

Laois Public Participation Network

Minutes of Meeting of PPN Secretariat
Thursday, 26th November 2020, 7.00pm
Via Microsoft Teams.

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

Apologies:

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

The minutes of the meeting held on 29th October 2020 were proposed by Paddy Buggy and seconded by Ann Fleming.

Update on Laois PPN November Events

Dan gave the Secretariat members an update of the events that the Laois PPN facilitated during November 2020.

- **11th November – Building your 2021 Fundraising Strategy:** Following on from the successful first workshop in October 2020 and due to high demand, Laois PPN held a second 'Building your 2021 Fundraising Strategy' with Kevin Delaney of Academy Street Workshop via Zoom. This online workshop was to help community groups whose main sources of fundraising were extinguished by the COVID-19 pandemic and show them new ways and give them new ideas for fundraising in 2021.
- **23rd – 29th November – Social Inclusion Week:** This is the first time Laois PPN has held a Social Inclusion Week. It was held in conjunction with Respond and Laois Partnership. Social Inclusion week saw numerous events being held:
 - **23rd November: Disability Access of Services Workshop** – This workshop was facilitated by PJ Cleere of the Disability Federation of Ireland. PJ gave a presentation of the disability sector in County Laois and nationwide. This was followed by a question and answer session with PJ, who used his 16 years of experience and knowledge of the disability sector to help answer any queries.

- **25th November:** ALONE Workshop – This online workshop was facilitated by Carol McGahon, Support Co-Ordinator at ALONE. Carol provided the participants on the night with information about the supports and services ALONE provide to people over 60 years of age.
- **26th November:** Grow your Own – Dee Sewell of Greenside Up facilitated this online workshop via Zoom. Dee created Greenside Up in 2009 to help promote the grow your own ethos and raise environmental awareness. Topics covered on the night included: Garden choices, Organic vs non - organic, Easy Herbs and a question and answer session. As part of Social Inclusion Week, priority was given to participants in the 55+ Age Group.
- **27th November:** Celebration of the Migrant Communities in Laois – The final event of the week was a series of short videos from the members of our migrant communities in Laois. These videos included music, dance, personal stories, art and sport and were uploaded to the Laois PPN social media sites. A special word of thanks to Laois PPN Secretariat member Bolaji Adeyanju and Laois PPN representative Sara Geraldine Rasool for their help with this event.

People First Credit Union

Dan advised the Secretariat that he had submitted an application on behalf of Laois PPN to People's First Credit Union for sponsorship for the Laois Community and Voluntary Awards 2020. Dan was pleased to inform the Secretariat that this application was successful and that People's First Credit Union had kindly agreed to sponsor the awards to the value of €3,500. This news was welcomed by the Secretariat.

Community and Voluntary Awards 2020

The Community and Voluntary Awards 2020 will take place virtually online on Friday 11th December at 7.30pm. Dan organised independent adjudicators for the C&V Awards in each category. The entries have been judged by independent adjudicators and the results have now been received. As the current chair of the Laois PPN, John Oxley represented Laois PPN and has recorded a speech that will be part of C&V Awards ceremony on the night. Speeches will also be made by John Mulholland, Chief Executive of Laois County Council, Catherine Fitzgerald, Cathaoirleach of Laois County Council and Carol Murphy, Marketing & Business Development Executive of the People First Credit Union. Official invitations are to be sent out the coming week by Laois County Council.

MRPPN Meeting Update

The most recent meeting of the Midlands Region Public Participation Network took place on Wednesday 18th November via Zoom. Dan Bergin, Laois PPN Resource Worker, John Oxley and Donal O' Shea, Laois PPN Secretariat Members represented Laois at this meeting. Each PPN were able to promote one topic for discussion and Laois PPN choose to discuss 'Volunteering and Volunteerism'. The other topics of discussion were:

- ❖ Meath PPN – Interaction with Council in relation to Member Group submissions / issues.
- ❖ Kildare PPN – Secretariat Training
- ❖ Offaly PPN – Recognition
- ❖ Westmeath PPN – Managing and Supporting our members during COVID-19.

The minutes are currently being finalised and a copy of the minutes will be sent out to each member of the Secretariat.

PPN Handbook & PPN Annual Report

On Thursday 19th November, Minister of State with responsibility for Community Development and Charities, Joe O' Brien launched both the PPN Handbook and the 2019 Annual Report for Public Participation Networks. This took place via Zoom and was attended on behalf of the Laois PPN by Dan Bergin, Resource Worker, Ailish Keane, Support Worker, Donal Brennan, Director of Services, Laois County Council and Donal O' Shea, Secretariat Member. The handbook has an extremely large volume of pages but pages 51 – 66 specifically relate to the Secretariat. The link to both publications has been sent to the Secretariat members and were also included on our monthly newsletter.

Plenary & MD Meetings

As stated at the previous Secretariat meeting, the PPN are required to hold three Municipal District Plenaries and two County Plenaries each year. Our first plenary took place in February 2020. As agreed at the last meeting of the Secretariat, these plenaries will take place online. The second week of December will host two municipal district plenaries, the following week will see the final municipal district plenary and the county plenary take place. Dan suggested we hold a raffle on the night of each plenary, with a prize of 3 x €50 Laois Gift Cards per Municipal District. This was proposed by Paddy Buggy and seconded by Michael Cobbe.

Upcoming Events

Dan gave the Secretariat a brief update on the upcoming events in December. They are as follows:

- The Community and Voluntary Awards 2020 will take place online on Friday 11th December at 7.30pm.
- Two Municipal District Plenaries will take place during the week 7th – 13th December 2020.
- One Municipal District Plenary will take place during the week 14th – 20th December 2020.
- The County Plenary will take place during the week 14th – 20th December 2020.
- The 5 Ways to Wellbeing for Christmas – online event will be facilitated by Finola Colgan, Development Officer for Mental Health Ireland due to be held on Thursday 10th December 2020.

Christmas Hamper

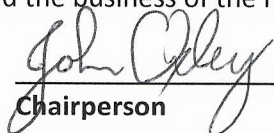
Normally, the PPN would take the Secretariat members out for a meal at Christmas as a thank you for the work they have done throughout the year. As everyone knows 2020 was anything but normal and due to current restrictions on numbers of people who can meet up, we have decided not to go out for a meal. Instead, Dan has arranged a Christmas Hamper for each member of the Secretariat, which will be delivered before Christmas. These hampers will contain some local Laois produce and will be purchased from a local retailer to help support our local businesses. The Secretariat were delighted with this gesture. Paddy Buggy proposed that Dan and Ailish both get a hamper too and this was seconded by Michael Cobbe.

Any Other Business:

- **Community Centres** – Michael J Cobbe would like someone to help him get a list of community centres in the Portlaoise area. Ailish will look into this for him. Michael hopes to have a list ready in January 2021.
- **Microsoft Teams Meetings** – Vincent Booth told the Secretariat that the meetings are much better when they are held via Microsoft Teams rather than by teleconference. All Secretariat members agreed with this view.
- **International Men's Day** – International Men's Day took place on Thursday 19th November. Donal O' Shea informed the Secretariat that an email was circulated by the PPN Office inviting people to a webinar about wellbeing and mental health being facilitated by the HSE.
- **Well Done** – The Secretariat acknowledged the good job done by John Oxley on chairing his first Secretariat meeting.
- **December Meeting** – The meeting is provisionally scheduled to take place on the third week of December with Dan to confirm the date of the Secretariat Meeting taking into account the 3 MD Plenaries and County Plenary.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Signed:


Chairperson

Date:

17 / 12 / 2020