

**MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER MEETING OF LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL HELD IN ARAS AN
CHONTAE, PORTLAOISE, ON THE 30TH OF SEPTEMBER 2019**

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

APOLOGIES: Councillors John Joe Fennelly James Kelly

IN ATTENDANCE:

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

139. VOTES OF BEST WISHES/CONGRATULATIONS

On the proposition of Councillor Tom Mulhall, the Members unanimously extended a vote of best wishes to Mr. Des Walshe, General Services Supervisor on his recent retirement.

On the proposition of the Cathaoirleach, Councillor Willie Aird, the Members unanimously extended a vote of best wishes for a speedy recovery to Mr. Tom Treacy, The Gandon Inn, Portlaoise.

On the proposition of the Cathaoirleach, Councillor Willie Aird, the Members unanimously extended a vote of congratulations to Ms. Diane Cooper on winning the Best Idea Category at the Laois County Final of Ireland's Best Young Entrepreneur 2019 and who went on to win the Regional Final and represented Laois and the Region at the National Finals in Google in September.

140. CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE JULY MEETING OF LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL HELD ON THE 29TH OF JULY 2019

On the proposition of Councillor Tom Mulhall seconded by Councillor Ben Brennan, the Minutes of the July meeting held on the 29th of July 2019 were confirmed as circulated.

141. REPORT ON CPG MEETINGS HELD ON THE 22ND OF JULY & THE 2ND OF SEPTEMBER 2019

On the proposition of Councillor Seamus McDonald seconded by Councillor Paschal McEvoy, the report on the CPG meetings held on the 22nd of July & the 2nd of September 2019 were confirmed as circulated.

142. REPORT ON MUNICIPAL DISTRICT MEETINGS HELD IN JULY 2019

On the proposition of Councillor Mary Sweeney seconded by Councillor Paschal McEvoy, the reports on the Municipal District meetings held in July 2019 were confirmed as circulated.

143. DISPOSAL OF 0.0910 HECTARES OF LAND AT SHANBOE, BORRIS-IN-OSSOSRY

Councillor Conor Bergin excused himself from the meeting under in accordance with Part 15 of the Local Government Act, 2001 as amended.

On the proposition of Councillor John King seconded by Councillor Thomasina Connell, the Members unanimously agreed to the disposal of 0.0910 hectares of land at Shanboe, Borris-in-Ossory in the townland of Shanboe, Borris-in-Ossory for a consideration of €100.00

144. DISPOSAL OF FREEHOLD AT 26, THE SHOWGROUNDS, RATHDOWNEY

On the proposition of Councillor John King seconded by Councillor Mary Sweeney, the Members unanimously agreed to the disposal of freehold at 26, The Showgrounds, Rathdowney, Co. Laois in the townland of Rathdowney for a consideration of €1.00

145. DISPOSAL OF FREEHOLD AT 60 BIANCONI WAY, RIDGE ROAD, PORTLAOISE

On the proposition of Councillor Caroline Dwane Stanley seconded by Councillor Noel Tuohy, the Members unanimously agreed to the disposal of freehold at 60 Bianconi Way, Ridge Road, Portlaoise, Co. Laois in the townland of Borris Little for a consideration of €1.00 (documentation enclosed)

146. DISPOSAL OF FREEHOLD AT 32 CASTLEGATE, STATION ROAD, PORTARLINGTON

On the proposition of Councillor Aidan Mullins seconded by Councillor Tom Mulhall, the Members unanimously agreed to the disposal of freehold at 32 Castlegate, Station Road, Portarlington, Co. Laois in the townland of Cooltederry for a consideration of €1.00.

147. DISPOSAL OF FREEHOLD AT 10 HAWTHORN AVENUE, BALLACOLLIG, MOUNTMELICK

On the proposition of Councillor Seamus McDonald seconded by Councillor Thomasina Connell, the Members unanimously agreed to the disposal of freehold at 10 Hawthorn Avenue, Ballacollig, Mountmellick, Co. Laois in the townland of Ballycullenbeg for a consideration of €1.00

148. RATIFICATION OF LAOIS PPN MEMBERS TO THE JOINT POLICING COMMITTEE

On the proposition of Councillor Noel Tuohy seconded by Councillor Paschal McEvoy, the Members unanimously agreed that the following will represent Laois Public Participation Network on Laois Joint Policing Committee:

- Mr. Bobby Delaney
- Mr. Thomas M. Jones
- Ms. Sara Geraldine Rasool

149. CONSIDERATION OF CIVIC RECEPTION TO MR. SHANE RYAN

On the proposition of Councillor Aidan Mullins seconded by Councillor Tom Mulhall, the Members unanimously agreed to the according of a civic reception to Mr. Shane Ryan (as recommended by the Corporate Policy Group on the 23rd of September 2019) in honour of his swimming achievements.

