

**MINUTES OF JANUARY MONTHLY MEETING OF LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL HELD IN ARAS AN CHONTAE, PORTLAOISE ON 28<sup>TH</sup> OF JANUARY 2008**

**PRESENT:** Councillors

John Moran	In the Chair
Willie Aird	John Bonham
Patrick Bracken	Ray Cribbin
James Daly	James Deegan
David Goodwin	Geraldine Delaney
J.J. Fennelly	Catherine Fitzgerald
Thomas Jacob	Laurence Kavanagh
Michael Lalor	Jerry Lodge
Dick Miller	Seamus McDonald
Paul Mitchell	Michael Moloney
Brendan Phelan	Martin Phelan
Michael Rice	Brian Stanley
Mary Sweeney	John D. Turley

**APOLOGIES:** Councillor Tom Jacob

**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, Ms. Anna Marie Delaney, Director of Services, Ms. Carmel McNicholl, Senior Executive Officer & Ms. Michelle McCormack, Executive Secretary

**1. VOTE OF CONGRATULATIONS**

The Cathaoirleach, Councillor John Moran indicated that the Portlaoise Leisure Centre had received a National L.A.M.A. award recently for the best recreational facility and extended congratulations and thanks to everyone involved.

**2. WELCOME**

The Cathaoirleach, Councillor John Moran welcomed the students from Scoil Mhuire, Abbeyleix and their teachers, Ms. Marian Lalor, Ms. Breda Nolan and Ms. Mary Fennelly. The students are on a visit to the offices of Áras an Chontae to see how meetings are held and conducted.

**3. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

(a) On the proposal of Councillor John Joe Fennelly seconded by Councillor John Bonham, it was unanimously agreed that the Minutes of the

December meeting held on the 17<sup>th</sup> of December 2007, as circulated be adopted and signed.

- (b) On the proposal of Councillor Michael Moloney seconded by Councillor Jerry Lodge, it was unanimously agreed that the Minutes of the Statutory Budget Meeting held on the 19<sup>th</sup> of December 2007, as circulated be adopted and signed.

**4. DISPOSAL OF LAND UNDER SECTION 183 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT, ACT, 2001**

- (a) Members were circulated with the Section 183 notice in relation to the disposal of land at Castletown, Mountrath, Co. Laois.

On the proposal of Councillor Dick Miller seconded by Councillor John Joe Fennelly, it was unanimously agreed that 28 sq. meters of land at Castletown, Mountrath in the townland of Churchfield be disposed to the E.S.B. (for E.S.B. Sub-Station), for a consideration of €1.00.

The Members queried the consideration in this regard. Ms. Anna Marie Delaney, Director of Services for Housing indicated that the sub-station was a requirement for the provision of the housing development at Castletown.

- (b) Members were circulated with the Section 183 notice in relation to the disposal of freehold at 25. Beladd, Portlaoise.

On the proposal of Councillor Brian Stanley seconded by Councillor Mary Sweeney, it was unanimously agreed that the freehold at 25 Beladd, Portlaoise in the townland of Beladd be disposed of, for a consideration of €127.

**5. PART VIII OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT(PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT) REGULATIONS, 2001 – 2007 - BALLACOLLA/KILLEANEY GROUP WATER SCHEME**

Members were circulated with the planning report on the Ballacolla/Killeaney Group Water Scheme Upgrade. The proposed development comprises the construction of new 100 cubic metre reservoir and pump house and associated site works at Boley Upper, Abbeyleix, Co. Laois.

On the proposal of Councillor Martin Phelan seconded by Councillor John Joe Fennelly, the Members unanimously agreed that this development proceed.

**6. AMENDMENTS TO THE ROAD TRAFFIC (SPEED LIMITS) (COUNTY OF LAOIS) BYE-LAWS 2007**

Members were circulated with details on the four speed limit zones that need to have the extents revised and two existing speed limit zones which require inclusion in the bye-laws.

