

**MINUTES OF THE MARCH MEETING OF LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL HELD IN ÁRAS AN
CHONTAE ON THE 26th OF MARCH 2012**

PRESENT:	Councillors	John Bonham	In the Chair
		Rotimi Adebari	William Aird
		Pat Bowe	Patrick Bracken
		Ben Brennan	Ray Cribbin
		James Daly	James Deegan
		John Joe Fennelly	Catherine Fitzgerald
		Padraig 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

IN ATTENDANCE:

Messers Peter Carey, County Manager, John O' Donohue, A/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.

21. VOTE OF SYMPATHY

On the proposition of Councillor Ray Cribbin and unanimously agreed, a vote of sympathy was extended to the Hunt family on the death of Mr. Benny Hunt, Post Office House, Portarlinton, Co. Laois.

On the proposition of Councillor James Deegan & Councillor Tom Mulhall and unanimously agreed, a vote of sympathy was extended to the Mansworth family on the death of Mr. Richard Mansworth & Ms. Breda Mansworth, Grange, Stradbally, Co. Laois.

On the proposition of Councillor Ray Cribbin & Councillor Tom Mulhall and unanimously agreed, a vote of sympathy was extended to the Slevin family on the death of Mr. Martin Slevin, Ballycarroll, Portarlinton, Co. Laois.

On the proposition of Councillor Michael Lalor and unanimously agreed, a vote of sympathy was extended to the Dowling family on the death of Ms. Mary Dowling, Rosnado, Camross, Mountrath, Co. Laois.

On the proposition of Councillor Michael Lalor and unanimously agreed, a vote of sympathy was extended to the Alexander family on the death of Ms. Kathleen Alexander of Mountainy, Mountrath, Co. Laois.

On the proposition of Councillor Ben Brennan and unanimously agreed, a vote of sympathy was extended to the Behan family on the death of Ms. Mary Behan, Tolerton, Ballickmoyler, Carlow.

On the proposition of Councillor Ben Brennan and unanimously agreed, a vote of sympathy was extended to the O' Shea family on the death of Ms. Mary O' Shea, 30 Doonane Road, Crettyard, Co. Laois

On the proposition of Councillor Ben Brennan and unanimously agreed a vote of sympathy was extended to the O' Neill family on the death of Ms. Catherine O' Neill, Kilgory, Crettyard, Co. Laois.

22. VOTE OF CONGRATULATIONS

On the proposition of Councillor John Bonham and unanimously agreed a vote of congratulations was extended to both Ms. Mary Territt, Fire-Fighter, Portlaoise Fire Brigade & Mr. Joe Harding, Sub-Officer, Rathdowney Fire Station on recently winning the National Trauma Challenge in Ashbourne on the 25th of March 2012. Ms. Territt and Mr. Harding will now participate in the World Trauma Challenge in October in London.

On the proposition of Councillor Mary Sweeney and unanimously agreed a vote of congratulations was extended to Ms. Louise Donlon, Arts Theatre Manager on her new appointment as the first ever Manager of the Lime Tree Theatre in Mary Immaculate College in Limerick. The Members wished Ms. Donlon well in her new appointment and extended thanks to Ms. Donlon for her contribution to the arts in Laois.

23. CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY MEETING OF LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL HELD ON THE 27TH OF FEBRUARY 2012

On the proposition of Councillor James Deegan seconded by Councillor Rotimi Adbeari, the Minutes of the February meeting of Laois County Council held on the 27th of February 2012 were agreed as circulated.

The Members made enquiries regarding the Five Towns Sewerage Scheme and it was agreed that a report would be prepared for the next meeting of Laois County Council.

24. ADOPTION OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN ROADWORKS SCHEME 2012

The Members were circulated with a copy of the Community Involvement in Roadworks Scheme 2012. An allocation of €170,000 has been received with six of the eleven schemes being carried out in 2012.

On the proposition of Councillor Paddy Bracken seconded by Councillor Ray Cribbin, the Members unanimously adopted the Community Involvement in Roadworks Scheme 2012.

25. APPROVAL OF AWARD OF ARTS ACT GRANTS 2012

The Members were circulated with a copy of the Arts Act Grants 2012. On the proposition of Councillor Ray Cribbin seconded by Councillor Rotimi Adebari, the Members approved the Arts Act Grants 2012 as circulated.

26. ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENT 2011 INCLUDING APPROVAL OF OVER-EXPENDITURE AND TRANSFERS TO CAPITAL

Mr. Gerry Murphy, Head of Finance briefed the Members on the Annual Financial Statement for 2011. The summary of capital expenditure and income shows a debit balance of €5,017,537 at the 31st of December 2011 compared to a debit balance of €15,575,606 at the beginning of 2011. A surplus of €19,537 was achieved on the Revenue Account for the year. He advised that this was a very positive outcome for the Council particularly having regard to the various reductions in the Local Government Fund, grants and in the Council's own income streams during 2011. The Head of Finance also advised the Members of the reasons for over-expenditure which had occurred on a number of Service Groups to which approval was now required. He also detailed the Transfers to Capital and the reasons for same.

The Head of Finance extended thanks to Ms. Roisin Walsh, Senior Staff Officer who had recently retired together with Ms. Julie Bergin, Financial Management Accountant and all the staff in the Finance Department for the significant work carried out in the preparation of the A.F.S. He, also, thanked the Cathaoirleach, Members, Manager and Directors for their support in ensuring a balanced budget for 2011.

The Members welcomed the report and complimented Mr. Gerry Murphy, Head of Finance and all staff in the Finance Section.

On the proposition of Councillor Michael Lalor seconded by Councillor John Moran, the Members unanimously adopted the Annual Financial Statement 2011 including approval of over-expenditure and transfers to capital.

27. 12.00 Noon – Presentation by Mr. Niall Hughes, Director of Business Development, Connect Ireland

Mr. Niall Hughes, Director of Business Development, Connect Ireland attended the meeting and gave a very comprehensive presentation to the Members. Connect Ireland were appointed by the I.D.A. to promote, market and deliver the Succeed in Ireland Initiative. The Members were supportive of the new initiative.

28. CORRESPONDENCE

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

- (i) Correspondence from the Department of Health dated the 28th of February 2012 in relation to Shaen Hospital
- (ii) Correspondence from the Department of Health dated the 29th of February 2012 in relation to Notice of Motion No: 04/2012
- (iii) Correspondence from the Department of Justice, Equality & Law Reform in relation to Notice of Motion No: 07/2012
- (iv) Correspondence from the Office of the Minister for Education & Skills dated the 20th of March 2012 in relation to the Student Grant Application Process 2012/2013
- (v) Correspondence from the Minister for Housing & Planning dated the 22nd of March 2012 in relation to Notice of Motion No: 10/2012

Notice of Motion No: 12/2012

Councillor Tom Mulhall proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That this Council work with the O.P.W. to raise awareness of our Heritage Sites and generate more visitors to the County”

It was noted that the County Manager & the Chairman had met with Minister Brian Hayes recently in this regard and a further meeting is to take place. It was agreed that a letter issue to Minister Brian Hayes in this regard. This motion was seconded by Councillor John Joe Fennelly.

Notice of Motion No: 13/2012

Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald proposed the following Notice of Motion:

“That this Council call on the Minister for the Environment, Phil Hogan, T.D., to reverse the increase in Motor Tax”

This motion was seconded by Councillor Alan Hand. It was agreed that a letter issue to Minister Hogan in this regard.

Notice of Motion No: 14/2012

Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That this Council request information from the H.S.E. on staffing levels at the Regional Hospital, Portlaoise especially in the maternity unit and clarify if they are happy with the level of frontline staff at the hospital”

This motion was seconded by Councillor Pat Bowe. It was agreed that a letter issue to the H.S.E. in this regard.

Notice of Motion No: 15/2012

Councillor Alan Hand proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That this Council calls for an end to the recruitment moratorium in the Public Sector and Health Service”

This motion was seconded by Councillor Jerry Lodge. It was agreed that a letter issue to the Department of the Environment, Community & Local Government in this regard.

Notice of Motion No: 16/2012

Councillor Alan Hand proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That this Council contacts the Football Association of Ireland offering a Civic Reception to the Irish Team in Áras an Chontae when they return from Euro 2012”

This motion was seconded by Councillor Ben Brennan. It was agreed that a letter issue to the Football Association of Ireland in this regard.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

SIGNED:

CATHAOIRLEACH

CERTIFIED:

DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE
AFFAIRS