

## Meeting: Laois Kilkenny Community Forum

**Date:** 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2022

**Venue:** Online Zoom

### Participants:

Irish Rural Link- James Claffey, Brendan Mulry

EirGrid-Avril Wilson and Stephen Dunne

ESB Networks- Ciaran Hughes

M.CO- Coleen Savage

Laois Kilkenny Community Representatives- Lawrence Vesey, Juanita Dunphy, Michael McEvoy, Pat Farrell, Thomasina Connell, Pat Fitzpatrick

**Meeting chaired by Irish Rural Link and draft minutes compiled by: Irish Rural Link**

Item	Description	
1.	<b>Introduction</b> James Claffey (Chairperson) opened the meeting and introduced the agenda. The forum members were invited to introduce themselves.	
2.	<b>Minutes of previous meeting</b> The minutes of the previous meeting were proposed by Thomasina Connell and Seconded by Michael McEvoy.	
3.	<b>Project Update from EirGrid and ESB</b> Stephen Dunne from EirGrid provided a project update and invited questions from members.	
	<b>Questions/Queries</b>	<b>Response</b>
	What is the size comparison between Coolnabackey and Ballyragget Substation infrastructure	Coolnabackey Substation building will be approximately twice in size.
	Avril Wilson Eirgrid confirmed information provided will also be available on the Spring Brochure. Link to be forwarded by James Claffey.	
4.	<b>Presentation on the EIRGRID/M/CO Application Evaluation Meeting and Wider Evaluation Process</b> Colleen Savage from M-CO presented an updated report on the Eirgrid/M.CO Application Evaluation Meeting of 16 <sup>th</sup> February. 19 Project applications were received at an over subscription rate of 132%. Great quality and wide variety of project were received. Good county balance. 10 small and 9 large project submissions. Report to final approval committee and final decisions will be made in coming weeks. Avril Wilson clarified this will likely be end of March, early April timeframe.	
	<b>Questions/Queries</b>	<b>Response</b>
	Comment - The application reflection process was very beneficial to groups involved.	
	Some small groups did not know about the funding call until it was	While the call was extensively advertised the advice will be taken on board and the

	closed, request for longer advertising for the next round.	importance of the forum and local councillors in spreading awareness was also stressed. Coleen Savage confirmed there will be two further funding rounds. Coleen also suggested SEAI be invited to present. Avril Wilson suggested there will be opportunity to build on projects funded from Phase One through further phases and also partnerships with other funding mechanisms.
	When will the next round of funding open?	Brochure and Guidelines suggests 2023 but this is dependent on no infrastructural construction delays which could result in a delay <del>to 2024</del> . M-CO/ <a href="#">EirGrid</a> available to assist groups through this pre -preparation process
	How many of the 19 applications submitted will qualify?	As results are at proposed stage this cannot be clarified at this time.
5	James Claffey IRL requested that the forum consider its future needs in terms of capacity building and future speakers. This needs to be driven by the forum itself.	
6	Avril Wilson Eirgrid asked that the forum to consider whether or not to move to Face to Face Meetings and it was agreed that the next forum meeting will take place in Ballyragget in June. <a href="#">To be confirmed.</a>	
	<b>Questions/Queries</b>	<b>Response</b>
	SEAI Presenter on community funding was requested to attend.	This to be explored by Eirgrid
	Can technical knowledge be pooled to serve future funding calls?	Wide forum agreement with this request but it was suggested that this will necessitate a face-to-face forum meeting to develop effectively.
7	Brendan Mulry IRL confirmed that there are SEAI Community Champions in every county and will forward contact details to Avril Wilson who will look to have a SEAI speaker at the next forum meeting.	
	<b>Next Steps</b>	
	The next community forum meeting will take place in Ballyragget in June.	