

**MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER MEETING OF LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL HELD ON  
THE 26<sup>TH</sup> OF SEPTEMBER 2022 IN ÁRAS AN CHONTAE**

**PRESENT:** Councillor Thomasina Connell In The Chair

Councillors James Kelly John King  
Seamus McDonald Ollie Clooney  
Willie Aird John Joe Fennelly  
Paschal McEvoy Caroline Dwane Stanley  
Noel Tuohy Catherine Fitzgerald  
Conor Bergin Aidan Mullins  
Padraig Fleming Paddy Bracken  
P.J. Kelly Barry Walsh

**APOLOGIES:** Councillors Ben Brennan Aisling Moran

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Messers John Mulholland, Chief Executive, Donal Brennan, Director of Services, Simon Walton, Director of Services, Ms. Angela McEvoy, Director of Services, Mr. Gerry Murphy, Head of Finance, Ms. Irene Delaney, S.E.O., Corporate Affairs & Ms. Michelle McCormack, S.O.

**95. VOTES OF SYMPATHIES**

On the proposition of the Cathaoirleach, Councillor Thomasina Connell, the Members unanimously passed a vote of sympathy to the Moran Family on the recent death of Ms. Loretta Moran, Ballinagar, Ballylinan, Co. Laois, mother of Councillor Aisling Moran, Laois County Council.

On the proposition of the Cathaoirleach, Councillor Thomasina Connell, the members unanimously passed a vote of sympathy to the O' Loughlin Family, St. Brigid's Place, Portlaoise on the recent death of Mr. Danny O' Loughlin, father of Mr. Michael O' Loughlin, Housing Department, Laois County Council.

On the proposition of the Cathaoirleach, Councillor Thomasina Connell, the Members unanimously passed a vote of sympathy to the O' Sullivan family, Coolagh, Abbeyside, Dungarvan, Waterford on the recent death of Mr. John O' Sullivan, brother of Mr. Jim O' Sullivan, Planning Department, Laois County Council.

On the proposition of the Cathaoirleach, Councillor Thomasina Connell, the Members unanimously passed a vote of sympathy to the Delaney family, Derryguile, Mountmellick on the recent death of Mr. James Delaney, father of Mr. Pat Delaney, H.R & Corporate Department, Laois County Council.

The meeting was adjourned for a period of fifteen minutes in accordance with Laois County Council's Bereavement Protocols.

**96. MINUTES OF THE JULY MONTHLY MEETING HELD ON THE 25<sup>TH</sup> OF JULY 2022**

On the proposition of Councillor Willie Aird seconded by Councillor Paschal McEvoy, the minutes of the July monthly meeting of Laois County Council held on the 25<sup>th</sup> of July 2022 were confirmed as circulated.

**97. REPORT ON CPG MEETING HELD ON THE 18<sup>TH</sup> OF JULY 2022**

On the proposition of Councillor John Joe Fennelly seconded by Councillor Conor Bergin, the Members unanimously agreed the report on CPG meeting held on the 18<sup>th</sup> of July 2022 as circulated.

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

**(i) DISPOSAL OF FREEHOLD COMPRISING 0.517 HECTARES OF LAND AT 5 EMMETT TERRACE, MOUNTMELLICK**

On the proposition of Councillor Paddy Bracken seconded by Councillor Seamus McDonald, the Members unanimously agreed to the disposal of freehold comprising 0.517 hectares of land at 5 Emmet Terrace, Mountmellick, Co. Laois in the townland of Townsparks for a consideration of €300.00

**(ii) DISPSOAL OF FREEHOLD COMPRISING 0.0442 HECTARES OF LAND AT 63 BELADD**

On the proposition of Councillor Noel Tuohy seconded by Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald, the Members unanimously agreed to the disposal of freehold comprising 0.0442 hectares of land at 63 Beladd, Portlaoise. Co. Laois in the townland of Beladd for a consideration of €300.00

**(iii) LICENCE TO OCCUPY PROPERTY AT THE DUNAMAISE THEATRE & CENTRE FOR THE ARTS, CHURCH STREET, PORTLAOISE, CO. LAOIS**

On the proposition of Councillor Barry Walsh seconded by Councillor John Joe Fennelly, the Members unanimously agreed to the licence to occupy property at the Dunamais Theatre & Centre for the Arts, Church Street, Portlaoise, Co. Laois in the townland of Maryborough for a period of 4 years and 11 months to the Laois Arts Theatre Company CLG., t/a Dunamais Theatre & Centre for the Arts for a consideration of €1.00 per annum.

