

**MINUTES OF THE MARCH MEETING OF LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL
HELD IN ÁRAS AN CHONTAE ON THE 21st OF MARCH 2016**

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

APOLOGIES: Councillor Brendan Phelan

IN ATTENDANCE:

Messers John Mulholland, Chief Executive, Gerry Murphy, Head of Finance, Kieran Kehoe, Director of Services, Mr. Michael Rainey, A/Director of Services, Ms. Irene Delaney, Administrative Officer, & Ms. Michelle McCormack, Executive Secretary.

24. CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY MEETING HELD ON THE 29TH OF FEBRUARY 2016

On the proposition of Councillor Mary Sweeney seconded by Councillor James Kelly, the Minutes of the February meeting of Laois County Council held on the 29th of February 2016 were agreed as circulated.

25. REPORTS ON MUNICIPAL DISTRICT MEETINGS HELD IN FEBRUARY 2016

On the proposition of Councillor Mary Sweeney seconded by Councillor James Kelly, the reports on Municipal District meetings held in February 2016 were noted and agreed as circulated.

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

- (i) DISPOSAL OF SITE NO. 3 COMPRISING 0.1052 HECTARES OF LAND AT 3 CLODIAGH WAY, CLONASLEE**

No proposer or seconder received.

- (ii) DISPOSAL OF FREEHOLD INTEREST AT 12 BELADD, PORTLAOISE, CO. LAOIS.**

On the proposition of Councillor William Aird seconded by Councillor Noel Tuohy, the Members unanimously agreed to the disposal of freehold interest at 12 Beladd, Portlaoise, Co. Laois in the townland of Beladd, for a consideration of €300.00

- (iii) DISPOSAL OF FREEHOLD INTEREST AT RATHMOYLE, ABBEYLEIX, CO. LAOIS.**

On the proposition of Councillor John Joe Fennelly seconded by Councillor Mary Sweeney, the Members unanimously agreed to the disposal of freehold interest at Rathmoyle, Abbeyleix, Co. Laois in the townland of Rathmoyle for a consideration of €300.00

- (iv) DISPOSAL OF 3.4538 HECTARES OF LAND AT PORTALINGTON, CO. LAOIS.**

On the proposition of Councillor Tom Mulhall seconded by Councillor Paschal MCEvoy, the Members unanimously agreed to the disposal of 3.4538 hectares of land at Portarlington, Co. Laois in the townland of Bracklone for a consideration of €160,000

- (v) DISPOSAL OF 0.003 HECTARES OF LAND AT BALLINTOTY, NENAGH, CO. TIPPERARY**

On the proposition of Councillor James Kelly seconded by Councillor John King, the Members unanimously agreed to the disposal of 0.003 hectares of land at Ballintoty, Nenagh, Co.

Tipperary in the townland of Ballintoty, for a consideration of €1.00

27. PART VIII OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS, 2001, AS AMENDED IN RESPECT OF CLONMINAM BUSINESS PARK, PORTLAOISE

On the proposition of Councillor John Joe Fennelly seconded by Councillor William Aird, the Members unanimously agreed to proceed with the various infrastructural improvement works at Clonminam Business Park, Portlaoise in accordance with the provisions of Part VIII of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended. The main specific elements of the project include provision of:

- c.355 linear metres of footpath, road improvement and associated surface water drainage
- c.13 no. public lighting columns
- c. 40 free-standing signs and
- Landscaping

28. DRAFT ANNUAL SERVICE DELIVERY PLAN 2016

Mr. John Mulholland, Chief Executive briefed the Members on the draft 2016 Annual Service Delivery Plan, the adoption of which is now a statutory requirement under The Local Government Reform Act, 2014. The Service Delivery Plan identifies the principle services to be provided by Laois County Council to the public and is consistent with the adopted Budget for 2016 and the Corporate Plan 2014-2019.

The Members were advised that any queries in relation to the draft Plan should be submitted to the Corporate Affairs Section and it was agreed that the adoption of the Plan would be tabled for consideration at the April meeting of Laois County Council scheduled for the 25th of April 2016.

29. LAOIS LECP 2015-2021 – PRESENTATION BY MS. GORMLA O' CORRIN, A/SENIOR EXECUTIVE PLANNER

Ms. Gormla O' Corrain, A/Senior Executive Planner delivered a presentation to the members on the Laois LECP. It was noted that the Members were circulated with copies of the LECP objectives and actions in January 2016 and were briefed at their Municipal District meetings in February of 2016.

(i) CONSIDERATION OF THE DRAFT LAOIS LOCAL ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY PLAN (LECP) 2016-2021 (INCLUDING REVISIONS AND THE SEA AND AA SCREEING REPORTS IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 44 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM ACT, 2014

On the proposition of Councillor John Joe Fennelly seconded by Councillor Padraig Fleming the Members unanimously adopted the Draft Laois Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) 2016-2021 (including revisions and the SEA and AA screening reports) in accordance with Section 44 of the Local Government Reform Act, 2014

(ii) CONSIDERATION OF THE 2016 LECP IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 44 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM ACT, 2014

On the proposition of Councillor John Joe Fennelly seconded by Councillor Padraig Fleming the Members unanimously adopted the 2016 LECP Implementation Strategy in accordance with Section 44 of the Local Government Reform Act, 2014

30. REVIEW OF THE LAOIS COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2011-2017 AND PREPARATION OF THE LAOIS COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2017-2023 – PRESENTATION BY MS. ANGELA MCEVOY, SENIOR PLANNER

Ms. Angela McEvoy, Senior Planner delivered a presentation to the Members on the Chief Executive's Report on issues raised during the first phase of consultation on the review of the Laois County Development Plan under Section 11 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended. The Senior Planner indicated that a draft plan would be prepared before the end of June 2016 and also details of the various timeframes for the plan were circulated to the Members.

31. ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT ON THE LITTER MANAGEMENT PLAN, 2015-2017

The Members were circulated with the Annual Progress Report on the Litter Management Plan, 2015-2017. The Progress Report contains the key performance indicators and provides the Members with an update on progress to date in Litter Management. The Members expressed concern, however, in relation to the increase in littering around the County and it was agreed that a letter issue to the Department of the Environment, Community & Local Government with a view to increasing the fines in this regard. The Members and Mr. Michael Rainey, A/Director of Services complimented all the staff in the Environment Section who carry out an excellent job. Members were encouraged to report all dumping to the Hotline Number 1800.32.32.30.

32. AUDIT COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2015

The Members were circulated with a copy of the Audit Committee Annual Report for 2015. On the proposition of Councillor Mary Sweeney seconded by Councillor John Joe Fennelly, the Members unanimously adopted the Audit Committee Annual Report 2015

33. REPORT ON THE AUDIT COMMITTEE'S FINDINGS IN RELATION TO THE AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENT AND STATUTORY AUDIT REPORT 2014

The Members were circulated with a copy of the report on the Audit Committee's findings in relation to the Audited Financial Statement and Statutory Audit Report 2014. The Members noted that the Auditor's opinion is that the Annual Financial Statement presents fairly, in accordance with the Code of Practice and Accounting Regulations, the financial position of the Council at 31st December 2014 and its income and expenditure for the year then ended. On the proposition of Councillor Willie Aird seconded by Councillor Jerry Lodge, the Members unanimously adopted the report on the Audit Committee's findings in relation to the audited Financial Statement and Statutory Audit Report 2014.

34. ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENT 2015 INCLUDING APPROVAL OF OVER-EXPENDITURE AND TRANSFERS TO CAPITAL

The summary of capital expenditure and income shows a debit balance of €4,705,916 at the 31st of December 2015 compared to a debit balance of €3,780,969 at the beginning of 2015. There has been a substantial improvement in Laois County Council's revenue account at 31/12/2015 as a result of the surplus of €95,423 income over expenditure. There has also been an improvement in the revenue collection accounts. An additional amount of €858,618 was collected in rates in 2015 compared to 2014 and the overall collection has improved by 5 percentage points to 74%. The collection of rent and annuities has increased from 95% to 96%. There has also been an improvement in the collection of our loan accounts whilst the introduction of the Mortgage to Rent Scheme has significantly helped many mortgagees.

The Chief Executive extended thanks to Mr. Gerry Murphy, Head of Finance, 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 and Directors for their support. The Members welcomed the report and complimented the Chief Executive, Head of Finance and all staff in the Council. The various queries raised by the Members were responded to.

On the proposition of Councillor Paschal McEvoy seconded by Councillor Ben Brennan, the Members unanimously approved the Annual Financial Statement 2015 including approval of over-expenditure and transfers to capital.

35. REPORT ON DEVELOPMENT CONTRIBUTIONS

The Members were circulated with a report containing details of monies received in respect of development contributions and how such monies have been expended in accordance with Section 48 of the Planning & Development Act, 2000. On the proposition of Councillor John Joe Fennelly seconded by Councillor John King, the Members unanimously agreed to the report on Development Contributions as circulated.

36. APPROVAL OF ARTS ACT GRANTS AWARDS

The Members were circulated with the listing of the successful applicants for funding under the Arts Act Grants for 2016. On the proposition of Councillor John King seconded by Councillor Willie Aird, the Members unanimously approved the grants as circulated.

37. RATIFICATION OF CONFERENCES/ATTENDANCE AT TRAINING

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

38. NOTICE OF MOTIONS

The following two Notice of Motions were discussed together:

Notice of Motion No: 08/2016

Councillor William Aird proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That Laois County Council request a representative from the Housing Section of the Department of the Environment, Community & Local Government to give an updated report on the future capital investment in social housing in County Laois”

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor John Joe Fennelly.

Notice of Motion No: 10/2016

Councillor John King proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That this Council apply for funding to the Department of the Environment, Community & Local Government to build social houses in rural towns in County Laois”

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Padraig Fleming. It was agreed that a letter issue to the Department of the Environment, Community & Local Government in relation to these two Notices of Motions.

Notice of Motion No: 09/2016

Councillor William Aird proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That Laois County Council give an update on the position with regard to the continuation of water supply upon non-payment of Irish Water bills”.

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor John King. The Members were advised that under the Water Services Act 2014,

Irish Water is prohibited from disconnecting houses connected to the public water supply in the event of charges

This concluded the business of the meeting.

SIGNED: _____

CERTIFIED:

CATHAOIRLEACH
CORPORATE
AFFAIRS

DIRECTOR **OF**