

MINUTES OF THE JUNE MEETING OF LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL HELD ON THE 28TH OF JUNE 2021 IN THE DUNAMAISE ARTS CENTRE & THEATRE & BY MICROSOFT TEAMS

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

IN ATTENDANCE:

Messers John Mulholland, Chief Executive, Donal Brennan, Director of Services, Simon Walton, Director of Services, Mr. Joe Delaney, Director of Services, Ms. Irene Delaney, A.O., & Ms. Michelle McCormack, S.O.

94. VOTE OF SYMPATHY

On the proposition of the Cathaoirleach, Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald, the Members unanimously extended a vote of sympathy to the McGree family on the recent death of Mr. Richard McGree, Carrigan Street, Durrow, father of Ms. Julie Bergin, Financial Management Accountant with Laois County Council

95. CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE MAY MEETING OF LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL HELD ON THE 31ST OF MAY 2021

On the proposition of Councillor John Joe Fennelly seconded by Councillor John King, the Minutes of the May monthly meeting held on the 31st of May 2021 were confirmed as circulated.

96. REPORT ON C.P.G. MEETING HELD ON THE 24TH OF MAY 2021

On the proposition of Councillor Paddy Bracken seconded by Councillor Thomasina Connell, the report on the CPG meeting held on the 24th of May 2021 was confirmed as circulated.

97. REPORT ON MUNICIPAL DISTRICT MEETINGS HELD IN MAY 2021

On the proposition of Councillor James Kelly seconded by Councillor Paschal McEvoy, the report on Municipal District Meetings held in May 2021 were confirmed as circulated.

98. DISPOSAL OF LAND UNDER SECTION 183 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT, 2001 in respect of DISPOSAL OF FREEHOLD COMPRISING 0.012 HECTARES OF LAND AT 25 BALLYMORRIS COURT, PORTARLINGTON, CO. LAOIS.

On the proposition of Councillor Aidan Mullins seconded by Councillor Paschal McEvoy the Members unanimously agreed to the disposal of freehold comprising 0.012 hectares of land at 25 Ballymorris Court, Portarlinton, Co. Laois in the townland of Cooltederry for a consideration of €1.00

99. ADOPTION OF THE 2020 ANNUAL REPORT

The Members were circulated with the 2020 Annual Report which was unanimously agreed on the proposition of Councillor Seamus McDonald and seconded by Councillor Willie Aird.

100. UPDATE ON LITTER MANAGEMENT PLAN 2018-2020

Mr. Simon Walton, Director of Services indicated that the current Litter Management Plan for County Laois is for the period 2018-2020. Circumstances over the past twelve months have mitigated against the planned review. It is intended to bring a Draft Litter Management Plan 2022-2024 before the Environment Strategic Policy Committee in September 2021 and thereafter, with the agreement of the Elected members collectively, Laois County Council will proceed to public consultation in Q4 of 2021 with a view to having a new Litter Management Plan adopted in late 2021/early 2022.

In this regard, the Members unanimously agreed to an extension of the current Litter Management Plan 2018 – 2021 to the end of 2021.

The Members requested an update on CCTV legislation and expressed concern regarding the ongoing issue of illegal dumping.

Mr. Simon Walton, Director of Services indicated that there is a new Waste Management (Amendment) (Regulator) Bill 2019 which the Department have indicated will be enacted in the first quarter of 2022.

101. FIX DATE FOR LPT MEETING – SUGGESTED DATE MONDAY, 26TH OF JULY 2021

The Members unanimously agreed that the LPT meeting would take place on the 26th of July 2021.

102. AGREED PROTOCOLS FOR LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL AND MUNICIPAL DISTRICT FUNCTIONS

The provisions of Section 31 (4) of the Local Government Act, 2001 which provides that “The Cathaoirleach shall take precedence at all meetings of the Local Authority and all proceedings of the Elected Council” were outlined to the members. It was also noted that Laois County Council’s agreed protocols incorporate this provision.

Clarification was provided by Mr. Simon Walton, Director of Services in relation to the recent opening of the N80 Maidenhead Realignment Scheme on the 11th of June 2021

103. MONTHLY MANAGEMENT REPORT FOR MAY 2021

The Members were circulated with the Monthly Management Report for June 2021 and the Director of Services responded to the various queries raised.

104. CORRESPONDENCE

The following correspondence was circulated which had been received since the last meeting:-

- (i) Correspondence from the Minister for Finance, Mr. Paschal Donohoe, T.D. dated the 2nd of June 2021 in relation to Notice of Motion No: 23/2021
- (ii) Correspondence from the Municipal District of Carrickmacross – Castleblaney dated the 8th of June 2021 in relation to a call on the Minister for Health to put in place measures for support to those who are cared for in their homes
- (iii) Correspondence from Meath County Council dated the 24th of June 2021 in relation to a call on the Government to explore the German Sparkasse Community Banking model
- (iv) Correspondence from Waterford City & County Council dated the 25th of June 2021 in relation to adult literacy limitations
- (v) Acknowledgment from the Minister for Health dated the 24th of June 2021 in relation to Notice of Motion No: 28/2021

105. NOTICE OF MOTIONS

Notice of Motion No: 29/2021

Councillor Noel Tuohy proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That this Council compliment and thank the Lollipop women and men who see to the safety of the children every day at school times now as we approach the end of the school year”

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor John King. It was agreed that a letter would issue in this regard.

