**Laois Local Community Development Committee**

**Minutes of Meeting held in Áras an Chontae, Portlaoise**

**On Friday, 26th June 2015 at 11.30am**

**Present:** Cllr. John King (Chair)

Ms. Evelyn Reddin, Laois Local Enterprise Office

Mr. Gerry Murphy, Chief Executive, Laois County Council

Mr. Paddy Buggy, Community Rep

Ms. Linda Tynan, Laois Offaly ETB

Ms. Anne Goodwin, Laois Partnership

Ms. Mary Delaney, HSE

Mr. Michael Bergin, Farming Pillar

Cllr. Paschal McEvoy

Mr. Mick Dowling, Community Rep

**Apologies:** Ms. Sheelagh Coyle, Mr. Chris Uys, Ms. Margaret Guijt-Lawlor, Cllr. Jerry Lodge, Mr. Joe Thompson

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

***Confirmation of Minutes of LCDC Meeting held on Friday 8th May 2015***

Upon the proposal of Mr. Paddy Buggy and seconded by Ms. Linda Tynan, the minutes of LCDC Meeting held on Friday 8th May 2015 were confirmed.

***Matters Arising***

Ms. Anne Goodwin advised on a point of clarification that the amount of funding available for Laois in the Rural Development Programme, i.e., €7.1 million. She advised that 25% of that amount pertains to administration costs, with 5% to the local authority in respect of work undertaken in its capacity as financial partner; the remaining 70% being funding for programmes/projects.

***Adoption of Standing Orders***

Mr. Paddy Buggy raised a query in relation to the position of chairperson of the LCDC. Mr. Ian McCormack clarified as outlined in the draft Standing Orders; *The Chairperson of the LCDC will be selected in accordance with Section 22 of the Local Community Development Committee (Section 128E) Regulations 2014 by the Members of the LCDC. The Chairperson/Vice Chairperson will be appointed for a maximum period of 3 years, where upon s/he shall retire as Chairperson or Vice Chairperson, as the case may be.*

It was agreed by the members that the position of chair would be filled by an elected member for years one, three and five of the term of the LCDC, and filled by a non-elected representative for years two and four.

Upon the proposal of Mr. Paddy Buggy and seconded by Mr. Michael Bergin, the Standing Orders were adopted by the members and put into immediate effect.

***LCDP Monthly Payments Report***

A copy of the finance monitoring report for the Local development Company for Quarter 4 of 2014 was circulated to the members for their information. Mr. Ian McCormack informed the members that:

* The administration cost is in line with the required spend threshold of the programme and is within budget.
* The spend across the 4 goals is in line within the required spend thresholds of the programme and is within budget.
* All targets had been met and exceeded.

The members noted the content of the LCDP Monthly Payments Report.

***SICAP***

Mr Ian McCormack asked those members who would potentially have a Conflict of Interest in respect of this agenda item to leave the room. The following people subsequently left the room in advance of the ratification process: Ms Anne Goodwin, Ms Mary Delaney, Mr Paddy Buggy and Mr. Mr. Michael Bergin.

Ian McCormack outlined progress so far in relation to the Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme Plan Approval process. He advised the members that the Annual Plan was now inserted by Laois Partnership Company into the IRIS system where it would be monitored by the local authority. He advised that Plan had been reviewed and confirmed the following:

1. Annual Plan submitted by Laois Partnership on time.
2. Overall costs do not exceed the Annual Budget amount of €423,048.
3. A commitment given in the Plan that no more than 15% of costs will be paid to subcontractors in carrying out actions.
4. Administration costs as a percentage of Overall costs (25%) do not exceed the 25% limit.
5. Action costs as a percentage of overall cost in respect of each goal are between 28% and 38% in each case.
6. The targets originally outlined have been entered and mid-year targets have been set for review, to satisfy KPI requirements.

He asked that the members approve the Annual Plan, and in doing so endorse the second payment of POBAL funds to the Programme Implementer, Laois Partnership Company in respect of the 2015 SICAP Programme. Upon the proposal of Cllr. Paschal McEvoy and seconded by Ms. Evelyn Reddin, the members present unanimously approved the Annual Plan and payment as outlined.

