



MINUTES OF MEETING

Project Name	Strategic Policy Committee Enterprise, Economic Development & Tourism	
Purpose of Meeting		
Location of Meeting	Council Chamber	Date and Time
		11.00am 11 th September, 2020
Present	Name Gerry Murphy (GM), Head of Finance Denise Rainey (DR) Administrative Officer BSU Linda Meredith (LM) Staff Officer BSU Dom Reddin, Administrative Officer Cllr. Conor Bergin Cllr. Aidan Mullins Cllr. Aisling Moran Pat Culleton Deirdre O`Connell-Hopkins Bernie Everard Pat Hennessy P.J Phelan	Representing LCC LCC LCC LCC Member LCC Member LCC Member LCC Dev/Construction Rep Trade Union Rep Business/Commercial Rep Agricultural/Farming Community/Voluntary
Apologies	Cllr. Seamus McDonald	Member LCC

Item No.	Description	Action By	Date for Completion
1.	<p>Confirmation of minutes</p> <p>Minutes of previous meeting were proposed by Pat Culleton and seconded by Cllr. Aidan Mullins.</p>		
2.	<p>Economic Development Update</p> <p>Denise Rainey gave an update on the work carried out by the Local Enterprise Office (LEO) and Business Support Unit (BSU) to date this year.</p> <p>Cllr. Aidan Mullins inquired if there was much up take of the COVID Business Loans.</p> <p>DR advised that these loans were introduced since Covid 19 , and that people were currently engaging with LEO but no up take to date.</p>		
3.	<p>Restart Grant Scheme</p> <p>Gerry Murphy gave an update on the Restart Grant Scheme. Applications are made on line.</p> <p>Restart Grant €1,500,000 paid to 455 businesses</p> <p>Restart Grant Plus €1,900,000 paid to 345 businesses</p> <p>Currently have 243 applications to process with 105 already approved</p>		
4.	<p>Tourism Update</p> <p>Dom Reddin gave an update report on the current tourism initiatives in the County.</p> <p>Laois Tourism</p> <p>A 12 week national promotional campaign in association with Fáilte Ireland to support the three counties on regional lockdown Kildare, Offaly & Laois commenced on August 24th. This includes advertisements in the National Newspapers & promotional adverts on National Radio.</p> <p>Barrow Blue Way</p> <p>The commencement date for the construction of the section of Blueway situated in Co Laois is expected to be early October 2020. Consultation with the Planning Section is required. The project involves the provision of a multi-use</p>		

	<p>shared 46km off-road, flat accessible public space and leisure route. The works are due to be completed in early 2022. This project is a joint initiative between Kildare Co Co, Laois Co Co and Waterways Ireland. Funding of €5,067,941 was allocated for this project under the Rural Regeneration Fund.</p> <p><u>Slieve Bloom Mountain Bike Trails</u></p> <p>The trails opened in Baunreagh Co Laois on the August Bank Holiday weekend with 9km of trails currently available on the Laois side. Killeen Civil Engineering have been awarded the next schedule of works which commenced on 20th July 2020 and is scheduled to be completed by 6th November, 2020. This comprises of 6.6km of trails.</p> <p>Car Parking Rock of Dunamase</p> <p>Laois County Council are pursuing options for the provision of a Car Park and appropriate interpretive signage at the Rock of Dunamase. LCC are currently having the land valued and are negotiating all possibilities with land owners.</p> <p>Simon Walton, DOS for Roads is currently looking at signage for all tourist attractions in the county</p>		
<p>5.</p>	<p>Update from Laois Chamber</p> <p>Bernie Everard, CEO gave an update on all the projects the Chamber had been involved with and how they were supporting Laois Businesses since the onset of the Pandemic. She specifically mentioned the initiative #Love Laois that was done in collaboration with Laois Today and Laois Tourism. She also mentioned a survey she was conducting among businesses and the Laois Business Recovery Group.</p>		
<p>6.</p>	<p>AOB</p> <p>Cllr Aisling Moran raised the need to push Laois as a destination. Grants need to be offered and help given with Planning applications to encourage landowners and business people to look at developing fully serviced campsites around Laois with water, toilets, showers and electricity. Cllr Aidan Mullins was in agreement with Cllr. Moran.</p>		

	<p>G Murphy advised that LCC are currently taking the issue up with Coillte regarding camping in Baunreagh in the Slieve Blooms.</p> <p>The issue of the Glenbarrow Car Park and the problems associated with same were raised by Cllr Conor Bergin.</p> <p>Pat Hennessy stated there had been numerous complaints from farmers in the locality unable to access their fields.</p> <p>G Murphy confirmed that an application for planning permission has been submitted from a farmer in the area.</p> <p>PJ Phelan raised the issue of ramps on the entrance to Emo Court and other locations throughout the County. The Council needed to provide ramps that minimise the impact on vehicles and their occupants.</p> <p>Cllr Aisling Moran raised the issue that the Barrow Blueway should be extended from where it is proposed to stop in Athy and instead to extend it through Maganey, past Knockbeg College and into Graiguecullen. Dom Reddin advised he sits on the Barrow Blueway Committee and will flag this issue at the next meeting.</p>		
	<p>Next meeting to be held on Friday 4th December, 2020 @ 2.30 pm</p>		