

Meeting: Laois Kilkenny Community Forum

Date: 10th September 2024

Venue: Online

Participants:

Irish Rural Link- Seamus Boland James Claffey, Brendan Mulry

EirGrid- Avril Wilson, Eoin Brockert, Des Cox,

ESB – Aoife Heneghan

Laois Kilkenny Community Forum Representatives – Cllr, William Aird, Enda Mooney, Michael McEvoy, Cllr. Paschal McEvoy, Juanita Dunphy

Apologies – Pat Farrell, Pat Fitzpatrick and Michael McEvoy.

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. Since the previous meeting, local elections took place and new county councils were formed. The Chief Executives of Laois and Kilkenny were contacted and invited to nominate councillors onto the forum. Laois Co Co nominated Cllrs Willie Aird and Pascal McEvoy. Cllr Pat Fitzpatrick will remain on the forum until Kilkenny Co Co finish their nomination process.	
2.	Minutes of previous meeting Minutes from the previous meeting (June 11th, 2024) proposed by Cllr Paschal McEvoy and Seconded by Juanita Dunphy	
3.	Review of Forum Terms of Reference James Claffey (chairperson) provided a review of the Forum Terms of Reference The Role of the Forum is to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide advice and guidance to the community• Advice Criteria and Parameters of the Fund• Suggest proposals for discussion and consideration• Provide the community sector perspective• Provide guidance of local needs and priorities• Provide Feedback at key stages in the process• To Assist EirGrid and ESB to develop mechanisms to communicate feedback and key milestones to the wider community The Forum is not a formal decision-making body. The views of members will be recorded, and the chair will ensure that they have been taken into account. Administration The group will be administered by Irish Rural Link with support of the EirGrid Laois Kilkenny Reinforcement Project Community Liaison Officer.	
	Questions/Queries, Comments	Response
	No questions, queries or comments arose	
3.	Project Update from EirGrid Eoin Brockert from EirGrid provided a project update for Quarter 3 2024.	

	<p>Stations</p> <p>Coolnabacky</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 110 kV GIS Building Structural Steel Works Erection Complete • • Stairs Core & Side Wall Framework Complete • Steel Decking for First Floor raft slab being installed <p>Ballyragget - Coolnabacky 110 kV Line</p> <p>Stringing – 50% complete Fibre Wrap – 37% complete All angle mast bases complete 8 Poles to be completed</p>	
	Questions/Queries, Comments	Response
	No questions, queries or comments arose	
3.	Coolnabacky Substation Planning Update	
	<p>Des Cox (EirGrid) outlined the Proposed Modification to ABP approved Development of Coollnabacky Substation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESB Networks has undertaken detailed design of the Coolnabacky substation previously approved by ABP • The process has identified the need for minor modifications to the previously approved Substation Design and Layout. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 400kV Substation Building – Repositioned 2 Metres north - 400kV Gantry – Slightly shifted southwest - 2 Transformer Bunds – to replace original consented bund - Substation Compound Internal Layout – Minor Reconfiguration - Substation Compound Access Track – Slight Reconfiguration - Substation Drainage Network – Minor adjustment to surface water collection network. <p>-</p> <p>Section 146B – Modification of SID Approvals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 146B of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) allows for requests to ABP to modify previously approved Strategic Infrastructure Development (SID) • The S146B process involves submissions directly to ABP without prior public notice • If ABP deems the request ‘not material’ it will decide the modifications without public input. • If ABP deems the request ‘material’ it will instruct EirGrid to publish notices inviting public submissions to ABP ahead of it deciding on the modifications • There are no statutory timelines for the S146B process 	
	Questions/Queries, Comments	Response
	Does this mean work will be delayed subject to ABP approval?	Approved site works will continue but proposal modifications cannot commence until ABP approval. The process usually adds a couple of months to the works timeline.
	Avril Wilson (EirGrid) Overview of the Laois Kilkenny Community Benefit Fund (€511,500)	

<p>Phase 1: (40%) €204,600 – Starting Construction (Funding Already Allocated – April 2022)</p> <p>Phase 2: 30% (€153,450) - Line Stringing/Cable Jointing (– process ongoing, project proposals are with EirGrid for approval)</p> <p>Phase 3 30% (€153,450) Energisation (Will be opened in line with project progress.)</p> <p>Laois Kilkenny Community Benefit Fund Phase 2 Fund Value - €153,450 Opening Date – 23rd April 2024 Closing Date – 18th June 2024</p> <p>Fund Principles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must support projects that are community led and not-for-profit • Will leave a positive legacy within communities that host the Laois Kilkenny Reinforcement Infrastructure • Will support Projects which align to the Sustainable Development Goals • Will be delivered in a fair and balanced way <p>Fund Application Overview</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15 Applications received • 1 Application deemed ineligible • A total of €253,251.53 funding requested representing 165% of the fund value • All applications received were located within the Area of Benefit (i.e. 3km from the reinforcement line) <p>EirGrid hope to be in a position to announce the outcome of the funding in the near future and M-CO and Avril Wilson (EirGrid) will be in touch with all applicants. Sincere thanks to all community forum members for their work to date on this fund. Announcing the results of the Phase 2 call is a huge milestone for the project.</p>		
	<p>Questions/Queries, Comments</p>	<p>Response</p>
	<p>Will the Forum members be informed of the Application Outcomes?</p>	<p>Yes, Applicants will be first informed, followed by the forum members and local political representatives. A press release will be issued thereafter.</p>
4.	<p>Any Other Business</p>	
	<p>No items arose for discussion.</p>	
5.	<p>Conclusion & Next Meeting</p>	
	<p>James Claffey (Chairperson) thanked all members for their attendance. The next meeting is scheduled for December 10th. Minutes of Previous Meetings are available on the EirGrid Website.</p>	