose Doolin, Assistant Staff Officer.

Cllr John King opened the meeting and welcomed everyone.

Confirmation of Minutes

Upon the proposal of Cllr James Kelly and seconded by Cllr Pdraig Fleming, the minutes of SPC Meeting held on Monday, 13th September 2021 were confirmed.

Matters Arising

Cllr James Kelly advised that the danger of headstones falling in old cemeteries was raised at the recent Municipal District meeting. Cllr King asked if a survey of these graveyards should be carried out to assess the danger with a view to families of the deceased being asked to carry out the repairs. The matter of the Council acquiring additional land for existing cemeteries that are reaching capacity was also raised.

Carmel McNicholl advised that the new Cemetery Bye-Laws will be brought before the next Council meeting and will then go on public display.

Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) Update

Carmel McNicholl gave a brief presentation on the Local Economic Community Plan (LECP). She advised that the current LECP is due to expire at the end of 2021 and guidelines have been issued to facilitate the development of a new plan. The plan promotes community and economic development in County Laois, with two strands – Community Strand (LCDC responsibility) and Economic Strand (Economic & Enterprise SPC responsibility) and there is also an integration to be achieved between Community and Economic Elements. The six-year plan will encompass the development of a strategic framework and agreed high level goals. The 6 stages of development were outlined- preparation, public consultation, development of SMART objectives and outcomes, finalisation of plan, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation. The most significant challenge is the current lack of up to date census data. It is envisaged that the process will proceed, and the Plan will be reviewed after the census data becomes available

following the 2022 census. Members of the SPC will be kept informed throughout on how the plan is processing.

The members thanked Carmel McNicholl for her presentation and asked for clarification on some items. The members requested that the presentation be circulated to them.

Arts Programme Update

Muireann Ní Chonaill, Arts Officer gave a presentation on implementation of the Arts Strategic Plan. She advised that the Arts Plan 2018-2022 will be coming up for review next year. Other plans to be aware of are the Framework for Collaboration 2018-2025, and Creative Ireland 2017-2022 plans. All these programmes/plans resulted in substantial amounts of money being available for the arts in Laois. She advised that she sees the role of the Arts office as one of developing projects and launching them onto the next stage. An example of this is the School of Music which commenced 20 years ago and its success brought Music Generation to Laois in partnership with the LOETB. These music education programmes have now been taken over by the LOETB. An overview was provided of all Arts programmes carried out during 2021. Two separate allocations in the sum of €143,000 was received by Laois County Council under the Local Live Performance Programming Scheme and this money is being used to create work opportunities for musicians. In addition, when the musicians were video recording their music, they used various locations showcasing the beautiful scenery in Laois, with potential tourism spin off benefits. The further development of a film industry in Laois is also planned. It was agreed that a video demonstrating some of the musicians would be circulated to SPC members after the meeting.

The members of the SPC thanked her for her presentation and congratulated her on keeping the Arts profile very strong during COVID. They added that it was great to see that all communities in Laois benefited from the Arts programmes.

Any Other Business

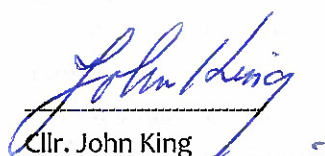
Cllr James Kelly informed the meeting that the Council have put in a Smart Cycle Stop in Mountrath. It is hoped that this will bring cyclists to the town that will spend money in the local community. He added that there is also a Smart Cycle Stop planned for Clonaslee.


Ann Fingleton advised that Eirgrid have announced a Community Benefit fund for some areas in Laois with a closing date of 1st February. It was agreed that Ann would share this email from Eirgrid with Carmel McNicholl for onward circulation to Community Groups.

Time and date of next meeting

The next meeting will take place in March 2022. When dates have been confirmed a letter will issue to members.

That concluded the business of the meeting.


Cllr. John King
Chairperson


Mr. Donal Brennan,
Director of Service