

**MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER MEETING OF LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL HELD IN  
ARAS AN CHONTAE ON THE 29<sup>TH</sup> OF NOVEMBER 2010**

**PRESENT: Councillors**

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

**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

**121. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

On the proposition of Councillor John Bonham seconded by Councillor Michael Lalor, the Minutes of the October meeting held on the 18<sup>th</sup> of October 2010 were confirmed as circulated.

On the proposal of Councillor John Moran seconded by Councillor Tom Mulhall, the Minutes of the special meeting held on the 8<sup>th</sup> of November 2010 were confirmed as circulated.

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

**(i) DISPOSAL OF FREEHOLD AT TIMAHOE RAOD, STRADBALLY, CO. LAOIS.**

On the proposal of Councillor Jerry Lodge seconded by Councillor Ray Cribbin, the members unanimously agreed to the disposal of freehold at Timahoe Road, Stradbally, Co. Laois in the townland of Stradbally, for a consideration of €100.00

**(ii) DISPOSAL OF 2.22 HECTARES OF LAND AT CARROWREAGH, PIKE OF RUSHALL, CO. LAOIS.**

On the proposal of Councillor Martin Phelan seconded by Councillor Michael Lalor, the members unanimously agreed to the disposal of 2.22 hectares of land at Carrowreagh, for a consideration of €76,500

**(iii) DISPOSAL OF EQUITY INTEREST IN THE PROPERTY AT PALLAS, PORTLAOISE, CO. LAOIS.**

On the proposal of Councillor Brian Stanley seconded by Councillor Mary Sweeney, the members unanimously agreed to the disposal of equity interest in the property at Pallas, Portlaoise, Co. Laois – Shared Ownership Loan No: 610029/F for a consideration of €33,048.74

**123. APPROVAL OF OVERDRAFT ACCOMMODATION IN THE SUM OF €9,000,000 FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31<sup>ST</sup> OF DECEMBER 2010**

On the proposal of Councillor Seamus McDonald seconded by Councillor Michael Lalor, the Members unanimously approved overdraft accommodation in the sum of €9,000,000 for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> of December 2010

**124. DRAFT RATHDOWNEY APPOINTED STANDS BYE-LAWS**

The Members were circulated with a copy of the draft Rathdowney Appointed Stands Bye-Laws.

Councillor John King proposed the draft Rathdowney Appointed Stands Bye-Laws and this proposal was seconded by Councillor Martin Phelan.

There was a counter proposal by Councillor Brendan Phelan and seconded by Ray Cribbin, that no Bye-laws be introduced and that the status quo remain.

A roll call vote was taken on Councillor Brendan Phelan's proposal which resulted as follows:-

COUNCILLOR		FOR	AGAINST	ABSTENTION/ABSENT
FIRST NAME	SURNAME			
Rotimi	ADEBARI	✓		
Willie	AIRD			Absent
John	BONHAM		✓	
Pat	BOWE	✓		
Paddy	BRACKEN	✓		
Ben	BRENNAN	✓		
Raymond	CRIBBIN	✓		
James	DALY			Absent
James	DEEGAN		✓	
John Joe	FENNELLY	✓		
Catherine	FITZGERALD	✓		
Padraig	FLEMING	✓		
David	GOODWIN		✓	
John	KING		✓	
Michael	LALOR		✓	
Jerry	LODGE	✓		
Seamus	MCDONALD	✓		
Paul	MITCHELL		✓	
John Robert	MORAN		✓	
Tom	MULHALL		✓	
Kathleen	O'BRIEN		✓	
Brendan	PHELAN	✓		
Martin	PHELAN		✓	
Brian	STANLEY	✓		
Mary	SWEENEY		✓	

The result of the roll call was 12 votes in favour of Councillor Phelan's proposal. Therefore, the draft Rathdowney Appointed Stands Bye-Laws were not adopted.

## 125. TAKING IN CHARGE OF 'ASHBROOK', ABBEYLEIX

On the proposal of Councillor John Joe Fennelly seconded by Councillor John Bonham, the members unanimously agreed to take in charge 'Ashbrook', Abbeyleix.

## **126. NOTICE OF MOTIONS**

### **NOTICE OF MOTION NO: 21/10**

Councillors Catherine Fitzgerald, Jerry Lodge, Kathleen O' Brien, Mary Sweeney, Brian Stanley, William Aird & Rotimi Adebari proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

"That Laois County Council calls on the Government to recognise the unique and vital role of the postal service in Ireland, particularly rural Ireland, as a means of communication, as a vital economic tool and as an intrinsic part of the fabric of the community.

Our postal service has a social value and an economic value, these must be properly protected as the Government drafts legislation to open the postal market to full competition.

Postmen and women provide an important public service and also function as an integral part of the social fabric of their community, particularly for the elderly and the isolated citizens whose only human contact might be their post person. Furthermore, An Post's extensive delivery and collection network, is an intrinsic part of the economic and business infrastructure of the Country. Reaching every corner of the Country and by delivering to every front door, An Post is an essential partner in business from a marketing, payment collection and business generation point of view.

