

**MINUTES OF JANUARY MEETING OF LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL HELD IN
ÁRAS AN CHONTAE, PORTLAOISE ON THE 29TH OF JANUARY 2007 AT 11.00
A.M.**

PRESENT:	Councillor Michael Lalor	In the Chair
	Councillors William Aird	John Bonham
	Patrick Bracken	Ray Cribbin
	James Daly	James Deegan
	John Joe Fennelly	Bill Delaney
	Catherine Fitzgerald	David Goodwin
	Jerry Lodge	Seamus McDonald
	Michael Moloney	Dick Miller
	Paul Mitchell	John Moran
	Brendan Phelan	Martin Phelan
	Michael Rice	Brian Stanley
	Mary Sweeney	John D. Turley
APOLOGIES:	Councillors Thomas Jacob	Larry Kavanagh

IN ATTENDANCE:

Messers Peter Carey, County Manager, Gerry Gibson, Director of Services, Declan Byrne, Director of Services, Gerry Murphy, Head of Finance, John Daly, Director of Services, Gerry Gillen, Senior Executive Officer, Ms. Anna Marie Delaney, Director of Services & Ms. Michelle McCormack, Executive Secretary.

**1. SECTION 184(4) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001 –
ON-ATTENDANCE OF A MEMBER AT MEETINGS OF A LOCAL
AUTHORITY**

The Members were circulated with a document outlining the procedures that relate to the non-attendance of a Member at meetings of a Local Authority for a continuous period that exceeds six months. Councillor Larry Kavanagh has been ill for some months. The last meeting of the Council at which he attended was held on the 31st of July 2006. On the proposition of Councillor Brian Stanley, the following resolution was passed:

“That Laois County Council approves the extension of Councillor Larry Kavanagh’s membership of the Council up to the 30th of June 2007 taking into account the fact he has been seriously ill for the past six months”

This proposal was seconded by Councillor William Aird and was unanimously agreed.

2. (a) CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER MONTHLY MEETING HELD ON THE 11TH OF DECEMBER 2006

On the proposition of Councillor William Aird which was seconded by Councillor John Bonham, it was unanimously agreed that the Minutes of the Meeting of Laois County Council held on the 11th of December 2006 as circulated, be adopted and signed.

2 (b) CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF THE STATUTORY BUDGET MEETING HELD ON THE 18TH OF DECEMBER 2006

On the proposition of Councillor Martin Phelan which was seconded by Councillor Bill Delaney, it was unanimously agreed that the Minutes of the Statutory Budget Meeting held on the 18th of December 2006 as circulated, be adopted and signed.

3. REPORTS ON AREA MEETINGS & SPC MEETINGS HELD IN DECEMBER 2006

On the proposition of Councillor John Joe Fennelly which was seconded by Councillor Michael Moloney, the reports on Area Council Meetings and the Strategic Policy Committee meetings held in December 2006 were noted.

4. PART VIII OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT) REGULATIONS 2001 IN RESPECT OF:

(a) SECTION OF ROAD, STRADBALLY BY-PASS BETWEEN THE N80 PORTLAOISE AND REGIONAL ROAD R427 VICARSTOWN ROAD

Councillor James Deegan proposed that consideration of this item be deferred in order to enable the Emo Electoral Area Members to discuss the matter in further detail. Councillor Dick Miller expressed his opposition to this proposal and he proposed that these works be proceeded with. This proposal was seconded by Councillor Michael Moloney. It was proposed by Councillor Ray Cribbin that the meeting be adjourned for 15 minutes to afford the Area Members to have a discussion on the matter. This proposal was seconded by Councillor William Aird.

Following some discussion the Cathaoirleach ruled that the discussion relating to this item be deferred and that the Meeting should adjourn for 15 minutes.

Following the adjournment, it was agreed that consideration relating to this the matter would be deferred to the February Meeting of Laois County Council.

