

**MINUTES OF THE JANUARY MEETING OF LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL HELD IN  
ARAS AN CHONTAE, PORTLAOISE, ON THE 30<sup>TH</sup> OF JANUARY 2017**

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

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Messers John Mulholland, Chief Executive, Kieran Kehoe, Director of Services, Gerry Murphy, Head of Finance, Donal Brennan, Director of Services, Ms. Irene Delaney, Administrative Officer & Ms. Michelle McCormack, Executive Secretary.

**1. VOTE OF SYMPATHY**

On the proposition of the Cathaoirleach, Councillor Tom Mulhall, the Members unanimously agreed to extend a vote of sympathy to the following families on the recent death of their loved ones:-

The Dunne family on the recent death of Mr. Dan Dunne, Clonurk, Ballyfin, Co. Laois father of Ms. Geraldine Dunne, Roads Department, Laois County Council & father in law of Ms. Kathleen Dunne, Housing Section, Laois County Council.

The O' Rourke family on the recent death of Mr. Richard O' Rourke, Campclone, Ballyfin, Co. Laois, father of Ms. Colette O' Rourke, Motor Tax & Ms. Derval O' Rourke, Water Services Section, Laois County Council.

The Dempsey family on the recent death of Mrs. Margaret Dempsey, Swan Road, Durrow, Co. Laois, mother of Ms. Margaret Saunders, Human Resources Department, Laois County Council.

The Lawler family on the recent death of Mr. Joe Lawler, Ardough, Bilboa, Carlow, father of Mr. Walter Lawler in the Library Department, Laois County Council.

The Callan family on the recent death of Mr. Liam Callan, 'Wayside', Ardreigh, Athy, Co. Kildare, father of Mr. Michael Callan, Planning Section and father of Mr. Tim Callan, Clerk-of-Works, Laois County Council.

The Conroy family on the recent death of Mr. Gerry Conroy, Killenard, Portarlinton, former Clerk-of-Works with Laois County Council.

The O' Brien family on the recent death of Ms. Kathleen O' Brien, 6 Millview, Portlaois, Co. Laois., former Member of Laois County Council and Portlaoise Town Council.

The Connell Family on the recent death of Mr. Patrick Connell, 57 Marian Avenue, Portlaoise, Co. Laois.

The votes of sympathies were endorsed by all Members present and in accordance with Standing Orders the meeting was adjourned for a period of fifteen minutes as a mark of respect to the deceased.

## **2. VOTE OF CONGRATULATIONS**

On the proposition of Councillor Tom Mulhall, it was unanimously agreed that a vote of congratulations be extended to Mr. Jim Bolger on his appointment as the new Leinster GAA Chairperson.

## **3. CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER MEETING OF LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL HELD ON THE 19<sup>TH</sup> OF DECEMBER 2016**

On the proposition of Councillor William Aird seconded by Councillor James Kelly, the Minutes of the December meeting held on the 19<sup>th</sup> of December 2016 were confirmed as circulated.

## **4. REPORT ON CPG MEETING HELD ON THE 12<sup>TH</sup> OF DECEMBER 2016**

On the proposition of Councillor Brendan Phelan seconded by Councillor John Moran, the report on the CPG meeting held on the 12<sup>th</sup> of December 2016 was confirmed as circulated.

## **5. REPORTS ON MUNICIPAL DISTRICT MEETINGS HELD IN DECEMBER 2016**

On the proposition of Councillor Ben Brennan seconded by Councillor James Kelly, the reports on the Municipal District Meetings held in December 2016 were confirmed as circulated.

## **6. REPORTS ON STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE MEETINGS HELD IN DECEMBER 2016**

On the proposition of Councillor Brendan Phelan seconded by Councillor Ben Brennan, the reports on Strategic Policy Committee Meetings held in December 2016 were confirmed as circulated.

**7. RATIFICATION OF MR. TONY DALTON AS THE LAOIS OFFALY EDUCATION & TRAINING BOARD REPRESENTATIVE ON THE LAOIS L.C.D.C.**

On the proposition of Councillor John Joe Fennelly seconded by Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald, the Members unanimously agreed to the ratification of Mr. Tony Dalton as the Laois Offaly Education & Training Board representative on the Laois LCDC.

