

**MINUTES OF THE JANUARY MEETING OF LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL HELD  
ON THE 27<sup>TH</sup> OF JANUARY 2020**

<b><u>PRESENT:</u></b>	Councillor	William Aird	In the Chair
	Councillors	Conor Bergin Ben Brennan Thomasina Connell John Joe Fennelly John King Paschal McEvoy Tom Mulhall Mary Sweeney Catherine Fitzgerald	Paddy Bracken Ollie Clooney Caroline Dwane Stanley Padraig Fleming Seamus McDonald Aisling Moran Aidan Mullins James Kelly Noel Tuohy

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

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

**1. VOTES OF SYMPATHY**

On the proposition of the Cathaoirleach, Councillor William Aird, the members unanimously agreed to extend a vote of sympathy to the Fitzpatrick Family on the recent death of Mr. John Fitzpatrick, Ashton Manor, Portlaoise, Co. Laois.

On the proposition of the Cathaoirleach, Councillor William Aird, the members unanimously agreed to extend a vote of sympathy to the Cannon Family on the recent death of Mr. Willie Cannon, Moyville West, Oranmore, Galway, mother of staff member, Ms. Regina Daly.

On the proposition of the Cathaoirleach, Councillor William Aird, the members unanimously agreed to extend a vote of sympathy to the Deevy Family, Castle Gardens, Kilkenny City, Kilkenny, on the recent death of Mr. Colin Deevy, brother of staff member, Ms. Honor Deevy.

On the proposition of the Councillor Tom Mulhall, the members unanimously agreed to extend a vote of sympathy to the McElwaine family, Station Road, Portarlinton on the recent death of Mr. Niall McElwaine.

On the proposition of Councillor Noel Tuohy, the members unanimously agreed to extend a vote of sympathy to the Mallon family, 5 Castleview, Markethill, Armagh on the recent death of Mr. Seamus Mallon.

On the proposition of Councillor Mary Sweeney, the members unanimously agreed to extend a vote of sympathy to the Walsh Family, St. Brigid's Place, Portlaoise on the recent death of Mr. Martin Walsh.

On the proposition of Councillor Ollie Clooney, the members unanimously agreed to extend a vote of sympathy to the Dunne Family, Mary Street, Durrow on the recent death of Mr. Michael Dunne.

On the proposition of Councillor Thomasina Connell, the members unanimously agreed to extend a vote of sympathy to the Malone & Flynn families, Kilbracken, Ballybrittas on the recent death of Ms. Caroline Flynn,

On the proposition of Councillor James Kelly, the members unanimously agreed to extend a vote of sympathy to the Conroy Family, 28 Grange Hall, Mountmellick on the recent death of Mr. Noel Conroy.

On the proposition of Councillor Mary Sweeney, the members unanimously agreed to extend a vote of sympathy to the Doody Family, Ridge Road, Portlaoise on the death of Ms. Bridie Doody.

## **2. VOTE OF CONGRATULATIONS**

On the proposition of Councillor Noel Tuohy seconded by Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald, the members unanimously agreed to extend a vote of congratulations to the Portlaoise Panthers on their recent successes.

## **3. VOTE OF BEST WISHES**

On the proposition of the Cathaoirleach, Councillor Willie Aird, the Members unanimously extended a vote of best wishes to Mr. Joe Delaney on his appointment as Director of Services with Laois County Council.

## **4. CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER MEETING OF LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL HELD ON THE 16<sup>TH</sup> OF DECEMBER 2020**

On the proposition of Councillor John Joe Fennelly seconded by Councillor John King, the Members unanimously agreed to the minutes of the December meeting of Laois County Council held on the 16<sup>th</sup> of December 2019.

## **5. REPORT ON CPG MEETING HELD ON THE 9<sup>TH</sup> OF DECEMBER 2019**

On the proposition of Councillor Seamus McDonald seconded by Councillor John King, the Members unanimously agreed to the report on CPG meeting held on the 9<sup>th</sup> of December 2019.

