

**MINUTES OF STATUTORY BUDGET MEETING HELD IN ARAS AN  
CHONTAE, PORTLAOISE, ON THE 19<sup>th</sup> OF DECEMBER 2011 AT 11.00  
A.M.**

**PRESENT:**

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

**APOLOGIES:** Councillors William Aird

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Messers Peter Carey, County Manager, Gerry Murphy, Head of Finance, John Daly, Director of Services, John O' Donoghue, A/Director of Services, Ms. Anna Marie Delaney, Director of Services, Ms. Irene Delaney, A/Senior Executive Officer, Corporate Affairs, Ms J Bergin, Financial Management Accountant & Ms. Michelle McCormack, Executive Secretary, Corporate Affairs.

**165. VOTE OF SYMPATHY**

On the proposition of Councillor John Bonham, Cathaoirleach and unanimously agreed, a vote of sympathy was extended to the Murphy family on the recent death of the Council's Solicitor, Mr. Colm Murphy, Main Street, Abbeyleix, Co. Laois.

On the proposition of Councillor James Daly and unanimously agreed, a vote of sympathy was extended to the Phelan family on the recent death of Ms. Mary Phelan, Larkhill Lodge, Dromagh, Crettyard, Co. Laois.

**166. BUDGET 2012**

The County Manager referred the Members to the Draft Budget 2012 which had been prepared and circulated. He outlined the process that had been undertaken in relation to the preparation of the draft budget. He advised that the draft budget had been prepared in an extremely difficult and very challenging economic environment. He referred in particular to the re-structuring and reduction of staff while maintaining an acceptable level of service. He then referred to the meeting

held In-Committee on the 12<sup>th</sup> of December 2011 when all aspects of the draft budget were discussed in great detail.

Mr. Gerry Murphy, Head of Finance then proceeded to summarise the Council's proposals for 2012 on a division by division basis. He advised that following the meeting in Committee on the 12<sup>th</sup> December 2011 that he was proposing to increase the provision for Housing Grants by €172,000 to €1,146,000 (to be funded by grant and internal capital resources). He, also, proposed to increase the provision for Community Projects by €2,500 to €25,000 and to reduce the Motor Taxation provision of €507,500 by €2,500 to fund same.

He indicated that the reduction in the Local Government Fund of approximately €828,543 (5.91% reduction on 2011) presented a major challenge to the Council in meeting their costs and ensuring that quality services are provided in 2012. In addition, there are further reduced income resources available to the Council across a range of headings, particularly in the Roads Transportation & Safety, Development Management and Environmental Services Divisions.

The amended draft budget provides for revenue spending of €65,688,000 which is the amount required to meet the expenses and to provide for the liabilities and requirements of Laois County Council during the year ending on the 31<sup>st</sup> of December 2012.

The Members collectively and individually complemented all the staff involved in the preparation of the budget for 2012. After a lengthy discussion, on the proposal of Councillor John Moran seconded by Councillor James Deegan the revised Annual Budget for 2012 was unanimously adopted as presented.

The County Manager thanked Mr. Gerry Murphy, Head of Finance, Ms. Julie Bergin, Financial/Management Accountant, the Directors of Service and all staff for the efficiency and professionalism with which the draft budget had been prepared. The County Manager welcomed the support of the Elected Members and acknowledged the flexibility of staff during 2011.

#### **167. PROGRAMME OF CAPITAL WORKS FOR 2012, 2013 and 2014**

The members were circulated with the indicative list of the likely capital projects to be undertaken over the next three years and this was noted.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

SIGNED: \_\_\_\_\_  
CATHAOIRLEACH

CERTIFIED: \_\_\_\_\_  
DIRECTOR OF SERVICES  
CORPORATE AFFAIRS