

Meeting: Laois Kilkenny Community Forum

Date: 2nd March 2023

Venue: Online

Participants:

Irish Rural Link- James Claffey, Brendan Mulry, Seamus Boland

EirGrid- Avril Wilson, Kelly Woods, Gustavo Mendez

M.CO - Coleen Savage

MaREI - Evan Boyle

Laois Kilkenny Community Forum Representatives - Michael McEvoy, Lawrence Vessey, Tomas Healy Juanita Dunphy, Eamonn Brophy and Pat Farrell

Apologies – Cllr Deirdre McMahon, Cllr Pat. Fitzpatrick

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

Item	Description	
1.	Introduction James Claffey (Chairperson) opened the meeting, facilitated introductions and introduced the agenda.	
2.	Minutes of previous meeting Minutes from the previous two meetings (December 1 st 2022) were proposed by Tomas Healy and seconded by Pat Farrell.	
3.	Review of the Forum Terms of Reference James Claffey (Chairperson) provided an overview of the Terms of Reference for the Group and invited any suggestions, comments or amendments from the forum members. There were no objections to the agreement of the Terms of Reference, but it was agreed that they would be circulated with the meeting minutes and amendments could be suggested afterwards.	
4.	Project Update from EirGrid Gustavo Mendez from EirGrid provided a project update since the December meeting and preview of expected future 2023 activity. Main points outlined. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stations<ul style="list-style-type: none">- South from Kilkenny Partial outage commenced 1st March and will continue to July 2023- Ballyragget – Energisation expected in July 2023 aligned with Kilkenny- Coolnabacky, Contractor mobilisation expected March 2023• Overhead Line Progress<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Very Successful Landowner Engagement with majority of access granted- Ballyraggett -Coolnabacky Line work to commence this spring commencing with clearance work	
	Questions/Queries, Comments	Response

	Is Pylon located at Ballyragget site to be used for one of the connections?	There are in fact two pylons present at the site, one to the right of the entrance is to be used by the ESB and the naked tower at the gate entrance will be the last tower connecting to the station.
5.	Update on the EirGrid Community Fund next steps.	
	Colleen Savage from M-CO provided an over of the EirGrid Community Fund Main points outlined	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phase 2 planned to be opened in September 2023. • M.CO will be reaching out in the coming weeks to projects that are finished as part of the evaluation process. • A request is made to submit photos of works in progress. • Successfully funded projects in Phase One can reapply for funding available in Phase 2 & 3 but funding already received should be drawn down prior to reapplication. The 3rd round of funding will be accessible to groups who are not ready to apply for the 2nd round. • Proposing the next forum meeting to be held in June in Person in Laois (Hopefully to coincide with the Fleadh Ceoil to be held in Laois). MCO will visit sites at this time to discuss progress and take some photos. • A formal evaluation form will also need to be completed at the end of the project. • By June the practical details to spread local knowledge of the fund will be circulated to the forum (eg. examples of social media posts). 	
	Questions/Queries, Comments	Response
	Works are due to be carried out in St. Patricks GAA club in the coming weeks.	
6.	AOB	
	No Items emerged for discussion	
7.	Next Steps	
	The next meeting will be held in June in person. Date and Venue tbd. James Claffey (Chairperson) thanked all members for their attendance tonight.	