

Minutes of Meeting
Climate Action and Community Strategic Policy Committee
Monday, 6th March at 9.30 a.m. in Council Chamber and via MS Teams



Present	Cllr Pdraig Fleming (Chairperson) Cllr. John King (on-line) Cllr. James Kelly (on-line) Ms. Ann Fingleton, Business/Commercial Mr. Bobby Delaney, Laois PPN, Environmental Rep Mr. Michael Gorman, Laois PPN, Social Inclusion Rep
Apologies:	Cllr. PJ Kelly Ms. Ruth Sullivan, Laois PPN, Community/ Voluntary Cllr. Ollie Clooney Mr. Donald Scully, Agriculture/Farming
In Attendance:	Mr. Donal Brennan Director of Services Ms. Pamela Tynan, A/Senior Executive Officer Ms. Suzanne O'Connor, A/Senior Staff Officer Ms Rose Doolin, Assistant Staff Officer Ms. Suzanne Dempsey, Climate Action Co-ordinator

Cllr Pdraig Fleming, Chairperson, welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Confirmation of Minutes

Upon the proposal of Cllr James Kelly and seconded by Cllr John King, the minutes of the SPC Meeting held on Monday, 5th December 2022 were confirmed.

LECP 2023-2028

Ms. Pamela Tynan, A/SEO provided members with an update on the preparation of the LECP. Members were informed that the primary aim of the LECP is to set out, for a six-year period, the objectives and actions needed to support and promote the economic development and the local community development of Laois, both by Laois County Council directly and in partnership with other economic and community development stakeholders. The LECP is an important way to set out how Laois County Council and other stakeholders can work together to ensure that their initiatives, programmes, and projects support an improved quality of life for people living and working in the County.

Stage 1 of the LECP process (Preparation) has been completed with the process now moved on to Stage 2, Public Consultation. The draft High Level Goals and Socio Economic Statement have now developed.

There are 10 Proposed High-Level Goals for the new LECP. These goals seek to recognise the challenges the County will face over the lifetime of the new LECP. Each goal is broad in scope, given that future stages of the process will develop more detailed Objectives and Actions. The proposed High Level Goals are as follows:

Goals	User Friendly Format
Goal 1	Encourage civic participation and support local communities to lead on their own developments.
Goal 2	Develop and promote ways of living and of doing business that supports a sustainable environment and resilient communities.
Goal 3	Encourage a sustainable culture of innovation and entrepreneurship throughout the County.
Goal 4	Help the local economy to diversify in a long-term, sustainable manner, broadening employment opportunities in the County.
Goal 5	Recognise and support diversity in the county, promoting equality, integration, and inclusiveness across all sectors.
Goal 6	Sustain, develop, and enhance town and village centres as focal points for their communities.
Goal 7	Support an integrated and holistic approach to education, training, and employment along with life-long learning.
Goal 8	Promote well-being and excellent quality of life within the county.
Goal 9	Strengthen and encourage a strong sense of pride in the county and promote our unique identity.
Goal 10	Promote the county as a key location for foreign and domestic investment.

Ms Tynan advised that the next stage in the preparation of the LECP is the public consultation phase. This will be followed by the remaining stages in the process.

- Stage 3-Develop Objectives and Outcomes
- Stage 4-Finalise Plan
- Stage 5-Implementation
- Stage 6-Monitoring and Evaluation

Climate Action Plan

Ms Suzanne Dempsey, Climate Action Co-ordinator provided an update to members on Climate Action. She advised that Laois County Council received Ministerial direction at the end of February to prepare a Local Authority Climate Action Plan (LACAP) by 23rd February 2024. Public consultations in relation to the preparation of the LACAP will take place over the next few months.

Mr Donal Brennan advised that it is intended to run the LACAP public consultations in conjunction with the public consultations on the LECP and Local Development Strategy. He added that due to the tight time-frame for preparation of the LACAP, there may be a requirement to reschedule the SPC meeting to accommodate approval of same. This was agreed by the members.

Cllr James Kelly thanked Ms Suzanne Dempsey for the update and stated that the biggest objective is changing the behaviour of people. He added that bus shelters will need to be provided along with better public transport.

Mr Bobby Delaney enquired where Laois was on the scale with respect to Climate Change. Ms Dempsey advised that Laois are near the top of the table. However, she advised that it will be very challenging going forward.

Health Laois Strategy 2023-2025

Ms. Tynan advised that the Healthy Ireland Strategy sets out the Local Authority priorities under the Healthy Ireland Fund for round 4 of the programme -2023-2025. The strategy provides a rationale for the selection of Healthy Ireland outcomes under the Healthy Ireland Fund (HIF) and identifies how work under HIF is aligned with wider health and wellbeing policy and interventions locally. Members were advised that the budget for 2023 is €78,561.6 which includes an underspend of €3,561.60 carried over from the 2022 HI Round 3 programme. Members were advised that 14 programmes were proposed with action partner and budget allocation identified for each programme. Members were also advised that the Healthy Laois 2023- 2025 Strategy was approved by the LCDC at their January 2023 meeting.

Laois Development Strategy, Leader 2023-2027

Ms. Pamela Tynan advised members that Laois LCDC submitted an Expression of Interest to the Department in late 2022 to develop a Local Development Strategy (LDS). An Assessment Panel was convened on 4th January and Laois LCDCs EOI was deemed eligible by the Panel to progress to Stage 2 of the Local Action Group (LAG) selection process.

Laois LCDC have now been invited to develop a Local Development Strategy (LDS) for the delivery of the 2023-2027 LEADER programme in the sub-regional area of Laois.

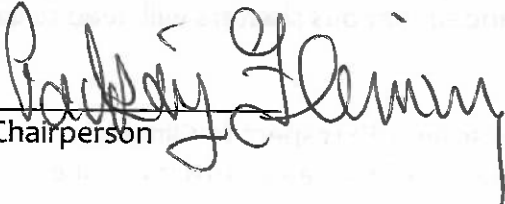
Strategies will be presented to the Independent Selection Committee which will be convened to consider all LDS(s) submitted and approve the LDS(s) to be delivered in each sub- regional area. The closing date for submission of the LDS is no later than 14th July 2023.

AOB

Mr Bobby Delaney enquired about the possibility of retrofitting 23 houses in Wolftone Street, Mountmellick which were built by a housing group. Ms Suzanne Dempsey advised that the group should contact SEAI for advice regarding the availability of suitable grants to carry out a full assessment of works that would need to be done.

Mr Bobby Delaney enquired if there was a way to monitor pollution from vehicles passing through Mountmellick town. Ms Suzanne Dempsey advised that she would forward him the relevant contact details.

That concluded the business of the meeting.


Chairperson


Mr Donal Brennan
Director of Services

Dated: 6/3/23