

**COMHAIRLE CHONTAE LAOISE  
LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL**

**Candidate Information Booklet**

**(Please read carefully)**

**Post of: General Operative**

**Closing Date: 4.00 P.M**

**Thursday 31st October 2024**

**Completed Application Forms (4 copies) should be submitted to:**

**Human Resources Department**

**Laois County Council**

**Aras an Chontae**

**Portlaoise**

**Co. Laois**

# COMHAIRLE CHONTAE LAOISE - LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL

## POST OF: GENERAL OPERATIVE

### THE COMPETITION

Laois County Council is inviting applications from suitably qualified persons for the above competition. Laois County Council will, following the interview process, form a panel for the post of General Operative from which future relevant vacancies may be filled.

### THE ROLE

The Council is seeking applications from suitably qualified candidates with relevant experience for the position of General Operative. It is proposed to form a panel of qualified candidates from which any vacancies permanent or temporary which arise will be filled during the lifetime of the panel.

#### Essential Requirements

A General Operative is a member of a multi-disciplinary team of front-line service employees usually based in one of the Council's three Municipal Districts (Portlaoise M.D., Borris in Ossory/Mountmellick M.D. and Portarlinton/Graiguecullen M.D.) which deliver a wide variety of key local authority services in the heart of communities. Typical services include roads and transportation, maintenance of social housing units and estates, water services (under a Service Level Agreement with Irish Water), environmental and drainage works, upkeep of recreation and amenity facilities and graveyards.

The role of General Operative involves working closely with a wide range of local authority stakeholders including businesses, schools, tidy towns committees, resident associations and other community groups. The ideal candidate will be a highly motivated adaptable and flexible person capable of acting on their own initiative, with a strong sense of commitment to delivering quality public services.

Candidates will also be expected to demonstrate a clear knowledge and understanding of:

- Local authority services, its key stakeholders and customers
- Local authority structures and the role of Elected Members
- Health, Safety and Welfare in the workplace
- Good public service values and ethics

The ideal candidate should also have **good experience, knowledge** and **proven track record in some or all of the following:**

- Road maintenance and repair to include drainage works, pipe laying & fencing
- Minor construction works including ground works and concrete
- Landscaping and grass cutting
- Blocklaying
- Plastering carpentry
- Driving in the context of work
- Machinery, tools and equipment associated with the above tasks
- Dealing with customers and members of the public
- Working with others as part of a team and taking direction from a supervisor

## DUTIES

You shall perform such duties as may from time to time be assigned to you in relation to your employment and as may be appropriate to any particular function of the local authority for which the Chief Executive is responsible and carry out such instructions as may be given in relation to the performance of your duties. You shall, if required, act for an employee of a higher level. You may be required to work outside your normal job description from time to time.

*Duties to be assigned include the following although this is not exhaustive and maybe reviewed from time to time as organisational needs require:*

- Driving Council owned plant and vehicles including tractors, pick-up trucks and other similar vehicles
- General Maintenance duties in relation to roads and footpaths including opening water inlets, drainage works, clean gullies, tar patching etc.
- Be responsible for the safe keeping of all stores and equipment that has been allocated to him/her for the purpose of carrying out his/her duties.
- Patch—macadam, tar and chippings.
- Street Cleaning and power washing.
- Surface dressing, road strengthening, sweep chips, traffic control and treat road for oil spillage.
- Cut grass using ride on mower, lawnmower, strimmers or other similar equipment
- Lay pipes, ducting, water mains etc.
- Assist in fencing, concrete post and rail and concrete post and chain link.
- Build walls, clean & paint signs.
- Chemical spraying and weed control
- Carrying out any other maintenance installation, construction and repair work as may be required from time to time.
- Attend to emergency work outside of normal working hours when required
- Undergo health and safety as well as general performance related or upskilling training when required
- Ensure compliance with organisational policies, procedures and legislation at all times
- Any other duties as may be assigned from time to time.

## QUALIFICATIONS

### 1. CHARACTER

Each candidate must be of good character.

### 2. HEALTH

Each Candidate must be in a state of health such as would indicate a reasonable prospect of ability to render regular and efficient service.

### 3. EDUCATION/TRAINING/EXPERIENCE

Each candidate must satisfy the local authority that he/she has

(a) adequate education, training and experience of a type which would render him/her suitable to perform satisfactorily the duties of the post of General Operative.

Experience in County Council related activities such as Road Maintenance Work, Construction Work, operating equipment, tools and machinery is desirable though not essential.

#### **4. DRIVING LICENCE:**

The candidate must hold a current full, valid Category B driving licence at the latest date of receipt of application forms and be prepared to drive such vehicles as the Council may require in the performance of his/her duties.

***IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT THE LICENCE OF A SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATE SHOULD REMAIN FREE FROM ANY ENDORSEMENTS WHILE EMPLOYED WITH LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL.***

***FAILURE TO DO SO REPRESENTS A BREACH OF THE CONTRACT OF EMPLOYMENT AND MAY RESULT IN REPERCUSSIONS TO CONTINUED EMPLOYMENT***

## **PARTICULARS OF OFFICE**

### **The Post:**

The post is whole time and pensionable. A panel will be formed for an initial period of one year and this may be extended for a further year at the discretion of the Chief Executive. The panel will be used to fill both permanent and temporary positions that may arise for its duration. Vacancies will be offered in order of merit as per the panel.

### **Probation:**

Where a person who is not already a permanent employee of this local authority is appointed, the following provisions shall apply:

There shall be a period after appointment takes effect, during which such a person shall hold the position on probation;

Such period shall be ten months but the Chief Executive may, at his/her discretion, extend such period;

Such a person shall cease to hold the position at the end of the period of probation, unless during this period the Chief Executive has certified that the service is satisfactory;

There will be ongoing assessments during the probationary period. Employment may be terminated by either party during probation or at the end of the probationary period on one week's notice.

### **Salary:**

The current annual pay-scale (as per EL 03/2024) is as follows: €658.32 to €738.55 p/w (after 15 years)

The salary shall be fully inclusive and shall be as determined from time to time. Holders of the post will be paid at the appropriate point on the salary scale in accordance with the relevant Department Circular. Starting pay for new entrants will be at the minimum of the scale. Where the appointee has been serving elsewhere in the public service in an analogous grade and pay-scale, and will be moving without break to another part of the public sector at an analogous grade, the appointment may be made at the appointee's current point of scale. The rate of remuneration may be adjusted from time to time in line with Government pay.

**Work Base:**

Laois County Council reserves the right to assign you to any department, premises or district in use by the Council, now or in the future. Changes in location of employment will not result in payment of disturbance money or other compensation. The person appointed will be required to provide him/herself at his/her own expense with the necessary mode of travel to and from work.

**Working Hours:**

The general working hours at present provide for a five day, thirty-nine hour working week, hours may vary from time to time. You may be required to work a 5/6 day week working arrangement on a roster basis as applicable to a particular location and assignment of duties.

The working hours may be reviewed at any stage at any time by the Council. The post may require flexibility in working outside of normal hours, including at weekends, as necessary.

You may be requested and in certain circumstances required to work overtime on various occasions and remuneration for such overtime will be paid in accordance with agreed rates and procedures.

**Annual Leave:**

The current annual leave entitlement is 25 days per annual. Granting of annual leave, payment for annual leave and arrangement for public holidays will be governed by the provisions of the Organisation of Working Time Act, 1997 (as amended).

**Residence/Location:**

The holder of the position shall reside in the district in which his/her duties are to be performed or within a reasonable distance thereof.

Laois County Council reserves the right to assign the successful candidate to any department or premises in use by the Council, now or in the future.

Changes in location of employment will not result in payment of disturbance money or other compensation. The person appointed will be required to travel to and from work at their own expense.

**Health:**

For the purpose satisfying the requirements as to health, it will be necessary for the successful candidates, before they are appointed, to undergo at their expense a medical examination by a qualified medical practitioner to be nominated by the local authority. On taking up appointment, the expense of the medical examination will be refunded to candidates. The successful candidate must comply, at his/her own expense with such remedial requirements as the Council considers necessary.

**Safety & Welfare:**

The holder of the post shall co-operate with the terms of Laois County Council's Safety Statement and Major Emergency Plan. He / She shall familiarise him/herself with the safety rules and procedures and make proper use of all safety, clothing and equipment. Failure to comply with the terms of the Safety Statement may result in a disciplinary action.

If required, the successful candidate shall wear protective clothing and have on his/her person at all times a valid Safe Pass card. Should he/she not hold a valid Safe Pass card, a course shall be undertaken to attain this card.

**Training:**

It is a condition of employment that successful candidates will be required to participate in training programmes relevant to the skills necessary for the performance of the duties attaching to the post.

**Citizenship:**

Candidates must, by the date of any job offer, be:

- (a) A citizen of the European Economic Area (EEA). The EEA consists of the Member States of the European Union, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway; or
- (b) A citizen of the United Kingdom (UK); or
- (c) A citizen of Switzerland pursuant to the agreement between the EU and Switzerland on the free movement of persons; or
- (d) A non-EEA citizen who is a spouse or child of an EEA or UK or Swiss citizen and has a stamp 4 visa; or
- (e) A person awarded international protection under the International Protection Act 2015 or any family member entitled to remain in the State as a result of family reunification and has a stamp 4 visa; or
- (f) A non-EEA citizen who is a parent of a dependent child who is a citizen of, and resident in, an EEA member state or the UK or Switzerland and has a stamp 4 visa.

**Equal Opportunities:**

The Council shall work to promote a culture of equality and to develop equality and recruitment policies and procedures to ensure that all candidates are selected on merit. The Council shall endeavour to ensure that the selection process does not provide unjustifiable advantage or disadvantage to any particular candidate or group of candidates. The recruitment and selection process shall embrace genuine equality of opportunity, and this will be integral to the process by which appointments are made.

