

Laois Local Community Development Committee
Minutes of Meeting held on Wednesday 24th June, 2020
At 11:30am via Telephone Conferencing



Members in attendance:

Public Sector representatives:

Cllr. Paschal McEvoy, Laois County Council (Chairperson)
Mr. John Mulholland, CE Laois County Council
Cllr. John King, Laois County Council
Cllr. Conor Bergin, Laois County Council
Mr. Evelyn Reddin, Laois Local Enterprise Office
Mr. Colm Purcell, DEASP
Mr. Pdraig Boland, Laois Offaly Education & Training Board

Private Sector representatives:

Ms. Catherine Cowap, Laois Partnership Company
Mr. PJ Campbell, Laois Public Participation Network
Mr. Paddy Buggy, Laois Public Participation Network (Vice Chairperson)
Ms. Mary White, Laois Public Participation Network
Mr. Robbie Quinn, Laois Public Participation Network
Mr. Joe Thompson, Youth Sector
Mr. Kiernan Finane, Business Sector
Mr. Ray Harte, Laois Public Participation Network

Apologies:

Ms. Ann Sheerin, HSE
Mr. Michael Bergin, Farming Sector

In Attendance:

Mr. Donal Brennan, Chief Officer
Ms. Carmel McNicholl, SEO Laois County Council
Ms. Suzanne O'Connor, A/Senior Staff Officer
Ms. Jenny Collier, Laois Partnership Company

Before commencing the meeting, Cllr. Paschal McEvoy, Chairperson, welcomed all members and noted the sad passing of Laois Partnership CEO, Ms. Anne Goodwin (RIP). Members of the committee conveyed their condolence to Anne's husband Rodney, daughters Alice and Martha, the extended family and the staff of Laois Partnership. Mr. John Muholland, CE Laois Co, noted Anne's passing was a massive loss to Laois. Anne was extremely professional and courteous person in every manner, always putting the community to the fore. Members of the committee was invited to mark their sentiments in remembrance of the late Anne Goodwin. Condolences conveyed will be markrd in a booklet being compiled by Laois Partnership Company. As a mark of respect 1 minutes silence was upheld. Ar dheis Dé go raibh a hanam.

Ms. Suzanne O'Connor, Laois Co Co took a roll call of all attendees and registered those present on the meeting attendance sheet.

Chairman Cllr. Paschal McEvoy opened the meeting.

1. Confirmation of Minutes of LCDC meeting held on 20th May 2020.

The minutes were adopted following a proposal from Cllr. John King which was seconded by Ms. Mary White.

2. Matters Arising

Cllr. John King, asked for clarification on a specific query in relation to the COVID-19 emergency fund. Mr. Donal Brennan, Chief Officer advised that matters will be clarified with Cllr. King directly after the meeting.

Following on from May minutes Mr. PJ Campbell enquired if there was any update in relation to the mattress amnesty. It was advised that there is no mattress amnesty planned for 2020. It is an expensive initiative that is contingent on specific grant funding being made available under waste management measures. This funding which was accessed in 2019 is not available within the current year’s budget.

3. Correspondence

Mr. Donal Brennan, Chief Officer advised members of the SICAP Communication on Flexibility within SICAP Budget (email received from the Dept 18th June 2020, and circulated to members in advance of the meeting)

“The Dept would like to bring to your attention that they have given some flexibility to LDCs on their percentage spend in Goal One and Two. As you know, each LDC are required to adhere as closely as possible to the percentage split of goal costs presented in their annual plan. However the dept are also conscious that, LDCs will also need to use any budget underspends to equip offices and staff to adhere to social distancing guidelines. Therefore the Dept are allowing flexibility that all equipment that may need to be purchased and would normally come out of their admin budget can be split across non-salary action goal costs. This measure will allow LDCs to meet their contract requirement that admin costs cannot exceed 25% of their total annual budget.”

The matter was noted.

4. SICAP

(A) Mid Year Check 2020

Mr. Donal Brennan, Chief Officer advised members that the Mid Year process will be replaced by a Mid Year Check, which will be a desk based check and will require less reporting than processes completed in the past. The timelines for updating IRIS and submission of mid-year reports by the LDC’s have been extended and the reporting period will now be for 6 months from January 1st 2020-June 30th 2020 and the submission of Mid-Year Reports will be extended to 14th July 2020.

	Timelines and Stages.
Step 1	The LDC must submit the Fin & Mon report and upload associated documents on IRIS by Tuesday 14th July.
Step 2	The LCDC will commence the check of the Fin and Mon Report on IRIS. The LCDC must confirm with the Pobal Development Coordinator if any issues have been identified as part of the review by Monday 10th August. If additional time is required, please contact your Development Co-ordinator.
Step 3	Pobal will undertake a check of the financial and monitoring information and provide feedback to the LCDCs by Wednesday 12th August
Step 4	Any issues identified as part of the process must be communicated to the LDC with a timeline to address these issues. The LCDC must confirm with Pobal how the LDC addressed items raised by Pobal. Once this is completed, Pobal will tick “Pobal Verified” on IRIS.
Step 5	Once the LCDC has completed the Mid-Year Check, the LCDC must tick “LCDC formally approved” and move the Stage to “Approved” on IRIS. Note, this process must be completed regardless of whether the Mid-Year Check has been formally approved by the LCDC or signed off by the Chief Officer. The deadline to have all Fin and Mon reports checked and the stage moved to “Approved” on IRIS is Friday 11st September.

