



**LAOIS PUBLIC PARTICIPATION NETWORK**

---

**SUBMISSION**

**Draft Litter Management Plan 2018-2020**

## Introduction

Laois Public Participation (PPN) was established under the Directive of the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government and in accordance with legislation in the Local Government Reform Act 2014 (Section 46).

Laois PPN is an independent organisation and is a framework for public engagement and participation with sustainability and wellbeing at its core. The aim of this structure is to facilitate and enable public organisations operating within the wider community to articulate and give voice to a diverse range of views, issues and interests within the local government system.

Laois PPN currently represents 454 registered community and voluntary, social inclusion and environmental groups across the county.

Laois PPN conducted meaningful consultation with its members and therefore Laois PPN Secretariat will make this submission on their behalf.

## Background

On Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> July Laois PPN held a “Poster Free Zone” Debate in the Maldron Hotel and invited all member organisations to attend. The debate was initiated as a result of member organisations raising concerns with Laois PPN in relation to the creating of litter from posters in their local areas, and was run in conjunction with Laois Tidy Towns special interest group.

Mr. Robbie Quinn, Abbeyleix Business and Community Development Forum proposed the topic while Mr. Paddy Buddy, Mountmellick Development Association, Heritage and Museum Committee opposed the topic. Each member organisation was afforded the opportunity to voice their diverse opinions and have questions in relation to the proposal addressed. With 29 different member organisations represented on the night a resounding 75% voted in favour of Laois becoming a Poster Free Zone within the 50km speed limit in all towns and villages. It is as a result of this consultation that Laois PPN makes this proposal on behalf of its member organisations.

## Proposal

Laois PPN hereby makes this submission proposing that Laois County Council adopt a ***Poster Free Policy within the 50km speed limits in all towns and villages in the county***. Laois PPN acknowledges the brave step that Ballacolla, Clonaslee, Portarlinton, Castletown and more recently Abbeyleix have taken in making their area a poster free zone. Now under the Litter Management Plan 2018-2020 let this be a county wide policy.

The proposal demonstrates support for the Laois Litter Management Plan and the National Waste Reduction Bill and compliments the National Waste Prevention Programme (NWPP). As you know, waste prevention is the preferred method when implementing any waste management activity. The policy demonstrates a tangible, bottoms up approach from communities on the ground who have come together to have their voice heard through Laois PPN.

### **What Does the Proposal Mean**

The proposal is asking that people, groups and organisation should voluntarily refrain from indiscriminately using public street lights, poles, buildings or street furniture to display their promotional material in the form of posters, flyers or signage within the 50km speed limits within each of the towns and villages of the county.

Laois PPN further propose that in time in consultation will all local communities involved Laois County Council will identify and roll out a designated area or space that can be used to display/exhibit such material as is done in other European countries. This could include, the use of digital display signs or similar on the approach roads to each town/village. These would be monitored and controlled by Laois Co Co. and could display upcoming community or county events or be used to display traffic management warnings / emergencies situations.

### **So, why should Laois be Poster Free**

- They are environmentally unfriendly. Posters/signs like those used in elections are very difficult and expensive to recycle, if at all in some cases.
- It will help reduce the waste being sent to landfill or exported at great cost.
- They are a visual blight on the streetscapes of out towns and villages.
- ESB Networks have banned the erection of posters/signage on their poles. There is a Health and Safety Risk to erection and taking down posters.
- They are dangerous to all road users (walkers/joggers/cyclists and motorists) if they become loose, slide down, blow down and fall off poles and light standards during wet and windy periods.
- They pose a risk to wildlife and ecology system who consume the discarded cable ties and bits of plastic left behind on removal.

We look forward to a favourable response in the near future.

Yours Sincerely,

\_\_\_\_\_.

Mr. Robbie Quinn

Laois PPN Secretariat

*On Behalf of*

Laois PPN Member Organisations

\_\_\_\_\_.

Ms. Suzanne O'Connor

A/Laois PPN Coordinator.