

**MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER MONTHLY MEETING OF LAOIS COUNTY  
COUNCIL HELD IN ÁRAS AN CHONTAE ON THE 15<sup>TH</sup> OF DECEMBER 2014**

<b>PRESENT:</b>	Councillors	John Joe Fennelly	In the Chair
	Councillors	William Aird	Ben Brennan
		Paddy Bracken	Caroline Dwane Stanley
		Catherine Fitzgerald	Padraig Fleming
		David Goodwin	John King
		James Kelly	Jerry Lodge
		Seamus McDonald	Paschal McEvoy
		John Moran	Tom Mulhall
		Aidan Mullins	Brendan Phelan
		Mary Sweeney	Noel Tuohy

Messers Gerry Murphy, Chief Executive, Kieran Kehoe, Director of Services, Ms. Anna Marie Delaney, Director of Services, Ms. Julie Bergin, A/Head of Finance, Ms. Irene Delaney, Administrative Officer & Ms. Michelle McCormack, Executive Secretary.

**149. VOTE OF SYMPATHY**

On the proposition of Councillor John Joe Fennelly, Cathaoirleach it was unanimously agreed that a vote of sympathy be extended to the Farrell family on the death of Mr. Ned Farrell, General Services Supervisor with Laois County Council. A minutes silence was observed as a mark of respect to Ned followed by the adjournment of the meeting for a period of fifteen minutes.

**150. CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER MEETING  
HELD ON THE 24<sup>TH</sup> OF NOVEMBER 2014**

On the proposition of Councillor William Aird seconded by Councillor Brendan Phelan, the Minutes of the November meeting of Laois County Council held on the 24<sup>th</sup> of November were confirmed as circulated.

**151. LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL – MONTHLY MANAGEMENT REPORT FOR  
NOVEMBER 2014 (IN ACCORDANCE WITH CIRCULAR LETTER LG  
18/2014)**

Mr. Gerry Murphy, Chief Executive briefed the meeting on this matter and the report for November was circulated. On the proposition of Councillor William Aird seconded by Councillor Brendan Phelan, the monthly management report for November 2014 was unanimously agreed and noted. A number of queries were raised on the report and the Directors of Services responded to the queries raised.

**152. DRAFT CORPORATE PLAN 2014-2019**

The Members were circulated with a copy of the draft Corporate Plan 2014-2019. Ms. Anna Marie Delaney, Director of Services briefed the Members on the Plan. The Members were advised that the Corporate Plan serves as Laois County Council's strategic framework for action during the lifetime of the Council and will play a key role in the realization of the vision set out in the Action Plan for Effective Local Government. On the proposition of Councillor James Kelly seconded by Councillor John Moran, the Members unanimously adopted the draft Corporate Plan for 2014-2019.

**153. STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEES**

**(a) Assignment of S.P.C. Chairs**

It was noted that the Chairs of the S.P.C.'s would be nominated as follows:-

- Councillor John Moran to chair the Economic Development, Enterprise & Planning Strategic Policy Committee
- Councillor Jerry Lodge to chair the Transportation, Environment and Emergency Services Strategic Policy Committee
- Councillor Paschal McEvoy to chair the Housing Strategic Policy Committee
- Councillor Brendan Phelan to chair the Community, Social, Culture & Heritage Strategic Policy Committee

**(b) Nomination of Council Members to the S.P.C.'s**

On the proposition of Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald seconded by Councillor John King, it was unanimously agreed that the following Members would be nominated as follows:-

<b>Economic Development, Enterprise and Planning Strategic Policy Committee</b>	Councillor John Joe Fennelly Councillor Mary Sweeney Councillor David Goodwin Councillor Aidan Mullins
<b>Transportation, Environment and Emergency Services</b>	Councillor John King Councillor Seamus McDonald Councillor Ben Brennan Councillor Noel Tuohy
<b>Housing Strategic Policy Committee</b>	Councillor William Aird Councillor Caroline Dwane Stanley Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald Councillor Paddy Bracken
<b>Community, Social, Culture and Heritage</b>	Councillor Tom Mulhall Councillor James Kelly Councillor Pdraig Fleming

**(c) Nomination of Sectoral Representatives to the S.P.C.s**

On the proposition of Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald seconded by Councillor John King it was agreed that the following representatives from the Agriculture/Farming Sector be nominated:

<b>Economic Development, Enterprise and Planning Strategic Policy Committee</b>	Mr. Harry Vanston, Clonbarrow, Mountrath, Co. Laois.
<b>Transportation, Environment and Emergency Services</b>	Mr. John Fitzpatrick, Knockbawn, Spink, Co. Laois.
<b>Community, Social, Culture and Heritage</b>	Mr. Donald Scully, Cherryhill House, Ballyhyland, Portlaoise, Co. Laois.

