



Laois Public Participation Network

Minutes of Meeting of PPN Secretariat
Thursday, 17th September 2020, 7.00pm
Via Teleconference.

Present: Mr. Paddy Buggy - Chair
Mr. Donal O' Shea
Mr. John Oxley
Mr. Donal O' Shea
Mr. Michael Cobbe

Apologies: Mr. Vincent Booth
Mr. Bolaji Adeyanju
Ms. Ann Fleming

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

The minutes of the meeting held on 8th July, 2020 were proposed by Michael Cobbe, and seconded by John Oxley.

Laois PPN August Events Update

Laois PPN held two online workshops in August, which were very well received. The first workshop was the Online Funding Application Workshop. This was held on Wednesday 5th August. We had 33 attendees representing 33 different member groups.

The second online workshop was the Online Social Media Training Workshop. The purpose of this workshop was to help community groups get their message out to the public using social media applications, which is especially important during this pandemic. This workshop had 20 participants representing 15 different member groups.

Membership of Midlands Regional Drug and Alcohol Task Force

Dan informed the Secretariat that the Midlands Regional Drug and Alcohol Task Force had been in touch to inform us that at present, we do not have a community representative on the Task Force. The Task Force meet once a month, usually in Tullamore or Athlone. It was put to the Secretariat, would they like to have a member on the Task Force. They all agreed that we should have a representative on the Task Force and asked Dan to open this position to all the relevant PPN member groups.

Vision for Community Wellbeing

The Vision for Community Wellbeing was originally meant to be completed by the end of 2020 but due to the COVID-19 pandemic the Department have recognised the challenges facing PPN's and have had revised this date. It has been proposed by the Department to give PPN's further training from early March 2021 to June 2021. The Department have clarified that they now wish for the completion of the Vision for Community Wellbeing by the end of 2021. This clarification was welcomed by the Secretariat.

Mick Dowling Fund

The closing date for the Mick Dowling Fund was Monday, 31st August 2020. We received 13 applications. The judging panel consists of:

Donal Brennan (Director of Services), Laois County Council

Member of the Dowling Family

The other member of the panel will be a member of the Secretariat. Michael Cobbe was the secretariat member proposed by Donal O' Shea and seconded by John Oxley.

The judging will take place over the next couple of weeks with winners to be announced in late October.

Online Elections

Currently the PPN have 10 seats to fill between the Secretariat, SPC's and other boards and committees. Dan suggested that we go down the route of online elections as other PPN's around Ireland are doing. The Secretariat agreed that this is the way to go. It was proposed by John Oxley and seconded by Donal O' Shea.

Upcoming Events

Laois PPN have a busy schedule of events over the next few weeks. See the list below:

- Crime Prevention Talk with Garda Sergeant Graham Kavanagh on Saturday 19th September in the MDA, Mountmellick.
- Biodiversity Walk & Talk in Abbeyleix Bog with ecologist Fiona MacGowan on Sunday 20th September.
- "Autumn Blooms" Event for 55+ age group in Castle Durrow featuring a guided walk by the head gardener followed by afternoon tea on Friday 25th September.
- "Wild Food Wander" in Ballintubbert House and Gardens on Saturday 26th September.
- Laois PPN in partnership with the Laois Heritage Department will be holding "A Ramble at the Rock" – Guided Tour of the Rock of Dunamaise with local tour guide Trudy Carmody on Saturday 3rd October.
- Laois PPN in partnership with Laois Tourism and the Laois Tour Guides Forum will be holding the Mick Dowling Memorial Walk on the Ridge of Cappard, Slieve Bloom Mountains on Sunday 11th October.

Paddy Buggy complimented Dan and Ailish on the variety of Laois PPN events that would appeal and be of benefit to the Member Groups of the Community, Environmental and Social Inclusion Pillars of Laois PPN. All Members of the Secretariat agreed with this.

Laois CONNECTS

Laois CONNECTS week starts on Saturday 10th October which is World Mental Health Day. Laois PPN have organised 2 events for Laois Connects. The first event is on in Castle Durrow on Monday 12th October. Philly McMahon, 7 time All Ireland winning footballer with Dublin and author of “The Choice” speaks about the impact of life changing events such as COVID-19, unemployment, drug addiction and the loss of a loved one can have on your mental health and the choices we make. Philly speaks from real life experience as he lost his brother through drug addiction in 2012.