**99. PART VIII OF THE PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS, 2001 (AS AMENDED) IN RELATION TO THE PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL**

**DEVELOPMENT OF 12 HOUSES AT CLONROOSKE VIEW, PORTLAOISE, CO. LAOIS.**

The Members were circulated with a copy of the Planning Report in relation to the above development consisting of the construction of a residential development with a total of 12 houses all at a site of 0.4092 hectares in Portlaoise, Co. Laois accessed from Harpers Lane. It was noted that the site is bounded east and west by residential properties and to the north by lands zoned for future residential development and to the south by Harpurs Lane. On the proposition of Councillor Caroline Dwane Stanley seconded by Councillor Willie Aird, the Members unanimously agreed the proposed development as outlined in accordance with Part VII of the Planning & Development Regulations, 2001 (as amended).

**100. LOCAL PROPERTY TAX – NOTICE OF CONSIDERATION OF SETTING A LOCAL ADJUSTMENT FACTOR**

The Members were circulated with details on the Local Property Tax outlining a proposed 5% increase in same for 2023.

On the proposition of Councillor John Joe Fennelly seconded by Councillor Willie Aird, the Members agreed not to proceed with the proposed increase of 5% for 2023 and to leave it at the 2022 rate which was a 10% increase on the basic rate.

**101. APPROVAL OF OVERDRAFT ACCOMMODATION IN RESPECT OF €8 MILLION FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31<sup>ST</sup> DECEMBER 2023 TO FINANCE WORKING CAPITAL**

On the proposition of Councillor Paschal McEvoy seconded by Councillor John King, the Members unanimously agreed to the overdraft accommodation in respect of €8 million for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023 to finance working capital.

**102. APPROVAL OF OVERDRAFT ACCOMMODATION IN RESPECT OF €15 MILLION FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31<sup>ST</sup> DECEMBER 2023 TO FACILITATE ANY TIMING ISSUES REGARDING THE PAYMENT OF PAYROLL AND PENSIONS FOR MY-PAY**

On the proposition of Councillor Seamus McDonald seconded by Councillor Noel Tuohy, the Members unanimously agreed to the overdraft accommodation in respect of €15 million for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023 to facilitate any timing issues regarding the payment of payroll and pensions for My-Pay

**103. ANNUAL AUDITED ACCOUNTS FOR LAOIS ARTS THEATRE COMPANY CLG T/A DUNAMAISE ARTS CENTRE**

Mr. Donal Brennan briefed the Meeting on this item and the Audit Accounts of the Laois Arts Theatre Company were circulated.

On the proposition of Councillor Barry Walsh seconded by Councillor James Kelly, the Members unanimously agreed to the annual audited accounts for Laois Arts Theatre Company CLG t/a Dunamaise Arts Centre as circulated.

**104. NOTING OF THE CONTINUATION OF GUARANTEES IN FAVOUR FOR MINISTER FOR TOURISM, CULTURE, ARTS, GAELTACHT, SPORT & MEDIA FOR OUTSTANDING GRANT IN RESPECT OF LAOIS ARTS THEATRE COMPANY CLG (T/A DUNAMAISE ARTS CENTRE)**

On the proposition of Councillor Paddy Bracken seconded by Councillor Padraig Fleming, the Members unanimously noted the continuation of guarantees in favour for Minister for Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport & Media for outstanding gran in respect of Laois Arts Theatre Company CLG (t/a Dunamaise Arts Centre).

**105. NOMINATION OF MR. RAY HARTE REPRESENTING THE LAOIS PUBLIC PARTICIPATION NETWORK TO THE LOCAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

On the proposition of Councillor Willie Aird seconded by Councillor John Joe Fennelly the members unanimously agreed to the nomination of Mr. Ray Harte representing the Laois Public Participation Network to the Local Community Development Committee.

**106. NOMINATION OF MS. EVELYN REDDIN REPRESENTING LOCAL ENTERPRISE OFFICE TO THE LOCAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

On the proposition of Councillor John Joe Fennelly seconded by Councillor John King the members unanimously agreed to the nomination of Ms. Evelyn Reddin representing the Local Enterprise Office to the Local Community Development Committee.