150. ADOPTION OF THE DRAFT STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE SCHEME 2019-2024

The Members were circulated with a copy of the draft Strategic Policy Committee Scheme 2019/2024 and membership. It was noted that due to the recent local elections and having regard to the provision of the national guidelines and also due to the re-designation of some

functions/services within Laois County Council directorates, it is necessary for Laois County Council to review the SPC Scheme.

On the proposition of Councillor Mary Sweeney seconded by Councillor John King, the Members unanimously adopted the Draft Strategic Policy Committee Scheme 2019-2024 and membership.

151. ADOPTION OF THE LAOIS CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION STRATEGY

On the proposition of Councillor Caroline Dwane Stanley seconded by Councillor Ben Brennan and pursuant to the provisions of the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015 and the National Adaptation Framework (NAF), 2018, Laois County Council adopted the Laois Climate Change Adaptation Strategy 2019-2024, having considered the draft strategy, the contents of the CE report on submissions received during the period of consultation and the SEA an AA Screening Reports carried out in accordance with the requirements of the SEA Directive (DIR 2001/42/EC) and Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive (Directive 92/43/EEC)

152. ADOPTION OF TRAVELLER ACCOMMODATION PROGRAMME 2019-2024

The Members were circulated with a copy of the Traveller Accommodation Programme 2019-20124. On the proposition of Councillor Paddy Bracken seconded by Councillor John King, the Members unanimously agreed to adopt the Traveller Accommodation Programme 2019-2024.

153. ADOPTION OF LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL AUDIT COMMITTEE ANNUAL WORK PROGRAMME 2019/2020

On the proposition of Councillor Padraig Fleming seconded by Councillor Aisling Moran, the Members unanimously agreed to adopt the Audit Committee Annual Work Programme

154. ADOPTION OF LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL AUDIT COMMITTEE CHARTER 2019

On the proposition of Councillor Padraig Fleming seconded by Councillor Aisling Moran, the Members unanimously agreed to adopt the Audit Committee Charter for 2019

155. LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL MONTHLY MANAGEMENT REPORT SEPTEMBER 2019

Mr. John Mulholland, Chief Executive briefed the meeting on this matter and the report for September 2019 was circulated. The report 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.

156. CORRESPONDENCE

The following items of correspondence which were received since the last meeting of Laois County Council were circulated:-

- (i) Correspondence dated the 13th of August 2019 from the Office of the Minister for Agriculture, Food & the Marine in relation to Notice of Motion No: 47/2018
- (ii) Correspondence dated the 15th of August 2019 from the Office of the Minister for Employment in relation to Notice of Motion No: 51/2018
- (iii) Correspondence dated the 13th of August 2019 from the Department of Housing, Planning & Local Government in relation to Notice of Motion NO: 50/2019

- (iv) Correspondence dated the 23rd of August 2019 from the Department of Housing, Planning & Local Government in relation to Notice of Motion No: 49/2019
- (v) Correspondence dated the 20th of August 2019 from the Office of the Minister for Finance & Public Expenditure in relation to Notice of Motion No: 20/2019
- (vi) Correspondence dated the 11th of September 2019 from the Office of the Minister for Finance & Public Expenditure in relation to Notice of Motion No: 45/2019

157. NOTICE OF MOTIONS

Notice of Motion No: 52/2019

Councillor Willie Aird proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That this Council give details of the percentage of monies that are collected by way of rent for Local Authority houses that is spent on housing maintenance”

This Motion was seconded by Councillor Tom Mulhall. The members were advised that it is estimated that 54% of the rental income for 2019 will be spent on the maintenance and improvement of local authority housing. A further 43% will be spent in the following areas:

- Social Worker
- Illegal parking of caravans
- Service Support
- Housing Assessment, Allocation and Transfer
- Rent and Tenant Purchase Administration
- Community Development Support
- Administration of Homeless Service
- Support to Housing Capital
- Housing Loans Administration
- Housing Grants
- HAP Programme

The remaining 3% will be used to partially fund:

- Estate Road Maintenance
- Public Lighting
- Bring Centres and Recycling
- Litter Warden Service
- Fire Brigade Service
- Water Quality
- Library Service
- Parks and Playgrounds
- Recreation and Amenity
- Arts
- Dog Warden Service
- Horse Control

A discussion ensued during which Mr. Michael Rainey, Director of Services responded to the various queries raised by the Members.

