

**MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY MEETING OF LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL HELD ON THE 26TH
OF FEBRUARY 2024 IN ÁRAS AN CHONTAE**

PRESENT:	Councillor	Paschal McEvoy	In The Chair
	Councillors	Willie Aird	Paddy Bracken
		John Joe Fennelly	Marie Tuohy
		James Kelly	Caroline Dwane Stanley
		John King	Aidan Mullins
		Catherine Fitzgerald	Seamus McDonald
		P.J. Kelly	Ollie Clooney
		Padraig Fleming	Aisling Moran
		Conor Bergin	Ben Brennan
		Barry Walsh	Thomasina Connell

IN ATTENDANCE:

Messrs John Mulholland, Chief Executive, Donal Brennan, Director of Services, Gerry Murphy, Head of Finance, Ms. Angela McEvoy, Director of Services, Mr. Simon Walton, Director of Services, Ms. Irene Delaney, Administrative Officer & Ms. Michelle McCormack, S.O.

22. ATTENDANCE OF I.F.A.

With the approval of the Cathaoirleach, Mr. Francie Gorman, incoming President of the IFA and Mr. Sean Fitzpatrick, County Chair of the IFA were in attendance to address the members in relation to a number of National issues.

23. VOTE OF SYMPATHIES

The following Votes of Sympathies were agreed:

- (i) The Flynn family on the recent death of Mr. Sean Flynn, No. 1 Hotel Street, Tinnahinch, Graiguenamanagh, Co. Kilkenny, father of Ms. Bernie Flynn, MyPay Department
- (ii) The Lawler family on the recent death of Mr. Jackie Lawler, Burton Hall, Carlow, father of Ms. Nicola Lawler, former SEO of the Housing Department, Laois County Council
- (iii) The Coogan family, St. Joseph's Terrace, Portarlinton, father of Ms. Louise McEvoy, Housing Department, Laois County Council
- (iv) The Earl family, Clogrennane, Carlow, mother of Ms. Brenda Earl, Local Enterprise Office, Laois County Council
- (v) The McCormack family, Dereen, Cloneygowan, Tullamore, mother of Ms. Michelle McCormack, Corporate Affairs Department, Laois County Council
- (vi) The Delaney family, The Swan, Wolfhill, Co. Laois on the recent death of Ms. Margaret Delaney
- (vii) The Doyle family, Aughanure, Ballylinan, Co. Laois on the recent death of Mr. Eddie Doyle
- (viii) The Ryan family, Newtown, Durrow, Co. Laois on the recent death of Mr. Patrick Ryan
- (ix) The Abbott family, Graigueavallagh, Errill, Co. Laois on the recent death of Ms. Teresa Abbott

- (x) The McKelvey family, 17 Sheehane, Roscrea, Co. Tipperary on the recent death of Mr. Louis McKelvey
- (xi) The Byrne family, 'St' Martins', Ridge Road, Portlaoise, Co. Laois on the recent death of Ms. Helen Byrne
- (xii) The Connell family, Tunduff, Abbeyleix, Co. Laois on the recent death of Ms. Brigid Connell
- (xiii) The Comerford family, 'Bridjohn House', Sleaty Road, Graiguecullen, Carlow on the recent death of Mr. Edward Comerford
- (xiv) The Dalton family, John Square, Portlaoise on the recent death of Mr. Paddy Dalton.

The meeting was adjourned for a period of ten minutes as a mark of respect to the deceased.

24. NOTICE OF INTENTION TO RETIRE AS CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL

Mr. John Mulholland, Chief Executive advised the Members of his intention to retire as Chief Executive of Laois County Council with effect from the 20th of June 2024. Mr. Mulholland extended his thanks to the Members of the Council for their continued support during his term of office as Chief Executive during which many important and high value projects were delivered. Mr. Mulholland, in concluding, advised the Members that an opportunity would be available at a later date for them to extend their good wishes to him on his forthcoming retirement if they so wished.

25. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF THE JANUARY MONTHLY MEETING HELD ON THE 29TH OF JANUARY 2024

On the proposition of Councillor Willie Aird seconded by Councillor James Kelly the minutes of the January monthly meeting held on the 29th of January 2024 were confirmed as circulated.

A request to have valuation information made available for the S183 notice was noted.