As Ireland prepares to liberalise it's postal market it is essential that the Government acknowledges this important public service, ensures that the Universal Service Obligation is protected by legislation and does not allow the opening of the market to lead to wide spread job losses, social dumping and an erosion in service levels as has happened in other Countries who have already opened their postal market to competition.

This motion was seconded by Councillor Mary Sweeney. It was agreed that a letter issue to the five T.D.'s & to Minister Ryan indicating the Member's opposition.

### **NOTICE OF MOTION NO: 22/10**

Councillor Brian Stanley proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That this Council contact Bord Gais to convey our disappointment at the long delays encountered in having gas re-connected to Council houses that are ready for re-letting. The Members of Laois County Council request that the Company put procedures in place to end the current delays which are totally unacceptable”.

This motion was seconded by Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald.

The Housing Officer and his staff met with Bord Gais regional account manager on 10<sup>th</sup> November 2010 and outlined the difficulties they were encountering when connecting a new property to a gas supply. Bord Gais have confirmed to Laois County Council that they will revise their procedures to reduce the current delays and that a single point of contact will be made available in Bord Gais to deal with all queries in the future. It is hoped that this will resolve the current delays in re-letting properties that require a new gas connection.

Mr. Michael Rainey, Senior Executive Officer also advised that two meetings had been held with Bord Gais, the most recent held this morning. At that meeting, Bord Gais made a commitment to provide a dedicated person to deal with Council queries and that all outstanding issues would be resolved by the end of the week.

#### **127. CORRESPONDENCE**

The Members were circulated with the following items of correspondence:

- (i) Correspondence received on the 21<sup>st</sup> of October 2010 from the Department of Social & Family Affairs in relation to the back to school clothing and footwear allowance to the self employed
- (ii) Correspondence received on the 10<sup>th</sup> of November 2010 from the Department of Enterprise, Trade & Employment in relation to a Jobs Stimulus Plan
- (iii) Correspondence in relation to Ethics Framework in Local Government & Code of Conduct for Councillors

#### **128. DRAFT MULTI-ANNUAL RESTORATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME 2011 – 2013**

The Members were circulated with a copy of the draft Multi-Annual Restoration Improvement Programme 2011 – 2013. On the proposition of Councillor Brian Stanley seconded by Councillor John Joe Fennelly, the Members unanimously approved the draft Multi-Annual Restoration Improvement Programme 2011 – 2013.

The Members expressed concern in relation to the current severe weather situation and in relation to the gritting of roads. Mr. Gerry Gibson, Director of Services clarified the situation and indicated also that the Members would receive details of the winter maintenance gritting/salting programme. A map indicating the routes salted in Laois would be available for viewing on the Council's website. The Council are treating roads on a prioritized basis which includes the national primary, national secondary and strategic regional routes. Arrangements are also being made to make available grit for collection and distribution by community and voluntary groups which will be available mid-week and the collection points will also be made available on the website.

Mr. Gerry Gibson, Director of Services also indicated that the procurement of salt is carried out nationally by the National Roads Authority and is then distributed to the local authorities based on the local authority's programme.

#### **129. PRIDE OF PLACE 2010 – RECOGNITION OF AWARD WINNERS**

The Cathaoirleach welcomed the representatives of the Christmas Tree Committee from Mountmellick who were recently awarded runners-up in their category at the recent National Pride of Place competition. He welcomed Mr. Sean Lynch, Mr. Brian Lynch, Mr. Ger Lynch & Ms. Celine Dunphy. He also congratulated the winners of an Adjudicator's Special Endeavour Award - the residents and staff of the Green Cottages, Stradbally for their development of a project to restore and preserve the cottages.

The County Manager joined with the Cathaoirleach in congratulating both winners and all the participating groups on a very proud occasion for County Laois. Mr. Peter Carey, County Manager acknowledged the Members support and thanked all the staff in the Community & Enterprise Section under the leadership of Mr. Declan Byrne, Director of Services. He also thanked the communities and assured them of Laois County Council's continued support.

Mr. Brian Lynch on behalf of the Mountmellick Christmas Tree Committee thanked Laois County Council for their encouragement and leadership with their project.

**130. OFFICIAL SIGNING OF THE TWINNING OATH BETWEEN THE MUNICIPALITY OF MONTEBELLUNA, ITALY AND COUNTY LAOIS**

Mr. James Deegan, Cathaoirleach welcomed the delegation from Montebelluna to formally sign the reciprocal Twinning Oath between the Municipality of Montebelluna and County Laois. The Members of Laois County Council were advised that the municipality of Montebelluna were anxious to enter into a twinning agreement with an area in an English speaking country in order to pursue their goal of English Language development in their region. County Laois was selected for this purpose.

The Deputy Mayor of Montebelluna, Mr. Franco Andolfato presented Laois County Council with the Italian flag.

The Cathaoirleach of Laois County Council, Mr. James Deegan presented Mr. Andolfato with a commemorative gift.

The County Manager, Mr. Peter Carey welcomed the Italian delegation and indicated that he looked forward to developing friendships over the next number of years. He also expressed thanks to all the staff involved in the twinning process.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

**SIGNED:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**CATHAOIRLEACH**

**CERTIFIED:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE  
AFFAIRS**