**Laois Local Community Development Committee**

**Minutes of Meeting**

**Held on Friday, 16th September 2016 at 11.30am in County Hall, Portlaoise**

**Present:** Mr. Paddy Buggy, Laois PPN (In the Chair)

Cllr. Jerry Lodge, Laois County Council

Cllr. John King, Laois County Council

Cllr. Paschal McEvoy, Laois County Council

Mr. John Mulholland, Laois County Council

Ms. Evelyn Reddin, Laois LEO,

Mr. David Hackett, Dept of Social Protection

Mr. Michael Bergin, Farming Sector

Mr. Joe Thompson, Youth Sector

Mr. Robbie Quinn, Laois PPN

Mr. Kieran Finane, Business Sector

**Apologies:** Ms. Mary Delaney, Ms. Linda Tynan, Ms. Anne Goodwin, Mr. Dave Fingleton, Mr. PJ Campbell, Ms. Mary White.

**In attendance:** Mr. Michael Rainey, Chief Officer, Ms. Georgina Ireland, Administrative Officer

*Mr. Paddy Buggy opened the meeting and thanked everyone for their attendance. The members unanimously welcomed Mr. Michael Rainey to his new position as Chief Officer to the Committee.*

**Confirmation of Minutes of LCDC meeting held on 5th August 2016**

Upon the proposal of Cllr. John King and seconded by Cllr. Jerry Lodge, the minutes of LCDC meeting held on Friday, 5th August 2016 were confirmed.

**Review of Standing Orders of Laois LCDC**

A copy of the Standing Orders was circulated to each member.

1. ***Governance***

Mr. Michael Rainey advised that he had reviewed the LCDC Standing Orders and made some changes, such changes to fulfil the requirements of both the Regulations relating to operation and remit of LCDC’s, and also the LAG requirements under the LEADER Programme Operating Rules. He referred particularly to the position of Chairperson of the LCDC and agreement by the members that the position would be rotated. He clarified that as per the Regulations and LEADER Programme Operating Rules, one member only must remain in the position of Chairperson to a maximum of 3 years, unless otherwise decided upon by the members, but it would not be possible to rotate the position of Chairperson on an annual basis.

Following this clarification, upon the proposal of Cllr. Paschal McEvoy and seconded by Cllr. John King, it was agreed that Mr. Paddy Buggy would remain in the position of Chairperson for a total period of 3 years.

Upon the proposal of Cllr. Jerry Lodge and seconded by Ms. Evelyn Reddin, it was agreed that Cllr. John King would remain in the position of Vice Chairperson for a total period of 3 years.

Mr. Rainey also referred under the heading of Governance to the matter of alternates and stated that no alternates can be permitted to attend LCDC meetings in the place of ratified members. He made reference also to a review of membership which would be carried out every 3 years, as provided for in the Regulations, to ensure that the appropriate member organisations were present to fulfil the strategic objectives of the Committee.

1. ***Conflict of Interest***

Mr. Michael Rainey advised in relation to the previously circulated Conflict of Interest forms for completion by each LCDC member as per the Regulations and LEADER Programme Operating Rules. He also advised that a member should declare at a meeting, any perceived conflict of interest they might have, should it arise when a decision is being made by the LCDC or the Local Action Group (LAG) in relation to a LEADER project application.

Mr. John Mulholland raised the matter of posting minutes of LCDC meetings online and the fact that the LCDC Guidelines provided for this. There was some discussion in relation to the matter of commercially sensitive information being made publicly available. It was agreed that as separate meetings of the LCDC and LAG would be held, and owing to the sensitive nature of the information imparted at LAG meetings, the minutes of LCDC meetings would be made available online following their adoption by the members at a subsequent meeting and with commercially sensitive information redacted where appropriate. It was also agreed that insofar as possible, retrospective LCDC minutes would be made available online.

Upon the proposal of Mr. Joe Thompson and seconded by Cllr. John King, the reviewed Standing Orders of Laois LCDC and Laois LAG were adopted.

**SICAP – Approval of 4th Quarter payment**

Mr. Michael Rainey advised the members in relation to previous approval given by this Committee to pay Laois Partnership the 3rd Quarter payment on foot of a midyear review of the SICAP Programme. He stated that the approval of the Committee was now requested in respect of the payment for the 4th Quarter 2016. He also advised that notice should be given to LCDC’s by the Dept of Housing, Planning, Community & Local Government in respect of the commencement of the 2016 End of Year and 2017 SICAP planning phase in the coming weeks.

Upon the proposal of Cllr. Jerry Lodge and seconded by Cllr. John King the payment of the 4th Quarter instalment to Laois Partnership in respect of the SICAP Programme 2016 was unanimously approved by the Committee.

**LEADER Programme 2014 - 2020**

1. ***Service Level Agreement***

Mr. Michael Rainey outlined the current status in relation to the programme, the ready status of the Service Level Agreement and a number of details in the document pertaining to the requirements of the LEADER Programme Operating Rules. He advised that the Dept. Of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs were preparing a Procedure Manual for the Programme.

There were some questions and discussions in relation to:

* an appeals procedure in respect of refused projects;
* the business process in relation to the application and decision process between the LAG and the Implementing Partner, including the role of the Board of Laois Partnership;
* membership of the Independent Evaluation Committee;
* the timing of themed calls for proposals;
* monitoring the fulfilment of objectives of the Local Development Strategy.

Upon the proposal of Cllr. John King and seconded by Cllr. Paschal McEvoy, the Service Level Agreement for the operation of the LEADER Programme 2014-2020 was approved by the Committee.

1. ***Update***

Mr. Michael Rainey advised that he expected the presentation of Expressions of Interest and potentially a project application to the October meeting of this Committee, but that he would clarify with the Implementing Partner in advance. He also advised that the Implementing Partner would present a proposal to the next meeting of this Committee in respect of funding calls, to ensure the appropriate spread of spend and administration across the period of the Programme and to monitor overall fulfilment of LDS objectives.

**Any Other Business**

Mr. Michael Rainey presented a proposed meeting schedule to the end of the year. He advised in relation to recent requests by some members to facilitate those who cannot always attend LCDC/LAG meetings during business hours. There was also some discussion in relation to meeting venues. It was agreed that meetings to the end of the year would be scheduled as follows and that the venue would be Portlaoise unless otherwise agreed:

21st October, 11.30am County Hall

25th November, 4.30pm County Hall

16th December, 11.30am *(Venue to be confirmed)*

It was agreed that members with outstanding travel claims should submit them to Ms. Georgina Ireland at their convenience but before the end of the year to facilitate budgets.

Mr. John Mulholland stressed the importance of keeping LECP on the LCDC agenda in terms of monitoring the achievement of yearly and overall objectives and also with regard to further developing links with the PPN and ensuring the preparation of a Tourism and marketing strategy for the county, among other objectives. It was agreed that over the next three months, the status of 2016 LECP actions with LCDC responsibility would be examined.

The members noted correspondence from the Dept of Housing, Planning, Community & Local Government inviting stakeholders to attend a Forum on delivery of a Framework Policy for local and community development. Any members wishing to attend should contact Ms. Georgina Ireland before 30th September 2016. It was noted that Michael Rainey and Paddy Buggy would attend.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

**Signed: Date:**

**LCDC Chairperson**