

LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL

COMHAIRLE CHONTAE LAOISE



STANDING ORDERS

The County Council of the County of Laois, in pursuance of the powers vested in it subject to the Local Government Act, 2001, as amended, hereby makes the following Standing Orders for the regulation of the business and proceedings of the said Council.

May 2015

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DEFINITIONS

- ‡ The “Act” means the Local Government Act, 2001, as amended by the Local Government Reform Act, 2014
- ‡ In these Orders “Council” means the “ Local Authority of the Administrative County of Laois”
- ‡ “Meeting” means a meeting of the Council save where the context indicates otherwise
- ‡ “Councillor” or “Member” means a person elected or co-opted to the office of “Councillor of the County of Laois”
- ‡ “Representative” means a person properly nominated and appointed to the position of representative on a Strategic Policy Committee by the Elected Members of Laois County Council.
- ‡ “Cathaoirleach” means the Councillor presiding at any meeting of the Council, or of a Committee, Sub-Committee, Corporate Policy Group, Strategic Policy Committee or Municipal District except when it specifically means the Cathaoirleach so elected at the annual meeting.
- ‡ “Leas-Cathaoirleach” means the Councillor presiding at any meeting of the Council, or of a Committee, Sub-Committee, Corporate Policy Group, Strategic Policy Committee or Municipal District in the absence of the Cathaoirleach
- ‡ “Chief Executive ” means the Chief Executive for the Administrative County of Laois, or in his/her absence, his/her appointed Deputy
- ‡ “Director of Services”, means the Director of Services for a specified functional area for the Administrative County of Laois, or in his/her absence, his/her appointed Deputy

- ⚡ **“Head of Finance”, means the Head of Finance for the Administrative County of Laois, or, in his/her absence, his/her appointed Deputy**

- ⚡ **“Meetings Administrator” means the Meetings Administrator to whom the duties of meetings administration are assigned or in his/her absence, his/her appointed Deputy**

- ⚡ **“County Solicitor” shall mean the Law Advisor to the County Council**

- ⚡ **The membership of the Council shall consist of the Councillors of Laois County Council**

- ⚡ **The membership of the Corporate Policy Group shall consist of the Cathaoirleach of the Council and the Chairperson of each Strategic Policy Committee**

- ⚡ **The membership of each Municipal District shall consist solely of the Councillors for the electoral area represented by that Municipal District**

- ⚡ **The membership of each Strategic Policy Committee shall consist of the Councillors selected by the Council to that Strategic Policy Committee together with representatives as nominated and appointed by the Council to that Strategic Policy Committee**

- ⚡ **“Excluded Day” means a Saturday or a Sunday or a public holiday within the meaning given in the Organisation of Working Time Act, 1997 or any other day on which the principal offices of the Council are closed**

- ⚡ **“Clear Days” shall only exclude normal day for receipt of the notification and the day of the meeting**

(1) MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL

In so far as is practicable the place for holding meetings of the Council shall be the principal offices of Laois County Council at Áras an Chontae and meetings shall normally be held there. Laois County Council may from time to time by resolution decide on an alternative location for a particular meeting. The address of the principal offices for the purposes of these Standing Orders is Áras an Chontae, Portlaoise, Co. Laois.

(2) MONTHLY MEETING

Unless upon any occasion when it is otherwise fixed by statute or by resolution of Laois County Council, the Monthly Meetings of the Council shall be held on the last Monday of every month except when that day falls on a Public Holiday and except in the month of August. A schedule of ordinary meetings of Laois County Council for the ensuing year shall be approved at each Annual Meeting.

(3) HOUR OF MEETING

The hour of ordinary meetings of Laois County Council shall be 11.00 a.m. or at such other hour as may from time to time be fixed by resolution of the Council. Meetings shall conclude no later than 5.00 p.m. unless otherwise decided by resolution of the Council.

(4) ANNUAL MEETING

In every year in which a local election is held the Annual Meeting shall be held on the fourteenth day after the polling day or, where the poll is for any reason countermanded, interrupted or adjourned, after the day on which the poll is completed or the fresh poll is held. Where the fourteenth day is an excluded day, the meeting shall be held on the next following day which is not an 'Excluded Day'

In every other year, Laois County Council shall hold an Annual Meeting on such day as Laois County Council shall, by resolution, appoint or fix by standing order.

Whenever an Annual Meeting of Laois County Council is for any reason not held on the appointed day, the Meetings Administrator shall, following consultation with the Cathaoirleach, or if the office of Cathaoirleach is vacant or he/she is unable to act, with the Leas Cathaoirleach, convene a meeting for a day which the Meetings Administrator considers to be the earliest convenient date for that purpose.