## **6. REPORT ON MUNICIPAL DISTRICT MEETINGS HELD IN DECEMBER 2019**

On the proposition of Councillor James Kelly seconded by Councillor Mary Sweeney, the Members unanimously agreed to the minutes of the reports on Municipal District Meetings held in December 2019.

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

**DISPOSAL OF SITE NO. 7A CLONMINAM INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, PORTLAOISE**

On the proposition of Councillor Caroline Dwane Stanley seconded by Councillor Noel Tuohy, the Members unanimously agreed to the disposal of Site No. 7A Clonminam Industrial Estate, Portlaoise, Co. Laois in the townland of Clonminam comprising 0.172 hectares for a consideration of €70,000 (technical amendment)

**DISPOSAL OF SITE NO. 7B CLONMINAM INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, PORTLAOISE**

On the proposition of Councillor Mary Sweeney seconded by Councillor John Joe Fennelly, the Members unanimously agreed to the disposal of Site No. 7B Clonminam Industrial Estate, Portlaoise, Co. Laois in the townland of Clonminam comprising 0.172 hectares for a consideration of €70,000, (technical amendment),

**8. TAKING IN CHARGE OF HYNDS SQUARE, PORTLAOISE**

On the proposition of Councillor Caroline Dwane Stanley seconded by Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald, the Members unanimously agreed to the Taking in Charge of Hynds Square, Portlaoise.

**9 RATIFICATION OF NOMINATIONS FROM THE I.F.A. TO STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEES**

On the proposition of Councillor Mary Sweeney seconded by Councillor John Joe Fennelly, the Members unanimously agreed to the nomination of Mr. John Talbot to the Transport, Environment & Emergency Services Strategic Policy Committee.

On the proposition of Councillor Mary Sweeney seconded by Councillor John King, the Members unanimously agreed to the nomination of Mr. Donald Scully to the Climate Action & Community Strategic Policy Committee.

**10. RATIFICATION OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF PUBLIC EVENTS COMMITTEE AND NOMINATION OF MEMBERS TO THE COMMITTEE**

The ratification of the establishment of the Public Events Committee and the nomination of the following Members was proposed and unanimously agreed:-

- Councillor Ben Brennan
- Councillor Paschal McEvoy
- Councillor Aisling Moran
- Councillor James Kelly
- Councillor Thomasina Connell

**11. OFFICIAL INVITATION TO THE ST. PATRICK'S DAY PARADE 2020 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 Padraig Fleming seconded by Councillor Seamus McDonald, approval was given to same.

**12. ADOPTION OF THE DRAFT 2020 ANNUAL SERVICE DELIVERY PLAN**

The Members were circulated with a copy of the Annual Service Delivery Plan for 2020 and same was noted and unanimously agreed.

**13. CORPORATE PLAN 2019-2024**

The Members were circulated with a copy of the Corporate Plan 2019-2024 and same was noted.

**14. ADOPTION OF DRAFT AFFORDABLE HOUSING SCHEME 2019-2024**

Mr. Joe Delaney, Director of Services briefed the Members on the Draft Affordable Scheme 2019-2024. On the proposition of Councillor Caroline Dwane Stanley seconded by Councillor Thomasina Connell, the Affordable Housing Scheme 2019-2024 was adopted.

**15. LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL MONTHLY MANAGEMENT REPORT FOR DECEMBER 2019/JANUARY 2020**

The Members were circulated with a copy of the Monthly Management Report for December 2019/January 2020 and the Directors of Services responded to the various queries raised.

**16. PRESENTATION BY MR. JOHN LOWRY, CNG BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT, GAS NETWORKS IRELAND**

Mr. John Lowry, CNG Business Development, Gas Networks Ireland gave a very comprehensive presentation to Members on Gas Networks Ireland. Mr. Lowry responded to the various queries raised by the Members and the Members complimented him on his presentation.

