

**MINUTES OF THE APRIL MONTHLY MEETING OF LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL
HELD IN ÁRAS AN CHONTAE ON THE 27th of APRIL 2015**

PRESENT:	Councillor	John Joe Fennelly	In the Chair
	Councillors	William Aird	Ben Brennan
		Paddy Bracken	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	Caroline Dwane Stanley

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.

42. CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE MARCH MEETING OF LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL HELD ON THE 30TH OF MARCH 2015

On the proposition of Councillor John Moran seconded by Councillor James Kelly, the Minutes of the March meeting of Laois County Council held on the 30th of March 2015 were confirmed as circulated.

43. MONTHLY MANAGEMENT REPORT FOR MARCH 2015 (IN ACCORDANCE WITH CIRCULAR LETTER LG 18/2014)

Mr. Gerry Murphy, Chief Executive briefed the meeting on this matter and the report for March was circulated. The report for March 2015 was unanimously agreed and noted. A number of queries were raised on the report and the Directors of Services responded to the queries raised.

44. REPORTS ON MUNICIPAL DISTRICT MEETINGS HELD IN MARCH 2015

The Members were circulated with the reports on Municipal District meetings held in March 2015 as circulated. On the proposition of Councillor Mary Sweeney seconded by Councillor John King, the Members unanimously agreed the reports as circulated

45. REPORTS ON SPC MEETINGS HELD IN MARCH 2015

The Members were circulated with the reports on SPC meetings held in March 2015 as circulated. On the proposition of Councillor Seamus McDonald seconded by Councillor James Kelly, the Members unanimously agreed the reports on SPC meetings held in March 2015 as circulated.

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

(i) DISPOSAL OF 82 M² OF LAND AT CHURCH LANE, PORTARLINGTON IN THE TOWNLAND OF COOLTEDERRY

On the proposition of Councillor Tom Mulhall seconded by Councillor Paschal McEvoy, the Members unanimously agreed to the disposal of 82m² of land at Church Lane, Portarlington in the townland of Cooltederry for a consideration of €1,500.00

(ii) DISPOSAL OF FREEHOLD IN RESPECT OF LAND AT LORD EDWARD STREET, MOUNTMELICK, CO. LAOIS.

On the proposition of Councillor Paddy Bracken seconded by Councillor Seamus McDonald, the Members unanimously agreed to the disposal of freehold in respect of land at Lord Edward Street, Mountmellick, Co. Laois in the townland of Ballycullenbeg comprising 0.0343 hectares for a consideration of €300.00

47. SECTION 85 AGREEMENT BETWEEN KILDARE COUNTY COUNCIL AND LAOIS COUNTYCOUNCIL

(i) The Offaly, Carlow, Kilkenny and Laois Bridges Rehabilitation Contract

On the proposition of Councillor Paschal McEvoy seconded by Councillor Paddy Bracken, the Members unanimously approved the Section 85 Agreement between Kildare County Council and Laois County Council for the 'Offaly, Carlow, Kilkenny and Laois Bridges Rehabilitation Contract'

(ii) The Leinster Bridges Expansion Joint Replacement Contract 2015

On the proposition of Councillor Paschal McEvoy seconded by Councillor Paddy Bracken, the Members unanimously approved the Section 85 Agreement between Kildare County Council and Laois County Council for the 'Leinster Bridges Expansion Joint Replacement Contract 2015'

48. SCHEDULE OF MUNICIPAL DISTRICT WORKS 2015 FOR THE PORTLAOISE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

The Members were circulated with a copy of the Schedule of Municipal District Works for 2015 for the Portlaoise Municipal District as agreed at their recent Municipal District meeting.

49. RATIFICATION OF NOMINATION TO THE TRANSPORTATION, ENVIRONMENT & EMERGENCY STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE FROM THE BUSINESS/COMMERCIAL SECTOR

The Members were advised of the following nomination from the Business Sector in respect of the remaining Business/Commercial nominee to the Transportation, Environment and Emergency Services SPC

Mr. Gerard Mulhall, c/o Mulhall's SuperValu, Lyster Square, Portlaoise, Co. Laois.

On the proposition of Councillor Mary Sweeney seconded by Councillor John Joe Fennelly, the Members unanimously agreed to the nomination of Mr. Gerard Mulhall to the Transportation, Environment & Emergency Strategic Policy Committee from the Business/Commercial Sector.

50. ADOPTION OF DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT 2014

Members were circulated with a copy of the draft Laois County Council Annual Report 2014. Ms. Anna Marie Delaney, Director of Service indicated to the Members that the Local Government Act, 2001 requires that a draft report be presented to the Members by the 30th of April. The final report will be listed for consideration and adoption at the June meeting of Laois County Council for formal adoption. On the proposition of Councillor Mary Sweeney seconded by Councillor John King, the Members unanimously agreed to adopt the draft Laois County Council Annual Report for 2014.

