

**MINUTES OF THE JANUARY MEETING OF LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL HELD IN ÁRAS AN  
CHONTAE, PORTLAOISE ON 25<sup>TH</sup> OF JANUARY 2010**

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

**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. Irene Delaney, Administrative Officer, & Ms. Michelle McCormack, Executive Secretary.

**1. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

On the proposition of Councillor Michael Lalor seconded by Councillor James Deegan, the minutes of the December Meeting held on the 14<sup>th</sup> of December 2009 were agreed with the following amendment:

At Item No. 196 under Notice of Motion No: 36/09 – Councillor James Deegan indicated that the views of the Members were not recorded in the Minutes in relation to this item and that it should be recorded that the Members vehemently oppose the construction of the Eirgrid Electrical Sub-Station at this location. It was agreed that the minutes would be amended to reflect this. On the proposition of Councillor John Joe Fennelly seconded by Councillor John Bonham, it was agreed that the minutes of the Budget Meeting held on the 18<sup>th</sup> of December 2009, as circulated be adopted and signed.

**2. EXTENSION OF PERIOD OF OFFICE OF MANAGER**

The Cathaoirleach, Councillor James Daly informed the Members that he had received notification from the County Manager in relation to his Contract of Employment with Laois

County Council. The County Manager is exercising the option to extend his tenure from seven to ten years under Section 147(2) of the Local Government Act, 2001.

On the proposition of Councillor John Bonham seconded by Councillor Jerry Lodge, the Members unanimously agreed that the County Manager's contract be extended to ten years. The Members indicated that the County Manager has done an excellent job over the last five years and looked forward to working with him for the next five years. Mr. Peter Carey, County Manager thanked the Elected Members and acknowledged their support and also that of the Management Team & Staff.

### **3. REPORTS ON AREA MEETINGS & S.P.C. MEETINGS HELD IN DECEMBER 2009**

Members were circulated with a copy of the reports on the Area Meetings & S.P.C. Meetings held in December 2009. Councillor Michael Lalor expressed concern in relation to the possibility of the western area office being re-located. Mr. Peter Carey, County Manager indicated that there is a proposal under consideration at present but no decision has been made yet. He indicated that the present office accommodation is sub-standard. A feasibility study is currently being carried out in respect of the Courthouse. The County Manager indicated that the Members would be kept apprised of developments

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

#### **(I) DISPOSAL OF .07712 ACRES AT BRITTAS, CLONASLEE**

On the proposition of Councillor Seamus McDonald seconded by Councillor David Goodwin, the Members unanimously agreed to the disposal of .07712 acres at Brittas, Clonaslee for a consideration of €1,000.00

#### **(II) DISPOSAL OF 0.1010 HECTARES AT DAVITT ROAD, MOUNTMELLICK**

On the proposition of Councillor David Goodwin seconded by Councillor Patrick Bracken, the Members unanimously agreed to the disposal of 0.1010 hectares at Davitt Road, Mountmellick in the townland of Ballycullenbeg, Davitt Road, Mountmellick for a consideration of €100.00

### **5. EXTINGUISHMENT OF RIGHT OF WAY AT HOPES BRIDGE, KILMULLEN, PORTARLINGTON**

The Members were informed that as a result of the re-alignment of the R420-0 road at Kilmullen, Portarlington, Laois County Council must now extinguish the right of way at the Regional Road R420-0-0 at Kilmullen, Portarlington. The right of way being extinguished

consists of the old road which has been re-aligned. On the proposition of Councillor Paul Mitchell seconded by Councillor James Deegan, the Members unanimously agreed to the extinguishment. The Members complimented Laois County Council on the excellent job carried out at Hopes Bridge, Kilmullen. Concern was expressed in relation to the condition of the Bog Road as a result of the extra traffic while the works were being carried out at Hopes Bridge. Mr. Michael O' Hora, Senior Engineer indicated that Laois County Council will be working with Kildare County Council to ensure that repairs are carried out on this road as soon as possible.

**6. TAKING IN CHARGE OF 'HEATHER HILL' & 'HEATHER HILL SQUARE' ESTATE, GRAIGUECULLEN**

On the proposition of Councillor Padraig Fleming seconded by Councillor James Daly, the Members unanimously agreed to the taking in charge of 'Heather Hill' & 'Heather Hill Square' Estate, Graiguecullen. Councillor Padraig Fleming expressed concern in relation to parking issues in the estates. Ms. Anna Marie Delaney, Director of Services indicated that parking had been provided in the estate in accordance with regulations. She also indicated that the Residents Association have a proposal to increase the parking spaces by reducing the green area and a response is awaited on this.