In an election year, Laois County Council shall publish a notice of its Annual Meeting in at least one newspaper circulating in its administrative area. The notice shall state the date of the Annual Meeting and where appropriate that the first business of the meeting will be the election of the Cathaoirleach followed by the election of the Leas Cathaoirleach. The notice shall also specify the joint bodies and other bodies to which Laois County Council is entitled to make appointments at that meeting or subsequently. The notice shall be in a form and published within the period prescribed by Regulations.

In the case of an Annual Meeting in an election year and until the election of the Cathaoirleach at such meeting, the Chair for this period shall be taken by a Member or an employee of Laois County Council if so selected by the meeting for this purpose. Any Member selected to chair an annual meeting under this sub-paragraph shall not have a second or casting vote and any employee of the Council if so selected in accordance with this subparagraph shall not have any vote.

At an Annual Meeting in an election year the Meetings Administrator shall read out the names of persons duly elected as Members of Laois County Council. Subject to this the election of a Cathaoirleach is to be the first business of an Annual Meeting and the next business is the election of a Leas-Cathaoirleach in accordance with Sections 36, 37 & 38 of the Local Government Act, 2001, as amended and prescribed arrangements.

In the case of the Annual Meeting in an election year the business to be transacted after the election of the Cathaoirleach and the Leas-Cathaoirleach shall include the consideration of the election, appointment or nomination of Members of joint bodies or other bodies elected, appointed or nominated by Laois County Council.

(5) METHOD OF ELECTION OF CATHAOIRLEACH & LEAS-CATHAOIRLEACH

The election of a Cathaoirleach & Leas-Cathaoirleach shall be in accordance with Sections 36, 37 & 38 of the Local Government Act, 2001, as amended and subject to the following arrangements:-

- (i) The procedures shall begin by a Member or Members being proposed and seconded and every person so proposed and seconded and no other person shall be a candidate
- (ii) Where there is only one candidate, such candidate shall be declared elected
- (iii) Where there are more than 2 candidates, a poll shall be taken

- (iv) If at such poll a majority of the Members present vote for any particular candidate, such candidate shall be declared elected
- (v) If at such poll, no candidate receives the votes of a majority of the Members present, the candidate receiving the least number of votes shall be excluded from the election, and subject to paragraph (vi) one or more further polls (according as may be necessary) shall be taken
- (vi) Where there are only two candidates or where as a result of one or more polls all the candidates except 2 have been excluded, the question as to which of such candidates shall be elected shall be put to the Members present and whichever of such candidates receives the majority of votes cast shall be declared elected
- (vii) If from an equality of votes given to 2 or more candidates any question arises under this article as to which of such candidates is to be excluded or as to which of such candidates is to be declared elected, such question shall be decided by lot in accordance with paragraph (viii)
- (viii) In deciding any such question by lot, the names of the candidates concerned shall be written on similar slips of paper, the slips shall be folded so as to prevent identification and mixed and drawn at random and the candidate whose name is first drawn shall, where the question concerns an exclusion, be the candidate who shall be excluded or, where the question concerns an election, be the candidate who shall be declared elected

This Article shall also apply and have effect in respect of the election of a Chairperson of a Committee, Board, Joint Committee or Joint Board of the Council, including a Committee, Board, Joint Committee or Joint Board appointed by or under statute to perform the functions of the Council. A reference to Cathaoirleach in the above shall be construed as including a reference to a Chairman or other analogous expression.

(6) BUDGET MEETING

Laois County Council's Budget Meeting shall be held during the period prescribed by Regulations for that purpose, in accordance with Paragraph 5, Schedule 10 of the Local Government Act, 2001, as amended. The provision of Section 103 of the Local Government Act, 2001, as amended shall apply in the case of the adjournment of a Budget Meeting.

(7) SPECIAL MEETING

A special meeting of Laois County Council may be convened at any time by the Cathaoirleach or if the office of Cathaoirleach is vacant by the Leas-Cathaoirleach or if the Cathaoirleach is unable to act, by the Leas-Cathaoirleach, or by the Cathaoirleach on foot of a request in writing presented to him or her by any five Members.

A requisition shall be made in writing and be delivered by the Cathaoirleach, the Leas-Cathaoirleach or by the five members making the requisition to the Meetings Administrator. Such a meeting shall commence at 2.00 p.m. or such other hour as determined by resolution of the Council.

