

**MINUTES OF THE JANUARY MEETING OF LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL HELD IN ARAS AN CHONTAE
ON THE 30TH OF JANUARY 2012**

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

IN ATTENDANCE:

Messers Peter Carey, County Manager, John Daly, Director of Services, Gerry Murphy, Head of Finance, Ms. Anna Marie Delaney, Director of Services, Ms. Irene Delaney, A/Senior Executive Officer & Ms. Michelle McCormack, Executive Secretary

1. VOTES OF SYMPATHY

On the proposition of Councillor Mary Sweeney and unanimously agreed, a vote of sympathy was extended to the Barry family on the death of Ms. Sheila Barry, Chapel Street, Ballyroan, Co. Laois.

On the proposition of Councillor Ray Cribbin and unanimously agreed, a vote of sympathy was extended to the Powell family on the death of Ms. Eileen Powel, Spa Street, Portarlinton, Co. Laois.

On the proposition of Councillor Ray Cribbin and unanimously agreed, a vote of sympathy was extended to the Higgins family on the death of Mr. Brian Higgins, Patrick Street, Portarlinton, Co. Laois.

On the proposition of Councillor Tom Mulhall and unanimously agreed, a vote of sympathy was extended to the Delaney family and also Ms. Breda Teehan on the death of Mr. Patrick Delaney, New Inn Cross, Emo, Portlaoise, Co. Laois.

On the proposition of Councillor Padraig Fleming and unanimously agreed, a vote of sympathy was extended to the O' Dea family on the death of Mr. Edward O' Dea, Ballypickas, Abbeyleix, Co. Laois.

On the proposition of Councillor Jerry Lodge and unanimously agreed, a vote of sympathy was extended to the Malone family on the death of Ms. Nora Malone, Lismard Court, Portlaoise, Co. Laois.

On the proposition of Councillor Jerry Lodge and unanimously agreed, a vote of sympathy was extended to the Breen family on the death of Ms. Vera Breen, Dr. Murphys Place, Portlaoise, Co. Laois.

On the proposition of Councillor Jerry Lodge and unanimously agreed, a vote of sympathy was extended to the Dollard family on the death of Mr. Patrick Dollard, St. Brigid's Place, Portlaoise, Co. Laois.

On the proposition of Councillor William Aird and unanimously agreed, a vote of sympathy was extended to the Conroy family on the death of Mr. John Joe Conroy, Cooltoran, Portlaoise, Co. Laois.

On the proposition of Councillor Councillor James Deegan and unanimously agreed, a vote of sympathy was extended to the Aldritt family on the death of Mr. Frank Aldritt, Stradbally Road, Portlaoise, Co. Laois.

2. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER MEETING OF LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL HELD ON THE 12TH OF DECEMBER 2011

- (i) On the proposition of Councillor Michael Lalor seconded by Councillor Paul Mitchell, the Minutes of the December Meeting of Laois County Council held on the 12th of December 2011 were agreed as circulated.
- (ii) On the proposition of Councillor Brendan Phelan seconded by Councillor John Moran, the Minutes of the Budget Meeting of Laois County Council held on the 19th of December 2011 were agreed as circulated.

3. REPORTS ON AREAS & STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE MEETINGS HELD IN DECEMBER 2011 FOR NOTING

The Members were circulated with the reports on Areas & Strategic Policy Committee Meeting held in December 2011 which were noted.

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

- (i) Lease of 2 acres of land at Oakglen, Stradbally, Co. Laois in the townland of Stradbally for a period of 6 years for a consideration of €500.00 per annum**

On the proposition of Councillor James Deegan seconded by Councillor Ray Cribbin, the members unanimously agreed to the lease of 2 acres of land at Oakglen, Stradbally, Co. Laois in the townland of Stradbally for a period of 6 years for a consideration of €500.00 per annum

- (ii) Disposal of 0.605 acres of land at Castlecuffe, Clonaslee, Co. Laois in the townland of Castlecuffe for a consideration of €100.00**

On the proposition of Councillor Seamus McDonald seconded by Councillor Patrick Bracken, the members unanimously agreed to the disposal of 0.605 acres of land at Castlecuffe, Clonaslee, Co.