**RECRUITMENT**

Selection of candidates for appointment shall be by means of a competitive interview.

**a) Shortlisting Process**

The local authority may decide, by reason of the number of persons seeking admission to a competition, to carry out a shortlisting procedure. The number of persons to be invited, in these circumstances, to interview, shall be determined by the local authority from time to time having regard to the likely number of vacancies to be filled. The local authority may at its discretion, decide that such shortlisting will be based on qualifications, relevant experience and information submitted on the application form. In that regard, candidates should ensure they provide detailed and accurate information in completing the form. Alternatively, the local authority may at its discretion decide to shortlist by way of preliminary interview.

**b) Competitive Interview**

Selection of candidates for appointment shall be by means of a competitive interview. The competitive interview shall be conducted by or on behalf of the local authority. The Council is committed to a process of selection on merit, based on fair and open competition. The criteria for judging suitability

and ranking will be related directly to the qualification, attributes and skills required to undertake the duties and responsibilities to the standard required in the post.

**c) Panels**

Following completion of interviews, panels may be formed, the duration of which is at the discretion of the Council. While a panel remains in force, offers of temporary or permanent employment may be made subject to confirmation of qualifications and satisfying clauses in relation to health, character, or other requirements of the particular post. Persons to whom an offer of employment is made must take up duty within 1 month from the date of offer, or such extended period as the Council may agree, otherwise, the Council may decide not to appoint them.

**d) References/Documentary Evidence**

Each candidate may be required to submit as references the names and addresses of two responsible persons to whom he/she is well known but not related. Candidates may be required to submit documentary evidence to the local authority in support of their application.

**COMMENCEMENT**

The local authority shall require a person to whom an appointment is offered to take up such appointment within a period of not more than one month and if he/she fails to take up the appointment within such period or such longer period as the local authority in its absolute discretion may determine, the local authority shall not appoint him/her.

**RETIREMENT**

The Single Public Service Pension Scheme ("Single Scheme") as provided by the Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and Other Provisions) Act 2012 commenced with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2013. The act introduces new pension and retirement provisions for **new entrants** to the public service appointed on or after 1<sup>st</sup> January 2013. Pension age set initially at 66 years; this will rise in step with statutory changes in the SPC age to 67 years in 2021 and 68 years in 2028. The compulsory retirement age of 70 applies. Otherwise the retirement age of the relevant Scheme applies. It should be noted that candidates who are in receipt of a Public Service Pension and are rehired in any paid capacity by a Public Service Body may be liable to have their pension abated. Prior to appointment successful candidates will be obliged to complete a Declaration in relation to previous Public Pensionable Employment.

**GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATIONS**

[Laos County Council is committed to protecting your personal data and we comply with our obligations under the Data Protection Acts, 1988 – 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulations.](#)

**Basis for Processing your Personal Information**

The basis for processing your personal data is to process your application for the position you have applied for with Laos County Council under the Terms of the Employment (Information) Act 1994 and Human Resources Department policies and procedures. Personal data sought for the purpose of recruitment will include your name, your contact details including email address and mobile number,

particulars of education, details regarding your record of employment, details of referees and confirmation of if you require an employment permit/visa or work authorisation. When your application form is received, we create a computer record in your name, which contains much of the personal information you have supplied. This personal record is used solely in processing your candidature. You are entitled to obtain at any time, a copy of information about you, which is kept on computer.

### **Sharing of Information**

Outside of the relevant recruitment team, the information provided in your application form will only be shared for progressing the competition for which you have applied for, with a designated short listing and/or interview board. If, following the competition, you are placed on a panel and offered a position, the information provided in your application form will form part of your Personnel File and may be used for deciding the post to which you are assigned. Furthermore, should you be offered a position and subsequently confirm your interest in the position, the information provided on your application form will be used to request service records, employment references and/or character references as required.

### **Storage period**

Your application will be retained for one year from the date a panel for this position is formed. In exceptional circumstances panels can be extended for an additional year and your personal data will be kept until the extension has expired (usually a further one year, rarely two years). You will be notified if the panel has been extended after one year and the new expiry date of the panel. Applications which are unsuccessful at interview stage will be retained for one year. Applications that are not progressed to interview stage will be destroyed post competition. If you do not furnish the personal data requested, Laois County Council will not be able to progress your application form for the competition for which you are applying. Laois County Council's Privacy Statement can be assessed at: <https://laois.ie/privacy-statement/>

**Any attempt by a candidate, or by any person(s) acting at the candidate's instigation, directly or indirectly, by means of written communication or otherwise influence in the candidate's favour, any member or employee of the Council or person nominated by the County Council to interview or examine applicants, will automatically disqualify the candidate for the position being sought. Expenses incurred by candidates in attending interview etc., will be at the candidates own expense.**

**Laois County Council is an equal opportunities employer.**

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