**Laois Local Community Development Committee**

**Minutes of Meeting**

**Held on Friday, 5th August 2016 at 11.30am in County Hall, Portlaoise**

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

Mr. Kieran Kehoe, Laois County Council (for Chief Executive)

Cllr. Jerry Lodge, Laois County Council

Cllr. John King, Laois County Council

Ms. Evelyn Reddin, Laois Local Enterprise Office

Ms. Linda Tynan, Laois/Offaly ETB

Ms. Anne Goodwin, Laois Partnership

Mr. Michael Bergin, Farming Sector

Ms. Mary White, Laois PPN (Social Inclusion Pillar)

Mr. PJ Campbell, Laois PPN (Community/Voluntary Pillar)

Mr. Robbie Quinn, Laois PPN (Community & Voluntary Pillar)

**Apologies:** Mr. Dave Hackett, Mr. Dave Fingleton, Cllr. Paschal McEvoy, Ms. Mary Delaney, Mr. Joe Thompson, Mr. Kieran Finane

**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 17th June 2016**

Upon the proposal of Cllr. John King and seconded by Ms. Evelyn Reddin, the minutes of LCDC meeting held on Tuesday, 17th June 2016 were confirmed.

**Matters Arising**

Ms. Mary White raised again the Jobspath issue and enquired as to the process by which they acquire clients. Ms. Anne Goodwin outlined the process, stating the compulsory nature of attending Jobspath appointments, as per Dept of Social Protection protocol.

**SICAP**

Mr. Ian McCormack outlined the process to date in respect of the Mid Year Review of the SICAP Programme. He advised that a sub committee comprising Mr. Joe Thompson, Ms. Evelyn Reddin and himself met to assess the figures reported to 30th June 2016 and presented them to the members. He stated that the subcommittee were satisfied with progress in respect of the majority of actions to date and that it was envisaged the Programme Implementer, Laois Partnership would achieve targets set to the end of 2016. He also advised that he had met with Ms. Anne Goodwin in relation to the POBAL parallel review and a small number of queries raised during the review.

Accordingly, Mr. Ian McCormack recommended to the members that the Mid Year Review be approved by the members and that payment of SICAP funds in respect of the 3rd quarter of 2016 be made to the Programme Implementer, Laois Partnership.

Ms. Evelyn Reddin, on behalf of the SICAP subcommittee praised the Programme Implementer for their work to date and the progress they made in achieving their targets to mid year. It was noted from the Headline Indicator Report that both KPI’s were achieved at midyear. Ms. Reddin suggested that going forward the SICAP subcommittee would meet more regularly with the Programme Implementer to keep the LCDC up to date with progress and deal with any issues that may arise from time to time.

Ms. Anne Goodwin made a presentation in respect of the qualitative information based on the figures reported to the committee and thanked the members for their support in respect of the Programme.

Ms. Goodwin also advised in relation to Headline Indicator Target No. 15 (no of social enterprises assisted by SICAP), that this is on target to be achieved by the end of the year, citing examples of the Men’s Shed projects, Community Childcare and LSTEP.

The members thanked Ms. Goodwin and her team, stating that the Programme was very worthwhile and showing good results in a number of areas in Laois. Mr. PJ Campbell asked about the delivery of SICAP supports in Mountmellick and was advised that as opposed to the previous LCDP programme, SICAP didn’t provide for financial supports to Mountmellick Development Association, however Laois Partnership did provide CE participants for some programmes being operated within the MDA.

Mr. Kieran Kehoe, A/Chief Executive complimented Laois Partnership on their work in respect of educational supports, stating its importance as a deterrent from criminality. He also praised the establishment of Portlaoise Social Inclusion Network and urged this committee to ensure, through its various programmes, the integration of new communities into community life in our county.