**17. PRESENTATION BY MR. RORY O' CALLAGHAN, SENIOR EXECUTIVE ENGINEER ON WASTE MANAGEMENT (STORAGE, PRESENTATION AND SEGREGATION OF HOUSEHOLD & COMMERCIAL WASTE) BYE-LAWS 2018**

Mr. Rory O' Callaghan, Senior Executive Engineer delivered a presentation to the Members on the European Union (Household Food Waste & Bio-Waste) Regulations, 2015, the Management (Storage, presentation and segregation of household and commercial waste) Bye-Laws 2018 & Illegal Dumping 2019.

**18. AGREE DATE FOR PRESENTATION TO EIRGRID**

On the proposition of Councillor Padraig Fleming seconded by Councillor Seamus McDonald, it was agreed that the presentation by Eirgrid would be scheduled for the February meeting of Laois County Council on the 24<sup>th</sup> of February matters.

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

On the proposition of Councillor Paschal McEvoy seconded by Councillor James Kelly, the Members unanimously agreed the details as circulated.

**20. CORRESPONDENCE**

The Members were circulated with the following correspondence which had been received since the last meeting:

- (i) Correspondence dated the 18<sup>th</sup> of December 2019 from the Office of the Minister for Health in relation to Notice of Motion No: 53/2019
- (ii) Correspondence dated the 15<sup>th</sup> of January 2020 from the Department of Housing, Planning & Local Government in relation to Notice of Motion No: 66/2019
- (iii) Correspondence dated the 19<sup>th</sup> of December 2019 from the Department of Justice & Equality in relation to Notice of Motion No: 67/2019
- (iv) Correspondence dated the 18<sup>th</sup> of December 2019 from the Minister of State for Mental Health and Older People in relation to Notice of Motion No: 67/2019
- (v) Correspondence dated the 16<sup>th</sup> of December 2019 from the Minister for Health in relation to Notice of Motion No: 69/2019
- (vi) Correspondence dated the 15<sup>th</sup> of January 2020 from the Minister for Health in relation to Notice of Motion No: 71/2019
- (vii) Correspondence dated the 30<sup>th</sup> of December 2019 from the Office of the Minister for Education & Skills in relation to Notice of Motion No: 72/2019
- (viii) Correspondence dated the 6<sup>th</sup> of January 2019 from the Office of the Minister for Housing, Planning & Local Government in relation to Notice of Motion No: 73/2019
- (ix) Correspondence dated the 13<sup>th</sup> of January 2019 from the Office of the Minister for Employment Affairs and Social Protection in relation to Notice of Motion No: 73/2019
- (x) Correspondence dated the 14<sup>th</sup> of January 2020 from the Office of the Minister for Housing, Planning & Local Government in relation to Notice of Motion No: 74/2019

- (xi) Correspondence dated the 23<sup>rd</sup> of December 2019 from the Office of the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine in relation to Notice of Motion NO: 75/2019

## 21. NOTICE OF MOTIONS

### Notice of Motion No: 01/2020

Councillor John Kelly proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

*“That Laois County Council commits to the carrying out of an audit of bus stopping points in the County with a view to securing funding to provide for bus shelters based on the need of the user”*

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor John King. The Members were advised that Laois County Council is the statutory body for the designation of bus stops across the public road network in County Laois.

In parallel the National Transport Authority licence bus operators to provide bus services and, in so doing, the NTA consult with individual local authorities with a view to ensuring that bus service providers utilize designated bus stopping stops only.

An audit of existing bus services throughout County Laois is underway and will be presented to the Transportation SPC. This audit will identify those bus stopping points that are used most frequently and will provide the basis for prioritizing funds to be allocated to the upgrading of individual bus stops. Once finalized at SPC the matter will be referred back to Laois County Council for approval.