Where the Cathaoirleach refuses or neglects to act on foot of a request within 7 days of it being presented to him/her, the Members making the request may convene a meeting. The provisions of paragraph 6 of Schedule 10 of the Local Government Act, 2001, as amended, apply in relation to calling of such meetings.

(8) MEETINGS IN COMMITTEE

Meetings in committee shall be convened for appropriate purposes at the discretion of the Cathaoirleach/Leas Cathaoirleach and on the advice of the Chief Executive.

Any matters decided at such meetings shall be placed on the Agenda for ratification or otherwise at the next meeting of Laois County Council.

(9) SUMMONING OF MEETING

A notification to attend a meeting, other than the Laois County Council Budget Meeting shall

- (a) be sent or delivered by post or electronic means to each Member of the Council,
- (b) specify the place, date and time of the meeting, and
- (c) give not less than 3 clear days notice.

A notification shall include or be accompanied by an Agenda listing the business to be transacted at the meeting. Subject to Standing Order No. 18, no business shall be transacted at a meeting other than that specified in the agenda which relates to the meeting or business required by the Act, or otherwise by law to be transacted at the meeting.

An agenda which has been sent or delivered for this purpose may be altered (whether by way of addition, deletion or otherwise) if an Agenda specifying the alteration is delivered or sent to each Member not less than 3 clear days before the day on which the meeting is to be held.

In the case of a Special Meeting convened by requisition under Standing Order No.7, a copy of the requisition shall be sent with the notification.

A notification shall have the signature of the Meetings Administrator and any document claiming to have that signature shall be deemed, until the contrary is proved to have been duly issued or given with the authority of Laois County Council.

Want of service or non-receipt of a notification by any Member or lack of a signature or any other defect in the notification does not affect the validity of a meeting or of any act or thing done at the meeting.

For the purposes of this Standing Order 'signature' includes an e signature or facsimile of a signature by whatever process reproduced or a printed version of the name of the Meetings Administrator.

(10) PUBLIC NOTICE OF MEETING

Public notice of the place, date and time of a meeting other than the Laois County Council Budget Meeting shall be displayed not less than three clear days before the day of the meeting in or at the principal offices of Laois County Council in a position convenient for public inspection during normal office hours.

The Notice shall include the Agenda for the meeting or specify a place where the Agenda can be inspected and in the case of a meeting requisitioned under Standing Order No. 7, the Agenda shall include or be accompanied by a copy of the requisition and the foregoing documents shall be published on Laois County Council's website. Subject to any arrangements as it may make the Council shall supply a copy of a public notice and agenda to the media.

(11) CONSTITUTION OF MEETINGS

The Chair shall be taken by the Cathaoirleach at a meeting of Laois County Council within ten minutes after the time appointed for such meeting or in his/her absence by the Leas Cathaoirleach or otherwise by a Member called hereto by general agreement or chosen by vote of the Members present to chair the meeting and such Member shall leave the chair on the arrival at the meeting of the Cathaoirleach or Leas-Cathaoirleach.

(12) RECORD OF ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS

The attendance of each Member present at a meeting shall be entered by that Member in a record kept for that purpose by Laois County Council herein after referred to as the Attendance Register.

(13) QUORUM FOR MEETINGS

The quorum for a meeting of Laois County Council is 6, being one-fourth of the total number of members of Laois County Council, rounded up to the next highest whole number, plus one. Whenever a meeting of Laois County Council is abandoned owing to failure to obtain a quorum the names of those present at the time and place appointed for such meeting shall be recorded by the Meetings Administrator and they shall, for all purposes be deemed to have attended a duly constituted meeting.

If a quorum is not present within 15 minutes after the time fixed for the meeting (or at any time during the meeting), the meeting shall stand adjourned to a day to be named by the Cathaoirleach. Laois County Council, may be resolution, adjourn a meeting as often as they wish, and a meeting resumed following such an adjournment shall form part of the original meeting.

(14) ORDER OF BUSINESS

The Order of Business at all meetings other than Annual Meetings, Budget Meetings and Special Meetings shall, subject to the provisions of any enactments, be as follows:

- (i) Confirmation of Minutes of Laois County Council and noting of reports of progress in matters raised at previous meetings
- (ii) Noting of minutes of Committee Meetings

- (iii) Business prescribed by Statute, Standing Orders or Resolutions of the Council for transaction at such meetings.
- (iv) Consideration of Reports and Recommendations by or on behalf of the Chief Executive
- (v) Other business set forth in the Notice convening the meeting
- (vi) Correspondence
- (vii) Notices of Motion

At any ordinary meeting of the Council, it shall be proper, if a majority of the Members present and voting so decide, to take an item for consideration out of the sequence of listing on the Agenda, provided always that such decision shall not affect any business required by Statute to be done before any other business at the meeting. In the case of a meeting convened for a special purpose the business specified in the Notification for such meetings shall be transacted and no other business.

