

**MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER MEETING OF LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL HELD
ON THE 16th OF DECEMBER 2019**

PRESENT: Councillor William Aird In the Chair

 Councillors Conor Bergin Paddy Bracken
 Ben Brennan Ollie Clooney
 Thomasina Connell Caroline Dwane Stanley
 John Joe Fennelly Padraig Fleming
 John King Seamus McDonald
 Paschal McEvoy Aisling Moran
 Tom Mulhall Aidan Mullins
 Mary Sweeney James Kelly

APOLOGIES: Councillors Catherine Fitzgerald Noel Tuohy

IN ATTENDANCE:

Messers John Mulholland, Chief Executive, Gerry Murphy, Head of Finance, Simon Walton, Director of Services, Donal Brennan, Director of Services, Ms. Irene Delaney, Administrative Officer & Ms. Michelle McCormack, Executive Secretary.

193. VOTES OF SYMPATHY

On the proposition of the Cathaoirleach, Councillor William Aird, the members unanimously agreed to extend a vote of sympathy to the Fingelton Family on the recent death of Ms. Maura Fingleton, Grange, Stradbally, Co. Laois, former employee of Laois County Council.

A minutes silence was observed as a mark of respect to Maura.

On the proposition of the Cathaoirleach, Councillor William Aird, the members unanimously agreed to extend a vote of sympathy to the Callan Family on the recent death of Ms. Margaret Callan, Ardreigh, Athy, Co. Kildare, mother of staff Members, Mr. Tim Callan, Housing & Mr. Michael Callan, Planning Department

On the proposition of the Cathaoirleach, Councillor William Aird, the members unanimously agreed to extend a vote of sympathy to the Hunt Family, Ballymacrossan, Geashill, Co. Offaly on the recent death of Mrs. Anne Hunt, mother of former employee of Laois County Council, Ms. Deirdre Hunt.

On the proposition of the Cathaoirleach, Councillor William Aird, the members unanimously agreed to extend a vote of sympathy to the Booth family on the recent death of Mr. Richard Booth, Killeen, Mountmellick, father of Mr. Shane Booth, Planning Department and brother of Ms. Ann Kavanagh, Roads Department.

On the proposition of the Cathaoirleach, Councillor William Aird, the members unanimously agreed to extend a vote of sympathy to the Campion family on the recent death of Mr. Sean Campion, Johnstown Glebe, Rathdowney, father of Ms. Geraldine Campion, Superannuation Department & Mr. Pat Campion, Western Area.

On the proposition of the Cathaoirleach, Councillor William Aird, the members unanimously agreed to extend a vote of sympathy to the Lalor family on the recent death of Ms. Patty Lalor, Boley, Shanahoe, Co. Laois.

On the proposition of the Cathaoirleach, Councillor William Aird, the members unanimously agreed to extend a vote of sympathy to the Corcoran Family on the recent death of Susan Corcoran, Castlebarnagh, Daingean, Co. Offaly.

On the proposition of the Cathaoirleach, Councillor William Aird, the members unanimously agreed to extend a vote of sympathy to the Dooley family on the recent death of Ms. Bridget Dooley, Chapel Hill, Baltinglass, Wicklow, mother of Fr. Tom Dooley, Parish Priest in Portarlinton.

194. CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER MEETING OF LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL HELD ON THE 25TH OF NOVEMBER 2019

On the proposition of Councillor John King seconded by Councillor Paddy Bracken, the Members unanimously agreed to the minutes of the November meeting of Laois County Council held on the 25th of November 2019

195. REPORT ON CPG MEETING HELD ON THE 18TH OF NOVEMBER 2019

On the proposition of Councillor Paddy Bracken seconded by Councillor Ollie Clooney, the Members unanimously agreed to the report on CPG meeting held on the 18th of November 2019.

196. REPORT ON MUNICIPAL DISTRICT MEETINGS HELD IN NOVEMBER 2019

On the proposition of Councillor John Joe Fennelly seconded by Councillor Padraig Fleming, the Members unanimously agreed to the minutes of the reports on Municipal District Meetings held in November 2019.

197. DISPOSAL OF SITE NO. 17 COMPRISING 0.095 HECTARES AT CASTLETOWN, CO. LAOIS.

On the proposition of Councillor Conor Bergin seconded by Councillor Thomasina Connell, the Members unanimously agreed to the disposal of Site No. 17 comprising 0.095 hectares at Castletown, Co. Laois in the townland of Churchfield for a consideration of €30,000

198. DISPOSAL OF FREEHOLD INTEREST AT 27 CHURCHFIELD HEIGHTS, CASTLETOWN, CO. LAOIS.

On the proposition of Councillor John King seconded by Councillor James Kelly, the Members unanimously agreed to the disposal of freehold interest at 27 Churchfield Heights, Castletown, Co. Laois in the townland of Churchfield for a consideration of €300.00

199. PRESENTATION BY MR. DAVID O' HARA, SENIOR EXECUTIVE PLANNER ON THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE REVIEW OF THE LAOIS COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2017-2023

Mr. David O' Hara, Senior Executive Planner delivered a very comprehensive presentation on the commencement of the review of the Laois County Development Plan 2017-2023. Various queries were raised by the Members which were responded to.

