



## Local Community Development Committee Minutes of Meeting held on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> December 2023 in County Hall and via County MS Teams at 11.30am

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### Members in attendance:

#### Public Sector representatives:

Mr. Joe Thompson, LOETB (Chairperson)  
Cllr. John King, Laois County Council  
Cllr. Paschal McEvoy, Laois County Council  
Cllr. Conor Bergin, Laois County Council  
Mr. John Mulholland, CE Laois County Council  
Ms. Evelyn Reddin, Laois Local Enterprise Office  
Ms. Paula Phelan, HSE

#### Private Sector representatives:

Ms. Joan Bolger, Laois PPN (Vice Chairperson)  
Ms. Nina Horan, Laois PPN  
Ms. Caroline Lydon, CEO Laois Partnership Company

#### Apologies:

Mr. Kevin Geoghegan, DSP  
Mr. Harry Lalor, Farming Sector (I.F.A)  
Ms. Rosey Kunene, Youth Sector (Youth Work Ireland Laois)  
Mr. John Oxley, Laois PPN  
Mr. Ray Harte, Laois PPN  
Mr. Caroline Hoffman Business Sector

#### In Attendance:

Ms. Pamela Tynan, A/Chief Officer  
Ms. Suzanne O'Connor, Senior Staff Officer, LCC

Ms. Suzanne O'Connor LCC commenced roll call and registered all members present on the meeting attendance sheet.

Mr. Joe Thompson, Chairperson, opened the meeting welcoming all members to the last LCDC of 2023.

### 1. Confirmation of Minutes of LCDC meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> November 2023

The minutes were adopted following a *proposal from Cllr. Paschal McEvoy seconded by Cllr. John King.*

## 2. Matters Arising

Ms. Pamela Tynan, A/Chief Officer advised that a slight amendment has been made under agenda item 4 of the minutes titled SICAP as follows:

- (a) Prior to discussions commencing in relation to the SICAP Internal Audit and SICAP 2024 tender, Ms. Caroline Lydon, CEO Laois Partnership Company declared a conflict of interest and briefly left the meeting room while discussions were undertaken”.
  
- (b) “Ms. Caroline Lydon re-joined the meeting”.

## 3. Correspondence

### **(a) Email received on Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> November from Dept of Rural and Community Development titled “Laois County Council – 2023 Dormant Account Funding allocation.”**

Ms. Pamela Tynan, A/Chief Officer advised that said email referred to Laois LCDCs application in partnership with Youth Work Ireland Laois to deliver actions under the Dormant Accounts Fund (Action 6.3 National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy – to take measures to ensure that existing community infrastructure is inclusive and welcoming to LGBTI+ people and consider the provision of pop-up- LGTBI+ services) with the overarching aims of the project. These include:

- Extending drop-in hours, developing information and guidance tools, holding additional community events.
- Delivering LGBTI awareness/sensitivity training in healthcare settings, business, schools etc.
- Provide outreach support.
- Providing sporting/physical activity programmes to promote inclusion, community participation, health and wellbeing.

We have now received funds from the Dept in the sum of €16,966.90 (note we applied for €42,101.73) and are in the process of entering into a service level agreement with YWI for delivery of previously mentioned actions.

### **(b) Email received on Monday 27<sup>th</sup> November from Dept of Rural and Community Development titled “2024 iteration of CEP”**

Ms. Tynan noted that this email from the Dept stating that a new iteration of a fund similar to that of the Community Support Fund would be issued shortly.

Since then, another email issued on 7<sup>th</sup> December with Minister for Rural and Community Development, Heather Humphreys TD, and Minister of Stare Joe O’Brien TD announcing the new capital fund in the amount of €6m in funding nationally.

The new fund will focus on small capital works/improvements, and the purchase of equipment for community use. The funding may be used, but is not limited to;

- improved access for persons with a disability;
- enhancing community participation for disadvantaged and marginalised groups,
- and improving energy efficiency of community facilities to reduce ongoing costs.

As part of the Local Enhancement Programme fund Laois received an allocation of €153,591.05 (general €127,992.54 and women's groups €25,598.51)

Ms Tynan advised that under the Community Support fund which was launched in 2022 we received a much larger allocation in the amount of €291,487 (capital €142,828, current, current €145,745, women's sheds €2,914 and admin €14,574). Under the Community Support Fund 139 groups were awarded funding. Once again it is expected that this fund will be very much over-subscribed.

#### **4. SICAP**

Prior to discussions commencing in relation to the SICAP Internal Audit and SICAP 2024+ tender, Ms. Caroline Lydon, CEO Laois Partnership Company declared a conflict of interest and briefly left the meeting room while discussions took place.

Ms. Pamela Tynan, A/Chief Officer advised that following the November LCDC meeting a letter of award was published on e-tenders with conditions of Award included.