(15) MINUTES

Minutes of the proceedings of a meeting of Laois County Council shall be drawn up by the Meetings Administrator.

The Minutes shall include:

- (i) The date, place and time of the meeting
- (ii) The names of the Members present at the meeting
- (iii) The names of the senior employees of Laois County Council present at the meeting.
- (iv) Reference to any report submitted to the Members at the meeting
- (v) Where there is a roll call vote, the number and names of Members voting for and against the motion and of those abstaining.
- (vi) Particulars of all resolutions passed at the meeting.
- (vii) Such other matters considered appropriate.
- (viii) Decisions made

A copy of the minutes of a meeting shall be sent or given by the Meetings Administrator to each Member of Laois County Council.

Minutes of a meeting shall be submitted for confirmation as an accurate record at the next following ordinary meeting, where practicable, or where not, at the next following meeting and recorded in the minutes of that meeting.

Any discussion of the Minutes except as to their accuracy shall be out of order and the Cathaoirleach shall rule accordingly. When confirmed with or without amendment, the minutes of a meeting shall be signed by the person chairing and the person they were submitted to for confirmation and any minutes claiming to be so signed shall be received in evidence without proof. When the question that they be confirmed is put from the Chair, a Member may object to any part thereof as not being an accurate record and upon a motion, any question of altering the record shall be determined by the Council by majority vote of those members who were present at the appropriate meeting.

A copy of the minutes when confirmed in accordance with this Standing Order shall be open to inspection at the principal offices of Laois County Council and any person may inspect and make of copy of, or abstract from, the minutes during normal office hours of the Council. A copy of the confirmed minutes will also be available on the Council's website.

(16) NOTICES OF MOTIONS

Every Notice of Motion dated and signed by the Member or Members giving it shall be delivered to the Meetings Administrator and shall be recorded in the order of its receipt and shall appear on the Agenda in that order.

A Notice of Motion delivered by electronic means shall, if it has the name of a Member appended thereto and if it appears to have been sent by him/her, be deemed for the purpose of this order to have been delivered by that Member.

No Notice of Motion shall be set down on the agenda for any meeting unless such Notice of Motion shall have been delivered to the Meetings Administrator at least **10 clear days** before the date of such meeting. Only those Notices of Motion which are received before five o'clock in the afternoon of that day shall appear on the Agenda.

If any Notice of Motion of which notice has been duly given in relation to a matter normally dealt with by a Municipal District of Laois County Council or comes within the terms of reference of any Municipal District(s) of the Council or any other Committee(s), it shall be referred to such Municipal District(s) as the Meetings Administrator may determine, if necessary, following consultation with the Cathaoirleach & the Member who put forward the motion. Any dispute on such reference shall be determined by the Cathaoirleach.

No Member shall be permitted to have more than 3 motions (including adjourned motions) on the Agenda for any one meeting and the name of the Member shall not appear more than 3 times on the Agenda as proposer or co-proposer of motions for any one meeting. Any Notice of Motion submitted jointly in the names of two or more Members shall be considered as a Notice of Motion submitted separately by each Member subscribing to the Notice and each section of a multiple motion shall be considered as constituting a separate Motion.

(17) MOTIONS TO AMEND OR REVOKE RESOLUTIONS

A motion to revoke or amend a resolution of Laois County Council can only be made on notice inserted in the Agenda, and such notice shall specify the resolution to be revoked or amended and furnish the terms of the motion to be made.

No such motion shall be allowed to appear on the Agenda to revoke or amend any resolution of the Council within six months of the date of the adoption of such resolution except with the written assent of not less than 6 Members of the Council. A resolution may not be revoked at the meeting at which it has been adopted.

It shall be necessary for adoption of a motion to revoke or amend a resolution of Laois County Council that not less than 10 Members (being not less than one half of the total number of members of the Council) vote in favour and subject to any statutory requirements.

(18) MOTION FOR PURPOSE OF DEALING WITH URGENT BUSINESS

Notwithstanding any other provisions of these Standing Orders a motion may be proposed without notice for the purpose of dealing with urgent business related to a function of Laois County Council, at the discretion of the Cathaoirleach and subject to the requirement that not less than 10 Members (being at least one-half of the total number of Members of the Council) vote in favour.