200. LOCAL AUTHORITY CLIMATE ACTION CHARTER

Mr. John Mulholland, Chief Executive referred to the Climate Action Charter and the Covenant of Mayors which was previously signed by the Cathaoirleach in September 2019. The Climate Action Charter commits the Council to put a process in place to achieve further efficiencies. Further updates will be brought to the Members in due course.

201. RATIFICATION OF CONFERENCES/ATTENDANCE AT TRAINING

On the proposition of Councillor John King seconded by Councillor Paschal McEvoy, the Members unanimously agreed the details as circulated.

202. CORRESPONDENCE

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

- (i) Correspondence dated the 5th of December 2019 from the Minister for Finance and Public Expenditure & Reform in relation to Notice of Motion No: 63/2019
- (ii) Acknowledgement dated the 9th of December 2019 from the Department of Housing, Planning & Local Government in relation to Notice of Motion No: 66/2019
- (iii) Acknowledgement dated the 10th of December 2019 from the Department of Children and Youth Affairs in relation to Notice of Motion No: 67/2019

203. NOTICE OF MOTIONS

Notice of Motion No: 70/2019

Councillor Aisling Moran proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That Laois County Council put in place procedures so that public service companies carry out maintenance works when it is minimally disruptive to the majority, for example at night, weekends and not during business hours as is done all across Europe, America, Australia. They force businesses to close their doors at another cost to the businesses”

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Mary Sweeney. The Members were advised that there are a multiplicity of organisations and agencies that use the public road network for the purposes of maintaining and upgrading their services.

For its part Laois County Council assesses its own jobs on a case by case basis so as to decide the appropriateness of carrying out works during daytime hours or at night. Night time works can reduce impacts on businesses and commuters but are more expensive and can increase inconvenience for residents depending on the location of the works.

Aside from local authorities there are numerous other statutory bodies (ESB Networks, Irish Water, Eir etc.) all of whom have legal entitlements to maintain and upgrade their services. These agencies also undertake daytime and nighttime works, as assessed on a case by case basis. It would appear inevitable that, in circumstances where such work are restricted solely to nighttime hours, there would inevitably be a consequent increase in service consumption costs. Local Authorities cannot compel such agencies to complete all of their works at night.

Thereafter, there are also health and safety issues that dictate that certain works are more appropriately addressed during daytime hours than at night.

Notice of Motion No: 71/2019

Councillor Aisling Moran proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That this Council calls on the Minister for Health, Mr. Simon Harris to amend the proposed Treatment Of Cancer (Advertisements) Bill 2018, with a view to being more inclusive of holistic medicines. As it stands this Bill excludes all other forms of treatment bar conventional medicine which in the main is driven by the pharmaceutical industry

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Caroline Dwane Stanley. The Members were advised that a letter would issue to the Minister for Health in this regard.

Notice of Motion No: 72/2019

Councillor Willie Aird proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That Laois County Council calls on the Minister for Education & Skills, Mr. Joe McHugh to give a commitment for prioritising of the new Kolbe School on the building programme with immediate effect”

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor John Joe Fennelly. The Members were advised that a letter would issue to the Minister for Education & Skills in this regard.

Notice of Motion No: 73/2019

Councillor Willie Aird proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That Laois County Council calls on the Government to revise the means testing procedures and cut offs for parents of children with severe disabilities”

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Caroline John Joe Fennelly. The Members were advised that a letter would issue to the Minister for Housing, Planning & Community in this regard.

Notice of Motion No: 74/2019

Councillor Willie Aird proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That Laois County Council calls on the Minister for Housing, Planning & Community, Mr. Eoghan Murphy, T.D., to give an extra allocation to enable the Council to purchase available houses in 2020”

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Mary Sweeney. The Members were advised that a letter would issue to the Minister for Housing, Planning & Community in this regard.

Notice of Motion No: 75/2019

Councillor Tom Mulhall proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That this Council write to the Minister for Agriculture, Food & the Marine, Mr. Michael Creed calling on him to engage with the main farming organisations to stop the decline in farm incomes

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Ollie Clooney. The Members were advised that a letter would issue to the Minister for Agriculture, Food & the Marine in this regard.

Notice of Motion No: 76/2019

Councillor Tom Mulhall proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That this Council with the lambing season just about to start call on dog owners to make sure they know where their pets are especially in the hours of darkness”

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor John King. The Members were advised that an advertisement would be published in the papers reminding dog owners of their responsibilities in relation to the control of their dogs. The Members also requested that details of the penalties for non-compliance also be included. Mr. Simon Walton, Director of Services confirmed that this would be done.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

SIGNED: _____
CATHAOIRLEACH

CERTIFIED: _____
DIRECTOR OF SERVICES
CORPORATE AFFAIRS