

MINUTES OF THE MARCH MEETING OF LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL HELD IN ÁRAS AN CHONTAE ON THE 28TH OF MARCH 2011

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

APOLOGIES: Councillor Ben Brennan

IN ATTENDANCE:

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

26. WELCOME TO COUNCILLOR ALAN HAND

The Cathaoirleach, Councillor James Deegan welcomed Mr. Alan Hand, M.C.C. to the Chamber following his co-option on the 16th of March 2011. Mr. Peter Carey, County Manager on behalf of the Management and staff also congratulated Councillor Hand on his co-option to Laois County Council.

27. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY MEETING HELD ON THE 28TH OF FEBRUARY 2011

On the proposition of Councillor John Moran seconded by Councillor Seamus McDonald, the Minutes of the February Meeting held on the 28th of February 2011 were confirmed as circulated.

28. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING HELD ON THE 16TH OF MARCH 2011

On the proposition of Councillor John Joe Fennelly seconded by Councillor John Moran, the Minutes of the Special Meeting held on the 16th of March 2011 were confirmed as circulated.

29. VOTES OF SYMPATHY

On the proposition of Councillor James Deegan, Cathaoirleach, the following votes of sympathy were extended and were unanimously agreed:-

- (i) Ms. Deirdre Alexander, Sports Section, Laois County Council on the recent death of her mother Ms. Maud Furney
- (ii) Ms. Angela McEvoy, Planning Section, Laois County Council on the recent death of her mother, Ms. Breda McEvoy
- (iii) Mr. Mark Macaulay, Water Services Section, Laois County Council on the recent death of his father, Mr. Dudley Macaulay
- (iv) Mr. Sydney Harvey, Western Area, Laois County Council on the recent death of his wife, Valerie Harvey

30. REPORTS ON AREA MEETINGS HELD IN MARCH 2011

The reports on the Area meetings held in March 2011 were circulated and noted by the Members

31. PART VIII OF THE PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS, 2001 IN RESPECT OF PROPOSED SCHEME FOR REFURBISHMENT OF THE FORMER DINING HALL/CHAPEL BUILDING AT DONAGHMORE WORKHOUSE, DONAGHMORE, RATHDOWNEY, COUNTY LAOIS

The Members were circulated with the report on the proposed Part VIII of the Planning & Development Regulations, 2001 in respect of proposed scheme for refurbishment of the former dining hall/chapel building at Donaghmore Workhouse, Donaghmore, Rathdowney, Co. Laois. In accordance with the provisions of Part VIII of the Planning & Development Regulations, 2001 as amended, Laois County Council, in conjunction with Donaghmore Museum Committee, seeks consent for the refurbishment of the former dining hall cum chapel building and associated works at the Donaghmore Workhouse complex, Donaghmore, Rathdowney, County Laois. The project also includes removal of 2 no. extensions on the northern elevation of the building.

On the proposition of Councillor Martin Phelan seconded by Councillor Brendan Phelan, the Members unanimously agreed to the proposed development in accordance with Part VIII of the Planning & Development Regulations, 2001.

The Members welcomed this initiative and complimented all involved. The County Manager acknowledged the work of everyone involved in bringing this project to fruition and in particular the input of Mr. Trevor Stanley.

32. FUNDING PROPOSAL FOR DONAGHMORE WORKHOUSE PROJECT

The Members were advised that Donaghmore Museum Co-Operative in partnership with the Council proposes to undertake a major project at the former workhouse building, which was recently acquired by the Council. The project will commence with the restoration of the former dining hall of the workhouse and substantial renovation works to the current museum building. The estimated cost of the work is €700,000 which, subject to Council approval and successful grant application to the Laois Partnership Company, is to be funded as follows:-

Grant from Laois Partnership	€500,000
Match funding – Laois County Council	€165,000
Match funding – Museum Committee	€35,000

The Museum Committee will be the applicant for the Partnership Grant and it will also be the client for the tender process, the engagement of the contractor, contractor payments, etc. It is proposed that the work will be carried out in three phases over a three year period at the following indicative costings:-

	Phase 1 2011/2012	Phase 2 2012/2013	Phase 3 2013/2014
Estimated Cost	€250,000	€250,000	€200,000
Laois Partnership Grant	€185,000	€185,000	€130,000
Match Funding Laois County Council	€65,000	€65,000	€35,000
Match Funding Museum Co-Op			€35,000

The Council's approval is also sought to advance the necessary finance, for each phase to the Museum Co-Op so that the Co-Op can pay the contractor and claim the grant monies from Laois Partnership which will in turn be reimbursed to the Council. The Museum Co-Op's match funding requirement of €35,000 will be facilitated by way of a bank loan subject to Council guarantee.

On the proposition of Councillor John Joe Fennelly seconded by Councillor John King, the Members unanimously agreed to the proposed financing proposal for the Donaghmore Workhouse Project as set out in this report.

