

**MINUTES OF THE APRIL MONTHLY MEETING OF LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL HELD
IN ÁRAS AN CHONTAE ON THE 28TH OF APRIL 2014**

PRESENT:	Councillors	Mary Sweeney	In the Chair
		Rotimi Adebari	William Aird
		John Bonham	Patrick Bracken
		Ben Brennan	Ray Cribbin
		James Daly	James Deegan
		Lisa Delaney	John Joe Fennelly
		Catherine Fitzgerald	Padraig Fleming
		David Goodwin	John King
		Michael Lalor	Jerry Lodge
		Seamus McDonald	Paul Mitchell
		John Moran	Tom Mulhall
		Kathleen O' Brien	Brendan Phelan
		Martin Phelan	Caroline Dwane Stanley

IN ATTENDANCE:

Messers Peter Carey, County Manager, Kieran Kehoe, Director of Services, Gerry Murphy, Head of Finance, Ms. Anna Marie Delaney, Director of Services, Ms. Josephine Kavanagh, Administrative Officer & Ms. Michelle McCormack, Executive Secretary.

33. VOTE OF SYMPATHY

On the proposition of the Leas Cathaoirleach, Councillor Martin Phelan, the Members unanimously agreed to pass a Vote of Sympathy to Mr. Gerry Murphy, Head of Finance on the recent death of his father, Mr. Michael Murphy, Arden Vale, Tullamore, Co. Offaly.

On the proposition of the Leas Cathaoirleach, Councillor Martin Phelan, the Members unanimously agreed to pass a Vote of Sympathy to Ms. Catherine Murphy, Senior Executive Technician on the recent death of her husband, Mr. Willie Murphy, Tomard, Athy, Co. Kildare.

The meeting was adjourned for 5 minutes as a mark of respect to the deceased. The County Manager on behalf of the Management & Staff of Laois County Council associated himself with the Votes of Sympathy.

34. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF THE MARCH MEETING OF LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL HELD ON THE 31ST OF MARCH 2014

On the proposition of Councillor Ray Cribbin seconded by Councillor William Aird, the Minutes of the March meeting held on the 31st of March 2014 were confirmed as circulated.

35. PART VIII OF THE LOCAL PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS, 2001 IN RESPECT OF PROPOSED SCHEME FOR THE REFURBISHMENT OF PORTARLINGTON PUBLIC LIBRARY AT MAIN STREET, PORTARLINGTON

The Members were circulated with the planning report on the proposed development. In accordance with the provisions of Part V111 of the Planning & Development Regulations, 2001 as amended, Laois County Council seeks consent for the refurbishment of its existing public library facility in Portarlington. The library is located in part of a detached single-storey

building at the junction of Main Street and Crowe Lane. The remainder of the building was used as a Courthouse but is currently vacant.

In particular this project provides for conversion of the Courthouse element of the overall building to use as a public library in conjunction with the existing library on the site. The gross floor area of the conversion is 183 sq. metres and the gross floor area of the existing library is 180 sq. metres. Consequent to the proposed development, the entire building of 363 sq. metres total gross floor area will function as a public library.

Ancillary works include:-

- Removal of internal partition walls
- Changes to external fenestration
- Paving and landscaping of the civic space in the front curtilage of the site
- Installation of public seating in this area
- Application of external insulation to all facades and
- Provision of an internal Courtyard in the rear curtilage of the site

On the proposition of Councillor Ray Cribbin seconded by Councillor Tom Mulahll, the Members unanimously agreed to proceed with the proposed development as outlined.

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

(i) DISPOSAL OF 0.0320 HECTARES OF LAND AT THE REAR OF HOUSES AT 92/93 CHERRY GROVE, PORTLAOISE

On the proposition of Councillor Caroline Dwane Stanley seconded by Councillor Kathleen O' Brien, the Members unanimously agreed to the disposal of 0.0320 hectares of land at the rear of houses at 92/93 Cherrygrove, Portlaoise in the townland of Knockmay, for a consideration of €250.00

(ii) DISPOSAL OF SITES NO. 2 & 3 COMPRISING OF 0.1472 HECTARES AT ARD EDMOND, CASTLETOWN

On the proposition of Councillor John Joe Fennelly seconded by Councillor Brendan Phelan, the Members unanimously agreed to the disposal of Sites No. 2 & 3 comprising of 0.1472 hectares at Ard Edmond, Castletown in the townland of for a consideration of €40,000.

37. ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENT 2013 INCLUDING APPROVAL OF OVER-EXPENDITURE AND TRANSFERS TO CAPITAL

Mr. Gerry Murphy, Head of Finance briefed the Members on the Annual Financial Statement for 2013. The summary of capital expenditure and income shows a debit balance of €4,388,777 at the 31st of December 2013 compared to a debit balance of €5,993,380 at the beginning of 2013. He advised that 2013 was again a difficult year

with reductions in some grants from Government Departments as well as reductions in a number of our own income sources. The percentage yields from rates and housing loans are a reflection of the financial situation businesses and mortgage holders are in. There has been, however, an improvement in commercial water, rent/annuity and fire collections and every effort is being made to collect all monies owed.

It was necessary during the course of the year to reduce expenditure across many service divisions. These measures together with strict budgetary controls and prudent financial management resulted in a surplus of €1,507 on the revenue account for the year.

The Head of Finance extended thanks to 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 2013. The County Manager, Mr. Peter Carey indicated that balancing the books is an ongoing challenge and paid tribute to the Head of Finance and his staff. The Members welcomed the report and complimented Mr. Gerry Murphy, Head of Finance and all staff in the Finance Section. The Head of Finance responded to the various queries raised by the Members.

On the proposition of Councillor Ray Cribbin seconded by Councillor Paul Mitchell, the Members unanimously adopted the Annual Financial Statement 2013 including approval of over-expenditure and transfers to capital.

38. REPORT ON DEVELOPMENT CONTRIBUTIONS

The Members were circulated with a report on Development Contributions detailing monies received in respect of development contributions and how such monies have been expended.

Mr. Gerry Murphy, Head of Finance responded to the various queries raised by the Members in this regard. The report was proposed by Councillor John King and seconded by Councillor James Deegan.

39. REPORT ON SERVICE INDICATORS 2012

The Members were circulated with the Executive Summary of the Service Indicators in Local Authorities for 2012. The Members were advised that regional comparisons had been carried out and Laois County Council compared very favourably against other Local Authorities in the region in delivering an extensive range of services to the people of Laois and will continue to make every effort to achieve further progress in 2014. The Members complimented all concerned.

40. DRAFT LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT 2013

Members were circulated with a copy of the draft Laois County Council Annual Report 2013. Ms. Anna Marie Delaney, Director of Service indicated to the Members that the Local Government Act, 2001 requires that a draft report be presented to the Members by the 30th of April. The report will come back to the June meeting of Laois County Council for formal adoption. On the proposition of Councillor John King seconded by Councillor James Deegan, the Members unanimously agreed to adopt the draft Laois County Council Annual Report for 2013.

41. PRESENTATION ON AGE FRIENDLY COUNTY PROGRAMME BY MS. DEBRA O' NEILL, REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT CONSULTANT, AGE FRIENDLY IRELAND INITIATIVE

Ms. Debra O' Neill from Age Friend Ireland delivered a presentation in relation to the Age Friendly Ireland initiative to the Members and sought the support of Laois County Council for the programme.

The County Manager, Mr. Peter Carey assured Ms. O' Neill of Laois County Council's unanimous support of the initiative. The Members complimented Ms. O' Neill on her presentation regarding the initiative and unanimously agreed to adopt the Age Friendly County Programme.

42. CORRESPONDENCE

Local Elections 2014

The Members were advised of the following details in relation to the forthcoming Local Elections:-

- (i) Receipt of Applications for the Supplement to the Register of Electors - May 6th 2014
- (ii) Nominations are being received from April 26th 2014 until 12.00 Noon on Saturday, May 3rd 2014
- (iii) Election Posters and Signage - Members were circulated with details received from the N.R.A. & E.S.B. in relation to same

Dissolution of the County Development Board

Ms. Anna Marie Delaney, Director of Services also advised the Members that the County Development Board held its final meeting on Tuesday, April 22nd 2014.

