

**MINUTES OF THE MAY MEETING OF LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL HELD ON THE 27<sup>TH</sup> OF  
MAY 2024 IN ÁRAS AN CHONTAE**

<b>PRESENT:</b>	Councillor	Paschal McEvoy	In The Chair
	Councillors	Willie Aird	Paddy Bracken
		John Joe Fennelly	Marie Tuohy
		James Kelly	Caroline Dwane Stanley
		John King	Aidan Mullins
		Catherine Fitzgerald	Seamus McDonald
		P.J. Kelly	Ollie Clooney
		Padraig Fleming	Aisling Moran
		Conor Bergin	Ben Brennan
		Barry Walsh	Thomasina Connell

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Messrs Simon Walton, Deputy Chief Executive, Donal Brennan, Director of Services, Gerry Murphy, Head of Finance, Ms. Angela McEvoy, Director of Services, Mr. Paul McLoughlin, A/Director of Services, Ms. Irene Delaney, Administrative Officer & Ms. Michelle McCormack, S.O.

**78. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF THE APRIL MONTHLY MEETING HELD ON THE 29<sup>TH</sup> OF APRIL 2024**

On the proposition of Councillor Willie Aird seconded by Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald, the minutes of the April monthly meeting held on the 29<sup>th</sup> of April 2024 were confirmed as circulated.

The Members raised the matter of the speed limit review. Mr. Paul McLoughlin, A/Director of Services advised that guidelines, advising the review, had been received. The process to review speed limits will commence as provided for in the guidelines and in parallel with all other Local Authorities.

**79. REPORT ON CPG MEETING HELD ON THE 22<sup>ND</sup> OF APRIL 2024**

On the proposition of Councillor Paddy Bracken seconded by Councillor Padraig Fleming, the minutes of the CPG Meeting held on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of April 2024 were confirmed as circulated.

**80. REPORT ON MUNICIPAL DISTRICT MEETINGS HELD IN APRIL 2024**

On the proposition of Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald seconded by Councillor John King, the minutes of the Municipal District meetings held in April 2024 were confirmed as circulated.

**81. PART VIII OF THE PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS, 2001 (AS AMENDED) – PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT BY LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL – FIRE STATION UPGRADE IN MOUNTMELICK, CO. LAOIS.**

The Members were circulated with details on the proposed development consisting of the following work:

- Provision of an 875m<sup>2</sup> drill yard to the rear of the station

- Provision of a new fire service tower with 4 levels with access to each level on at least 2 sides with an approximate footprint of 3m x 4m with an overall height of approximately 15m
- All associated ancillary site works including drainage, rainwater harvesting tanks and water supply in relation to the construction of a new drill yard and erection of the fire tower at Portlaoise Road, Mountmellick, Co. Laois.

On the proposition of Councillor Paddy Bracken seconded by Councillor Seamus McDonald, the Members agreed to proceed with the development as outlined.

**82. DISPOSAL OF LAND UNDER SECTION 183 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT, 2001 IN RESPECT OF LEASE OF 1070.4 M2 OF LAND AT THE UNDERCROFT BASEMENT CAR PARK, PORTLAOISE PLAZA**

On the proposition of Councillor Pádraig Fleming seconded by Councillor John Joe Fennelly, the Members unanimously agreed to the lease of 1070.4 m<sup>2</sup> of land at the Undercroft Basement Car Park, Portlaoise Plaza (53 no. car parking spaces) in the townland of Kylekiproe for a period of three years (commencing 01/06/2024) by way of a Licence Agreement with the Office of Public Works, 100 Georges Quay, Dublin 2, D02 Y098 for a consideration of €30,000.

**83. MONTHLY MANAGEMENT REPORT FOR MAY 2024**

The Members were circulated with a copy of the Monthly Management Report for May 2024 and the Directors of Services responded to the various queries raised.

**84. TRAINING & CONFERENCES**

It was noted that there was no training and conferences for ratification this month.

**85. CORRESPONDENCE**

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

- (i) Correspondence dated the 15<sup>th</sup> of May 2024 received from the Minister for Transport in relation to Notice of Motion No: 19/2022
- (ii) Correspondence dated the 16<sup>th</sup> of May 2024 received from the Minister for Transport in relation to Notice of Motion No: 57/2023
- (iii) Correspondence dated the 20<sup>th</sup> of May 2024 received from the Minister for Justice in relation to notice of Motion No: 62/2023
- (iv) Correspondence dated the 13<sup>th</sup> of May 2024 received from the Minister for Health in relation to Notice of Motion No: 19/2024
- (v) Correspondence dated the 14<sup>th</sup> of May 2024 received from the Minister for Health in relation to Notice of Motion No: 20/2024
- (vi) Correspondence dated the 20<sup>th</sup> of May 2024 received from the Minister for Transport in relation to Notice of Motion No: 21/2024
- (vii) Correspondence dated the 15<sup>th</sup> of May 2024 received from Monaghan County Council in relation to a Notice of Motion with regard to Free Education Scheme

- (viii) Correspondence dated the 21<sup>st</sup> of May 2024 received from Tipperary County Council in relation to a Notice of Motion with regard to the review of support for farmers impacted by Ash Dieback
- (ix) Correspondence dated the 14<sup>th</sup> of May 2024 received from Clare County Council in relation to a Notice of Motion with regard to addressing the huge failures in the reconfigured health services established by the Government and the establishment of the HSE for responsibility in implementing the policy.

## 86. NOTICE OF MOTIONS

### Notice of Motion No: 24/2024

Councillor Thomasina Connell proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

*“That this Council appoint a Communications Officer to ensure that all of the great work undertaken by Laois County Council is shared with our community and the wider population”*

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald. The Members were advised that the question of funding for a Communications Officer will be discussed as part of the budget considerations for 2025. In addition to any budgetary approval, a separate approval would be needed from the Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage.

### Notice of Motion No: 25/2024

Councillor Marie Tuohy proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

*“That this Council undertake a feasibility study on the availability of a suitable site for use for a sports complex in the environs of Portlaoise”*

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Caroline Dwane Stanley. The Members were advised that ahead of looking for sites, it is considered that the first matter to be decided is the question of the type of facility to be provided. Given the needs of the County and of Portlaoise as the County town it is considered that initial efforts be focussed on the provision of an additional Sports Hall within Portlaoise as a community level facility.

Following a lengthy discussion on the issue Mr. Simon Walton, Deputy Chief Executive advised that the Council will require state investment in order to provide a regional Sports Centre in Portlaoise, at a likely overall cost of €30 - €35 million. Where such state support is not available, the Council will consider available grant schemes and what is possible, in terms of funding, from the Council's resources.

### Notice of Motion No: 26/2024

Councillor Aisling Moran proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

*“That Laois County Council call on the Minister for Children, Equality, Disability and Youth, Mr. Roderic O Gorman, T.D., & the Minister for Social Protection, Ms. Heather*

*Humphries, T.D., to put measures in place to provide a full Contributory Pension to Foster parents as they provide an invaluable place in their homes for the most vulnerable in our Society. The state should recognise their contribution”*

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor John Joe Fennelly. The Members were advised that correspondence would issue to the Minister for Children, Equality, Disability

This concluded the business of the meeting.

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

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