33. CONFIRM DATE FOR APRIL MEETING OF LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL

On the proposition of Councillor Jerry Lodge seconded by Councillor John King, the members unanimously agreed that the April meeting of Laois County Council take place on the 18th of April 2011.

34. NOMINATION OF MEMBER OF LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL TO THE HOUSING & SOCIAL POLICY STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE

Councillor Pat Bowe proposed that Mr. Alan Hand be nominated to the Housing & Social Policy Strategic Policy Committee. This proposal was seconded by Councillor Rotimi Adbeari.

35. NOMINATION OF MEMBER OF LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL TO THE PORTARLINGTON JOINT BURIAL BOARD

Councillor Rotimi Adebari proposed that Mr. Alan Hand be nominated to the Portarlington Joint Burial Board. This proposal was seconded by Councillor Pat Bowe

36. NOMINATION OF MEMBER OF LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL TO THE LOCAL TRAVELLER ACCOMMODATION CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

Councillor Pat Bowe proposed that Mr. Alan Hand be nominated to the Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee. This proposal was seconded by Councillor Paul Mitchell

37. NOMINATION OF MEMBER OF LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL TO THE PORTLAOISE LEISURE CENTRE

Councillor Rotimi Adebari proposed that Mr. Alan Hand be nominated to the Portlaoise Leisure Centre. This proposal was seconded by Councillor Pat Bowe.

38. NOMINATION OF MEMBER OF LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL TO LAOIS VOCATIONAL EDUCATIONAL COMMITTEE

Councillor John Moran proposed that Mr. Alan Hand be nominated to the Laois Vocational Educational Committee. This proposal was seconded by Councillor Seamus McDonald

39. NOMINATION OF MR. BRENDAN O' BRIEN(IRISH CONGRESS OF TRADE UNIONS NOMINEE TO STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEES

- (a) On the proposal of Councillor Martin Phelan seconded by Councillor Brendan Phelan, it was unanimously agreed that Mr. Brendan O' Brien be nominated to the Community & Economic Development, Culture & Heritage Strategic Policy Committee

- (b) On the proposal of Councillor John Joe Fennelly seconded by Councillor Alan Hand, it was unanimously agreed that Mr. Brendan O' Brien be nominated to the Transportation & Water Services Strategic Policy Committee
- (c) On the proposal of Councillor John Moran seconded by Councillor Rotimi Adebari, it was unanimously agreed that Mr. Brendan O' Brien be nominated to the Housing & Social Policy Strategic Policy Committee

40. PERMISSION TO USE THE LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL CREST ON THE LAOIS ATHLETICS BOARD WEBSITE & MEDALS

The Members were advised that correspondence had been received from the Laois Athletics Board requesting the use of the Laois Crest for use in their new log.

On the proposition of Councillor Pdraig Fleming seconded by Councillor Tom Mulhall, the Members unanimously agreed to the use of the Laois Crest in the Laois Athletics Board logo.

41. WELCOME TO STUDENTS

The Cathaoirleach welcomed students to the Chamber from Abbeyleix Further Education Centre who are doing a CSPE project.

42. APPROVAL OF ARTS ACTS GRANTS, 2011

The Members were circulated with a list of the successful applicants for funding under the Arts Act Grants, 2011. On the proposition of Councillor Seamus McDonald seconded by Councillor Martin Phelan, the Members unanimously approved the Arts Acts Grants 2011.

43. LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL TENANT PURCHASE SCHEME 2011

The Members were circulated with a copy of the Laois County Council 2011 Purchase Scheme for Long Standing Tenants. Ms. Anna Marie Delaney, Director of Services responded to the various queries raised by the Members. The Members welcomed the scheme.

On the proposition of Councillor John Moran seconded by Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald, the Members unanimously adopted the Laois County Council Tenant Purchase Scheme 2011.

44. DRAFT OUTDOOR RECREATION POLICY FOR COUNTY LAOIS (FROM THE COMMUNITY, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, CULTURE, SPORT, HERITAGE & COUNTY PROMOTION STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE)

The Members were circulated with a copy of the Draft Outdoor Recreation Policy for County Laois. On the proposition of Councillor Jerry Lodge seconded by Councillor John Joe Fennelly, the Members unanimously adopted this policy.

A discussion ensued regarding bogs and forestry. On the proposition of Councillor Pdraig Fleming seconded by Councillor Michael Lalor, it was agreed that Laois County Council adopt a proposal that state assets such as bogs or forestry not be sold and that Laois County Council totally object to the sale of Coillte and Bord na Mona and that they be kept in the ownership of the County.

45. DRAFT LIBRARY & ARTS POLICY FOR DISADVANTAGED GROUPS (FROM THE COMMUNITY, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, CULTURE, SPORT, HERITAGE & COUNTY PROMOTION STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE)

The Members were circulated with a copy of the Draft Library & Arts Policy for County Laois. On the proposition of Councillor Alan Hand seconded by Councillor Pat Bowe, the Members unanimously adopted this policy.

