



# LAOIS PUBLIC PARTICIPATION NETWORK

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A Guide to being a PPN Representative on a Board/Committee

**Local Community Development Committee**

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## Local Community Development Committee

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## Introduction

### Welcome to Laois Public Participation Network!

#### ***The PPN gives us a voice!!***

The aim of a PPN Structure is to facilitate and enable public organisations operating within the wider community to give voice to a diverse range of views, issues and interests within the local government system.

The PPN will:

- ***Facilitate the participation*** by the public and representation of communities in a fair, equitable and transparent manner through the environmental, social inclusion and community/voluntary sectors on decision making bodies.
- ***Strengthen the capacity*** of the environmental, social inclusion and community/voluntary groups to contribute positively to the community that they live/participate in.

Provide information to the environmental, social inclusion and community/voluntary sectors and will act as a hub around which information can be received and distributed.

As a Representative of Laois Public Participation Network (PPN), you will be part of the democratic framework which gives our local communities and its groups a voice within the decision making processes within local government.

This document will outline for you the committee on which you will represent Laois PPN, including its scope and membership. It will also outline your role as a PPN representative, and the importance of having the collective voice of the community heard through you on that committee.

Be reassured that you are supported at all times in your role as a PPN representative. If you need to, know that you can ask the silly question, and that you can talk to someone who has the information you need, e.g., your fellow representatives, a member of the Secretariat, or your PPN Resource Worker.

*Don't ever feel foolish at being confused by it all! The PPN Framework is a learning adventure in which we are all taking part, and together we will make it stronger by our best efforts and learning from our mistakes! It is your commitment to the PPN that will ensure its strength positive outcomes.*

***Best of luck in your endeavours!***

### Local Community Development Committee (LCDC)

#### What does an Local Community Development Committee do?

'Putting People First' sets out reforms to local government to provide it with a more central role in local economic, social and community development. The Local Government Act 2014 gave legislative affect to these commitments, including the establishment of Local Enterprise Offices (LEO) and the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC).

LCDC's have a number of statutory functions amongst which are:

- To be responsible for national funding programmes at a local level. In 2015-2017 the implementation of the **Social Inclusion Community and Activation Programme (SICAP)** will support local strategies for communities and individuals. It will identify and address social inclusion issues, promote access to life-long learning, employment and social enterprise. **SICAP** aims to tackle poverty, social exclusion and long-term unemployment through local engagement and partnership between disadvantaged individuals, community organisations and public sector agencies. It was rolled out on 1st April 2015 and will run until December 2017. It is the successor programme to the outgoing Local and Community Development Programme (LCDP). It is a national programme and following a public procurement process, contracts for the implementation of the new programme have been awarded.
- Facilitate the **LEADER element of Rural Development Programme (2015-2020)** to support sustainable economic development projects for rural communities ranging from tourism, agri-food and other business activities.
- Improve the **co-ordination** of public-funded local and community development programmes and reduce duplication.
- The preparation and implementation of the community element and review of economic elements of the **Laois Local Economic & Community Plan (LECP)**.

#### **Who is the Local Community Development Committee?**

The 16-member LCDC has broad representation from public and private interests including business, local development, education, enterprise, agriculture, voluntary and local authority members.

Each Committee will have its own set of standing orders which you will receive from the Committee Administrator. This will also set out how often the Committee meets and the time and venue of the meetings.

In the case of the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC), generally:

1. Meetings take place every month, notice of at least 5 days is usually given
2. Venue is County Hall, Portlaoise (unless otherwise agreed)
3. Meetings are held during business hours
4. Meetings are chaired as per the agreed Standing Orders of the Committee.
5. Agendas, minutes and any relevant documentation are issued by the LCDC Chief Officer, namely, Ms. Georgina Ireland, A/Senior Executive Officer.

## Terms to be Aware of

**SPC** – Strategic Policy Committee

**LEO** – Local Enterprise Office

**CPG** – Corporate Policy Group (*Chairs of each SPC and the Chairperson of the Council make up this committee, set the agenda for each Council Meeting and approve finally any policies/plans to be brought before the full Council*)

**RDP** – Rural Development Programme

**SICAP** – Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme (As explained above)

**LECP** – Local Economic & Community Plan (As explained above)

**DoECLG** – Dept of Environment, Community & Local Government

**DSP** – Dept of Social Protection

## Your Role as a PPN Representative

### ***Listen!***

It is important to go into such committee meetings with a willingness to listen to (a) the business being discussed and (b) the points being made by all parties at the table. It is especially important to do this at your first few meetings, acknowledging that it will take a while for you to get to know the business of the SPC and the contributions being made by the other members. Listening will provide you with a balanced insight into what's important and what isn't important, when feeding back to the Secretariat and/or the Plenary of groups.

### ***Discuss!***

Don't be afraid to enter discussions. Having listened to everyone's opinion, give yours. You have been selected to be a member of this committee because of your interest in the subject matter and because you are a member of the community in which we all live and are affected by policies or plans being made, so be assured that you can participate fully and knowledgeably in the debate.

### ***Represent!***

In participating in this committee, remember why you were elected by your fellow PPN members - to represent them in every way possible. You are not just there to voice your own views, the views of a particular group(s) you are a part of, or the local area in which you live, you are there to represent the views of your PPN pillar grouping. This is the most important part of the PPN Framework – that the community sector raises the vital issues at county level with ***one collective voice***.

### ***Feed back!***

It is your responsibility to feed back to your peers within the PPN Framework. Feedback is a two-way street, i.e., (a) issues to be raised by you at your particular committee and (b) feedback from the business of the meeting to your pillar group or linkage group, whichever is appropriate.

*The PPN Secretariat will assist and advise with the process of providing feedback to the PPN by putting a process in place in due course. In the meantime, allow yourself the time to get acquainted with your new position and its processes, and most importantly, keep in touch with members of the Secretariat in relation to any matters raised at your committee.*