



Comhairle Chontae Laoise

Laois County Council

Protocol for Special Lighting and Flag Raising Requests at Council buildings and facilities

Introduction

Laois County Council receives requests from a wide variety of organisations, charitable groups and causes seeking support to raise awareness on issues or to support campaigns.

Laois County Council wishes to participate and support these initiatives, strengthen public engagement and promote Laois, all of which can have a positive reputational impact.

This protocol sets out the criteria required to be met in respect of such requests, the process for making such applications, and the approval process for same.

Definitions

Special Lighting – means any form of lighting of Council buildings/facilities (see Appendix 2 for details of locations) other than essential operational lighting.

Operational Lighting – means the normal lighting of the building/facilities for operational reasons.

Flag raising means any form of flag raising at Council buildings/facilities other than the National Flag of Ireland, the National Flag of a visiting Dignitary, EU Flag or County Flag.

Occasion may mean one single day or a period of unbroken days. On any day, the special lighting will normally be from sunset.

Scope

This protocol applies to Council offices located at Áras an Chontae, Portlaoise and other public buildings/facilities under the control of Laois County Council where arrangements are in place to facilitate requests.

Who may apply

Requests for lighting up buildings or flag raising may only be submitted by:

- a registered charity, or
- the public sector or
- a community or
- other non-profit making organisation.

Individuals and/or commercial organisations may not apply.

Criteria

Requests are required to fulfil pre-determined criteria as follows:

- The application must represent an established civic, national or charitable organisation,
- The reason for special lighting or flag raising i.e. causes, awareness campaigns, charity or day of significance must support core civic, nationally recognised or philanthropic causes and/or have a clear link with objectives of Laois County Council or an association with the county of Laois.
- Political or religious requests will not be accepted.
- Requests for the recognition of national days of other countries will not be normally accepted.

Duration

The facilitation of special lighting or flag raising will be limited to **a duration of 1 working day** subject to the initiative not coinciding with any other initiatives approved by Laois County Council.

What requests will not be considered

Requests which are:

- Linked to a commercial activity: and/or,
- Linked to a party-political issue, or a campaigning issue that is novel, contentious, or politically sensitive: and/or
- Risks reputational damage to Laois County Council: and/or
- Generates a commercial advantage: and/or
- Is not in keeping with the purpose and dignity of the building: and/or
- Is not in keeping with the objectives of Laois County Council.

Application Form and Process

In order to fully evaluate a request, applicants are required to fully complete the Application Form at Appendix 1 and submit same to the **Corporate Affairs Department, Áras an Chontae, Portlaoise** or email same to corpaffairs@laoiscoco.ie at least **8 weeks** before the event. Requests in respect of events in August/September must be submitted no later than the 30th June to facilitate consideration of same.

The **Senior Executive Officer/Director of Services of Corporate Services** will consider all requests and whether the proposed special lighting or flag raising is feasible, appropriate and in compliance with this protocol.

Once deemed appropriate, Corporate Services will forward details to Laois Council Council's Meeting Administrator for inclusion on the Agenda for the next meeting of the Corporate Policy Group.

Once approved by the Corporate Policy Group, Corporate Affairs will liaise with the relevant group and agree arrangements.

Publicity/Media

Laois County Council reserves the right to use photographs, images and any information held in relation to approved requests in Corporate publications, Annual Reports, on our website and social media sites as the Council considers appropriate.

Exclusions

Outside of this protocol, the Corporate Policy Group may agree to light up or raise a flag at buildings/facilities of Laois County Council for occasions that are significant in the wider community, such as St. Patrick's Day (green), Europe Day (blue)

Cancellation.

Any approved requests for special lighting or flag raising may be cancelled at their absolute discretion by:

1. the Corporate Policy Group, or
2. the Director of Corporate Services following consultation with An Cathaoirleach.

Appendix 1

Special lighting and flag raising – Application form

Name of applicant (established civic or charitable organisation)	
Charity Registration Number	
Contact name	
Contact telephone number/email	
Reason for lighting up/flag raising (cause/ awareness campaign/charity/day of significance)	
Location/Venue	
Date/time for building light up or flag raising	
Campaign colour	
Details of associated social media accounts and hashtags	
To be completed by Laois County Council Approval signature and date	

Appendix 2

List of offices and other locations that can facilitate special lighting requests

Portlaoise	Áras an Chontae,
Other location to be added	

List of offices and other locations that can facilitate requests to raise flags.

Portlaoise	Áras an Chontae,
Other locations to be added	

Agreed by the Members of Laois County Council at the December meeting held on Monday 11th December 2023

