**Laois Local Community Development Committee**

**Minutes of Meeting**

**Held on Friday, 20th November 2015, 11.30am, Áras an Chontae, Portlaoise**

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

 Mr. John Mulholland, Laois County Council

 Cllr. John King, Laois County Council

 Cllr. Jerry Lodge, Laois County Council

 Ms. Evelyn Reddin, Laois LEO

 Ms. Mary Delaney, HSE

 Mr. David Hackett, Dept. Of Social Protection

Ms. Anne Goodwin, Laois Partnership Company

 Mr. Michael Bergin, Farming Pillar

 Mr. PJ Campbell, Laois PPN

 Mr. Robbie Quinn, Laois PPN

 Ms. Mary White, Laois PPN

 Mr. Joe Thompson, Youth Work Ireland Laois

**Apologies:** Cllr. Paschal McEvoy, Ms. Linda Tynan, Mr. Dave Fingleton.

**In attendance:** Mr. Ian McCormack, Chief Officer, Ms. Georgina Ireland, Administrative Officer.

*Mr. Paddy Buggy opened the meeting and thanked everyone for their attendance.*

 **Confirmation of Minutes of LCDC meeting held on Tuesday, 20th October, 2015**

Upon the proposal of Mr. John Mulholland and seconded by Mr. Robbie Quinn, the minutes of LCDC meeting held on Tuesday, 20th October 2015 were confirmed.

**Matters Arising**

Mr. Ian McCormack, Chief Officer gave an update in relation to training for members. He advised that the format of training for LCDC members was being examined by DECLG and also that the matter would be discussed at a forum of Chief Officers in the region on Wednesday, 25th November 2015. He committed to revert to the members with a further update on the matter.

**Local Development Strategy Update**

Mr. Ian McCormack reminded the members of their adoption of the Draft Local Development Strategy at their meeting on 20th October 2015. Ms. Anne Goodwin advised that the draft document was almost complete, with some additions in respect of monitoring and review to be made, and should be ready for submission to the Dept of Environment, Community & Local Government week beginning 30th November 2015. She advised in relation to the Dept’s timeline for evaluation of the Draft Local Development Strategy and the process through which approval would be given.

**Local Economic & Community Plan (LECP) Update**

Mr. Ian McCormack updated the members in relation to the current status – LECP preparation currently at Stage 2; public consultation period concluded on 10th November 2015. He advised that a number of consultation sessions were held across the county, some independently and some in conjunction with the public consultation for the local authority’s County Development Plan Review.

Mr. McCormack outlined next steps for LECP preparation, i.e., the final Socio-Economic Statement including High Level Goals for the economic and community development of the county, would come before the LCDC for adoption at its next meeting and following this a process for developing objectives and actions under those Goal headings would be developed and driven by the LECP Advisory Steering Group by the end of the year.

**SICAP Update**

Ms. Georgina Ireland, Administrative Officer, Community & Enterprise presented an update in respect of a recent SICAP seminar given by the Dept of Environment, Community & Local Government and POBAL in respect of LCDC procedures for End of Year Review (2015) and preparation of the SICAP Annual Plan 2016. *(copy attached)*

Ms. Anne Goodwin added in relation to the issue of Dept of Social Protection’s jobs referral protocol, that Laois currently has a good referral process with the DSP in respect of SICAP clients, however if a ‘Jobs Path’ service is established in Portlaoise, this may affect the referral numbers and may need to be examined locally. She advised that she met recently with Farm Relief Services in this regard and how the SICAP programme could provide supports in this area also.

There was some discussion in relation to the appraisal process for this Committee in respect of the SICAP End of Year Review and Annual Plan 2016 preparation. Upon the proposal of Ms. Mary White and seconded by Cllr. John King, it was agreed that a subcommittee of the LCDC would be established to review the 2015 SICAP Plan with the Chief Officer, and to assist the Chief Officer and the Programme Implementer (Laois Partnership) in the preparation of the Annual Plan 2016. This subcommittee would comprise members of the original SICAP evaluation subcommittee and make recommendations to the larger group as to what actions should be taken by the LCDC in this regard.

**Rural Economic Development Zone (REDZ) Update**

Mr. Ian McCormack advised the members that the project under this heading, *“Inspire Rathdowney”*, was recently awarded funding under the REDZ Scheme in the sum €50,000, this to be supplemented by funding from Laois County Council in the sum of €17,000. He thanked Ms. Anne Goodwin, Laois Partnership, Cllr. John King and Evelyn Reddin, Laois LEO for their assistance in making the application.

He further advised that this funding would be used to employ an ‘animator’, who would source 20 participants with a view to targeting indigenous enterprise to foster economic development in the local area. It was noted that this project would commence in early 2016, to run for approximately 12 months. It was also noted that no indication had yet been given as to the extension/continuation of the REDZ programme nationally in 2016.

Cllr. John King welcomed the project and thanked the local authority and the LCDC for their commitment.

**Any Other Business**

The members congratulated Laois County Council, in particular the staff of Laois LEO, for their work on the recent 2015 Global Irish Economic Forum Regional Event at the Heritage, Killenard.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

***Next meeting to be held on Wednesday, 9th December at 11.30am; venue to be confirmed.***