**(d) Adoption of Revised Standing Orders**

On the proposition of Councillor Jerry Lodge seconded by Councillor John King, the Members unanimously agreed the Revised Standing Orders for the Strategic Policy Committees as circulated.

**154. PRESENTATION BY WATERWAYS IRELAND ON THE BARROW BLUEWAY PROJECT**

The following representatives from Waterways Ireland were in attendance to give a presentation on the Barrow Blueway Project:-

- Éanna Rowe, Head of Marketing and Communications
- Rosanna Nolan, Senior Engineer, Barrow Navigation
- Joe McMahon, Senior Engineer, Technical Services
- Cormac McCarthy, Environment Officer

The presentation included details on the Barrow Blueway Scheme and the proposals for same.

The Cathaoirleach & Members thanked Waterways Ireland for the very comprehensive presentation

**155. RATIFICATION OF CONFERENCES/ATTENDANCE AT TRAINING**

On the proposition of Councillor John King seconded by Councillor Seamus McDonald, the Members unanimously ratified conferences/training as circulated.

## 156. CORRESPONDENCE

The Members were circulated with a copy of the following correspondence which had been received since the last meeting of the Council:-

- Correspondence dated the 25<sup>th</sup> November 2014 from the Office of Public Works in relation to Notice of Motion No: 33/2014
- Correspondence dated the 1<sup>st</sup> December 2014 from the Office of the Minister for Justice & Equality in relation to Notice of Motion No: 51/2014
- Correspondence dated the 1<sup>st</sup> December 2014 from the Office of the Minister for the Environment, Community & Local Government in relation to Notice of Motion No: 52/2014
- Correspondence dated the 1<sup>st</sup> December 2014 from the Office of the Minister for the Environment, Community & Local Government in relation to Notice of Motion No: 53/2014
- Correspondence dated the 1<sup>st</sup> December 2014 from the Office of the Minister for Social Protection in relation to Notice of Motion No: 48/2014
- Correspondence dated the 1<sup>st</sup> December 2014 from the Office of the Minister for the Environment, Community & Local Government in relation to Notice of Motion No's: 46 & 50/2014
- Correspondence dated the 1<sup>st</sup> of December 2014 from the Office of the Minister for the Environment, Community & Local Government in relation to Notice of Motion No: 49/2014

## 157. NOTICE OF MOTIONS

### Notice of Motion No: 54/2014

**Councillor James Kelly proposed the following Notice of Motion:-**

*“That Laois County Council would provide a list of all land and vacant household properties in their ownership in the County so that this Council can take full advantage of the new Social Housing Strategy”*

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Ben Brennan. The Members were advised that Laois County Council's social housing land bank includes land in the following towns: Stradbally, Timahoe, Durrow, Portarlinton, Mountrath, Rathdowney, Ballylinan, Mountmellick & Errill. In addition, the Housing Agency has landbanks in Ballinakill, Rathdowney, Portlaoise, Crettyard, Durrow, Ballinakill, Castletown & Mountrath that may be used for social housing development.

The Council currently has 2000 housing units in stock. On the 8<sup>th</sup> of December 2014 only nine properties were vacant, that equates to 0.45% of the overall stock. All the vacant properties are undergoing works or have been scheduled for works by contract. The vacant properties are in Portlaoise, Portarlinton, Crettyard, Ballyroan, Mountmellick, Mountrath, Stradbally. Five of the nine properties are already allocated and it is envisaged that these properties will be tenanted before Christmas. It should be noted that Laois County Council has one of the lowest vacancy rates nationally.

**Notice of Motion No: 55/2014**

**Councillor Noel Tuohy proposed the following Notice of Motion:-**

*“That this Council welcomes the supplying of 35,000 additional social housing units announced by Minister Alan Kelly, T.D., and also welcomes the jobs that this will create”*

This Notice of motion was seconded by Councillor James Kelly. Mr. Gerry Murphy, Chief Executive also welcomed the proposal.

The Members were advised also that the Minister for the Environment, Community & Local Government, Alan Kelly had met with officials and elected members prior to the Council meeting to discuss the Social Housing Strategy 2020.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

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

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