Notice of Motion No: 53/2019

Councillor Mary Sweeney proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That this Council call on the Minister for Health, Mr. Simon Harris, T.D. & Minister Jim Daly, Minister of State at the Department of Health with special responsibility for mental health and older people to urgently address the reduced staffing levels in the Young Adult Mental Health services in Laois in particular the shortage of Occupational Therapists for children and young adults who are not being assessed due to the shortage of these key professionals”

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Aisling Moran. It was agreed that a letter issue to the Minister for Health in this regard.

Notice of Motion No: 54/2019

Councillor Conor Bergin proposed the following Notice of Motion:

“That Laois County Council call on the Minister for Health, Simon Harris TD to address the serious issues regarding the lack of HSE dental services for children and orthodontic waiting lists in County Laois as a matter of urgency”

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Padraig Fleming. It was agreed that a letter issue to the Minister for Health & the H.S.E. in this regard.

Notice of Motion No: 55/2019

Councillor Aisling Moran proposed the following Notice of Motion:

“That this Council prior to the granting a licence for Electric Picnic 2020 consider putting in place Health & Safety measures to ensure the health and wellbeing of those attending Ireland’s largest festival bearing in mind the implication made by Melvin Benn that there would be a further increase in numbers for Electric Picnic 2020 - Electric Picnic 2020 needs to be a better and safer festival rather than just a bigger festival”

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Noel Tuohy. The Members were advised that Laois County Council has committed to work with the Festival organisers in the coming months to address Health and Safety concerns raised by Statutory Agencies and the public. This approach has been adopted irrespective of the overall numbers attending the event. The festival organisers are required to submit to Laois County Council an application for an Event Licence at least 13 weeks prior to such an event. It is a statutory requirement that an Event Management Plan, which includes health and safety measures, is submitted with this licence application. The engagement over the coming months with Festival Republic and Laois County Council and the feedback from Statutory Agencies and the public will inform the Event Management Plan for Electric Picnic 2020.

Notice of Motion No: 56/2019

Councillor Aisling Moran proposed the following Notice of Motion:

“That this Council consider the planting of wild flowers along the motorways and primary routes in an effort to have a positive impact on the environment in Laois whilst improving the appearance for both residents and visitors to our lovely County”

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Tom Mulhall. The Members were advised that Transport Infrastructure Ireland retains full responsibility for the ongoing maintenance of the Motorway Network. Therefore the implementation of the Notice of Motion is not in the control of

Laois County Council insofar as the motorway network is concerned. It was requested that a letter issue to T.I.I. in this regard.

The ongoing development and imminent completion of the Portlaoise Southern Circular will include numerous elements of pollinator friendly planting, fully in keeping with the Notice of Motion. Suitable pollinator friendly, native planting supports the enhancement of public realm presentation, supports biodiversity and compliments the more formal, mown grass areas on the approaches to and within our towns. Insofar as resources allow and in co-operation with local residents' groups and Tidy Towns' associations there is considerable merit in seeking to realise the principles of the Motion.

Notice of Motion No: 57/2019

Councillor Aisling Moran proposed the following Notice of Motion:

“That this Council actively review our policy in relation to Anti-Social Behaviour for housing provided by this Council and consider the introduction of penalties for repeated anti-social behaviour - anti-social behaviour should not be tolerated”

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Caroline Dwane Stanley. The Members were advised that the Laois County Council Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy was adopted by the Elected Members in October 2010. Estate Management staff in the Housing Department deal with all incidents in an effective and efficient manner. Laois County Council endeavours to use all necessary measures available under the current legislation to prevent and abate anti-social behaviour. This strategy could be considered for review at the next Housing SPC meeting.

A discussion ensued during which Mr. Michael Rainey, Director of Services responded to the various queries raised by the Members.

Notice of Motion No: 58/2019

Councillor Noel Tuohy proposed the following Notice of Motion:

“That Laois County Council call on the Minister for Health to direct the HSE to immediately stop the practice of removing Medical Cards from those with acute life threatening long term illnesses and also the policy of revoking medical cards due to technical errors as they have done to over 200,000 medical card holders”

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Aisling Moran. The Members were advised that a letter would issue to the Minister for Health in this regard.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

SIGNED: _____
CATHAOIRLEACH

CERTIFIED: _____
DIRECTOR OF SERVICES
CORPORATE AFFAIRS

