

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL
HELD IN ÁRAS AN CHONTAE, PORTLAOISE ON 25th OF JUNE 2012**

PRESENT: Councillors	John Bonham	In the Chair
	Rotimi Adebari	William Aird
	Pat Bowe	James Daly
	Paddy Bracken	Ben Brennan
	Ray Cribbin	James Deegan
	John Joe Fennelly	Catherine Fitzgerald
	Padraig Fleming	David Goodwin
	Alan Hand	John King
	Michael Lalor	Jerry Lodge
	Seamus McDonald	Paul Mitchell
	John Moran	Tom Mulhall
	Kathleen O' Brien	Brendan Phelan
	Martin Phelan	Mary Sweeney

IN ATTENDANCE:

Messers Peter Carey, County Manager, Gerry Murphy, Head of Finance, Ms. Anna Marie Delaney, Director of Services, Mr. Michael O' Hora, A/Director of Services, Ms. Irene Delaney, Administrative Officer & Ms. Michelle McCormack, Executive Secretary.

69. PRESENTATION TO OUTGOING CATHAOIRLEACH

Mr. John Bonham, Cathaoirleach welcomed the County Manager, Members of Laois County Council and Guests to the Council Chamber for the Annual General Meeting of Laois County Council and reflected on his term of office and highlights during his time as Cathaoirleach. The Cathaoirleach expressed thanks to Mr. Peter Carey, County Manager, Management & Staff at Áras an Chontae, Members of Laois County Council, Members of the Press and in particular his family members for their support during 2011/2012.

Councillor Jerry Lodge & Councillor Alan Hand on behalf of their own groups, thanked the Cathaoirleach and congratulated him. The County Manager, Mr. Peter Carey, County Manager, on behalf of Management & Staff also joined with the Members in paying tribute to the Cathaoirleach.

Mr. Peter Carey, County Manager made a formal presentation to Mr. John Bonham, the outgoing Cathaoirleach of a bound book of minutes of meetings during his term as Cathaoirleach, together with a photo album of events attended.

70. ELECTION OF CATHAOIRLEACH

It was proposed by Councillor Tom Mulhall and seconded by Councillor James Deegan :

“That Councillor Paul Mitchell be appointed Cathaoirleach for the coming year”

It was proposed by Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald and seconded by Councillor Patrick Bracken

“That Councillor Jerry Lodge be appointed Cathaoirleach for the coming year”

A roll call vote was taken which resulted as follows:-

COUNCILLOR		FOR COUNCILLOR MITCHELL	FOR COUNCILLOR LODGE	ABSENT
FIRST NAME	SURNAME			
Rotimi	ADEBARI		✓	
Willie	AIRD	✓		
John	BONHAM	✓		
Pat	BOWE			✓
Paddy	BRACKEN		✓	
Ben	BRENNAN	✓		
Raymond	CRIBBIN		✓	
James	DALY	✓		
James	DEEGAN	✓		
John Joe	FENNELLY		✓	
Catherine	FITZGERALD		✓	
Padraig	FLEMING		✓	
David	GOODWIN	✓		
Alan	HAND			✓
John	KING	✓		
Michael	LALOR	✓		
Jerry	LODGE		✓	
Seamus	MCDONALD		✓	
Paul	MITCHELL	✓		
John Robert	MORAN	✓		
Tom	MULHALL	✓		
Kathleen	O'BRIEN	✓		

Brendan	PHELAN		✓	
Martin	PHELAN	✓		
Mary	SWEENEY	✓		

As a result of the Roll Call Vote, there was 14 votes in favour of Councillor Paul Mitchell and 9 votes in favour of Councillor Jerry Lodge, with two Councillors absent. Councillor Paul Mitchell having been elected thanked his proposer and seconder and all his colleagues who supported him and he then took the Chair.

Councillor Mitchell commiserated with Councillor Jerry Lodge who thanked his proposer and seconder and congratulated Councillor Paul Mitchell. Councillor John Joe Fennelly & Councillor Pat Bowe on behalf of their groups congratulated Councillor Mitchell on his election.

The County Manager Mr. Peter Carey, on behalf of the Management and staff at Áras an Chontae extended congratulations to Councillor Mitchell on his election as Cathaoirleach of Laois County Council for 2012/2013 and wished him well in his term.

71. ELECTION OF LEAS- CATHAOIRLEACH

It was proposed by Councillor James Daly and seconded by Councillor William Aird

“That Councillor John Moran be appointed Leas-Cathaoirleach for the coming year”

It was proposed by Councillor Brendan Phelan and seconded by Councillor Padraig Fleming

“That Councillor John Joe Fennelly be appointed Leas-Cathaoirleach for the coming year”

A roll call vote was taken which resulted as follows:-

COUNCILLOR		FOR COUNCILLOR MORAN	FOR COUNCILLOR FENNELLY	ABSENT
FIRST NAME	SURNAME			
Rotimi	ADEBARI		✓	
Willie	AIRD	✓		
John	BONHAM	✓		
Pat	BOWE			✓
Paddy	BRACKEN		✓	
Ben	BRENNAN	✓		
Raymond	CRIBBIN		✓	

James	DALY	✓		
James	DEEGAN	✓		
John Joe	FENNELLY		✓	
Catherine	FITZGERALD		✓	
Padraig	FLEMING		✓	
David	GOODWIN	✓		
Alan	HAND			✓
John	KING	✓		
Michael	LALOR	✓		
Jerry	LODGE		✓	
Seamus	MCDONALD		✓	
Paul	MITCHELL	✓		
John Robert	MORAN	✓		
Tom	MULHALL	✓		
Kathleen	O'BRIEN	✓		
Brendan	PHELAN		✓	
Martin	PHELAN	✓		
Mary	SWEENEY	✓		

As a result of the Roll Call Vote, there was 14 votes in favour of Councillor John Moran and 9 votes in favour of Councillor John Joe Fennelly, with 2 Members absent. Councillor John Moran having been elected Leas-Cathaoirleach thanked his proposer and seconder.