Laois in the townland of Castlecuffe, Castlecuffe, Clonaslee, Co. Laois, for a consideration of €100.00

(iii) Disposal of equity interest at 23 Cluainin, Portlaoise Road, Mountrath, Co Laois in the townland of Portlaoise for a consideration of €51,546.13

On the proposition of Councillor John Joe Fennelly seconded by Councillor Jerry Lodge, the Members unanimously agreed to the disposal of equity interest at 23 Cluainin, Portlaoise Road, Mountrath, Co Laois in the townland of Portlaoise for a consideration of €51,546.13

(iv) Disposal of equity interest at 34 Arlington Estate, Portarlinton, Co. Laois in the townland of Portarlinton for a consideration of €55,063.80

On the proposition of Councillor Ray Cribbin seconded by Councillor Paul Mitchell, the Members unanimously agreed to the disposal of equity interest at 34 Arlington Estate, Portarlinton, Co. Laois in the townland of Portarlinton for a consideration of €55,063.80

(v) Disposal of equity interest at 9 Glenkeen Park, The Fairgreen, Portlaoise in the townland of Portlaoise for a consideration of €99,751.69

On the proposition of Councillor Rotimi Adebari seconded by Councillor Alan Hand, the Members unanimously agreed to the disposal of equity interest at 9 Glenkeen Park, The Fairgreen, Portlaoise in the townland of Portlaoise for a consideration of €99,751.69

5. PART VII OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS, 2001 IN RESPECT OF PROPOSED SCHEME AT KNOCKS, BALLYFIN, CO. LAOIS FOR THE PROVISION OF A 1.850 CUBIC METRES CAPACITY WATER STORAGE RESERVOIR AND ANCILLARY SERVICES

The Members were circulated with the planning report on the above proposed scheme which provides for

- The construction of a 1,850 water storage reservoir of 1,850 cubic metres storage capacity
- Laying of a 150 mms diameter rising main and a 150 mms diameter distribution main between the proposed reservoir and the existing Laois County Council waterworks located on an adjoining site at Knocks, approximately 330 mms away to the north-east
- Installation of palisade security fencing around the curtailage of the site and
- Landscaping of the site

On the proposition of Councillor Patrick Bracken seconded by Councillor Seamus McDonald, the Members unanimously agreed to the proposed scheme.

6. DRAFT TOURISM POLICY FOR COUNTY LAOIS (AGREED BY COMMUNITY, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, CULTURAL, HERITAGE SPORT AND COUNTY PROMOTION STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE ON THE 5TH OF SEPTEMBER 2011)

The Members were circulated with the draft Tourism Policy for County Laois which was introduced by Councillor Michael Lalor, Chairperson of the Community, Economic Development, Cultural, Heritage, Sport & County Promotion Strategic Policy Committee and which was adopted at their meeting held on the 5th of September 2011. The Members complimented the Tourism Officer, Mr. Dom Reddin on the policy and also Ms. Honor Deevy, former Tourism Officer. The County Manager thanked the Members for their support also.

7. UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CORPORATE PLAN 2009-2014

The Members were circulated with an update on the Corporate Plan 2009 – 2014 and a general discussion took place in relation to same. In addition, the County Manager, Mr. Peter Carey advised the Members that a survey had been carried out on the area offices and having regard to the findings it is intended that the area offices at Graiguecullen, Rathdowney and Portarlinton be closed. This would result in savings of approximately €150,000 per annum and would address reduced staffing levels in County Hall. He indicated that the services in Mountmellick would also reduce. The Council will seek to utilise community facilities in the three areas affected with a view to having meeting facilities at these locations.

In relation to the depots the County Manager indicated that these are also being reviewed at present. In addition, the County Manager confirmed that the proposed closures would not adversely impact on the level of service provided by the Local Authority in the areas concerned.

8. CONSULTATION ON ESTABLISHMENT OF IRISH WATER

The Members were circulated with a position paper on the Consultation on establishment of Irish Water. Mr. John Daly, Director of Services advised the meeting that the public consultation process in relation to the establishment of Irish Water had commenced and submissions were being sought in relation to the proposal. The meeting was advised that there are a number of considerations to be addressed and that the closing date for receipt of submissions was 24th February, 2012. The members expressed concern in relation to the proposals and indicated that this proposal would remove powers and responsibilities for water services from local authorities.

Councillor William Aird requested that the Minister should address the Members of Laois County Council in this regard.

9. CORRESPONDENCE

The following items of correspondence were circulated to the Members:

- (i) Correspondence dated 13th of December 2011 from the Department of Health in relation to Shaen Hospital
- (ii) Correspondence dated the 13th of December 2011 from the Department of Justice, Equality & Defence in relation to Laois Domestic Abuse Service
- (iii) Correspondence dated the 4th of January 2012 from the Health Services in relation to the Laois Domestic Abuse Services
- (iv) Correspondence dated the 4th of January 2012 from the Department of Health in relation to Shaen & Abbeyleix Hospitals
- (v) Correspondence dated the 9th of January 2012 from the Department of Environment, Community & Local Government in relation to Scrap/Metal Yard Regulations.