**7. ADOPTION OF PARKING AREAS & CAR PARK BYE-LAWS, MOUNTMELICK 2010**

Members were circulated with a copy of the draft parking areas and car park bye-laws 2010 for Mountmellick. On the proposition of Councillor Patrick Bracken seconded by Councillor Seamus McDonald, the Members unanimously adopted the parking areas and car park bye-laws for Mountmellick.

**8. ADOPTION OF PARKING AREAS AND CAR PARK BYE-LAWS, PORTARLINGTON**

Members were circulated with a copy of the draft parking areas and car park bye-laws 2010 for Portarlinton. On the proposition of Councillor Tom Mulhall seconded by Councillor Paul Mitchell, the Members unanimously adopted the parking areas and car park bye-laws for Portarlinton.

**9. REVIEW OF RECENT SEVERE WEATHER INCIDENCE**

The County Manager updated the Members on the response to the recent severe weather incidence. He indicated that there was approximately 1,400 call outs which put enormous pressure on our resources. He acknowledged the level of commitment from the area staff and also paid tribute to the representatives from the H.S.E. An Garda Síochana, Civil Defence

volunteers and all the other agencies involved. A report is being compiled and submissions will be made to the National Roads Authority and the Department of Transport.

The County Manager paid particular tribute to Mr. Liam Preston, Civil Defence Officer & the Civil Defence Volunteers, Ms. Fionnuala Daly, Senior Social Worker & Housing Staff, Mr. Michael O' Hora, Senior Engineer, Roads, Roadworkers & Drivers, Mr. Brendan Clarke, Senior Engineer, Water Services & Mr. Martin Collins, Chief Fire Officer & Fire Personnel for their commitment and dedication.

The Members joined with the County Manager in acknowledging the work of all concerned and complimented Laois County Council on their response. They expressed concern in relation to the reduced numbers of outdoor staff and on the proposal of Councillor Brian Stanley seconded by Councillor Michael Lalor, the Members unanimously agreed that a letter issue to the Department of the Environment & Local Government to have the embargo on staff recruitment lifted. It was agreed that this letter would issue.

#### **10. PRESENTATION BY MS. HONOR DEEVY, LAOIS TOURISM OFFICER**

Ms. Honor Deevy, Tourism Officer gave a brief presentation on tourism in Laois. She briefed Members on events during 2009 and also forthcoming events and festivals scheduled for 2010.

The Members thanked Ms. Deevy for her presentation and paid tribute to her on the profile that she has created for the County of Laois. The County Manager, Mr. Peter Carey also thanked Ms. Deevy for the presentation and for her commitment to date. He also acknowledged the support of the Members.

#### **11. CORRESPONDENCE**

The following items of correspondence were circulated to the Members:-

- (i) Correspondence received in December 2009 in relation to St. Vincent's Hospital, Mountmellick & Shaen Hospital, Portlaoise
- (ii) Correspondence dated the 6<sup>th</sup> of January 2010 received from the Office of the Minister for Social and Family Affairs in relation to Notice of Motion No: 33/09

#### **12. NOTICE OF MOTIONS**

## Notice of Motion No 01/10

Councillor Brian Stanley proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

*“That this Council put in place a scheme of work to insulate the attics and the plumbing in them, of any dwellings in the Council’s housing stock that don’t have this work already done”*

This motion was seconded by Councillor Mary Sweeney. The Department of the Environment provided a grant allocation of €275,000 to Laois County Council under the 2009 Energy Efficiency in Local Authority Stock. The focus of the plan was to improve the energy efficiency of vacant Social Housing. Following completion of the upgrade works under the plan, the dwelling was required to achieve a minimum C1 rating, when assessed, on the Building Energy Rating (BER).

A typical list of works is set out below:-

- Install gas fired central heating with a condensing boiler
- Install solid fuel stove in the living room
- Pump insulation into cavity walls
- Insulated attic to a thickness of 300 mm
- Install 3 zone heating with 7 day programme
- Install a 120 ltr cylinder with 40 mm factory fitted insulation
- Light fitted with CFL bulbs

The Housing Department is confident that 50 properties will have achieved a C1 BER Rating, under the 2009 programme. As the programme is in line with government policy, Laois County Council are optimistic that Laois County Council will receive an allocation under this plan in 2010, thus allowing the upgrade works to be extended to further dwellings.

This programme was in addition to the Central Heating Programme for which funding was provided in 2006, 2007 & 2008. Works carried out under this programme included provision of central heating, attic insulation, draught-proofing windows and doors, lagging of exposed pipework and hot water cylinders, etc. Councillor Stanley welcomed the report and any additional funding forthcoming in 2010.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

**SIGNED:**

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CATHAOIRLEACH

**CERTIFIED:**

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DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE AFFAIRS