26. REPORT ON CPG MEETING HELD ON THE 22ND OF JANUARY 2024

On the proposition of Councillor John Joe Fennelly seconded by Councillor Pdraig Fleming the minutes of the CPG Meeting held on the 22nd of January 2024 were confirmed as circulated.

27. REPORT ON MUNICIPAL DISTRICT MEETINGS HELD IN JANUARY 2024

On the proposition of Councillor James Kelly seconded by Councillor John Joe Fennelly, the minutes of the Municipal District meetings held in January 2024 were confirmed as circulated.

28. DISPOSAL OF LAND UNDER SECTION 183 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT, ACT 2001 – DISPOSAL OF LAND AT J17 NATIONAL ENTERPRISE PARK

On the proposition of Councillor Willie Aird seconded by Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald, the Members unanimously agreed to the disposal of 0.809 hectares of land at J17 National Enterprise Park, Togher, Portlaoise in the townland of Togher for a consideration of €280,000 plus V.A.T.

29. SECTION 11 OF ROADS ACT, 1983 – DECLARATION OF A PUBLIC ROAD, EXISTING LANE OFF THE R445 MAIN STREET, BALLYROAN

On the proposition of Councillor Barry Walsh seconded by Councillor John Joe Fennelly, the Members unanimously agreed to the declaration of a public road – existing lane off the R445 Main Street, Ballyroan.

30. NOMINATION OF MS. JACKIE CARROLL, C.E.O., LAOIS CHAMBER ALLIANCE TO REPLACE MS. CAROLINE HOFFMAN ON THE ENTERPRISE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM STRATEGY POLICY COMMITTEE

On the proposition of Councillor Willie Aird seconded by Councillor James Kelly the Members unanimously agreed to the nomination of Ms. Jackie Carroll, C.E.O., Laois Chamber Alliance to replace Ms. Caroline Hoffman on the Enterprise, Economic Development and Tourism Strategy Policy Committee.

31. NOMINATION OF MR. PATRICK WHELAN REPRESENTING THE LAOIS PPN SOCIAL INCLUSION TO THE LAOIS COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

On the proposition of Councillor Aisling Moran seconded by Councillor Caroline Dwane Stanley, the Members unanimously agreed to the nomination of Mr. Patrick Whelan representing the Laois PPN Social Inclusion to the Laois Community Development Committee.

32. PRESENTATION BY MR. JOSPEH THOMPSON, YOUTH OFFICER, LOETB ON THE YOUTH WOR PLAN 2023-2027

Mr. Joe Thompson, Youth Development Officer, Ms. Linda Tynan, Director of Schools (including Youth and Music) & Ms. Ailbhe Enraght-Moony, Youth Services Resource Worker were in attendance to deliver a presentation on their Youth Work Plan 2023-2027.

Councillor Caroline Dwane Stanley proposed that a letter issue to Minister Roderic O'Gorman, Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth requesting additional funding for County Laois. This proposal was seconded by Councillor Aisling Moran. In addition, on the proposal of Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald seconded by Councillor Aisling Moran, the Members agreed that a deputation meet with Minister O'Gorman in this regard. The deputation to be accompanied by the local Oireachtas Members

33. PRESENTATION BY DR. CYRIL SULLIVAN, C.E.O, ISPCA – THE ROLE OF ISPCA IN LAOIS AND THE DOG WARDEN/POUND SERVICES TO LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL

Dr. Cyril Sullivan, CEO, ISPCA gave a comprehensive presentation on the role of ISPCA in Laois and the Dog Warden/Pound Services to Laois County Council. Dr. Sullivan was accompanied by Mr. Tristan Blundell, Laois Dog Warden. The presentation detailed the services provided by the Laois County Council Dog Warden and the ISPCA and the various queries by Members were responded to.

34. PROPOSED CIVIC RECEPTION TO MR. FRANCIE GORMAN, PRESIDENT OF IFA AS RECOMMEND BY THE CORPORATE POLICY GROUP ON THE 19TH OF FEBRUARY 2024

On the proposition of Councillor Paschal McEvoy seconded by Councillor Willie Aird, the Members unanimously agreed to the according of a Civic Reception to Mr. Francie Gorman, President of IFA as recommended.

35. Monthly Management Report for February 2024 (documentation enclosed)

The Members were circulated with a copy of the Monthly Management Report for January 2024 and the Directors of Services responded to the various queries raised.