**107. DECLARATION OF PUBLIC ROADS (SECTION 11 ROADS ACT, 1993 (AS AMENDED) (TAKING IN CHARGE) OF TOMMY MURPHY ESTATE, GRAIGEUCLLEN**

On the proposition of Councillor Padraig Fleming seconded by Councillor Paschal McEvoy, the Members unanimously agreed to the taking in charge of Tommy Murphy Estate, Graiguecullen in accordance with Section 11 of the Roads Act, 1993.

**108. DECLARATION OF PUBLIC ROADS (SECTION 11 ROADS ACT, 1993 (AS AMENDED) (TAKING IN CHARGE) OF HEATHFIELDS, PORTLAOISE**

On the proposition of Councillor Willie Aird seconded by Councillor Caroline Dwane Stanley, the Members unanimously agreed to the taking in charge of Heathfields, Portlaoise in accordance with Section 11 of the Roads Act, 1993.

**109. FIX DATE FOR THE OCTOBER MEETING OF LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL**

On the proposition of Councillor John Joe Fennelly seconded by Councillor Pdraig Fleming, the Members unanimously agreed that the October meeting of Laois County Council be scheduled for the 24<sup>th</sup> of October 2022 at 11.00 a.m.

**110. FIX DATE FOR THE BUDGET MEETING IN COMMITTEE OF LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL**

On the proposition of Councillor James Kelly seconded by Councillor Caroline Dwane Stanley, the Members unanimously agreed that the budget meeting in committee of Laois County Council be scheduled for the 1<sup>st</sup> of November 2022 at 11.00 a.m.

**111. FIX DATE FOR THE STATUTORY BUDGET MEETING OF LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL**

On the proposition of Councillor Noel Tuohy seconded by Councillor Paddy Bracken, the Members unanimously agreed that the statutory budget meeting of Laois County Council be scheduled for the 7<sup>th</sup> of November 2022 at 11.00 a.m.

**112. CONSIDERATION OF CIVIC RECEPTION TO LAOIS LADIES INTERMEDIATE FOOTBALL TEAM ON WINNING THE ALL-IRELAND**

On the proposition of Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald seconded by Councillor P.J. Kelly the Members unanimously agreed to accord a Civic Reception to the Laois Ladies Intermediate Football Team on winning the All-Ireland as recommended by the Corporate Policy Group on the 19<sup>th</sup> of September 2022. It was requested that the reception be held on a Friday night if possible for this group.

**113. CONSIDERATION OF CIVIC RECEPTION TO LAOIS U-16 CAMOGIE TEAM ON WINNING THE ALL-IRELAND**

On the proposition of Councillor Caroline Dwane Stanley seconded by Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald the Members unanimously agreed to accord a Civic Reception

to the Laois U-16 Camogie Team on winning the All-Ireland as recommended by the Corporate Policy Group on the 19<sup>th</sup> of September 2022.

#### **114. CONSIDERATION OF CIVIC RECEPTION TO MR. MARTIN MCDONALD ON WINNING THE 0/65 10 K RACE IN THE 2022 WORLD MASTER MOUNTAIN RUNNING CHAMPIONSHIPS**

On the proposition of Councillor Thomasina Connell seconded by Councillor Ollie Clooney the Members unanimously agreed to accord a Civic Reception to Mr. Martin McDonald on winning the 0/65 10 K race in the 2022 world master mountain running championships as recommended by the Corporate Policy Group on the 19<sup>th</sup> of September 2022.

#### **115. MONTHLY MANAGEMENT REPORT FOR AUGUST & SEPTEMBER 2022**

The Monthly Management Report for August/September 2022 was circulated and noted by the Members. The Directors of Services responded to the various queries raised.

#### **116. TRAINING & CONFERENCES**

The Members were circulated with a copy of the conferences and training for ratification and same was agreed on the proposition of Councillor Paschal McEvoy seconded by Councillor Ollie Clooney.

#### **117. CORRESPONDENCE**

The following correspondence was circulated which had been received since the last meeting of Laois County Council:-

- (i) Correspondence from the Minister for Finance dated the 26<sup>th</sup> of July 2022 in relation to a recent Notice of Motion regarding the Cycle to Work Scheme
- (ii) Correspondence from Wexford County Council dated the 26<sup>th</sup> of July 2022 in relation to the provision, retention and expansion of the Long Covid Clinics
- (iii) Correspondence from the Minister for Health dated the 15<sup>th</sup> of August 2022 in relation to a recent Notice of Motion regarding the availability of disability services for children with complex needs in County Laois.
- (iv) Correspondence from the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage dated the 15<sup>th</sup> of August 2022 in relation to a recent Notice of Motion regarding Laois County Council's social housing income limits
- (v) Correspondence from Mayo County Council dated the 16<sup>th</sup> of September 2022 in relation to Croí Cónaithe