On the proposal of Councillor Brian Stanley seconded by Councillor Paul Mitchell, the Members unanimously agreed that the amendment to the Road Traffic (Speed Limits) (County of Laois) Bye-Laws 2007 be adopted.

**7. COUNTY MANAGER'S REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2006 – 2012**

The Members had been circulated with the County Manager's Report on progress on the implementation of the County Development Plan 2006 – 2012 which was noted by the Members.

It was agreed that a Planning Workshop would be held in Áras an Chontae on the 11<sup>th</sup> of February 2008 at 9.30 a.m. It was also agreed that the Draft Development Contribution Scheme would be discussed on this date also.

**8. CORRESPONDENCE**

Members were circulated with one item of correspondence in relation to Notice of Motion No: 45/07 proposed by Councillor William Aird at the December meeting of Laois County Council. This correspondence was received in response to a letter which issued to the Office of the Minister for Education & Science in relation to the provision of defibrillators in schools.

Councillor Aird indicated that a further letter issue to the Minister expressing our disappointment with the response and also that we write to the local Red Cross for their observations.

Members were also circulated with a press release in relation to the recently published EPA Report on Drinking Water Quality 2006 – 2007 referring in particular to

issues for Laois. The press release indicated that Laois County Council is actively carrying out works to address the identified issues and will continue to prioritise actions necessary to resolve any outstanding issues. It was re-iterated by the County Manager that the water in Laois is of very safe quality.

## 9. NOTICE OF MOTIONS

### **Notice of Motion No: 01/08**

Councillor Brian Stanley proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

*“That this Council contacts the Office of the Minister for Communications to demand that a plan of action be implemented to provide broadband coverage to all areas of Laois”*

This motion was seconded by Councillor Jerry Lodge.

It was agreed that a letter issue to the Minister for Communications in this regard.

### **Notice of Motion No: 02/08**

Councillor Michael Moloney proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

*“In view of the Government announcement that it has no option but to direct County Councils to impose water charges on schools and as our Council has not budgeted for additional revenues from the imposition of water charges that we as a Council make a special grant available to each primary school in the County equal to any monies collected from the imposition of this rate and that until such time that primary schools are adequately funded by Government, this arrangement remain in place”*

This motion was seconded by Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald. The Members were informed that on the 9th January 2008 the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government advised each Water Services Authority by Circular WSP1/08 of the transitional arrangements for charging schools for water services, pending schools being charged on a full cost recovery and volumetric basis with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2010.

The following arrangements apply to recognised primary, non-fee paying secondary, community, comprehensive and vocational schools receiving water and sewerage:

2007 - €3.00 per pupil,  
2008 – €3.50 per pupil,  
2009 - €4.00 per pupil.

The following arrangements apply for schools receiving a water supply only:

2007 - €2.25 per pupil,  
2008 – €2.63 per pupil,  
2009 - €3.00 per pupil.

This Council are at present reviewing all invoices issued to schools for 2007 and will recalculate their bills on the basis of the Departmental Circular. The school principals will be advised of the position at an early date.

It is not correct to state that the Council has not budgeted for additional revenues from the imposition of water charges as an amount of approximately 120,000 is included in this year's budget for water and waste water charges for schools. The Head of Finance, Mr. Gerry Murphy indicated that he was not in a position today to advise of any possible shortfall to Council funds in either 2007 or 2008 as a result of the Department's circular.

**10. PRESENTATION BY MR. CARL PAGE, PROJECT MANAGER, IARNROID EIREANN ON THE NATIONAL TRAINCARE DEPOT, TOGHER**

Mr. Carl Page, Project Manager & Mr. Mike Kavanagh from Iarnroid Eireann attended the meeting to give Members a presentation on the National Traincare Depot at Togher and responded to the various queries raised by the Members in relation to the development.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

**Signed:**

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Cathaoirleach

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Director of Services  
Corporate Affairs