

**MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER MEETING OF LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL HELD ON THE 18TH OF
OCTOBER 2021 IN THE DONAGHMORE WORKHOUSE & AGRICULTURAL MUSEUM**

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

IN ATTENDANCE:

Messers John Mulholland, Chief Executive, Donal Brennan, Director of Services, Simon Walton, Director of Services, Ms. Angela McEvoy, A/Director of Services, Mr. Gerry Murphy, Head of Finance, Ms. Irene Delaney, A.O., & Ms. Michelle McCormack, S.O.

140. VOTE OF THANKS

The Cathaoirleach, Councillor Conor Bergin thanked Mr. Trevor Stanley, Manager of Donaghmore Workhouse & Agricultural Museum and his staff for facilitating Laois County Council on holding the October monthly meeting. The Chief Executive on behalf of the Management joined in the sentiments expressed.

141. VOTE OF WELL WISHES

On the proposition of Councillor Willie Aird seconded by Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald, the Members unanimously extended their good wishes to Councillor Noel Tuohy for a speedy recovery from his surgery in England.

142. VOTE OF CONGRATULATIONS

On the proposition of Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald, the Members unanimously congratulated Portlaoise on being awarded Ireland's cleanest town in the recent National IBAL League. This is a wonderful achievement for Laois County Council and Portlaoise Tidy Towns. Tribute was paid to all Tidy Towns in the County for their work and those who contributed to this success.

143. CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER MEETING OF LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL HELD ON THE 27TH OF SEPTEMBER 2021

On the proposition of Councillor John Joe Fennelly seconded by Councillor Seamus McDonald, the Minutes of the September monthly meeting held on the 27th of September 2021 were confirmed.

144. REPORT ON C.P.G. MEETING HELD ON THE 20TH OF SEPTEMBER 2021

On the proposition of Councillor Seamus McDonald seconded by Councillor Caroline Dwane Stanley, the report on the CPG meeting held on the 20th of September 2021 was confirmed as circulated.

145. REPORT ON S.P.C. MEETINGS HELD IN OCTOBER 2021

It was noted that these reports would be circulated at the next meeting.

146. DISPOSAL OF LAND UNDER SECTION 183 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT, 2001 IN RESPECT OF

Disposal of 0.683 hectares of land at Fairmount

On the proposition of Councillor Ben Brennan seconded by Councillor Aisling Moran, the Members unanimously agreed to the disposal of 0.683 hectares of land at Fairmount in the townland of Doonane for a consideration of €35,000.00.

Disposal of freehold comprising of 0.0169 hectares of land at 11 Marian Avenue, Portlaoise

On the proposition of Councillor Willie Aird seconded by Councillor Caroline Dwane Stanley, the Members unanimously agreed to the disposal of freehold comprising of 0.0169 hectares of land at 11 Marian Avenue, Portlaoise in the townland of Clonminam for a consideration of €300.00.

Disposal of freehold comprising of 0.0152 hectares of land at 55 O' Moore Place, Portlaoise

On the proposition of Councillor Caroline Dwane Stanley seconded by Councillor Thomasina Connell, the Members unanimously agreed to the disposal of freehold comprising of 0.0152 hectares of land at 55 O' Moore Place, Portlaoise in the townland of Maryborough for a consideration of €300.00.

Disposal of freehold comprising of 0.0144 hectares of land at 32 Brotherton, Sleaty Road, Graiguecullen

On the proposition of Councillor Ben Brennan seconded by Councillor Aidan Mullins, the Members unanimously agreed to the disposal of freehold comprising of 0.0144 hectares of land at 32 Brotherton, Sleaty Road, Graiguecullen, Co. Laois for a consideration of €1.00

147. Declaration of Public Road at Knockmay

Mr. Simon Walton, Director of Services briefed the meeting on this item, details of which had been circulated to the Members including a map of the location. On the proposition of Councillor Willie Aird seconded by Councillor Caroline Dwane Stanley, the Members unanimously agreed to declare the J17 Distributor Road to the Irish Rail Depot a public road.

148. Laois County Council Audit Committee:-

The Members were circulated with a copy of the following documents and both were unanimously agreed on the proposition of Councillor John King seconded by Councillor Ollie Clooney.

- (i) Annual Work Programme 2022 (documentation enclosed)
- (ii) Audit Committee Charter 2022 (documentation enclosed)

149. RATIFICATION OF CONFERENCES & TRAINING

On the proposition of Councillor John Joe Fennelly seconded by Councillor Ollie Clooney, the Members unanimously agreed to ratify any forthcoming conferences and training.

The position regarding unspent monies from the 2020 and 2021 allocations due to non-attendance was raised. Clarification in relation to 2020 was provided. The position in relation to 2021 unexpended funds to be clarified further.

150. CORRESPONDENCE

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

- (i) Correspondence received from Fermanagh & Omagh District Council dated the 20th of September 2021 in relation to a Notice of Motion with regard to syringes for Cuba Campaign
- (ii) Acknowledgment letter from the Office of the Taoiseach dated the 7th of October 2021 in relation to Notice of Motion No: 47/2021
- (iii) Correspondence from the Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage dated the 15th of October 2021 in relation to targeted Quarter 4 Rates Waiver for Hospitality and Tourism Sectors

It was noted that the TII have agreed to meet a deputation from Laois County Council – agenda and suitable dates to be arranged.

151. NOTICE OF MOTIONS

Notice of Motion No: 51/2021

Councillor John King proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That Laois County Council develop the Hub Centre in the Workhouse, Donaghmore as a centre to train people in IT skills and also for local people in the area who run small businesses from home including the farming community who need the services of high speed broadband that is now installed in the building”

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Conor Bergin. The Members were advised that Donaghmore has already been established as a Broadband Connection Point (BCP) and was part of a pilot project to increase connectivity in a rural area supported by the DCRD.

In 2021 further funding was granted under the TVRS Scheme to provide dedicated space , equipment and furniture to set it up for people to use for studying , business and to gain access to digital platforms. A further plan needs to be developed to explore increased usage of the space and provide appropriate amenities in conjunction with the Museum Committee.

Collaboration with training institutions could also be explored but the facility requires investment in amenities to make it fit for purpose in this regard. The Buildings and Complex are protected structures and any interventions will require expertise and a source of funding which we can explore.

Councillor King indicated that he would like to see Donaghmore becoming a technology centre for local small business including farmers. It was agreed that the matter would be examined.

Notice of Motion No: 52/2021

Councillor Paddy Bracken proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That this Council call on the Minister for Social Protection, Ms. Heather Humphries, T.D., to restore immediately the Community Welfare Office to Mountmellick”

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor John King.

Councillor Paddy Bracken indicated that the closure of this office has affected approximately 10,000 people and requested that a letter issue to the Minister in this regard and seeking the support of the local Oireachtas Members. It was agreed that this be issued.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

SIGNED: _____
CATHAOIRLEACH

CERTIFIED: _____
**DIRECTOR OF SERVICES
CORPORATE AFFAIRS**