Notice of Motion No: 30/2021

Councillor Noel Tuohy proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That this Council give a special mention of gratitude to the Members of the Tidy Towns who do huge work to keep our towns clean and looking so well as we head into the tourist/summer season”

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Caroline Dwane Stanley. It was agreed that a letter would issue in this regard.

Notice of Motion No: 31/2021

Councillor Noel Tuohy proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That this Council provide signage in relation to children at play in housing estates if requested throughout the County”

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Caroline Dwane Stanley. The Members were advised that all housing estates have “slow zones” signs with Speed limit 30-km/h. If any location requires additional signage, the Area Engineer can review and install additional signage.

Notice of Motion No: 32/2021

Councillor Aisling Moran proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That this Council make provision to live stream all public Council meetings on the Laois County Council website”

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Noel Tuohy. The Members were advised that the Council would investigate the costs associated with live streaming of all public Council meetings with a view to it being considered in the Budget for 2022.

Notice of Motion No: 33/2021

Councillor Aisling Moran proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That Laois County Council provide all costs to date on The Cube, to include all grants applied for and received, number of staff working on the project and for how long. Also the price agreed for the building when all works are completed and how that figure was calculated”

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Noel Tuohy. The Members were advised of the following:-

Costs to Date:

The following costs have been incurred to date:

Payroll	€46,875
Employer’s Liability Insurance	€208
Computer Software	€485
Legal fees and expenses	€414
Recruitment	€9,720
Advertising	€2,069
Application fees- Fire & Disability	€3,449
Total	€63,220

Grants Applied for and Received:

Funding of €2,050,560 (80%) has been secured by Portlaoise Innovation Centre DAC towards the development of a Low Carbon Centre of Excellence in Portlaoise. A breakdown of the grant allocated v projected expenditure is shown below:

Category of Funding	Grant Allocated	Budgeted Expenditure
Payroll and Overheads	461,760	€577,200
Travel and Subsistence	39,000	€48,750
Capital Grant	1,440,000	€1,800,000
Promotional Grant	9,000	€11,250
Consultancy grant	100,800	€126,000
Total Grant	2,050,560	€2,563,200

The amount in grant aid approved to date is €78,000 (Payroll and overheads for 1 year)

Number of Staff working on the Project and for how long:

The Portlaoise Innovation Centre DAC employs 1 staff member at present. He commenced on the 2nd November 2020 and has a 3-year contract. There is provision in the budget for an additional staff member.

Price agreed for building when all works are completed and how that figure was calculated:

No price has been agreed to date.

A discussion ensued regarding representation of Laois County Council on the Board of the Portlaoise Innovation Centre Designated Activity Company. It was noted that the incoming Cathaoirleach will represent Laois County Council on the Board.

Notice of Motion No: 34/2021

Councillor Aisling Moran proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That Laois County Council carry out a comprehensive audit on all the pits and quarries in the County, to include all those on the register of quarries and all others which Laois County Council have any knowledge of. This must include all Unauthorised Developments since the 261 process and any other that may have had been brought to the attention of Laois County Council”

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Aidan Mullins. The Members were advised that Since 2005 there are 156 quarries registered by Laois County Council under Section 261 and 261 A of the Planning and Development Act. The vast majority of these have now ceased operations. Currently 12 of these registered quarries have open enforcement files against them. These are being processed by the staff assigned to enforcement duties. There is an ongoing regime of inspections and any complaints received are investigated fully.

During 2020, a review commenced with staff undertaking site visits and surveys in relation to quarries from our Registers. This review is being managed by the Planning Service of Laois County Council as part of its annual work programme. The processes and procedures involved are being implemented in accordance with the relevant legislation, relevant regulations and guidance documentation issued by the Environmental Protection Agency.

To date 110 quarries have been tabulated with site maps, photographs and report sheets prepared for each one of them. This work has been interrupted over the past year by public health restrictions and the challenges of maintaining a full planning service during a pandemic. Nonetheless, the work will continue on the review in accordance with the resources available to Laois County Council and having regard to the demands on the Planning Service generally.

Notice of Motion No: 35/2021

Councillor Willie Aird proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That Laois County Council give a date as to when the Motor Taxation Office will re-open to the public”

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Paddy Bracken. The Members were advised that The Motor Tax / Cash Office will re-open to the public from Monday 5th July 2021 from 9.30am to 1.00pm Monday to Friday with the same Health and Safety arrangements as before.

Notice of Motion No: 36/2021

Councillor Thomasina Connell proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That Laois County Council call on the Minister for Health to intervene directly in the current situation regarding maternity hospitals & maternity units in general hospital which prevents partners from attending at scans, appointments and in particular during & after labour. Laois County Council calls on the Minister to issue a ministerial directive to maternity hospitals to ensure this issue is resolved without delay”

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

This concluded the business of the meeting.

SIGNED:

CATHAOIRLEACH

CERTIFIED:

**DIRECTOR OF SERVICES
CORPORATE AFFAIRS**