Prior to contract signing, the tenderer has been asked to provide the LCDC with an implementation plan, including timelines and quarterly milestones, which demonstrates how the tenderer will implement recommendations from the Internal Audit Report on the SICAP programme for 2022 by the end of 2024.

Once an implementation plan for implementation of the 2022 audit recommendations has been received and agreed with the contracting authority, this plan will become an addendum to the SICAP Call-Off Contract. The plan will therefore, upon contract signing, form part of the tenderers' contractual obligations under the SICAP Call-Off Contract and, in line with section 2.1 of the SICAP Call-Off Contract, evidence of its implementation will be a pre-condition for continued programme funding beyond 2024.

It should be noted that failure, refusal or neglect 'to comply within a reasonable time with any recommendation or report arising from any audit' constitutes an 'event of default' under the SICAP Call-Off Contract (see clause 3.8.2.8) and, as such, grounds for contract termination, without liability for compensation or damages, and/or imposition of any sanction/ remedy by the contracting authority (see clause 3.8.1)".

Once all documentation is in place we will be in a position to sign contracts for the new programme to commence on the 1<sup>st</sup> January 2024.

Since the issue of the meeting papers the Laois Partnership Company have submitted an implementation plan which is currently being reviewed in tandem with the audit report.

In addition, the Dept have issued an email containing:

- Framework Agreement template for Social Inclusion and Related Services
- Call Off Contract for SICAP Template, and
- Schedule A

Finally, Ms. Tynan noted that the Dept have advised that the annual budget allocation for the new SICAP programme 2024 will increase from €715,706 to €763,890 with an additional allocation of €143,123 for new arrivals.

Ms. Caroline Lydon re-joined the meeting.

## **5. Healthy Ireland**

Ms. Pamela Tynan, A/Chief Officer advised that the Healthy Ireland sub-committee convened on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> December to consider:

- 2023 Progress Update
- 2024 Funding Update
- 2024 Programme Proposals, and
- Additional actions undertaken in 2023.

During the course of the meeting the HI co-ordinator, Ms. Emma O'Connor gave the sub-committee an outline of the 2023 budget allocation amounting to €81,833.60.

In addition, Ms. O'Connor provided an update of the progress of activities that took place in 2023 with particular points noted as:

- Underspend of €810 on Make Way Day will be used to purchase activator poles for Portlaoise and Portarlinton libraries. Match funding was secured from Age Friendly and HI Offaly.
- Additional €1,058.19 allocated to the Living Well Expo due to large turnout of over 1,000 people.
- Finally, Ms. O'Connor noted that the 2024 budget allocation of €75,000 has been confirmed.

## 2024 Programme Proposal

Ms. Tynan advised members that on the recommendation of the HI Sub-committee Ms. Emma O'Connor proposed the continuation of existing programmes into 2024 with the exception of the following:

1. Ride Laois Programme paused with 2023 funding brought forward until February 2024 and final decision to be made at this time. No additional funding allocated for 2024.
2. New Programme to be implemented called *Mountmellick & Rathdowney Health Meitheal* with the target of improving lifestyle behaviours whilst utilizing local services in these two towns.
3. Live well Expo funding to be increased to €5,000 and partnered again with Age Friendly Laois.
4. Laois Partnership Funding to be increased to €10,000.
5. Make Way Day funding to be reduced to €1,000 as this is sufficient to cover expenses.
6. €75,000 to be divided equally with €37,500 allocated to Lifestyle and Behaviour Risk Outcome Area and €37,500 allocated to Wellbeing Factors

LCDC members present welcomed the Healthy Ireland update on the work undertaken by the HI co-ordinator and sub-committee. The HI 2024 programme of works and allocation were proposed by Cllr. Paschal McEvoy being seconded by Ms. Paula Phelan.

## **6. Any Other Business**

2024 Proposed Meeting dates:

<b>LCDC/LAG Proposed 2024 Meeting Dates</b>
Wednesday 17 <sup>th</sup> January 2024
Wednesday 28 <sup>th</sup> February 2024
Wednesday 27 <sup>th</sup> March 2024
Wednesday 24 <sup>th</sup> April 2024
Wednesday 29 <sup>th</sup> May 2024
Wednesday 26 <sup>th</sup> June 2024
Wednesday 31 <sup>st</sup> July 2024
<b>No Meeting in August</b>
Wednesday 25 <sup>th</sup> September 2024
Wednesday 30 <sup>th</sup> October 2024
Wednesday 27 <sup>th</sup> November 2024
Wednesday 18 <sup>th</sup> December 2024

The 2024 meeting dates were unanimously agreed by members being proposed by Ms. Joan Bolger and seconded by Mr. John Mulholland.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

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*Joe Thompson*  
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SIGNED:

DATE: Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> January 2024.

**Mr. Joe Thompson**  
**CHAIRPERSON – LAOIS LCDC**