On the issue of funding it is noted that, in the recently adopted Capital Budget 2020 – 2022, Elected Members approved a sum of €50,000 for Bus Shelters, to be funded by development contributions. Laois County Council will also continue to liaise with the National Transport Authority with a view to securing funding for the upgrading of public transport facilities throughout County Laois. Accessibility to public transport services will be a key priority of any programme of works.

### Notice of Motion No: 02/2020

Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

*“That this Council request the Minister for Employment Affairs and Social Protection, Ms. Regina Doherty, T.D., to re-instate the state pension to the age of 65”*

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor John Joe Fennelly. The Members were advised that a letter would issue to the Minister for Employment Affairs and Social Protection in relation to this matter.

### **Notice of Motion No: 03/2020**

Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

*“That this Council make arrangements for extra collections at bottle banks at Christmas time”*

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor John Joe Fennelly. The Members were advised that Laois County Council operates bottle banks at 43 locations around the County. The bottle bank collection service is a joint service contract operated by the four midland counties, Offaly, Longford, Westmeath & Laois. The bottle banks are monitored daily by LCC staff and some of them also have CCTV in place.

There is a rota in place for the emptying of the banks by the Contractor, Glassco. If this collection service is required sooner than the agreed rota, arrangements are made with the contractor. Following the Christmas period, Glassco were very busy trying to service all of the additional callouts in each of the four counties. Offaly County Council is the lead authority for tendering the works. The current contract expires later this year.

Laois County Council is currently in contact with Offaly County Council to include in the next tender a process whereby the contractor will prioritise the collection rota and collection schedule of the busiest and higher volume bottle banks during and after the busy holiday periods. Laois County Council is always seeking additional locations for bottle banks and relies on members of the public to respect these areas and to keep them clean and litter free. Where receptacles are full an alternative location should be sought or recyclables brought home.

### **Notice of Motion No: 04/2020**

Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

*“That this Council exclude the Carers Allowance in their calculation when assessing rent”*

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Paschal McEvoy. The Members were advised that Carers allowance is one of many social welfare incomes that is included for rent calculation purposes. Laois County Council has commenced a review of rents, the first since 2013. There are no plans under the current differential rent scheme to exclude Carers Allowance.

### **Notice of Motion No: 05/2020**

Councillor Aisling Moran proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

*“That this Council calls on the Minister for Housing, Planning & Local Government, Mr. Eoghan Murphy, T.D. to offer a tax exemption to all landlords renting accommodation to students”*

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Conor Bergin. The Members were advised that a letter would issue to the Minister for Housing, Planning & Local Government in this regard.

#### **Notice of Motion No: 06/2020**

Councillor Mary Sweeney proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

*“That Laois County Council replicate the global greening initiative for St Patrick’s Day and light up cultural and historical sites around the County”*

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald. The Members were advised that Laois County Council are currently examining the possibility of lighting some historical /cultural buildings within the County for the St Patrick’s Weekend and will pursue the matter further.

#### **Notice of Motion No: 07/2020**

Councillor Mary Sweeney proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

*“That Laois County Council provide an update on the Age Friendly Strategy and consider co-ordinating and hosting multi agency community meetings around the County that will provide important information to people”*

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald. The Members were advised that The Laois Age Friendly Strategy 2016-2021 outlines 66 actions under pinned by the 8 Age Friendly Themes as identified by the World Health Organisation. The programme coordinator based in Laois County Council works closely with the Older Peoples Executive Forum. The Age Friendly Alliance is a high level cross sector multi agency group and meets on a quarterly basis to oversee the implementation of the Age Friendly Strategy. We are currently organizing the Annual General Meeting for the Older Peoples Forum in May or June. This will be the popular Tea Dance. The event will have information stands and speakers. Date, venue and speaker to be confirmed. Together with the Older Peoples Executive Forum Laois County Council intend to update the list of Older Peoples Forum members and their contact details at the Tea Dance. This wider Older Peoples Forum will provide support to the Older Peoples Executive Forum.



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

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