51. RATIFICATION OF CONFERENCES & ATTENDANCE AT TRAINING

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

52. PRESENTATION BY MR. MICHAEL O' REILLY, COMMUNITY LIAISON OFFICER, IRELAND 2016 TEAM ON THE IREALND 2016 PROGRAMME

Mr. Michael O' Reilly, Community Liaison Officer, Ireland 2016 Team gave a very detailed presentation on the 1916 commemoration programme. Mr. O' Reilly responded to the various queries raised by the Members. The Cathaoirleach & Members extended thanks to Mr. O' Reilly for his very comprehensive and enjoyable presentation. The Members were advised that further information on the Programme for Ireland 2016 is available on the website at www.ireland.ie.

53. PRESENTATION BY MR. MICHAEL RAINEY, S.E.O., HOUSING - HOUSING UPDATE

Mr. Michael Rainey, Senior Executive Officer gave a very comprehensive presentation to the Members in relation to Housing and the topics covered included:

- Statistics/Laois County Council Waiting List/Housing Stock
- The Social Housing Strategy
- Current Expenditure Programme and Leasing Initiatives
- The Rental Accommodation Scheme
- Housing Assistance Programme/Rent Supplement
- The Energy Efficiency Programme
- Void Management
- Grants & Loans
- Homelessness
- Reform Agenda & Estate Management

The Members raised a number of queries regarding HAP, Mortgage to Rent Scheme, anti-social behaviour and the new National Differential Rent Scheme. Mr. Rainey, S.E.O., responded to the various queries raised. The Cathaoirleach thanked Mr. Rainey for his very informative presentation.

54. CORRESPONDENCE

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

- (i) Correspondence from the Department of Social Protection dated the 20th of April 2015 in relation to Notice of Motion No: 14/2015
- (ii) Correspondence from the Health Services Executive dated the 9th of April 2015 in relation to Notice of Motion No: 18/2015
- (iii) Correspondence from the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources dated the 17th of April 2015 in relation to Broadband
- (iv) Correspondence in relation to I.T. facilities/introduction of paperless meetings

55. NOTICE OF MOTIONS

Notice of Motion No : 30/2015

Councillor James Kelly proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That Laois County Council calls on the Department of the Taoiseach that the Seanad Electoral (Panel Members) Act, 1947 be amended to provide for the nomination of Seanad Candidates on the same date as the nomination of candidates to the Dáil and that candidates who wish to run for either the Dáil or the Seanad declare those intentions on the same date”

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

Notice of Motion: 31/2015

Councillor James Kelly proposed the following Notice of Motion

“That Laois County Council provide funding to ensure that all of the towns and villages of Laois have Public Playground facilities”

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Brendan Phelan. The Members were advised that Laois County Council will continue to assist local communities to identify suitable locations & to source funding for community playgrounds as has been done over the past 12 years. Currently no funding is available to Laois County Council to directly fund playground developments.

Notice of Motion No: 32/2015

Councillor Jerry Lodge proposed the following Notice of Motion

“That this Council agrees to review it’s current litter management plan as the incidence of dumping in the countryside throughout County Laois has now become an epidemic”

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald. The Members were advised that the new Litter Management Plan 2015-2017 is currently being drafted. It will be presented to the Transportation, Environment & Emergency Services SPC meeting on 11 June 2015 and will then go out for a 4 week public consultation phase. Submissions received following the public consultation will be considered and the necessary amendments will be made to the Draft Litter Management Plan prior to bringing it before the SPC meeting scheduled for September 2015. Once approved at this SPC meeting, it will move for formal adoption through CPG and Full Council Meetings during Quarter 4 of 2015.

The Litter Management Section continues to deal with illegal dumping on a daily basis and some of the actions for 2015 to date include:

- 4 No. Section 55 Notices under the Waste Management Act issued in relation to larger scale illegal dumping
- Litter Fines
 - 88 No. Litter Fines issued to date
 - 41 No. litter fines paid
 - 8 prosecutions taken
 - 2 convictions secured
- CCTV utilised successfully at Bring Banks during Q4 2014 & Q1 2015 – 63 fines issued
- Specific Area Clean-ups carried out at various locations in 2015, some of these include
 - Bay Road, Mountmellick (2 clean ups)
 - Ashgrove, Mountmellick,

- Brockera
- Ballyfin
- Straboe
- Representatives of Downtown Portlaoise & Portlaoise Tidy Towns carried out a major clean up of the area adjacent to Hynds Square and removal of waste was provided by the Cleansing Team and the local Litter Warden
- Individual litter black spots have been cleaned between Portlaoise and Mountmellick on the N80 and a tender is being issued this week (week commencing 27th April 2015) for a complete litter pick of N80 within the County Boundaries.
- Almost 80 groups and committees around the county registered for clean up Laois week 2015”

