



Longford PPN County Plenary Meeting 10th March 2021 via MS Teams

A County Plenary meeting of Longford PPN was held on the on 10th March 2021. The meeting was chaired by Tess Murphy, Secretariat member who opened the meeting and welcomed everyone.

Siobhán Cronogue, Development Officer, Longford PPN presented an update on the PPN Workplan 2021.

Siobhán reported that the Secretariat met at the beginning of 2021 to develop and approve the PPN Workplan for 2021. The PPN made a submission for funding to Longford County Council in January under the Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027 and the Keep Well Campaign. The PPN joined forces with Longford ICA guilds in a campaign to stay connected with those living alone during the Covid19 restrictions.

In February the PPN, in collaboration with Longford Women's Link, Bridgeways Family Resource Centre and Lus na Greine established a Minority Women's Group for the purposes of integrating and establishing social connections among migrant women from various communities.

In addition, during February Siobhán was invited to make a video presentation on behalf of the PPN at the National Macra na Feirme meeting.

Siobhan reported that the 2021 Memorandum of Understanding between the PPN and Longford County Council was countersigned by Longford County Council and the Secretariat and forwarded to the Dept. of Rural & Community Development in order to draw down PPN funding for 2021.

Siobhán reported that she represents the PPN on the Community Response Forum which is lead by Longford County Council in collaboration with a number of stakeholders in the county. The forum was set up during Covid19 with the aim of giving support to the local community during Government restrictions. Siobhán reported that she also represents the PPN on the Age Friendly Alliance Committee. PPN reps continue to attend online committee meetings including the Joint Policing Committee, Longford Local Development Committee and Strategic Policy Committees.

Siobhán then presented an outline of PPN plans for the remainder of 2021:

Siobhán was invited to speak at the national Men's Sheds meeting in March and on foot of this has been approached by the Men's Sheds organisation requesting assistance from the PPN to develop a programme of activities for the Men's Sheds for the coming months.

The PPN plans to hold Municipal District meetings during the month of May.

The Income and Expenditure account for 2021 will be completed and submitted to the Dept. of Rural & Community Development by the end of March.

The Dept. of Justice has chosen County Longford to pilot the new structure of the Joint Policing Committee to be called “The Local community Safety Partnerships” at which the PPN will be heavily involved.

Siobhan reported that two PPN representatives (Louise Lovett and Tess Murphy) have been chosen to sit on the Eastern Midlands Regional Focus Group.

Siobhán concluded that the PPN will continue to respond to the needs of the community during 2021 through community initiatives, providing one-to-one supports and keeping all members updated on grants and information through our newsletters and emails.

N4 Mullingar to Longford (Roosky) Project

Ann Marie Corroon, Senior Executive Engineer, Westmeath County Council and Client Project Manager for the N4 Scheme introduced to the meeting the N4 Project Team from Westmeath National Roads Office, Longford County Council and the Technical Advisers - ROD-AECOM.

Ann Marie presented an informational video which gave an overview of the project, the need for the scheme, the work that has been carried out to date, what is happening in relation to the public consultation and the next steps of the project.

John Holmes, Deputy Project Manager, Westmeath County Council then presented further details of the project.

John stated that the N4 Mullingar to Longford (Roosky) Project is a partnership including Westmeath and Longford County Councils in association with Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII).

The objectives of the project are to improve safety and enhance overall accessibility in the region, alleviate congestion, improve journey times and to provide safer and more reliable journeys for road users, vulnerable users and road based public transport.

The development of the N4 Project will deliver on a number of EU policy documents supporting the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T), the National Planning Framework, the National Development Plan and is also identified as an objective in both the Westmeath and Longford County Development Plans.

John presented an overview of Phase 1 – concept and feasibility and Phase 2 – option selection process together with outline of the constraints involved in the project, full details of which are available on the project website.

Tara Farrell, CEO, Longford Women's Link tarafarrell@lwl.ie

Tara gave an overview of the work of Longford Women's Link and presented the 3 strategic policies of their Integrated Services Delivery Model namely Economic and Social Choice and Opportunity, Leadership Networking and Influence and Crisis and Practical Support. Tara continued her presentation by outlining to the meeting the services provided by LWL to include: Domestic violence and counselling services, Early Years childcare and education service and the mobile childcare "Catkins on the Move" service. LWL is also the lead sponsor for the CE childcare scheme in Co. Longford.

LWL also provides training and education to include access to 3rd level programmes with IT Carlow, programmes in female entrepreneurship, a women's manifesto programme, the "Willow Traders" charity social enterprise in Longford town and they also work with Aontas for the benefit of educationally disadvantaged individuals.

Tara informed the meeting that LWL's current major projects of work include the establishing of a Migrant Women's Group in collaboration with the PPN and stakeholders and the SHE Project in collaboration with Longford County Council which supports more women to take on roles as public representatives/participants.

Dr. Michelle Maher, Coordinator (SHE – See Her Elected project)

Michelle presented an overview of the SHE Project (See Her Elected project) which was set up as a collaboration between Longford Women's Link and 55 North West (a group of women's groups across the North West). It was set up based on changes were noted taking place in Dublin regarding the increase in the election of females to public positions when it was noticed that these changes were not happening in the rest of the country.

Locally the SHE Project initiative operates in collaborations with Longford County Council. LWL is currently working on a publication with Longford County Council to explain the role of Longford County Council in the county and hopefully demystifying local politics for the general public. Michelle also gave an overview of the upcoming SHE School course run by LWL.

Diarmuid Murray, Agricultural Affairs, Macra na Feirme

Diarmuid presented an overview of the Macra na Feirme organisation and stated that it is a voluntary countrywide organisation comprising a community of approx. 10,000 young people in the 17-25 age group. The aim of the organisation is to foster a fun, inclusive and supportive environment to encourage young people to become active in the local community to make rural Ireland a more attractive place to live in.

Diarmuid also outlined details of how farmers have been working with an eye on the environment stating that the main environmental impacts for farmers are water (climate change), the weather and biodiversity while at the same time working within the requirements of Government guidelines and restrictions. Diarmuid stated that Macra na Feirme has proposed a pilot scheme to achieve environmental generational renewal.

[Recording of PPN County Plenary Meeting 10th March 2021](#)

The meeting concluded with a Spin the Wheel raffle and the winners were:

1st Prize - Edgeworthstown District Development

2nd Prize - EDI Centre, Longford

3rd Prize - Cullyfad Community Centre