Urgent Business is defined as a matter that would arise between the sending of the notification and agenda for the meeting and the times of the actual meeting itself, requiring immediate action or attention.

It must be established that the matter is:

- Of such pressing need that it is impossible for the matter to be deferred whereby it could come before Council on notice in the normal fashion.
- So immediate that it is not possible for such a motion to be proposed previously allowing it to come before the meeting on notice in the normal way.
- That weight would have to be given to the unusual or novel nature of the matter to be discussed, its gravity and importance, the consequences of delay in dealing with the matter and in particular, whether the nature of the matter is such that circumstances will have irreparably changed, were the Council to insist that the matter should come before the council in the normal way.

The following Motions may be made without notice at a Meeting:

- On matters expressly required by Statute to be done at the meeting.
- On matters arising directly out of a Report presented at the meeting.
- For, or on, the appointment of a Committee to which business specified is to be referred.
 - (a) For the resolution of the Council into a Committee of the whole council.
 - (b) For a variation of the order of business.
 - (c) For the adjournment of a meeting.
 - (d) For the suspension of a Standing Order or of Standing Orders in respect of any specified rule or rules.

(19) MOTIONS AND AMENDMENTS

The proposer of a Motion not listed on the agenda or an amendment to it, shall, upon moving the same deliver a copy to the Cathaoirleach. A Motion, notice of which stands in the agenda and which has been proposed and seconded, may be withdrawn only on leave obtained from a majority of the Members present at the meeting and at the request of the Member concerned. A motion may either be proposed by the Member in whose name it stands or if he/she is absent, by any Member authorised by him/her in writing to propose it on his or her behalf, but unless so proposed, and in the absence of a request in writing from the Member in whose name it stands to postpone it, the Motion shall be removed from the agenda and shall not re-appear except on fresh notice.

A Motion or an Amendment when not seconded is lost.

An amendment which has been proposed and seconded may be withdrawn only on leave obtained from a majority of the members present at the meeting and at the request of its proposer and seconder.

Every amendment shall be relevant to the Motion on which it is moved and shall be either:

- To leave out words
- To leave out words and insert or add others
- To insert or add words

An amendment shall not be in order if it is equivalent to a direct negative or if it is not in fact an amendment of the Motion it purports to amend.

Whenever an amendment on an original Motion has been moved and seconded, no second or subsequent amendment shall be moved until the first amendment shall have been disposed of. Notice of all amendments shall be given to the Cathaoirleach before the first amendment is taken.

When an amendment is affirmed the original Motion as amended becomes the substantive Motion upon which any further amendment, of which notice has been given may be moved.

When an amendment is lost, any further amendment of which notice has been given may be proposed, but only one amendment shall be at any time before the meeting and an amendment shall not be in order if the Cathaoirleach rules it to be substantially the same as an amendment already lost.

(20) ORDER OF DEBATE

Except with the permission of the Cathaoirleach no Member shall address the Council for more than 5 minutes. A Member may speak once upon any item on the agenda or on any Motion except a motion, which is to be put without debate. The proposer of a Motion has the right to reply while the Motion remains before the Cathaoirleach and when the proposer replies the debate on the motion is closed.

A member may speak more than once on the same motion or amendment for the purpose only of submitting a point of order or making a personal explanation. The Cathaoirleach's decision in determining a point of order or personal explanation shall be final.

The Cathaoirleach shall ascertain that a Motion is seconded and the meeting shall hear any report on it before the proposer is permitted to speak to it.

A Motion 'That the Council proceed to the next business' may be made after any motion has been proposed and seconded. When made it shall be determined without amendment or debate and if it be affirmed the business interrupted by such motion shall not be proceeded with further at that meeting and unless the Council otherwise determine shall be adjourned to the next ordinary meeting.

The Motion to proceed to next business shall not be made more than once during the debate on any question.

At any time during a discussion on a Motion a Member may move 'that the question be now put' and if such leave be given by the assent of the majority of the Members present and voting, the motion shall be put, subject to the right of reply by the proposer of the original or substantive motion.

When two or more Members at the same time offer to speak, the Member called upon by the Cathaoirleach shall have precedence.

A Member while speaking shall address only the Cathaoirleach. A Member speaking shall not be interrupted except upon a question of order, but may give way to a Member desiring to make a personal explanation. When a Member seeks to make a point of order, the Member then addressing the Cathaoirleach shall give way until the question of order has been determined by the Cathaoirleach.