Mr. Brennan, sought approval from members that in the event of the LCDC not being in a position to formally approve the Mid Year Review the Chief Officer would sign off the Mid Year Check. In this event an update will be

presented to members on the progress of the review at the July meeting. This was proposed by Mr. Paddy Buggy and seconded by Cllr. John King.

(B) KPI2 Goal 2 – Living in Disadvantage Update

Mr. Donal Brennan, Chief Officer, advised members that formal communication was issued to the Dept of Rural and Community Development and Pobal seeking a reduction of KPI2 from 42% to 28%. Pobal have reviewed the matter and have prepared their correspondence to the Dept on which we await a reply.

(C) SICAP Q3 Approval

Mr. Donal Brennan, Chief Officer, sought approval for the payment of €151,056.50 to the Implementing Partner, Laois Partnership. This amount relates to Q3 payment (July-Sept) which was submitted to the Dept on the 15th May 2020. This was proposed by Cllr. Paschal McEvoy and seconded by Ms. Mary White.

(D) SICAP Engagement Meeting

Mr. Donal Brennan, Chief Officer, advised the purpose being to engage with the SICAP sub-committee members on the LCDC oversight role of SICAP 2018-2022 and discuss the overall progress of SICAP at local level and planning for 2021. Following discussions with Pobal and subject to LCDC agreement Mr. Brennan sought approval from members for:

- Face-to face engagement meeting with Pobal. (This is Pobal’s preferred option pending availability of suitable room giving the current restrictions).
- A provisional date of Tuesday 28th October has been set. This date has yet to be agreed with Pobal.

This motion was proposed by Cllr. Paschal McEvoy and seconded by Cllr. John King.

5. Healthy Ireland SunSmart Campaign

The LCDC was advised that the HSE’s National Cancer Control Programme, in collaboration with Healthy Ireland and key cross-sectoral partners is launching the SunSmart brand. The campaign aims to support people to be SunSmart by following the 5 S’s which are key behaviours for everyone to protect their skin in the sun.

Key Messages - Be SunSmart and follow the 5 S’s to protect your skin:

- **Slip on** clothing that covers your skin such as long sleeves, collared t-shirts;
- **Slop on** sunscreen on exposed areas, using factor 50+ for children;
- **Slap on** a wide-brimmed hat;
- **Seek shade** - especially if outdoors between 11am and 3pm - and always use a sunshade on a child’s buggy;
- **Slide on** sunglasses to protect your eyes.

6. Any Other Business

The LCDC Members were advised in relation to:

(A) Town and Village Renewal Scheme

Laois County Council has announced details of their 2020 Town & Village Renewal Scheme. This is a great opportunity for any communities who may have a project in mind to develop/improve their area.

- Funded by the Department of Rural and Community Development, is part of a package of national and local support measures to rejuvenate rural towns and villages throughout Ireland.
- Targeted at rural towns and villages with populations of less than 10,000.

- In 2020 the Town and Village Renewal Scheme, is being tailored to address the emerging challenges associated with COVID-19.

Closing date for 'Expression of Interest' is Monday 29th June 2020(4pm)

Grant Levels

Standard Town & Village Scheme

In recognition of the challenges presented by the Covid 19 pandemic.

- The minimum grant available is €20,000 and the maximum is generally €100,000.
- The maximum grant level has been increased to 90% of the total cost of the project.

Accelerated Measure Scheme

- The maximum grant level of funding is €25,000 per project, with the possibility to increase to €40,000.
- The maximum grant level will be 90% of the project cost.

(B) Community Enhancement Programme 2020

Mr. Donal Brennan, Chief Officer, advised members that the Community Enhancement Programme 2020 was launched on the 22nd June 2020 by Minister Ring TD, Minister for Rural and Community Development. It provides grants to community groups to improve facilities in their area. While the CEP will be run in the same manner as previous years, there will be flexibility to use funding on COVID-19 related capital expenditure, where this is a priority. Discretion will rest with the LCDC in each area. In order to allow flexibility, the Department is not setting a national closing date, but will allow each LCDC to set its own (no later than 30th September) to best suit its area. Suggested closing date for receipt of application is Friday 14th August. Laois Allocation for 2020 is €58,297. Mr. Brennan sought approval for the formation of a CEP sub-committee to appraise applications.

CEP Sub-Committee Members 2020

Cllr. Paschal McEvoy, Chairperson (2019 sub-committee member to retain position -unanimous LCDC approval)

Mr. PJ Campbell (2019 sub-committee member to retain position -unanimous LCDC approval)

Ms. Mary White (Proposed Cllr. Paschal McEvoy, Seconded Cllr. John King)


Ms. Evelyn Reddin (Proposed Cllr. Paschal McEvoy, Seconded Cllr. John King)

(C) LCDC Membership

Mr. Donal Brennan, Chief Officer, advised that three current LCDC/LAG members are fast approaching the end of their term on the committee on the 17th September 2020. Members in question are Mr. Michael Bergin - Farming Sector, Mr. Joe Thompson - Youth Sector and Mr. Paddy Buggy - Laois PPN. Despite COVID-19 we have not received any derogation in relation to membership to date. It was suggested to move the Sept meeting to an earlier date but this would have huge implications on the IP and promoters/projects as a result of Circular 9-2020. Mr. Donal Brennan, Chief Officer suggested that we keep the September meeting date under review and discuss further at the July meeting pending nominations from community representatives. Members were asked to keep the September 16th provisionally available in case of change of meeting date.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

SIGNED:


 CHAIRPERSON – LAOIS LCDC

DATE: 22nd July 2020