

**MINUTES OF NOVEMBER MEETING OF LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL HELD ON
THE 28th OF NOVEMBER 2005 IN ÁRAS AN CHONTAE, PORTLAOISE AT 11.00
A.M.**

PRESENT: Councillor Larry Kavanagh In the Chair

Councillors William Aird, John Bonham, Patrick Bracken, Ray Cribbin, James Daly, James Deegan, Bill Delaney, John Joe Fennelly, David Goodwin, Catherine Fitzgerald, Tom Jacob, Michael Lalor, John D Turley, Jerry Lodge, Seamus McDonald, Dick Miller, Paul Mitchell, John Moran, Brendan Phelan, Martin Phelan, Michael Rice, Brian Stanley, Mary Sweeney

APOLOGIES: Councillors Michael Moloney

IN ATTENDANCE:

Messers Peter Carey, County Manager, Louis Brennan, Director of Services, John Daly, Director of Services, Gerry Gibson, Director of Services, Declan Byrne, Director of Services, Gerry Murphy, Head of Finance, Gerry Gillen, Senior Executive Officer, Corporate Affairs & Ms. Michelle McCormack, Assistant Staff Officer, Corporate Affairs

177. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

On the proposition of Councillor John Joe Fennelly seconded by Councillor James Daly, it was unanimously agreed that the Minutes of the October Meeting of Laois County Council held on the 24th of October 2005 as circulated be adopted and signed.

178. IMPROVEMENT WORKS AT MONEYCROSS

Councillor Dick Miller raised the issue of the situation at Moneycross and proposed a vote of sympathy to the Kelly & Whelan families with regard to the deaths of three people in a traffic accident at the location that had occurred recently. This proposal was seconded by Councillor James Deegan. It was stated by many Members that works need to be carried out at this location as a matter of urgency.

Mr. Gerry Gibson indicated that a submission has been made to the Department of the Environment, Heritage & Local Government and negotiations have been held with the landowners with a view to having the necessary works undertaken. Detailed plans have been drawn up and approval is awaited from the Department. He stated that the matter will be expeditiously pursued with the landowners involved.

Mr. Gerry Gibson, Director of Services also expressed sympathy to the families that had been bereaved on behalf of the Management and employees of Laois County Council.

179. RESPOND! HOUSING

Councillor Deegan enquired if a response had been received from Respond! in relation to their attendance at a future meeting of Laois County Council. Mr. Declan Byrne, Director of Services indicated that it was hoped that Respond! would attend the January meeting of Laois County Council.

180. WELCOME

The Cathaoirleach, Councillor Larry Kavanagh welcomed the group from the Fresh Start/National Learning Network (formerly N.T.D.I.) to the meeting who are at present carrying out an Accessibility Audit in the Portlaoise area.

181. FIX DATES FOR MEETINGS

- (a) It was agreed that the Budget Meeting in committee would be held on Thursday, December 15th 2005 at 2.30 p.m.
- (b) It was agreed that the statutory Budget Meeting would be held on Monday, December 19th 2005 at 11.00 a.m.
- (c) It was agreed that the monthly Council Meeting for December would be held on Monday, December 12th 2005.

182. PART VIII OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT) REGULATIONS

(a) FIRE STATION AT LONK ROAD, PORTARLINGTON

The Members were circulated with the Planning Report on the Fire Station at Link Road, Portarlinton. The proposed development is for a new two bay Fire Station and parking facilities for crew at the Link Road, Portarlinton. This site is located to the east of the Link Road on lands owned by Laois County Council. On the proposition of Councillor Ray Cribbin seconded by Councillor Paul Mitchell, the Members unanimously agreed to proceed with the proposed development.

(b) IMPROVEMENT WORKS TO FIRE STATION AT SHANNON STREET, MOUNTRATH

The Members were circulated with the Planning Report on the Fire Station at Shannon Street, Mountrath. The proposed development is for improvements to the Fire Station in Mountrath. These improvement works are to consist of the construction of a new perimeter fence, training tower and appliance bay. These works will be undertaken at the existing Fire Station off Shannon Street in Mountrath. On the proposition of Councillor Michael Lalor seconded by Councillor John Joe Fennelly, the Members unanimously agreed to proceed with the proposed development.

A query was raised in relation to the proposed Fire Station in Rathdowney by Councillor Brendan Phelan. Mr. Martin Collins, Chief Fire Officer stated that a site has been purchased for the new Fire Station in Rathdowney. The Chief Fire Officer indicated that the Department of Environment, Heritage & Local

Government has committed to funding for Mountrath and Portarlinton only at this stage.

(c) CONSTRUCTION OF A RESERVOIR AT RALISH, ABBEYLEIX

The Members were circulated with the Planning Report with regard to the proposed construction of a reservoir at Ralish, Abbeyleix. The proposed development is for a reservoir with a capacity set at 2500 cubic metres which will allow for the storage of water for the Abbeyleix public water supply. The available storage in the current scheme is not adequate for the needs of Abbeyleix.

The height of the proposed reservoir is 7m and the diameter is 20m. The site that has been acquired is of sufficient size to accommodate a similar reservoir if the need arises in the future. On the proposition of Councillor John Bonham seconded by Councillor John Joe Fennelly, the Members unanimously agreed to proceed with the proposed development. Mr. Kieran Kehoe, Senior Executive Engineer responded to a number of queries raised in relation to the Reservoir at Ralish.

