

Meeting: Laois Kilkenny Community Forum

Date: 22nd July 2021

Venue: Online Zoom

Participating:

Irish Rural Link

EirGrid

M.CO

Laois Kilkenny Community Representatives

Compiled by: Irish Rural Link

Item	Description	
1.	Introduction Seamus Boland (Chairperson) opened the meeting and introduced the agenda and speakers. In the 1st part of the meeting Stephen Dunne Project Manager gave a project update. He outlined the project background and progress to date.	
	Questions/Queries	Response
	Are there any plans to increase awareness of the project through the local media?	There was previous local engagement, however Stephen will take the question away for further discussions within EirGrid. EirGrid have issued press releases, used social media platforms and the PPN as channels to promote the community forum and information evenings. Each project has a dedicated page on the EirGrid website, which is updated regularly.
	In relation to Timahoe, when will construction start on that site (Coolnabacky)?	At this time a start date could not be confirmed but work will commence on site in the near future. The project is required for quality and security of electricity of supply for the region.
	For the Ballyragget area, will there be much disruption caused around the town?	The vast majority of the disruption for Ballyragget aspect of the project has taken place over the past 12 months, as the civil works have been progressing. This phase is now concluding. The electrical works will be on going over the next 24 months and these works will have less disruption than the civil works.
2.	Presentation from IRL and M.CO Seamus began by outlining the make-up of the community forum and its functions. The terms of reference for the forum were then defined.	

	Colleen Savage from M.CO presented some initial findings from the scoping study but stated further discussions are planned with the local community before finalising the document. The findings will be presented to the community forum and M.CO welcome any comments the forum has on the initial findings.	
	Questions/Queries	Response
	There are a lot of different community groups in Ballyragget with their individual focus. Is it expected that these groups should submit a combined application?	In other areas, joint applications are encouraged where it makes sense for projects to amalgamate, especially for large amounts of funding. It was noted that individual applications are welcomed if they are stand-alone projects.
	If you had a small project, maybe up to 5000, would it require the same amount of paperwork?	The intention would not be to make the application process difficult for smaller projects, however there will governance requirements on all application
	Are non-capital projects considered part of the fund? I.e. training/capacity building	Yes, non-capital will be considered.
	If a group is based outside the funding area but provides a service in the area, would they qualify for funding? For example a local meals on wheels provider.	Applications outside of the funding area who provide a service in the area, may be considered on a case by case basis.
3.	<p>Breakout Sessions</p> <p>The forums members were invited to introduce themselves and briefly described their organisation.</p> <p>The following questions were posed to commence the discussion and assist the scoping study:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the needs in your community? • What supports are required to help community groups apply for funding? <p>The findings were recorded for addition into the scoping document.</p>	
4.	<p>Next Steps</p> <p>M.CO will circulate the scoping survey to more groups and have further interviews planned with community leaders. Colleen circulated her email address to forum members.</p> <p>At the next forum meeting in September (date to be confirmed), the scoping study will be presented, and the grant application process will be discussed.</p> <p>Suggested topics for the next meeting can be sent to james@irishrurallink.ie</p>	
5.	Seamus closed the meeting, thanking the forum members for attending.	