36. Training & Conferences

On the proposition of Councillor John King seconded by Councillor Padraig Fleming, the Members unanimously agreed the details as circulated on Training & Conferences

37. Correspondence

The following correspondence was circulated which had been received since the last meeting of Laois County Council:-

- (i) Correspondence from Cork County Council dated the 8th of February 2024 in relation to the reduction of VAT rate in pubs
- (ii) Correspondence from Cork County Council dated the 8th of February 2024 in relation to the reduction of VAT rates in the hospitality sector
- (iii) Correspondence from Sligo County Council dated the 30th of January 2024 in relation to the introduction of effective laws for the use of bicycles, electric bicycles and electric scooters
- (iv) Correspondence from Sligo County Council dated the 6th of February 2024 in relation to additional bus services from Dublin Airport to Sligo at night
- (v) Acknowledgment from the Department of Enterprise, Trade & Employment dated the 15th of February 2024 in relation to Notice of Motion No: 05/2024
- (vi) Acknowledgement from the Department of Transport dated the 16th of February 2024 in relation to Notice of Motion No: 02/2024
- (vii) Acknowledgement from the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration & Youth dated the 15th of February 2024 in relation to Notice of Motion No: 04/2024

- (viii) Acknowledgment from the Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage dated the 15th of February 2024 in relation to Notice of Motion No: 01/2024
- (ix) Acknowledgement from the Minister of State, Mr. Patrick O' Donovan dated the 29th of January 2024 in relation to Portlaoise Courthouse

38. NOTICE OF MOTIONS

Notice of Motion No: 06/2024

Councillors Conor Bergin & PJ Kelly proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That Laois County Council give an update on the provision of accommodation for the Order of Malta in Portlaoise as a matter of priority”

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Barry Walsh. The Members were advised that a meeting, with the Order of Malta, will be arranged shortly, to discuss their accommodation needs at Mountrath Road.

Notice of Motion No: 07/2024

Councillor Willie Aird proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That Laois County Council requests that IDA representatives are invited to the March meeting of the Council to give an update of their future plans for job creation in the County”

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Barry Walsh. It was agreed that correspondence would issue in this regard.

Notice of Motion No: 08/2024

Councillor Willie Aird proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That Laois County Council requests that representatives from the Irish Fisheries Board attend a Council meeting to inform this Council about criteria for removal of debris and cleaning of our waterways”

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor John Joe Fennelly. It was agreed that correspondence would issue in this regard.

Notice of Motion No: 9/2024

Councillors Thomasina Connell, Willie Aird, Barry Walsh, P.J. Kelly, Conor Bergin & John King proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That Laois County Council notes, that the Help to Buy Scheme has assisted 982 individuals and families in County Laois with up to €30,000 of their taxes back from the previous four years towards their deposit to either build or purchase their first home. Laois County Council further supports the Government’s extension of the Help to Buy Scheme to the end

of 2025 and calls for the scheme to be extended to the end of 2026 in Budget 2025 to introduce certainty for prospective buyers or those seeking to build their first home”

This Notice of Motion was deferred to the March meeting of Laois County Council.

Notice of Motion No: 10/2024

Councillors Ben Brennan, Padraig Fleming, Aisling Moran & Aidan Mullins proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That Laois County Council ask ESB Networks/Eirgrid to show what provisions will be in place for an alternative water supply for over 25,000 people in Laois including homes, businesses, farms, schools, nursing homes etc in the event of a catastrophic failure on site at the Coolnabacky substation as mentioned in the independent risk assessment dated January 2024”

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor P.J. Kelly. It was agreed that a letter issue in this regard

Notice of Motion No: 11/2024

Councillors Ben Brennan, Padraig Fleming, Aisling Moran & Aidan Mullins proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That Laois County Council enforce the legally binding planning condition 1a of Coolnabacky Substation, (Planning Permission VA0015), which includes submissions and documentation from the oral hearing”

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor P.J. Kelly. The Members were advised that The Planning Authority will enforce the planning conditions in relation to the development as granted planning permission under Ref Planning Permission VA0015.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

SIGNED: _____
CATHAOIRLEACH

CERTIFIED: _____
DIRECTOR OF SERVICES
CORPORATE AFFAIRS