This event is subject to change to an online event in keeping with Government restrictions at that date.

On Wednesday 14th October, Laois PPN are holding an Online Mental Health and Wellbeing Workshop. This is being facilitated by Finola Colgan, Development Officer, Mental Health Ireland. This event will take place via Zoom and is part of our Laois CONNECTS week events.

Social Inclusion Week

Social Inclusion Week is a concept that Kildare PPN came up with and Dan spoke to the Secretariat about it. This is an annual event that runs for one week in Kildare. This year those events would be all on-line due to COVID-19. San suggested that Laois PPN could run 2-3 events over the week. Asked if they would like to do something like this, the Secretariat agreed with Michael Cobbe suggesting we ask Catherine Cowap of Laois Partnership to join forces with us.

DFI – Make Way Day

The Disability Federation of Ireland is holding their “Make Way Day” on Friday 25th September 2020. The aim of the day is to make people aware of the obstacles that face people with disabilities as they go about their daily lives. This year Laois County Council are taking part in “Make Way Day” and Secretariat Member Donal O’ Shea representing Laois PPN joined members of Laois County Council including Simon Walton (Director of Services) and Catherine Fitzgerald (Cathaoirleach) for the launch of “Make Way Day” with a photo shoot at County Hall.

Any Other Business:

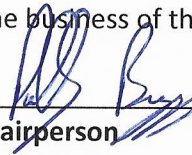
- **Defibrillators** – Michael Cobbe wanted to know if a booklet with the locations of all the defibrillators in Laois is available or if it is only available online. This is online only.

- **Biodiversity Booklet** – At our last meeting, Michael Cobbe was asking about pocket size booklets on plants and flowers. Dan informed Michael that we have “Tree and Shrub” swatches that are pocket size ordered for the Biodiversity Walk and Talk. A swatch has will be circulated to each Member of the Secretariat.
- **Community Centres** – Ailish sent Michael Cobbe a list of Community Centres registered with Laois PPN of which there are only 7. Michael would like to try and make contact with other community centres and get them to register with Laois PPN.
- **Town & Village Renewal Scheme** – Donal O’ Shea told the Secretariat that the town of Stradbally has received funding of €22,500 under the 2nd Tranche of Rural Town and Villages COVID-19 Adaptation Supports.
- **Tidy Towns** – Paddy Buggy complimented Portlaoise Tidy Towns on how well the roundabouts coming into town look. He said it was a great initiative.
- **Laois Federation of Tidy Towns** - John Oxley who is a member of the Laois Federation of Tidy Towns is delighted that the Laois Federation is back up and running and says it gives a better chance to smaller villages to join and compete in the Tidy Towns Competition.
- **Community and Voluntary Awards** – Dan told the Secretariat that he had spoken with Donal Brennan and Carmel McNicholl regarding the Community and Voluntary Awards and the format for the Awards 2020 has not yet been finalised. Paddy Buggy asked that we get permission from the Department to ring fence this money for next year should the awards not go ahead.
- **Resignation** – Dan informed the Secretariat that Patrick Blake, Area Representative for Borris in Ossory / Mountmellick has resigned his position on the Laois PPN Secretariat. He thanked the other members of the Secretariat and Dan and Ailish for everything. The Secretariat thanked Patrick for his contribution to the PPN.
- **LCDC** – The Secretariat thanked Paddy Buggy for his service and commitment to the LCDC as he leaves his position after 6 years. Laois PPN Secretariat Member Vincent Booth takes up the position and the Secretariat wish Vincent all the best in his new position.
- **Estate Names** – Donal O’ Shea brought to the attention of the Secretariat that not only are some estates not clearly named but that door numbers are also missing making it very hard for people to find addresses. He hopes that this could be brought to the attention of the Housing Regeneration & Planning SPC.

- **Best Wishes** - The members of Laois PPN Secretariat would like to wish fellow Secretariat member Bolaji Adeyanju the very best of luck in his new role as Migrant Support Worker with Respond.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Signed:



Chairperson

Date:

29 / 10 / 2020