46. LOCAL IMPROVEMENT SCHEME 2011

The Members were circulated with a list of Local Improvement Schemes to be undertaken in 2011.

On the proposition of Councillor John Joe Fennelly seconded by Councillor Ray Cribbin, the Members unanimously agreed to the adoption of the Local Improvement Schemes 2011 as circulated.

47. 2011 ROADWORKS PROGRAMME

The Members were circulated with a copy of the 2011 Roadworks Programme which has been agreed at the Area meetings.

On the proposition of Councillor John Moran seconded by Councillor Rotimi Adebari, the Members unanimously agreed the 2011 Roadworks Programme as circulated.

48. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN ROADWORKS SCHEME 2011

The Members were circulated with a copy of the applications to be considered under the Community involvement in Roadworks Scheme 2011.

On the proposition of Councillor Seamus McDonald seconded by Councillor John Joe Fennelly, the Members unanimously agreed the Community involvement in Roadworks Scheme 2011.

49. ADOPTION OF EXTENSION OF MOUNTMELICK CAR PARK & PARKING AREA BYE-LAWS 2011

The Members were advised that following discussion with the Mountmellick Parking Area & Car Park Bye-Law Committee it was agreed to advertise changes to the bye-laws for Mountmellick to include double yellow lines at the Junction at College Avenue and Patrick Street, Mountmellick.

On the proposition of Councillor Seamus McDonald seconded by Councillor Pat Bowe, the Members unanimously adopted the extension of Mountmellick Car Park & Parking Area Bye-Laws 2011.

50. ADOPTION OF EXTENSION OF PORTLAOISE CAR PARK & PARKING AREA BYE-LAWS 2011

The Members were advised that following discussion with the Portlaoise Parking Area & Car Park Bye-Law Committee, it was agreed to advertise changes to the bye-laws for Portlaoise to include double yellow lines at Dublin Road, Kylekiproe Road & Ashley Gardens.

On the proposition of Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald seconded by Councillor William Aird, the Members unanimously adopted the extension of Portlaoise Car Park & Parking Area Bye-Laws 2011.

51. NOTICE OF MOTIONS

Notice of Motion No: 07/11

Councillors Michael Lalor, John King, John Joe Fennelly, Brendan Phelan, Martin Phelan & John Bonham proposed the following Notice of Motion:

“Where Laois County Council have a speed reduction in place at major road works can the Council clarify the legal position as regards the speed camera signs”

This motion was seconded by Councillor John King

The members were advised that speed camera signs are used to indicate the presence of a speed camera or cameras along a road. Laois County Council do not have any such cameras. The erection of these cameras is a matter for the Road Safety Authority (RSA) under the national roll out of road safety measures.

Notice of Motion No: 08/11

Councillors Michael Lalor, John King, John Joe Fennelly, Brendan Phelan, Martin Phelan & John Bonham proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That this Council install bus shelters throughout the County on a phased basis”

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor John King. The Members were advised that Laois County Council do not have a policy or funding for the provision of bus shelters. The Council will consider planning applications for bus shelters from bus companies. Mr. Gerry Gibson, Director of Services indicated that the matter would be examined, however, the provision of bus shelters is a responsibility for the bus operators.

52. SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

As the time had reached 1.00 p.m., on the proposal of Councillor William Aird seconded by Councillor Kathleen O’ Brien, it was unanimously agreed that Standing Orders be suspended.

Notice of Motion No: 09/11

Councillor James Deegan proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That Laois County Council distribute any funds that will accrue from the derelict site payments within the immediate area to which they are collected”

This motion was seconded by Councillor Tom Mulhall.

The Members were advised that the main purpose of the Derelict Sites Levy is to provide an incentive to owners of derelict sites to carry out remedial works so that the sites can be removed from the Register and not be liable to fines. Removing the dereliction is the ultimate solution for the Council.

Monies collected from derelict sites levies will be used to cover the considerable valuation, legal and other costs incurred by Laois County Council in this area since 2009 and which will be ongoing.

In particular, these costs include:

[a] site valuation costs: a site must be valued by an independent valuer as a prerequisite to the Council charging a derelict sites levy on it. To date, site valuations have cost the Council €8,072.

[b] legal costs: in the event of the derelict sites levy not being paid within the appropriate time period [generally within two months of demand], the Council may take legal action to recover the costs in court. No derelict sites levies have been paid so far and at present the Council is initiating legal action to recover the outstanding monies from the owners of the properties in question. While bills have yet to be received from the Councils legal advisers, nonetheless it is likely that this cost factor will also be considerable.

Notice of Motion No: 10/11

Councillor William Aird proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That the recent decision by the Department of Agriculture to close the District Veterinary Office in Portlaoise be rescinded and that this Council request the Minister for Agriculture, Mr. Simon Coveney, T.D., to re-examine why this decision was made”

This motion was seconded by Councillor Brendan Phelan. It was agreed that a letter issue to the Department in this regard.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

SIGNED: _____
CATHAOIRLEACH

CERTIFIED: _____
DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE
AFFAIRS