**8. APPROVAL FOR THE RAISING OF A LOAN OF €4.9 MILLION IN RESPECT OF THE BUY-OUT PAYMENT FOR BLOCK 2, ÁRAS AN CHONTAE, PORTLAOISE**

On the proposition of Councillor Paschal McEvoy seconded by Councillor John King, the Members unanimously agreed to the approval for the raising of a loan of €4.9 million in respect the buy-out payment for Block 2, Áras an Chontae, Portlaoise.

**9. LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL – MONTHLY MANAGEMENT REPORT FOR JANUARY 2017**

Mr. John Mulholland, Chief Executive briefed the meeting on this matter and the report for January was circulated. The report for January 2017 was unanimously agreed and noted. A number of queries were raised on the report and the Directors of Services responded to the various queries raised.

**10. 2017 ROADS & TRANSPORTATION ALLOCATIONS**

The Members were circulated with the details of the 2017 Roads & Transportation Allocations for 2017. It was noted that the total overall Road Grants for 2017 amounted to €8,833,167.

**11. UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CORPORATE PLAN 2014-2019**

It was agreed that this matter be deferred to the February meeting of Laois County Council for discussion.

**12. HOUSING UPDATE**

**(I) REPORT TO STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE ON 5/12/2016 (ACTION PLAN FOR HOUSING & HOMELESSNESS)**

The Members were circulated with a copy of the Action Plan for Housing & Homelessness. Mr. Gerry Murphy, Head of Finance/Director of Housing briefed the Members on the report and responded to the various queries raised

## **(II) UPDATE ON HOUSING MATTERS FOR STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE ON 23/01/2017**

The Members were circulated with a report which was circulated at the Housing SPC meeting on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of January 2017 detailing the Capital Programme, Acquisitions for 2016 and the Capital Assistance Scheme. Mr. Gerry Murphy, Head of Finance/Director of Services responded to the various queries raised.

### **13. OFFICIAL INVITATION TO THE ST. PATRICK'S DAY PARADE 2017 NEW YORK FROM THE LAOIS ASSOCIATION NEW YORK**

Mr. Donal Brennan, Director of Services advised the Members that an invitation had been received from the County Laois Association in New York inviting the Cathaoirleach and other officials of Laois County Council to the St. Patrick's Day Parade in New York. On the proposition of Councillor Paschal McEvoy seconded by Councillor John King, approval was given to same.

### **14. CONFIRM DATES FOR CONSIDERATION OF THE 2<sup>ND</sup> CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT ON THE DRAFT LAOIS COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2017-2023**

The following dates were agreed for the consideration of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Chief Executive's Report on the draft Laois County Development Plan 2017-2023:

- **Meeting in Committee – February 22<sup>nd</sup> 2017 at 2.00 p.m.**
- **Statutory Meeting – March 20<sup>th</sup> 2017 at 11.30 a.m.**

### **15. PRESENTATION TO THE INAB ACCREDITATION TO THE LABORATORY STAFF**

Mr. Tom Mulhall, Cathaoirleach presented the Laois County Council's Water Services Laboratory their accreditation to ISO17025 for drinking water check parameters plus nitrates certificate which was received in October 2016.

The Members of the Council together with the Chief Executive and the Director of Services complimented all the Laboratory staff on this achievement and on the tremendous work in providing a quality service to Irish Water under the SLA.

### **16. RATIFICATION OF CONFERENCES/ATTENDANCE AT TRAINING**

On the proposition of Councillor Paschal McEvoy seconded by Councillor John King, the Members unanimously agreed to the ratification of conferences/attendance at training as circulated.

## 17. CORRESPONDENCE

The following items of correspondence were circulated to the Members which had been received since the last meeting:-

- (i) Correspondence dated the 12<sup>th</sup> of January 2017 received from the Department of Housing, Planning, Community & Local Government in relation to the Tenant (Incremental) Purchase Scheme
- (ii) Correspondence dated the 18<sup>th</sup> of January 2017 received from the Office of the Commissioner of An Garda Síochána in relation to additional personnel to be allocated to Laois
- (iii) Correspondence dated the 3<sup>rd</sup> of January 2017 received from the Office of the Tánaiste and the Minister for Justice & Equality in relation to the Garda murdered in 1976
- (iv) Acknowledgement dated the 25<sup>th</sup> of January 2017 from the Minister of Health regarding his recent visit to Portlaoise General Hospital

## 18. NOTICE OF MOTIONS

### Notice of Motion No: 01/2017

Councillor Willie Aird proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

***“That Laois County Council call on Mr. Seán Canney, T.D., Minister for State to issue an order in relation to CFRAM’s mapping flood report which was completed in 2016 be taken into account in the preparation of the County Development Plan and Local Area Plans”***

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Caroline Dwane Stanley. It was agreed that a letter issue to the Minister in this regard.