(b) CONSTRUCTION OF WASTE WATER TREATMENT PLANT AT DURROW, CO. LAOIS

On the proposition of Councillor Martin Phelan which was seconded by Councillor John Bonham, the Members unanimously approved the undertaking of the development works outlined in the proposal relating to the Laois Towns and Villages Wastewater Improvement Scheme – Durrow Wastewater Treatment Plant. The proposed works in Durrow will result in the provision of improved treatment works with a design capacity that will be sufficient to accommodate a population equivalent of 3,000. The treatment works are required to meet the effluent quality standards as set out in Urban Wastewater Treatment Regulations 2001 and other current regulations governing discharges to freshwaters.

It is intended that the development will provide reliable treatment facilitates for the existing and future residential and commercial developments in the town of Durrow and that this will ensure the environmental well being of the area.

(c) STATION ROAD, PORTARLINGTON – TRAFFIC CALMING MEASURES

Councillor Paul Mitchell proposed the undertaking of the development works outlined in the proposal relating to traffic calming and junction management at Station Road, Portarlington. Councillor Ray Cribbin seconded this proposal and requested that officials from the Roads Department arrange a meeting with Mr. Shay Gallagher from The Railway Bar on Station Road in order that Mr. Gallagher could be briefed on the proposed works. Mr. Gerry Gibson, Director of Services agreed that this meeting would be arranged. It was then unanimously agreed that the proposed works should be undertaken.

5. DISPOSAL OF LAND UNDER SECTION 183 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT, 2001 IN RESPECT OF 24 SERVICED RESIDENTIAL SITES AT CHURCHFIELD, CASTLETOWN.

On the proposal of Councillor Bill Delaney which was seconded by Councillor John Joe Fennelly, the Members unanimously agreed to the disposal of 24 serviced residential sites at Churchfield, Castletown to purchasers who are deemed to be eligible under the provisions of the Sale of Private Sites Scheme. It was agreed that the consideration for the transfer of each site would be €55,500 and that this figure could in the future be reviewed having regard to demand and the prevailing market conditions. It was pointed out that in some instances applicants acquiring sites might be eligible for a site subsidy. This might result in applicants being in a position to purchase sites at a net cost of €23,700 as the maximum available site subsidy is €31,800.

On a related matter Councillor Bill Delaney requested that the Placenames Committee consider renaming the estate. Councillor Delaney was supported by fellow Councillors regarding the naming of estates in general.

A discussion took place in relation to the provision of Social Housing by the Council. Mr. Peter Carey, County Manager informed the Members that Laois County Council are to the forefront with initiatives in relation to the provision of both Social and Affordable Housing and that the Council is actively seeking suitable land on which Social Housing can be provided.

6. WELCOME TO STUDENTS

The Cathaoirleach welcomed students from the Mountmellick Youthreach Project who had entered the Council Chambers. The Cathaoirleach also welcomed the teachers who were accompanying the students. On the proposition of Councillor Patrick Bracken which was seconded by Councillor Michael Moloney, the Members unanimously congratulated the teachers on the wonderful work that they were undertaking at Youthreach in Mountmellick.

7. PORTLAOISE ENTERPRISE CENTRE – NOMINATION OF 2 MEMBERS TO THE BAORD OF DIRECTORS

It was agreed that 3 members of Laois County Council should be appointed to the Board of the Portlaoise Enterprise Centre. Councillor James Deegan proposed that Councillor Mary Sweeney and Councillor William Aird be nominated to the Portlaoise Enterprise Centre from Laois County Council. This proposal was seconded by Councillor John Bonham. Councillor Brendan Phelan proposed that Councillor Jerry Lodge be nominated to the Portlaoise Enterprise Centre from Laois County Council. This proposal was seconded by Councillor Bill Delaney. These proposals were unanimously agreed and Councillors Jerry Lodge, Mary Sweeney and William Aird were deemed to be the Council's nominees to the Board of Portlaoise Enterprise Centre.

8. CASUAL TRADING BYE-LAWS 2007

The Members were circulated with the Casual Trading Bye-Laws 2007 for Portlaoise. On the proposition of Councillor Brian Stanley which was seconded by Councillor Mary Sweeney, the Members unanimously agreed to adopt the Casual Trading Bye-Laws 2007 for Portlaoise. The introduction of the bye-laws for Portlaoise was welcomed by many of the Members who were present.

9. CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL BEREAVEMENT PROTOCOL AND CONGRATULATIONS PROTOCOL

The Members were circulated with a draft Protocols relating to the extension of sympathies by the Council and the passing of votes of congratulations by the Council. On the proposition of Councillor James Deegan which was seconded by Councillor Brian Stanley, the Members unanimously agreed to adopt the draft Protocols that had been circulated to them.

10. LAUNCH OF RE-DESIGNED WEBSITE – www.laois.ie

Mr. Ray Bell, Information Systems Project Leader gave a presentation to the Members outlining the features that had been included on the new Laois County Council Website. Many of the Members complimented the employees of the Information Systems Department on an excellent job that had been carried out in revamping the Website. The County Manager welcomed the remarks that had been made by the Members and stated that he was very appreciative of the hard work that had gone into the redesigning of the Website.

11. CORRESPONDENCE

The Members noted the following items of correspondence which had been circulated to them :-

- (a) 2007 N.R.A. National Roads Grants Allocations
- (b) 2007 D.O.E.H.L.G. Non-National Roads Grants Allocations
- (c) M7 Portlaoise to Castletown/M8 Portlaoise to Cullahill Motorway Draft Toll Scheme

12. NOTICE OF MOTIONS

Notice of Motion No. 01/07

Councillor Brian Stanley proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That Laois County Council introduces a timeframe of two months within which all applications for housing will be assessed. In a case where there is an application for Rent Supplement pending, that the present practice of the assessment has been carried out immediately will continue”

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor John D. Turley

The reply to the Notice of Motion, which was as follows, was read by Gerry Gillen.

The Council currently carries out assessments in an efficient, effective and timely manner in order to ensure that all qualified applicants can be considered for new houses, when built, and casual vacancies when they arise, and that houses are occupied as quickly as possible. The present practice in relation to assessments for applicants applying for Rent Supplement will continue. However, practices and resources can be examined with a view to amending procedures, if appropriate, through the Housing SPC Structure.

Mr. Declan Byrne, Director of Services responded to a number of questions that were put to him by various Members.

Notice of Motion No. 02/07

Councillor Michael Moloney proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That Laois County Council call on the G.A.A. to give consideration to make available their facilities at O’ Moore Park to the Leinster Branch of the I.R.F.U, for any potential forthcoming fixtures which may otherwise have to be staged abroad”

This proposal was seconded by Councillor Martin Phelan. Following some discussion it was agreed that this Notice of Motion related to matters that are of a sensitive nature.

Notice of Motion No. 03/07

Councillor William Aird proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That Laois County Council afford opportunities to prospective purchasers of Affordable Housing to be fully informed of their options by holding information seminars outside of normal office hours”

This motion was seconded by Councillor Brian Stanley. In the course of a discussion that then took place Director of Services, Declan Byrne said that the employees in the Housing Department will make themselves available for information seminars relating to the Affordable Housing options that can be availed of, outside of normal office hours, as appropriate.

12. VOTE OF BEST WISHES

The Cathaoirleach on behalf of the Members conveyed best wishes to Mr. Gerry Gillen, Senior Executive Officer on his move to Longford County Council. Many of the Members who were present expressed their thanks to Mr. Gillen for the help that he had given to them during his time in Laois County Council. The County Manager expressed his gratitude to Mr. Gillen for the contribution that he had made to the Council over the period of his employment with Laois County Council. On a personal note the Manager thanked Gerry for the assistance that he had given to him when he had arrived in Laois.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Signed: _____
Cathaoirleach

Certified: _____

Filename: 02minutes290107.doc
Directory: C:\2007 Cxouncil Meetings
Template: Normal.dot
Title: MINUTES OF JANUARY MEETING OF LAOIS
COUNTY COUNCIL HELD IN ÁRAS AN CHONTAE, PORTLAOISE ON
THE 29TH OF JANUARY 2007 AT 11
Subject:
Author: mmccorma
Keywords:
Comments:
Creation Date: 2/12/2007 10:10:00 AM
Change Number: 9
Last Saved On: 6/18/2007 4:54:00 PM
Last Saved By: mmccorma
Total Editing Time: 234 Minutes
Last Printed On: 9/26/2007 11:34:00 AM
As of Last Complete Printing
Number of Pages: 9
Number of Words: 2,046 (approx.)
Number of Characters: 11,051 (approx.)