***Annual Report 2014***

Mr. Ian McCormack advised the members that the 2014 LCDC Annual Report was prepared in the context of Chapter 2 Section 128B (1) (i) of the Local Government Act 2001, as inserted by the Local Government Reform Act 2014, which states that one of the functions of a Local Community Development Committee is: “*to prepare, adopt and submit to the local authority a report in relation to the performance of its functions during the year immediately preceding the year in which the report is submitted”.*

The members noted the report with no requested amendments.

***Rural Development Programme 2014-2020 – Joint Expression of Interest update***

Mr. Ian McCormack advised the members that a joint submission was made to the Dept of Environment, Community & Local Government on 8th May 2015 on behalf of the LCDC and the local development company, Laois Partnership. He advised that 45 submissions were received nationally in respect of Stage 1, the results of which are expected week beginning 6th July 2015. He also advised that POBAL would host an information event in relation to the RDP on 16th July 2015, and Ms. Anne Goodwin and himself would attend and advise the LCDC accordingly.

Ms. Anne Goodwin stated that to her knowledge, only one expression of interest was received by DoECLG in respect of Co. Laois.

***Local Economic and Community Plan Update***

Ms. Gormla O’Corrain, A/Senior Executive Planner, Planning Section outlined for the members, the process of compiling the Local Economic and Community Plan as per Guidelines recently issued, as legislated for in the Local Government Reform Act 2014. She outlined the responsibility of the LCDC to drive the compilation of the community element of the Plan and she summarised a Pre-Draft Consultation Submissions Report in respect of consultations undertaken earlier in 2015. She advised that this pre-draft consultation would inform the high level goals and socio-economic statement in the Plan. She also outlined the expected timeline for compilation and adoption of the LECP.

Mr. Ian McCormack advised the members that a tendering process had begun to engage consultants to compile the community element of the LECP on behalf of the LCDC, and to link in with the Economic Development, Enterprise & Planning SPC, being the drivers of the economic element. He asked that members agree / modify the responses to the submissions. The submissions report was agreed by the members without request for amendment.

***REDZ Zone Update***

Mr. Ian McCormack outlined the CEDRA Report for Economic Development in rural areas and RED Zones. He advised of €2million being made available nationally, for which 3 flagship projects will be chosen and 18 pilots in total, closing date for receipt of applications of 31st August 2015. He advised that Anne Goodwin and he would be attending an information seminar on this on 29th June and that he would revert to the members with an update at the next meeting. He did advise that an element of match funding would be sought as part of applications made.

***Regulation of Lobbying Act 2015***

Mr. Ian McCormack circulated details of new legislation to the members, which they noted.

***Training***

Mr. Ian McCormack advised that training would be made available to LCDC members in the coming months; the first session to be for LCDC Chairpersons, elected members and Chief Officers, dates to be advised. Several members raised the issue of providing training during peak summer months and the availability of members to attend during that time. They requested that this be communicated to the DoECLG.

***Any Other Business***

Mr. Ian McCormack advised in relation to Laois Public Participation Network elections which recently took place, from which 5 PPN representatives would replace the current community representatives on the LCDC. He thanked the outgoing representatives sincerely for their participation and their commitment to the process and wished them well in their future endeavours.

New members to represent the PPN:

Environment Pillar – Mr. Dave Fingleton

Community & Voluntary Pillar – Mr. Robbie Quinn and Mr. P.J. Campbell

Social Inclusion Pillar – Mr. Paddy Buggy and Ms. Mary White

A discussion ensued in relation to the need to have the business sector represented on the LCDC. A number of suggestions were made in relation to this and it was agreed that members would forward their suggestions to the Chief Officer who would examine same.

Ms. Anne Goodwin suggested that a high level goal/objective of the Local Economic and Community Plan should be to examine the re-establishment of the Chamber of Commerce in Laois, citing the effects of its absence in the county and the merits of re-establishing it. Mr. Gerry Murphy advised that the Council’s Economic Development Section is currently compiling a Directory of Businesses in Co. Laois.

***Time and Date for next Meeting***

Next meeting to take place in Áras an Chontae on Friday 24th July at 11.30am.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

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**John King Ian McCormack**

**Chairperson Chief Officer**

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