Local Community Development Committees (L.C.D.C's)

Ms. Anna Marie Delaney, Director of Services advised the Members that the L.C.D.C.'s are in the process of being set up. Interim guidelines have been issued by the Department of the Environment, Community & Local Government and the Committee must be in place by the 1st of June 2014. The L.C.D.C. will comprise statutory and non-statutory members and will consist of 17 members for County Laois, i.e. 8 Statutory (including 3 Elected Members) & 9 Non-Statutory Members.

Ms. Delaney advised that the L.C.D.C. would oversee the running of the Rural Development Programme and the Social Inclusion Activation Programme. Members were also advised that it was now proposed to seek nominations to the Committee from the relevant groupings. It was agreed to proceed on the basis outlined.

The Rural Water Programme

The Members were advised of the allocation for the Rural Water Programme 2014 which was notified by the Department of the Environment, Community & Local Government to Laois County Council on the 10th of April 2014 as follows:-

No.	JOB(T)	Allocation 2014
1	Grants for New Group Schemes	
	Water (Derrymoyle):	20,000
	Waste:(Derrymoyle)	10,200
	(Crossneen)	104,000
2	Taking In Charge G.W.S.S.	200,000
3	GWS Water Conservation/Network Upgrades	125,000
4	GWS Specific Source Protection Measures	12,750
5	GWS DBOs Capital Replacement Costs	-
		€471,950

Irish Water

The Members were circulated with the contact details for Irish Water including website and twitter accounts and contact numbers. Mr. Kieran Kehoe, Director of Services responded to the various queries raised in relation to same.

43. NOTICE OF MOTIONS

Notice of Motion No: 20/2014

Councillor Pdraig Fleming proposed the following Notice of Motion:

“That Laois County Council calls on the H.S.E. to ensure that the School Dentist visit every school in Laois each year”

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald. It was agreed that a letter issue to the H.S.E. in this regard.

Notice of Motion No: 21/2014

Councillor Tom Mulhall proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That Laois County Council seek an update from the Department of the Environment, Community & Local Government on the application for storm damage following the recent adverse weather conditions”.

This motion was seconded by Councillor John Joe Fennelly. The Members were advised that Laois County Council made a submission to the Department of the Environment, Community & Local Government for storm damage and recovery costs. The Report and Memo has been prepared for Government and is scheduled for the Government Cabinet Meeting on the 6th of May 2014. The Local Authorities will be contacted following this meeting.

Notice of Motion No: 22/2014

Councillor Kathleen O’ Brien proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That this Council call on the Government and the Commission for Energy Regulation to ensure that no standing charge be applied by Irish Water when water charges come in”

This motion was seconded by Councillor William Aird. It was agreed that a letter issue to the Commission for Energy Regulation in this regard.

Notice of Motion No: 23/2014

Councillor Kathleen O’ Brien proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That this Council call on the Minister for Transport not to close any of our railway lines”

This motion was seconded by Councillor Jerry Lodge. It was agreed that a letter issue to the Minister for Transport in this regard.

Notice of Motion No: 24/2014

Councillor Kathleen O' Brien proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

"That this Council call on the H.S.E. to re-consider the medical card/G.P. card holder ban of three months on moving to a new doctor if they have transferred not through their own fault to another practitioner"

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

Notice of Motion No: 25/2014

Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

"That this Council request Irish Water, while deciding on charges to take into consideration the amount of people who have to pay for water softeners"

This motion was seconded by Councillor Brendan Phelan. It was agreed that a letter would issue to Irish Water in this regard.

Notice of Motion No: 26/2014

Councillor Caroline Dwane Stanley proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

"That this Council re-instate the discretionary funding for ramps and other road safety measures and put in place a programme of road safety measures to be rolled out throughout the County"

This motion was seconded by Councillor William Aird. The Members were advised that Laois County Council does have a programme of Road Safety Measures in place. At last month's Council meeting, the Member's adopted the 2014 Roads Programme and endorsed an allocation of €190,000 to Road Safety Remedial measures for 10 schemes across the County. Indeed all Laois County Council's grants received are used primarily to address road safety concerns in particular areas such as the condition of the roads surface(i.e. skid resistance) and other areas such as road signs, lining, traffic calming and road topography. In this year's budget the Members also approved the amounts of €439,500 to Low Cost Remedial Measures, €82,500 to Road Safety & €116,000 to Traffic Management improvement.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

SIGNED: _____
CATHAOIRLEACH

CERTIFIED: _____
DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE
AFFAIRS

