



Laois Public Participation Network

Minutes of Meeting of PPN Secretariat
Monday, 20th January 2020, 7.00pm
Killeshin Hotel, Dublin Road, Portlaoise.

Present: Mr. Michael Cobbe - Chair
Mr. Donal O' Shea
Mr. Paddy Buggy
Mr. Vincent Booth
Ms. Ann Fleming
Mr. Patrick Blake
Mr. John Oxley

Apologies:

In Attendance: Ms. Suzanne O'Connor, PPN Coordinator.
Ms. Ailish Keane, PPN Support Worker.

The minutes of the meeting held on 16th December, 2019 were proposed by John Oxley, seconded by Donal O' Shea, confirmed and signed.

Introductions

Suzanne welcomed Patrick Blake of Clonaslee Tidy Towns who has taken the Area Representative Seat for Borris In Ossory / Mountmellick to his first Secretariat meeting.

Work Plan 2020

The Secretariat members were given a copy of the proposed work plan for 2020. They looked it over and are happy to go ahead with it. Suzanne will now send a copy to Laois County Council for approval.

Laois County Development Plan

The County Development Plan 2021 – 2027 review has started with public consultations in Abbeyleix and Clonaslee having already taken place. The next public consultation will be held in Killeshin on Tuesday 21st January 2020. Vincent Booth was wondering if the retention of the local hospital and its services would come under that remit. As this is unclear Suzanne suggested that she would attend the consultation in Killeshin on behalf of the Secretariat and make some enquiries.

If groups or individuals wish to make a submission to the County Development Plan, they have until 2nd March to do so.

Any Other Business:

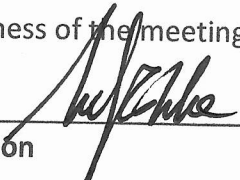
- **DSIG (Disability Special Interest Group)** – Donal O’ Shea gave a very brief update of the DSIG. He has been trying to make contact with the DFI (Disability Federation of Ireland) to pursue their suggestion of another DSIG meeting but there is no progress on this at present. It was suggested that the DSIG could make a submission to the Laois County Development Plan under their heading of Sustainable Communities – Are the needs of different cultural, ethnic, youth, elderly, and persons with a disability being accommodated in our community?
- **Laois Partnership** – Michael Cobbe told us that Laois Partnership are looking for a list of registered groups from the Crettyard, Doonane and Swan areas of Laois. They are looking to get groups to come together to develop their area.
- **Town Centres** – Michael Cobbe would like to see groups / organisations that are in town centres work more with LEADER. They have funding that can be used to improve our town centres and entice people into them.
- **Memorandum of Understanding** – A copy of the Memorandum of Understanding was given to all Secretariat members to look over and once they were happy with its contents it would be signed and sent to Laois County Council. It was proposed by Paddy Buggy and seconded by Michael Cobbe.
- **PPN Handbook** – Through the Chair, Suzanne brought it to the Secretariats attention that submissions could be made regarding the drafting of the new PPN Handbook. The Handbook is over 250 pages so Suzanne will go through it and make a list of things she thinks would be important to the Secretariat and email it to them for approval and then make a submission on our behalf.
- **MRPPN** – The MRPPN (Midlands Region Public Participation Network) are holding their next meeting on Wednesday 19th February 2020 in Bloomfield House Hotel, Mullingar. The meal is at 6.30pm with the meeting at 7.30pm. Suzanne is meeting with the MRPPN Sub Group regarding the Tidy Towns Charter on Thursday.

- **National Conference** – The Department of Rural and Community Development and the National PPN Advisory Group have issued an email seeking joint expression of interest from PPN's and their respective local authority to host the 2020 National Conference. The Conference will take place in September / October of this year and will be held on a Friday and Saturday. Submissions must be received before 31st January 2020. Donal Brennan (Director of Services, Laois County Council) told Suzanne they are having a Management meeting this week and they will issue Laois PPN with a letter of support.
- **Rural Halls / Community Centres** – John Oxley wanted to know if there are specific grants available for the repair and maintenance of halls and community centres in rural areas. Suzanne will email the list of grants to John.
- **CCTV for Illegal Dumping** – Some members of the Secretariat feel that there is a lack of signage warning people that there is CCTV in place and the implementation of fines. Dumping affects the image of the town.
- **Grants** – Vincent Booth wanted to know if there was any way of getting information regarding grants out to specific groups. The PPN currently e-mail all information received from the local authority and the Dept regarding grants to all members of the PPN. We also put it up on our website and include it on our newsletters.

As many of our members are involved with more than one group and these groups may be of different colleges (Social Inclusion, Community & Voluntary, Environment) it may exclude many groups if we only send information to specific groups.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Signed:



 Chairperson

Date:

17 / 2 / 2020