The Cathaoirleach is the sole judge of order at meetings and has authority to maintain order and enforce prompt obedience to his/her ruling. When during a debate the Cathaoirleach rises, any Member then speaking shall give way to the Cathaoirleach.

If, at any meeting, any Member of the Council, in the opinion of the Cathaoirleach, misconducts himself or herself by persistently disregarding the ruling of the Cathaoirleach, or by wilfully obstructing the business of the meeting, the Cathaoirleach or any other Member may move "That the Member named be not further heard" and the Motion, if seconded, shall be put and determined without discussion.

If, in the opinion of the Cathaoirleach, any Member has been or is disorderly by persistently disregarding the ruling of the Cathaoirleach, or by behaving irregularly, improperly or offensively or by otherwise obstructing the business of the meeting, and the Cathaoirleach has conveyed his/her opinion to the Members present by naming the Member concerned, then the Cathaoirleach or any Member may move “that the Member named leave the meeting” and the Motion, if seconded, shall be put and determined without discussion. Where the Council decides that a Member leave a meeting, the Member shall immediately leave the meeting and shall not be entitled to speak or to take any further part in that meeting on that day.

Where in the opinion of the Cathaoirleach there is general disorder which impedes the orderly transaction of business or where a Member against whom it was resolved that he/she leave the meeting refuses to do so, the Cathaoirleach may adjourn the meeting for such period as he/she considers necessary in the interests of order. No Member shall address the Cathaoirleach, unless from one of the seats reserved to the use of the Members.

(21) QUESTIONS, VOTES AND DIVISIONS

Every question shall be determined by a show of hands, unless three members request a division, in which case the names for and against the motion or amendment shall be taken down in writing and recorded in the Minutes. Where the Chair has not formally declared the result of a vote, or is in doubt as to whether his/her declaration is right or wrong, s/he is entitled if s/he thinks fit to take a second vote on the matter, especially if s/he considers that through some misunderstanding the first vote did not properly represent the sense of the meeting at that time. Each member present at a meeting of the Council shall have a vote unless prohibited by any enactment.

Without prejudice to any enactment or other provisions of these Standing Orders requiring either the presence of a specified number or proportion of the members or that a specified number or proportion should vote in favour for the doing of any particular act, all acts of Laois County Council which are reserved functions or questions duly coming or arising before a meeting of the Council shall be determined by a majority of the members present and voting or where there is an equality of votes, by a second or casting vote of the person chairing the meeting (which person shall have and may choose to exercise such a vote.

(22) DEPUTATIONS

Deputations concerning local matters will only be received by the appropriate Municipal District of Laois County Council. Deputations concerning specific policy issues may be received by the appropriate Strategic Policy Committee of the Council. Deputations may be received by Laois County Council where issues of Countywide concern are to be discussed or where the Council has, by resolution, decided to receive such a deputation.

Requests for a deputation to be heard by the Council shall not be considered unless the subject matter to be raised be notified in writing on the motion of a member of the Council, or direct application by the body concerned, sent to the Meetings Administrator at least 10 clear days before the date of the meeting. The deputation may be limited to three in number. The deputation may only be questioned by Members of Laois County Council. The deputation shall not be entitled to ask questions.

Subject to the direction of the Chair, 1 person may speak on behalf of the deputation for not more than 5 minutes in total unless permitted by resolution.

When the members of a deputation have addressed the meeting, they shall withdraw from the meeting.

(23) ATTENDANCE OF PUBLIC AND MEDIA

The right of the public and representatives of the media to attend Council meetings is subject to the following:-

Where Laois County Council is of the opinion that the absence of members of the public and representatives of the media from the whole or part of a particular meeting is desirable because of the special nature of the meeting or of an item of business to be or about to be considered at the meeting or for other special reasons, the Council may, by resolution in respect of which, at least one-half of the total number of members vote in favour (10), decide to meet in committee for the whole or part of the meeting concerned. The resolution in this instance shall indicate in a general way the reasons for the resolution and those reasons shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

Members of the public and representatives of the media will occupy the parts of the Meeting Rooms allotted to their use.