72. ELECTION OF CHAIR TO THE HOUSING & SOCIAL STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE

On the proposal of Councillor James Deegan seconded by Councillor James Daly, it was unanimously agreed that Councillor Tom Mulhall be elected Chair of the Housing & Social Strategic Policy Committee

73. ELECTION OF CHAIR TO THE COMMUNITY, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, CULTURAL, HERITAGE, SPORT & COUNTY PROMOTION STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE

On the proposal of Councillor John Moran seconded by Councillor William Aird, it was unanimously agreed that Councillor John King be elected Chair of the Community, Economic Development, Cultural, Heritage, Sport & County Promotion Strategic Policy Committee

74. ELECTION OF CHAIR TO THE TRANSPORTATION & WATER SERVICES STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE

On the proposal of Councillor James Daly seconded by Councillor Michael Lalor, it was unanimously agreed that Councillor Kathleen O' Brien be elected Chair of the Transportation & Water Services Strategic Policy Committee

75. ELECTION OF CHAIR TO THE PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT & ENVIRONMENT STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE

On the proposal of Councillor Jerry Lodge seconded by Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald, it was unanimously agreed that Councillor John Joe Fennelly be elected to the Planning, Development & Environment Strategic Policy Committee

76. APPOINT 1 MEMBER TO THE MIDLAND REGIONAL DRUGS TASK FORCE

On the proposal of Councillor John Bonham seconded by Councillor John King, it was unanimously agreed that Councillor William Aird be appointed to the Midland Regional Drugs Task Force .

77. NOTICE OF MOTIONS

Notice of Motion No: 32/2012

Councillor John Moran proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That on behalf of the Housing & Social SPC, it is proposed that Laois County Council put in place a facility whereby a borrower in difficulties with his/her mortgage would be allowed to recalibrate their loan, thereby extending the period for a further 5 years to facilitate a lower repayment”

This motion was seconded by Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald.

The Members were advised that borrowers, who are experiencing financial difficulties are dealt with on an individual basis by the Council and every effort is made to assist them in meeting their loan commitment. These include arrears arrangements and/or changes to either the term or type of loan.

Changes to the term of a housing loan are governed by Housing (Local Authority Loans) Regulations, 2009 (SI No. 145/2009) which include the following conditions:-

The amount of a loan shall not exceed €220,000

A loan shall be repaid within such period not exceeding 30 years

In addition, in order for borrowers to maintain mortgage protection insurance cover in the event of death and disability, loans must be repaid before the borrowers reach the age of 65.

As a result, it is not always possible to extend the existing loan term.

Notice of Motion No: 33/2012

Councillor John Moran proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That on behalf of the Housing & Social SPC, it is proposed that Laois County Council write to the Department of the Environment, Community & Local Government to seek funding to purchase houses which are being re-possessed by Laois County Council”

This motion was seconded by Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald. It was agreed that a letter issue to the Department of the Environment, Community & Local Government in this regard.

Notice of Motion No: 34/2012

Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That this Council call on the Minister for Communications, Energy & natural Resources, Mr. Pat Rabbitte to bring in legislation to ensure that Mobile Phone/Internet Providers are more responsible and accountable to their customers”

This motion was seconded by Councillor Mary Sweeney. It was agreed that a letter issue to the Minister for Communications, Energy & Natural Resources in this regard.

The Members also expressed concern with regard to door to door selling of these products and the after sales service provided and it was agreed that this would also be included in the correspondence to the Minister.

Notice of Motion No: 35/2012

Councillor Mary Sweeney proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That Laois County Council inform all prospective 3rd level grant applicants of new arrangements for centralized applications and encourage them to apply early. Existing applicants also should be advised that they will continue to process their applications with Laois County Council”

This motion was seconded by Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald.

The Members were informed that the City of Dublin VEC have advised that they have been in contact with all Career Guidance Teachers with a view to informing all prospective third level applicants of new arrangements for centralized applications and encouraging them to apply early. Renewal forms have issued to all existing students and they have been advised to return completed forms to Laois County Council. Information with regard to the new arrangement for 2012/2013 has been placed on laois.ie with the required link to studentfinance.ie.

Notice of Motion No: 36/2012

Councillor John Joe Fennelly & Councillor Brendan Phelan proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That Laois County Council request Bus Eireann to retain their full bus service and bus stops throughout County Laois”

This motion was seconded by Councillor Mary Sweeney. The Members expressed serious concern in relation to the proposal to remove bus stops from various towns around the County. It was agreed that an urgent letter issue to Bus Eireann in this regard

This concluded the business of the meeting

SIGNED:

CATHAOIRLEACH

CERTIFIED:

DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE AFFAIRS

