



# Laois Public Participation Network

Minutes of Meeting of PPN Secretariat

Tuesday, 16<sup>th</sup> March 2021, 7.00pm

Via MS Teams.

Present: Ms. Ann Fleming - Chair  
Mr. Paddy Buggy  
Mr. Donal O' Shea  
Mr. John Oxley

Apologies: Mr. Vincent Booth  
Mr. Michael J. Cobbe

In Attendance: Mr. Dan Bergin, PPN Resource Worker.  
Ms. Ailish Keane, PPN Support Worker.

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The minutes of the meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> February were proposed by Paddy Buggy, seconded by John Oxley.

## **Laois PPN Events**

Dan Bergin gave the Secretariat members an update on the events being run by Laois PPN in March.

The first event was a Grant Writing Tricks and Tips Workshop delivered by Emma Murtagh of The Wheel. This took place on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> March at 7pm via Zoom. The feedback from this workshop was very positive and due to the high demand when the event was advertised, a second workshop was added on Tuesday March 16<sup>th</sup>, 2021. Attendees received a recording of the session and useful reference guides following the Workshops.

The third event was an online workshop called 'Age Friendly Business Recognition Scheme' which was organised by Laois PPN in partnership with Laois County Council, Laois Chamber and the Local Enterprise Office. The workshop for Laois based businesses focused on attracting the huge over 50's consumer base and making their businesses more age friendly and took place via Zoom on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> March. The Laois Nationalist printed an article on this workshop.

Dan also informed the Secretariat that we are running a 4-week Spring Gardening Workshop, which was advertised this evening and already registration is over half full. Paddy Buggy complimented the Laois PPN on the idea of the gardening workshop as it is coming into the time of year when people are getting out in their gardens and it makes the workshop very relevant.

### **Laois PPN 1<sup>st</sup> County Plenary of 2021**

Laois PPN are required to hold two County Plenaries a year. Laois PPN held our 1<sup>st</sup> County Plenary of 2021 of our Member Groups on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> March. This was an online event. There was a large attendance on the night.

Emily Nelson of The Wheel was the guest speaker. She gave a presentation on EU Funding opportunities for Community Groups including the recently launched Access Europe Programme which is a three-year programme, led by The Wheel and funded by the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs. Laois PPN were the first PPN in the country to receive a presentation on the Access Europe Programme by The Wheel.

On the night, the budget for 2021 and the Laois PPN Workplan for 2021 were ratified. The online election of Naeem Iqbal as the Laois PPN Representative to the LCDC was also ratified. To promote local businesses in a positive way, Laois PPN held a raffle for three €50 Laois Gift Cards. This was very much appreciated by our members.

### **Income & Expenditure 2020 & MOU 2021**

The MOU 2021 was approved by the Secretariat at the February meeting of the Secretariat and was ratified at the Plenary. The Income & Expenditure report was completed and returned to the Department before the deadline of Friday 19<sup>th</sup> March. The completion and submission of the MOU 2021 and Income & Expenditure 2021 is a requirement of the Department to obtain funding for Laois PPN for 2021. Dan thanked Paddy Buggy and Ann Fleming for signing the documents of behalf of Laois PPN Secretariat.

### **Secretariat & Rep Training**

Dan informed the Secretariat that after Vincent Booth raised the issue of Secretariat and Rep training at the February Meeting of the Secretariat, he contacted the Department regarding the training and was told that it may be 2022 before training would be available.

Dan then contacted Social Justice Ireland who are happy to provide training to Laois PPN Secretariat Members and Reps. Training took place on Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> March for Ann Fleming, John Oxley, Vincent Booth, Ruth Sullivan, Sara Geraldine Rasool and Naeem Iqbal. The presentations from the training are available online.

### **PPN Focus Group – Local Economic and Community Plans**

Laois PPN looked for members to come forward to take part in the Focus Group – Local Economic and Community Plans. Donal O' Shea (Laois PPN Secretariat Member) and Sheelagh Coyle (Laois PPN SPC Representative) are representing Laois PPN in the Focus Group. Donal O' Shea informed the Secretariat that they had answered a questionnaire and hope to have feedback by the end of April. Donal was happy that they had acknowledged the short comings in the Social Inclusion Strand and that things were heading in the right direction.

### **Laois Check in Cards**

The Laois Check-In cards are an initiative of Laois County Council. It is promoted in collaboration with Laois PPN. The Laois Check-In cards are distributed to Laois PPN member groups who are delighted to be part of this initiative to ensure that older and vulnerable persons in our communities, living alone or more isolated are not forgotten during this pandemic. These cards allow people to check in with a designated person from the Laois PPN member group or with the Laois County Council Community Call Helpline. The Laois Check-In Card is part of the Community Resilience "Keep Well" Campaign in Laois. This initiative and Laois PPN's involvement has featured in both local newspapers, the Leinster Express and Laois Nationalist.

### **Community Centres**

Dan gave the Secretariat a brief update on the Community Centres. Michael Cobbe supplied us with a list of Community Centres / Halls that are not registered with Laois PPN. He would like us to make contact with these community centres / halls and ask them to register with Laois PPN. Ailish is following up this list and is making progress in getting in contact with committee members of these community centres / halls. We will have a more detailed update at the next Secretariat meeting.

### **Any Other Business:**

- **St. Patrick's Day** – Through the Chair, Dan wanted to inform the Secretariat about the Laois PPN and Laois County Council celebrating St. Patrick's Day virtually. They are hosting an online campaign looking at parades of the past. Details will be available on the Laois County Council website [laois.ie](http://laois.ie)
- **National PPN** – Donal O' Shea is the Laois PPN Representative on the National PPN. Donal feels that the Department are listening to the inputs of the PPN and that a structural review of the PPN is imminent. The next regional meeting is being held in April.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Signed: Ann Fleming  
Chairperson

Date: 20 / 04 / 2021