The public shall be admitted subject to the following arrangements:

- (1) The limit on numbers is 20 considering the space available in the public seating area in the Council Chamber
- (2) No member of the public present shall attempt to address the meeting or otherwise disrupt the meeting.
- (3) Members of the public shall be seated ten minutes prior to the meeting and maintain silence and observe any directions given by the Chair or by any employee in attendance upon the Council. Such employees are responsible for the execution of all measures necessary for the maintenance of order and decorum in and about the Chamber.
- (4) Members of the public shall vacate the Council Chamber once the meeting is concluded
- (5) If a member of the public interrupts a meeting at any time or endeavours, without the permission of Laois County Council to address a Meeting, the Chair shall warn him or her and if the interruption continues shall order that person's removal, the Cathaoirleach may adjourn the meeting if necessary.
- (6) In the case of a general disturbance in any part of the Council Chamber open to the public, the Cathaoirleach shall order that part to be cleared, the Cathaoirleach may adjourn the meeting if necessary.
- (7) No cameras of any kind or sound recording or communication equipment may be used at meetings of the Council without prior approval of Laois County Council
- (8) Mobile phones shall remain on silent for the duration of the meeting
- (9) Banners and all other items of protest shall not be allowed into the Council Chamber and entrance foyer at the Chamber

(24) ETHICS/DECLARATION OF INTEREST
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Members shall at all times comply with the provisions of law relating to their conduct in public office and especially with all of Part 15 of the Local Government Act 2001, as amended, and with any guidelines on ethics and any Codes of Conduct issued by or on behalf of the Government. Members shall comply in all respects with Section 177 of the Local Government Act 2001, as amended and any Member having a pecuniary or beneficial interest in a matter before a meeting of the Council or any of its committees, or having knowledge that a connected person, as defined in the Act, has any such interest, shall declare the interest and withdraw from the meeting for so long as the matter is being

discussed or considered and shall have no part in the proceedings relating thereto and shall refrain from voting in relation to it.

The onus is on the Member to declare the interest and leave the Chamber. In the event of a division, such Member shall, before the Roll is called, disclose the nature of his/her interest and shall refrain from voting on the matter.

After the number in a division has been stated and before the Cathaoirleach shall have declared the results of the division, a Member may move that Laois County Council disallow the vote or votes in that division of any Member or Members on the grounds that a Member or Members has or have a direct pecuniary interest in the question at issue in such a division and if the Motion be adopted, any vote or votes so disallowed, shall be deducted from the original numbers in the division and the result shall be declared accordingly.

(25) STATEMENT OF DONATIONS & EXPENSES

All Members elected to Laois County Council are required to supply a signed statement of donations and electoral expenses incurred at Local Elections and on an annual basis thereafter within specified periods of time. Any Members failing to comply with the regulations will be automatically disqualified.

(26) SUPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Subject to the provisions and requirements of the Act and any other enactment, any standing order except Standing Order No's. 17, 20 & 24 (Motions to Amend, Order of Debate and Ethics/Declaration of Interest) if so decided by the Council may at any time be suspended on a Motion proposed without notice for the purpose of enabling any specific business defined in the suspensory motion to be considered and dealt with by the Council, subject to the requirement that at least two-thirds of the Members present vote in favour, any fraction in the calculation of two-thirds being disregarded.

(27) CASUAL VACANCY

A casual vacancy shall be filled in accordance with Section 19 of the Local Government Act, 2001, as amended. Where the person causing the casual vacancy was a non-party candidate at his/her election to Laois County Council, the vacancy shall be filled by resolution of the Council subject to the proposed new Member being nominated by the Members whose departure caused the casual vacancy. Where the Member whose departure caused the casual vacancy is no longer living or is so incapacitated as to be unable to nominate a successor or fails to make such a nomination within a month of the departure, the vacancy shall be filled by agreement of the Council (a month for this purpose means 31 days)

(28) ADJOURNMENT OF MEETINGS

A motion for adjournment of a meeting of the Council may be made at any time and shall be determined without amendment and without debate, except that the mover of the Motion of adjournment and the mover of the Motion immediately affected by it, may each address Laois County Council for not more than five minutes on the question of the adjournment and when the Motion of adjournment is adopted, the meeting will stand adjourned to a day then named or in the event of no such date being named, to the next occurring ordinary meeting. A Special Meeting may be adjourned from time to time until its business is concluded.

(29) INTERPRETATION OF STANDING ORDERS

The Cathaoirleach's ruling on any question or his/her interpretation of Standing Orders shall be final.

(30) RIGHT TO FORM GROUPS

The right to form groups shall be in accordance with Schedule 10 of the Local Government Act, 2001, as amended.

(31) MATTERS NOT COVERED BY STANDING ORDERS

The Cathaoirleach shall have power to deal with any matters not covered by Standing Orders.

(32) BEREAVEMENT PROTOCOL

The convening and adjournment of meetings of Laois County Council as a demonstration of sympathy should be carried on by reference to the Council's Bereavement Protocol (attached Appendix 1).