- (vi) Correspondence from Sligo County Council dated the 19<sup>th</sup> of September 2022 in relation to an audit of the availability of disabled parking places

## 118. NOTICE OF MOTIONS

### Notice of Motion No: 40/2022

Councillor Conor Bergin proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

*“That Laois County Council give an update on the current number of applications on the waiting list for the Local Improvement Scheme, the length of the oldest application on the waiting list, and the number of such schemes the Council hopes to carry out in 2022”*

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor James Kelly. The Members were advised that at the start of August 2022, there were 65 Local Improvement Scheme applications to hand in County Laois summarised as follows:-

- Borris-In-Ossory/Mountmellick MD            33 applications
- Portlaoise MD    8 applications
- Portarlinton/Graiguecullen MD            24 applications

The oldest LIS application in County Laois is dated 2018. In recent weeks, Laois County Council has received an additional allocation of €508,000 for Local Improvement Schemes and is currently engaging with applicants with a view to using the full allocation currently available. The new allocation will deliver approximately 14 Local Improvement Schemes. The number of applications to hand, going into 2023, is likely to be in the mid-50s allowing for the fact that some additional applications may be made.

Mr. Simon Walton, Director of Services responded to the various queries raised in relation to same.

### Notice of Motion No: 41/2022

Councillor Willie Aird proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

*“That Laois County Council seek a deputation with the Minister of State with responsibility for the Office of Public Works, Mr. Patrick O’ Donovan, T.D., to further enhance the purchase of lands adjacent to the Capital Projects Office in Portlaoise”*

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald. The Members were advised that correspondence would issue to the Minister of State with responsibility for the OPW, Mr. Patrick O’ Donovan, T.D. in this regard.

### **Notice of Motion No: 42/2022**

Councillor Willie Aird proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

***“That Laois County Council call on Minister Eamon Ryan, Minister for the Environment, Climate Change & Communications to allow for the provision of solid fuel heating in the building of all new homes”***

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor P.J. Kelly. The Members were advised that correspondence would issue to Minister Eamon Ryan in this regard.

### **Notice of Motion No: 43/2022**

Councillor Barry Walsh proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

***“That Laois County Council contact Minister Eamon Ryan, Minister for the Environment, Climate Change & Communications to identify a number of shovel ready projects within Laois that could utilise the nationally underspent Active Travel Budget”***

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor James Kelly. The Members were advised that correspondence would issue to Minister Eamon Ryan in this regard.

### **Notice of Motion No: 44/2022**

Councillors Thomasina Connell, P.J. Kelly, John King, Conor Bergin, Willie Aird, Barry Walsh, Catherine Fitzgerald, John Joe Fennelly, Paschal McEvoy, Seamus McDonald, Paddy Bracken, Padraig Fleming, Ollie Clooney, Noel Tuohy, Aidan Mullins, Caroline Dwane Stanley, Ben Brennan & James Kelly proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

***“That this Council call on the Minister for Education, Ms. Norma Foley, T.D., to urgently resolve the widespread problematic issue of the non-issuing of Bus Eireann transport tickets to school going children across County Laois who have applied”***

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Paschal McEvoy. The Members were advised that correspondence would issue to Minister Norma Foley in this regard.

### **Notice of Motion No: 45/2022**

Councillor Thomasina Connell proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

***“That Laois County Council calls on the Department of Agriculture to subsidise and/or promote domestic production of flour from native wheat and the associated milling industry to increase food security and reduce dependence on imports”***

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor P.J. Kelly. The Members were advised that correspondence would issue to Minister Charlie McConalogue in this regard. It was agreed that the correspondence would also issue to Minister Heydon.

### **Notice of Motion No: 46/2022**

Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald proposed the following Notice of Motion:-



***“That this Council call on the Department of Social Protection to provide a more efficient system for the Community Welfare Officer service for County Laois”***

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Paschal McEvoy. The Members were advised that correspondence would issue to the Department of Social Protection in this regard.

**Notice of Motion No: 47/2022**

Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

***“That this Council call on the Government to stop the Standing Charge increase on Electricity and Gas bills”***

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Willie Aird. The Members were advised that correspondence would issue to the Government in this regard.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

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

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