**183. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND COUNTY PROMOTION
PROGRESS REPORT**

The Members were circulated with a progress report on the work being done in the Economic Development and County Promotion Department. Mr. Louis Brennan briefed the members on the progress made to date. The County Manager, Mr. Peter Carey welcomed the production of the brochure. The Members also congratulated Mr. Louis Brennan and his team on the progress that has been made. Ms. Honor Deevy, Tourism Officer was also complimented on her input. Some Members indicated that they had concerns in relation to inward investment. Councillor James Deegan proposed that a representative from the I.D.A. be invited to the January meeting of Laois County Council to update the Members in this regard. This proposal was seconded by Councillor Mary Sweeney. Mr. Louis Brennan responded to queries that were raised and complimented his team, Mr. Ian McCormack and Ms. Honor Deevy, Tourism Officer for their contribution to the success of the department.

**184. PROPOSED REPLACEMENT WASTE MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR
THE MIDLANDS REGION - PRESENTATION BY MR. LARRY O'
TOOLE, RPS MCOS CONSULTANTS**

Mr. Larry O' Toole, RPS MCOS Consultants was in attendance to give a presentation on the proposed Replacement Waste Management Plan for the Midlands Region. Mr. O' Toole indicated that the proposed Replacement Plan has resulted from a consultation process which commenced in July 2004.

Mr. Larry O' Toole & Mr. John Daly, Director of Services, responded to a number of queries that arose. Mr. John Daly, Director of Services, indicated that following presentations to the County Councils in the region in

November/December 2005, that the proposed Replacement Waste Management Plan would be made in January 2006.

185. INVITATION FOR SUBMISSIONS REGARDING TAXIMETER AREAS AND TAXI FARES

The Members were circulated with a copy of a consultation paper on taximeter areas and taxi fares. Mr. Gerry Gibson, Director of Services indicated that the Commission for Taxi regulation has been established. The Commission is consulting with Laois County Council, Portlaoise Town Council & Mountmellick Town Council and is seeking submissions before the 19th of December 2005 with regard to a variety of matters. Mr. Gibson requested that the Members consider this matter prior to the next meeting of Laois County Council scheduled for the 12th of December 2005.

186. BRIEFING UPDATE ON INLAND PORT/TRANSPORT NODE INTERCHANGE AT PORTLAOISE

Mr. Louis Brennan, Director of Services gave a presentation on the Inland Port/Transport Node Interchange at Portlaoise. He outlined the progress that has been made to date with regard to the development of the Motorway Services, Events Park, Logistics Park, Irish Rail National Traincare Depot & Heliport services. Mr. Louis Brennan, Director of Services and his team were complimented on their work to date on this project.

187. NOTICE OF MOTIONS

Notice of Motion No: 40/05

Councillor Martin Phelan proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

"That this Council invites Mr. Michael Egan of the N.R.A. to attend our January 2006 meeting to brief the Council on the up to date progress on the N7-N8 Motorway"

This motion was seconded by Councillor Jerry Lodge. The Members were informed that the making of a Progress Report with regard to the motorway project is a Standing Item on the agenda for the Borris-in-Ossory Electoral Area Meeting. The M7/M8 project is being undertaken as a Public Private Partnership. The National Roads Authority are progressing the pre-qualification tender process. The tender date is mid-January 2006 with a tender return date of May 2006 and a contract award date of late 2006.

Councillor William Aird proposed that a letter be issued to the N.R.A. in this regard as this is a matter with countywide implications. This proposal was seconded by Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald and agreed.

Notice of Motion No: 41/05

Councillor Martin Phelan proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

"That this Council elect a committee as agreed at a previous meeting to represent elected members to work with the N.R.A. during the construction on the N7/N8 Motorway"

This motion was seconded by Councillor John Bonham. The Members were advised that the M7/M8 Project is a Public-Private Partnership contract and as such it is the contractor/concessionaire who has the legal responsibility for the construction and maintenance of the scheme for a 20/30 year time frame. The modus operandi of the project is not yet known. However, it is envisaged that the conduit for Laois County Council is the Project Liaison Officer(Clonkeen) and regular update meetings can be arranged with/for Members and the Contractors.

It was suggested that the committee comprise of the following:-

- Three Representatives from the Borris-in-Ossory Electoral Area
- Two Representatives from the Portlaoise Area
- 1 Representative from each other Electoral Area

Councillor Larry Kavanagh proposed that this item be discussed again at the December meeting of Laois County Council with a view to forming a committee.

Notice of Motion No: 42/05

Councillor Martin Phelan proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

"That this Council erect warning signs to warn drivers where deer are crossing the roads"

It was agreed that consideration of this Notice of Motion be deferred to the January Meeting of Laois County Council.

188. VOTES OF SYMPATHY

- (a) On the proposal of Councillor Ray Cribbin, the Members unanimously agreed that a vote of sympathy be extended to the Leavy family on the recent death of Mr. Pat Leavy, 14 St. Michael's Park, Portarlington
- (b) On the proposal of Councillor James Deegan, the Members unanimously agreed that a vote of sympathy be extended to the Bambrick family on the recent death of Brendan Bambrick, Curraclone, Stradbally
- (c) On the proposal of Councillor John Moran, the Members unanimously agreed that a vote of sympathy be extended to the McDonald Bryne family on the recent death of Peadar McDonald Byrne, Ashfield, Ballickmoyler
- (d) On the proposal of Councillor William Aird, the Members unanimously agreed that a vote of sympathy be extended to the Paisley family on the recent death of their Aunt Kitchester Dooley, Millview, Portlaoies

- (e) On the proposal of Councillor Mary Sweeney, the Members unanimously agreed that a vote of sympathy be extended to the Carter family on the recent death of Jack Carter, Ballyroan
- (f) On the proposal of Councillor John Bonham, the Members unanimously agreed that a vote of sympathy be extended to the Ward family on the recent death of Johnny Ward, a former employee of Laois County Council from Clononeen, Borris-in-Ossory

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Signed:

_____ **Cathaoirleach**

_____ **Director of Corporate Affairs**