10. NOTICE OF MOTIONS

Notice of Motion No: 01/2012

Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald proposed the following Notice of Motion

“That this Council request the Department of the Environment to make it possible for Local Authorities to put a system in place for people to be able to pay in instalments at their Local Authority for the Property Charge”

This motion was seconded by Councillor Rotimi Adebari. It was agreed that a letter issue to the Department of the Environment in this regard.

Notice of Motion No: 02/2012

Councillor Jerry Lodge proposed the following Notice of Motion

“That this Council set out clearly the requirements for all septic tank owners to meet under the current Water Services Amendment Bill as there appears to be considerable confusion”

This motion was seconded by Councillor Alan Hand. The Members were advised of the following main points in the Water Services (Amendment) Bill, which is still going through the Oireachtas:

- (1) Each Local Authority will have to establish and maintain a Register of domestic waste water treatment systems situated within its functional area.
- (2) A Certificate of Registration issued by the Local Authority will be valid for a period of 5 years.
- (3) The fee payable on application to have a treatment system entered in the Register will not exceed €50.00.
- (4) The Environmental Protection Agency will be obliged to prepare a National Inspection Plan in relation to the inspection and monitoring of domestic waste water treatment plants.

The Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government will be issuing a Circular to Local Authorities as soon as the legislation is passed by the Oireachtas.

As soon as the Department’s Circular is received, a further report will be issued to the members of Laois County Council.

Notice of Motion No: 03/2012

Councillor Jerry Lodge proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That this Council publicises through all avenues open to it the changed legal situation for people who wish to protect their current rights of way, turf cutting rights., etc.”

This motion was seconded by Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald. The Members were advised that the Council would advise the public to consult their solicitor in relation to recent legislation passed in respect of rights of way, turf cutting rights, etc., where they feel their rights are affected.

Notice of Motion No: 04/2012

Councillor Martin Phelan proposed the following Notice of Motion:

“That this Council ask Minister, Dr. James O’ Reilly to consider making funds available to build community shelter accommodation for rural areas”

This motion was seconded by Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald. It was agreed that a letter issue to the Minister in this regard.

Notice of Motion No: 05/2012

Councillor Martin Phelan proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That this Council ask Minister Phil Hogan, T.D., to consider a deposit charge on all containers in which alcohol is sold and refund when containers are returned to where purchased”

This motion was seconded by Councillor John King. It was agreed that a letter issue to the Minister in this regard.

Notice of Motion No: 06/2012

Councillor Martin Phelan proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That this Council ask the National Roads Authority to address the Council on progress on the M7/M8 Motorway and hear the views of Laois County Council”

This motion was seconded by Councillor Brendan Phelan. The Members were advised that all works associated with the construction of the motorway and the side roads, together with all accommodation works and the like have been completed to the satisfaction of the National Roads Authority and Completion Certificates issued.

All works outside the “Project Road” have been handed over by the NRA to Laois County Council and the council are responsible for the maintenance of the works and for any matters relating to the works.

The Council are currently progressing outstanding issues relating to land acquisition and transfer of surplus lands, together with any queries relating to accommodation works.

It was agreed that the N.R.A. be invited to address the Members in this regard.

Notice of Motion No: 07/2012

Councillor Alan Hand proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That this Council calls on the Government to introduce tough regulations concerning Management Companies in apartment blocks and housing estates and that this Council monitors the activities of such companies in estates where this Council has a concern or interest”

This motion was seconded by Councillor Pat Bowe.

Notice of Motion No: 08/2012

Councillor Alan Hand proposed the following Notice of Motion:

“That this Council sets up a scheme to phase out all exiting shared ownership loans in County Laois and replace these loans with straight loans”

This motion was seconded by Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald. The Members were advised that Laois County Council are currently reviewing shared ownership loans and where it is possible and affordable the Council are encouraging borrowers to transfer to annuity loans. Laois County Council are proactive in this area in contacting people with shared ownership loans encouraging them to transfer to annuity.

Notice of Motion No: 09/12

Councillor William Aird proposed the following Notice of Motion

“That Laois County Council request again the Minister for Health, Dr. James O’ Reilly to ensure that he visits Shaen Hospital”

This motion was seconded by Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald. It was agreed that a further letter would issue to the Minister in this regard.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

SIGNED:

CATHAOIRLEACH

CERTIFIED:

**DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE
AFFAIRS**