Notice of Motion No: 33/2015

Councillor Noel Tuohy proposed the following Notice of Motion:

“That this Council call on Dunnes Stores to enter into meaningful talks with the Mandate Trade Union”

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

Notice of Motion No: 34/2015

Councillor Noel Tuohy proposed the following Notice of Motion:

“That this Council compliment the work being done by Tidy Town Committees and Cemetery Committees”

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor James Kelly. The Members were advised that Laois County Council appreciates the valuable work being done by all groups, committees, cemetery committees and voluntary organizations throughout County Laois. The annual awards evening affords an opportunity to highlight & acknowledge the work being done. This continued effort will help to improve our County and make Laois a better place to live, work and visit. It was agreed that letters would issue to the Tidy Town Committees & Cemetery Committees across the County in this regard.

Notice of Motion No: 35/2015

Councillor Noel Tuohy proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That this Council compliment the efforts of all the St. Patrick’s day committees, throughout the County for their hard work”

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This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor James Kelly. . It was agreed that letters would issue to the St. Patrick’s Day Committees across the County in this regard

Notice of Motion No: 36/2015

Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That this Council inform Members as to:

- (i) How many plots of land are in the Land Aggregation Scheme***
- (ii) How much are these lands costing Laois County Council***
- (iii) How much are the units at Conniberry Way costing including the site cost***

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Brendan Phelan. The Members were advised of the following:-

- There are 10 plots of land in the Land Aggregation Scheme. The lands are situated in Portlaoise, Doonane, Rathdowney, Durrow, Ballinakill, Mountrath & Castletown
- There is no cost to Laois County Council as 5 plots of land had their loans redeemed in full by the Department and 5 currently have principal and interest recouped by the Department.
- The preliminary budget cost approval for Conniberry Way (33 units) is €4,774,230. The final cost will not be known until the scheme has gone to tender later this year.

It was further agreed to forward details of the land costs to Councillor Fitzgerald.

Notice of Motion No: 37/2015

Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That this Council hold a special meeting to address speed limits on roads and estates in the County”

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor John Joe Fennelly. The Members were advised as follows:

Policy guidance has recently been received from the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport in relation to the setting of speed limits. Further correspondence

has issued within the last week in relation to funding requirements for new signage in 2015 and beyond.

Road Design now has a detailed inventory of all sign locations in the county on our road GIS database. The Speed Limit Review was discussed at the Transportation Strategic Policy Committee meeting before Easter and proposals under a number of broad headings are scheduled to be brought back to the next SPC meeting in June on how roads section are intending to proceed. These will deal with signage and the criteria to be used to determine the proposed speed limit for the road in question. Following that a further committee meeting can be held with all councillors before the summer.

Notice of Motion No: 38/2015

Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That this Council request the Government to bring in urgent legislation re: Derelict Sites/Dangerous Sites/Vacant Houses”

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Caroline Dwane Stanley. The Members were advised that in dealing with Derelict Sites and Dangerous Structures, Laois County Council operates within the confines of existing legislation, namely Derelict Sites Act 1990 and the Local Government (**Sanitary Services**) Act, 1964. The Derelict Sites (Amendment) Bill 2015 is at draft stage and may, if adopted into law, provide for the tightening of regulations in relation to derelict sites.

Notice of Motion No: 39/2015

Councillor Caroline Dwane Stanley proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“To ask Laois County Council for an up-date on progress on their commitment to provide a private meeting room for members of the public to meet staff at County Hall. This commitment was given in answer to my Motion on this issue in 2014”

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor James Kelly. The Members were advised that Laois County Council expect to be in a position to have this facility in place in approximately 2 months – details are currently being finalised.

Notice of Motion No: 40/2015

Councillor Caroline Dwane Stanley & Councillor Aidan Mullins proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That Laois County Council contacts the Minister for the Environment, Community & Local Government to find out when funding will be approved and provided for Housing Grants for the elderly and for people with disabilities”

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Aidan Mullins. It was agreed that a letter would issue to the Minister for the Environment, Community & Local Government in this regard.

Notice of Motion No: 41/2015

Councillor Caroline Dwane Stanley & Councillor Aidan Mullins proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That Laois County Council demands that the Minister for Social Protection halts the proposed cuts to the One Parent Family Payment Scheme on 2nd July for children who reach 7 years of age”

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor John Joe Fennelly. It was agreed that a letter issue to the Minister for Social Protection in this regard.

Notice of Motion No: 42/2015

Councillor Padraig Fleming proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That Laois County Council request Coillte to consult with the Council regarding any sale of their woodland in the County consisting of hard wood trees in view of their importance to the Environment, Landscape and Biodiversity”

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Paschal McEvoy. It was agreed that a letter issue to Coillte in this regard.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Signed: _____
CATHAOIRLEACH

Certified: _____
**DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE
AFFAIRS**