*At this stage, Ms. Anne Goodwin left the meeting temporarily to allow a vote to take place and Mr. Kieran Kehoe excused himself to attend to some urgent business.*

Upon the proposal of Cllr. John King and seconded by Cllr. Jerry Lodge, the SICAP Mid Year Review of the SICAP 2016 Programme was approved and payment of funds in respect of 3rd Qtr 2016 to Laois Partnership was agreed.

*Ms. Anne Goodwin and Mr. Kieran Kehoe re-joined the meeting at this stage.*

Ms. Georgina Ireland advised the members of an upcoming SICAP Support event scheduled to take place on 1st September 2016 in Dublin to raise awareness of the needs and issues experienced by women experiencing domestic abuse and men who are at risk of suicide. She advised that one member of each LCDC was invited to participate and if any member wished to do so, they should contact her before 19th August 2016.

Ms. Ireland also updated the members in respect of future programme updates advised by POBAL in respect of the SICAP Programme, relating to engagement with children and young people and the recording of same for caseload purposes. It was noted that a new Headline Indicator would go live in January 2016 to capture this update and that it would be necessary for the Programme Implementer to engage with local educators in this regard.

**LEADER Programme**

It was noted by the Committee that a funding agreement was recently signed with the Minister for Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs in respect of the LEADER Programme in Laois. Mr. Paddy Buggy thanked all involved in getting to that point and enquired as to the current status locally with regard to commencement of the Programme.

Mr. Ian McCormack advised that the Local Action Group (i.e., Laois LCDC) would shortly be entering into a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with the local authority as Financial Partner and Laois Partnership as Implementing Partner. He advised that this agreement was at draft stage and would be agreed with the LCDC as soon as possible. Mr. Paddy Buggy highlighted the importance of this Committee agreeing content of the draft as drivers of the SLA and ultimately the Local Development Strategy. He urged that this SLA be agreed as a matter of urgency to allow for the programme move forward.

It was agreed that a draft SLA would be presented to the members for agreement at the next meeting of this Committee.

In respect of upcoming project proposals under the programme and implementation of the Local Development Strategy, Ms. Anne Goodwin advised that the Board of Laois Tourism was working towards a tender for the preparation of a Tourism Strategy for Laois and in this regard, aiming to apply for LEADER funding before the end of this year.

**Any Other Business**

Ms. Georgina Ireland presented a number of items of correspondence:

* Email from Water and Communities Office with a request to engage with LCDC’s on the role of the Office and the Water Framework Directive.
* Letter from National Rural Network with regard to making contact with LCDC’s to identify any assistance they could offer in delivering the LEADER programme.

*(It was agreed by the members to invite both of the above to make a presentation at upcoming scheduled LCDC meetings; Ms. Georgina Ireland would revert and advise)*

* A “save the date” notice in respect of the proposed national launch of LECP’s by the Minister for Housing, Planning, Community & Local Government – 20th September 2016 at the National Ploughing Championship.
* A “save the date” notice in respect of an upcoming information event being held by Dept of Agriculture about a Rural Renaissance funding stream under Horizon 2020 – 20th October 2016 in Dundalk.
* Correspondence from Laois County Council Planning Dept in respect of the public consultation period for the Draft County Development Plan 2017-2023.

*(The possibility of LCDC making a submission to the County Development Plan was raised)*

It was agreed that details of all upcoming events would be emailed to members.

The members thanked Mr. Ian McCormack, on the occasion of his last meeting as Chief Officer of Laois LCDC, for his service and commitment to the Committee since its establishment in 2014, and wished him well in his future endeavours. The members were advised that Mr. Michael Rainey would be taking up the post of Chief Officer with effect from 8th August 2016.

It was also noted that the Chair of Laois LCDC would rotate to Cllr. John King with effect from the next meeting and in this regard the members thanked Mr. Paddy Buggy for his chairmanship; in turn he thanked all for their assistance during his term in the chair.

**Time and Date of Next Meeting**

It was agreed that the next meeting would take place on ***Friday, 16th September 2016 at 11.30am in County Hall, Portlaoise.***

This concluded the business of the meeting.

**Signed: Date:**

**LCDC Chairperson**