APPENDIX 1 – BEREAVEMENT PROTOCOL

The following are the protocols that will apply in the event of the death occurring of:-

- ❖ **A Member of Laois County Council**
 - ❖ **A Former Member of Laois County Council**
 - ❖ **An immediate family Member of a Member of the Council**
 - ❖ **Any other person who has been connected with the Council, County Laois or a person who has made a significant contribution at a National or International level**
 - ❖ **Any other person**
-
- Where a Member of the Council or a group of Members wishes to have the sympathy of the Council extended the Member or Members must discuss the matter with the Cathaoirleach of the Council and the Director of Services with responsibility for Corporate Affairs in advance of the Meeting.
 - The Member or Members must then submit a written request to the Cathaoirleach prior to commencement of the Council Meeting
 - At the commencement of the meeting the Cathaoirleach will read the requests that have been received
 - In the event of the death of a Member of Laois County Council, the protocol shall be that on the date of the next Council Meeting, the Members will agree, as a mark of respect, that the meeting be adjourned. The Members will agree a date and time at which the meeting will be reconvened and thereafter a minutes silence will be observed prior to the meeting being adjourned.
 - In the event of the death of a former Member of Laois County Council, the protocol shall be that the Members will agree, as a mark of respect that the meeting be adjourned for a period of fifteen minutes and a minutes silence will be observed prior to the meeting being adjourned. Following the adjournment the meeting will reconvene and the business of the meeting will be proceeded with.
 - In the event of the death of an immediate family member of a member of Laois County Council, the protocol shall be that the Members will agree, as a mark of respect that the meeting be adjourned for a period of fifteen minutes and a minutes silence will be observed prior to the meeting being adjourned. Following the adjournment the meeting will reconvene and the business of the meeting will be proceeded with.

- In the event of the death occurring of any other person who has been connected with the Council, County Laois or a person who has made a significant contribution at a National or International level the protocol shall be that a vote of sympathy will be extended to the family of the deceased person.
- In the event of the death occurring of a serving employee of the Council, the protocol shall be that the office or other facility of the Council where the employee worked will be closed for a half day on the day of the funeral service in order to afford an opportunity to Council employees to attend the funeral service of the deceased person.
- In the event of the death occurring of a serving employee of the Council, the protocol shall be that the Members will agree as a mark of respect that the first meeting of the Council which is held after the death occurring will be adjourned for a period of fifteen minutes and a minutes silence will be observed prior to the meeting being adjourned. Following the adjournment the meeting will reconvene and the business of the meeting will be proceeded with.
- In the event of the death occurring of a retired employee of the Council the protocol shall be that the Members will agree as a mark of respect that the first meeting of the Council which is held after the death, a minutes silence will be observed prior to the meeting being adjourned. Following the adjournment the Meeting will reconvene and the business of the meeting will be proceeded with.
- In the event of the death occurring of any other person the protocol shall be that a vote of sympathy will be extended to the family of the deceased person
- In all cases, the fact that the Council has extended it's sympathy for any reason will be recorded in the minutes of the Meeting without reference being made to the Member or Members who submit the request.

- The appropriate letters will be issued by the Corporate Affairs Department

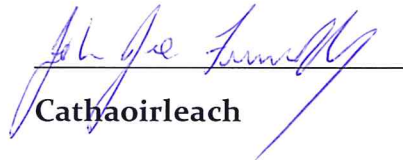
May 2015

(33) AMENDMENT AND DURATION OF STANDING ORDERS

These Standing Orders shall remain in force from the date of their adoption, which date shall be recorded and entered on a copy to be held at the Council's head office, until such time as Laois County Council shall decide by resolution to repeal them. Pending any such resolution, these orders may be amended by a resolution of the Council for which two thirds of the Members of the Council vote in favour. For this purpose two thirds of the membership shall be determined by disregarding any fraction remaining after the calculation of two thirds.

The above draft Standing Orders were adopted at meeting of Laois County Council held on May
25th 2015

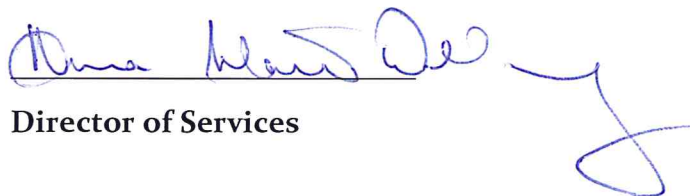
Signed:


Cathaoirleach

Signed:


Chief Executive

Signed:


Director of Services

Dated:

25th of May 2015