### Notice of Motion No: 02/2017

Councillor William Aird proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

***“That Laois County Council calls on Mr. Simon Coveney, T.D., Minister for Housing, Planning, Community & Local Government to allow people on old age pensions to buy out their homes as the current scheme does not include them”***

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Noel Tuohy. It was agreed that a letter issue to Minister Coveney in this regard.

### Notice of Motion No: 03/2017

Councillor William Aird proposed the following Notice of Motion:

***“That Laois County Council calls on Mr. Shane Ross, T.D., Minister for Transport, Tourism & Sport to allow Local Authorities to re-surface/fill potholes on roads that were done under L.I.S. Schemes”***

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Brendan Phelan. It was agreed that a letter issue to Minister Ross in this regard.

The Members were advised that LIS schemes provide funding for roads and laneways that have not been taken in charge by the Council, the maintenance and improvement of which is a matter for the relevant landowner. At the moment, there is no separate funding allocation for LIS schemes. Strengthening and maintenance of the regional and local road network is funded by the Department through the annual grant allocations along with our own resources, which is barely enough to strengthen and maintain the 2.5% target length each year. There is currently no ring-fenced funding in place to cater for maintenance works on LIS schemes. Such funding, should it become available, would be very much welcomed, in order to maintain the road surfaces that have been completed under previous LIS schemes.

Councillors were advised that if requests were submitted for taking in charge such private roads they would be considered.

**Notice of Motion No: 04/2017**

Councillor William Noel Tuohy proposed the following Notice of Motion:

***“That Laois County Council support the National initiative to help secure the legislative approval for the legislation of medicinal cannabis.”***

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Padraig Fleming.

**Notice of Motion No: 05/2017**

Councillor James Kelly proposed the following Notice of Motion:

***“That Laois County Council seeks to develop and support the establishment of business incubation units within the County in conjunction with the local enterprise office and the relevant government agencies”***

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Jerry Lodge. The Members were informed that Laois County Council, through the Local Enterprise Office has a very close working relationship with both Portlaoise and Portarlington Enterprise Centres. Both centres and the LEO form an integral part of the support infrastructure for start-ups and micro enterprises and a close working relationship between all parties ensures a more coordinated and cohesive approach to the development of small businesses within the County.

The Council is represented on the Boards of both Enterprise Centres and will continue to work closely with both through the Local Enterprise Office and the newly formed Business Support Unit, to establish a structured link to facilitate and encourage economic/enterprise development within the county, whether by start-up companies, expansion of existing businesses or inward investments.

The Council were recently successful in securing funding under the REDZ Programme to develop a FAB LAB in Portarlington Enterprise Centre the aim of which is to re-orientate the focus of the Portarlington Enterprise Centre to effectively meet the needs of the emerging digital economy in Co. Laois. The Business Support Unit are also meeting with representatives from Mountrath in the coming months to discuss the establishment of Business Incubation Units in the town.

The Council will continue to liaise with Enterprise Ireland in relation to possible funding streams for the promotion/further development of both centres.

**Notice of Motion No: 06/2017**

Councillor James Kelly proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

***“That Laois County Council provide an update report on the provision new playgrounds in the County”***

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Pascal McEvoy. The Members were advised that Laois County Council Sport & Leisure Section is working with two communities (Ballinakill & Borris in Ossory) with a view to assisting the communities there to access funding for Community Play Facilities in 2017/18. No funding is available currently to Local Authorities to develop additional play areas in Co Laois.

**Notice of Motion No: 07/2017**

Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald proposed the following Notice of Motion

***“That Laois County Council calls on the Government to provide funding for the life saving Cystic Fibrosis drug Orkambi”***

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Noel Tuohy. It was agreed that a letter issue to the Government accompanied by the signatures of the 19 Members of Laois County Council.

This concluded the business of the meeting

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

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

