



LAOIS PUBLIC PARTICIPATION NETWORK

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

Laois Tourism

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Laois Tourism

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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!

Laois Tourism

Role of the Committee

Laois Tourism is a not-for-profit organization, limited by guarantee. It is the county promotional, marketing and development company for tourism. It is the aim of Laois Tourism to develop and implement a sustainable tourism policy on behalf of the industry and enhance the image of Laois as a tourist destination.

The Board of Laois Tourism is a voluntary committee comprising of tourism providers, Laois County Council and Tourism Authorities working in Laois. Laois Tourism part-takes in marketing campaigns in Ireland and abroad.

The Board of Laois Tourism works to encourage and assist the improvement of the tourism product in County Laois to internationally acceptable standards. Their mission is to increase the level of awareness and appreciation of the value of the tourism industry throughout County Laois.

The membership is open to people or businesses with an interest in tourism. Laois Tourism provides advice to members on how to market their business and encourage standards which will benefit the industry. Laois Tourism insists that all accommodation providers must be registered with Fáilte Ireland and that all equestrian facilities are AIRE approved.

All financial contributions received from membership assist in funding the Marketing Activities of the group. Grant assistance for marketing has been provided through Laois LEADER, Fáilte Ireland and Laois County Council.

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 Laois Tourism, generally:

1. Notice of at least one week is usually given before each meeting
2. Venue is County Hall, Portlaoise (unless otherwise agreed)
3. Meetings are held during business hours
4. Meetings are chaired as per agreed Standing Orders.
5. Agendas, minutes and any relevant documentation are issued by the Committee Administrator, in your case, Mr. Dom Reddin, Tourism Officer, Laois County Council.

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*)

LCDC – Local Community Development Committee

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.