

MINUTES OF THE JANUARY MEETING OF LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL HELD ON THE 29TH
OF JANUARY 2024 IN ÁRAS AN CHONTAE

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|-----------------|-------------|----------------------|------------------------|
| PRESENT: | 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 John Mulholland, Chief Executive, Donal Brennan, Director of Services, Gerry Murphy, Head of Finance, Ms. Angela McEvoy, Director of Services, Mr. Simon Walton, Director of Services, Ms. Carmel McNicholl, A/Director of Services, Ms. Irene Delaney, Administrative Officer & Ms. Michelle McCormack, S.O.

1. VOTE OF SYMPATHIES

The following Votes of Sympathies were agreed:

- (i) The Reddin family on the recent death of Mr. Anthony Reddin, Triogue Place, Portlaoise, Co. Laois, brother of Mr. Dom Reddin, A.O., Environment Department, Laois County Council
- (ii) The Sweeney family on the recent death of Ms. Maura Sweeney, Carrigbán, Bunclody, Wexford, mother of Mr. Nigel Sweeney, Capital Projects Office, Laois County Council
- (iii) The Brennan family on the recent death of Mr. Tom Brennan, Leeds and formerly of Monavea, Crettyard, Co. Laois, brother of Councillor Ben Brennan
- (iv) The Connolly family on the recent death of Mr. Ger Connolly, former T.D., Bracknagh, Co. Offaly.
- (v) The Tynan & Heffernan families on the recent death of Ms. Esther Heffernan, Esker Hills, Portlaoise, Co. Laois.
- (vi) The Fitzpatrick family on the recent death of Ms. Nora Fitzpatrick, The Swan, Wolfhill, Co. Laois.
- (vii) The Mulhall family on the recent death of Mr. Martin Mulhall, Shannon Road, Mountrath, Co. Laois, brother of Ms. Ellen Ryan, MyPay Department, Laois County Council
- (viii) The O' Brien family on the recent death of Ms. Betty O' Brien, Donaghmore, Co. Laois.
- (ix) The Bracken family on the recent death of Ms. Margaret Bracken, Ryevale Lawns, Leixlip, Co. Kildare, sister-in-law of Councillor Paddy Bracken.
- (x) The Bailey family on the recent death of Mr. Noel Bailey, Grantstown, Ballacolla, Co. Laois.
- (xi) The Phelan family on the recent death of Mr. John Phelan, Ballacolla, Co. Laois.
- (xii) The Deegan family on the recent death of Mr. Michael Deegan, John's Lane, Nenagh, Co. Tipperary and former County Manager with Laois County Council.

2. VOTE OF CONGRATUATIONS

On the proposition of Councillor Barry Walsh, the Members unanimously extended a vote of congratulations to Mr. Francie Gorman on his recent election as the 17th President of the Irish Farmers Association.

3. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF THE JANUARY MONTHLY MEETING HELD ON THE 11TH OF DECEMBER 2023

On the proposition of Councillor John Joe Fennelly seconded by Councillor Padraig Fleming, the minutes of the December monthly meeting held on the 11th of December were confirmed as circulated.

4. REPORT ON CPG MEETING HELD ON THE 4TH OF DECEMBER 2024

On the proposition of Councillor John Joe Fennelly seconded by Councillor Padraig Fleming the minutes of the CPG Meeting held on the 4th of December 2023 were confirmed as circulated.

5. REPORT ON MUNICIPAL DISTRICT MEETINGS HELD IN DECEMBER 2023

On the proposition of Councillor James Kelly seconded by Councillor Padraig Fleming, the minutes of the Municipal District meetings held in December 2023 were confirmed as circulated.

6. REPORT ON STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE MEETINGS HELD IN SEPTEMBER 2023

On the proposition of Councillor Padraig Fleming seconded by Councillor Conor Bergin, the reports on the Strategic Policy Committee meetings held in September 2023.

7. PART VIII OF THE PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS 2001 (AS AMENDED) – DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM HUB (FORMER) HA’PENNY SCHOOL, CHURCH AVENUE, PORTLAOISE

The Members were circulated with the Planning Report on this matter. On the proposition of Councillor Willie Aird seconded by Councillor Thomasina Connell, the Members unanimously agreed to the proposed development of the Tourism Hub (former Ha’penny School), Church Avenue, Portlaoise.

8. DISPOSAL OF LAND UNDER SECTION 183 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT, ACT 2001

In accordance with the provisions of Section 177 of the the Local Government Act, 2001 (as amended) and Standing Orders, Councillor Conor Bergin absented himself from the meeting for consideration of the following:-

(i) Disposal of 0.0159 hectares (Area C) of land at Ballymackan, Portlaoise

On the proposition of Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald seconded by Councillor Willie Aird, the Members unanimously agreed to the disposal of 0.0159 hectares (Area C) of land at Ballymackan, Portlaoise in the townland of Ballymackan for a consideration of €3,930.

(ii) Disposal of 0.0411 hectares of land comprising of Area A at 0.0276 ha and Area B at 0.0135 ha of land at Ballymackan, Portlaoise

On the proposition of Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald seconded by Councillor Willie Aird, the Members unanimously agreed to the disposal of 0.0159 hectares (Area C) of land at Ballymackan, Portlaoise in the townland of Ballymackan for a consideration of €10,145.

(iii) Disposal of 0.518 hectares of land at Swan Road, Durrow

On the proposition of Councillor Ollie Clooney seconded by Councillor John King, the Members unanimously agreed to the disposal of 0.518 hectares of land at Swan Road, Durrow in the townland of Course, Durrow for a consideration of €181,000.

(iv) Disposal of Site No. 1 comprising 0.375 acres of land at Durrow, Co. Laois

On the proposition of Councillor Ollie Clooney and seconded by Councillor John Joe Fennelly, the Members unanimously agreed to the disposal of Site No. 1 comprising 0.375 acres of land at Durrow, Co. Laois in the townland of Course for a consideration of €40,000.

(v) Disposal of Site No. 2 comprising 0.364 acres at Durrow, Co. Laois

On the proposition of Councillor Ollie Clooney seconded by Councillor John Joe Fennelly, the Members unanimously agreed to the disposal of Site No. 2 comprising 0.364 acres at Durrow, Co. Laois in the townland of Course for a consideration of €40,000.

(vi) Disposal of Site No. 3 comprising 0.366 acres at Durrow, Co. Laois

On the proposition of Councillor John King seconded by Councillor James Kelly, the Members unanimously agreed to the disposal of Site No. 3 comprising 0.366 acres at Durrow, Co. Laois in the townland of Course for a consideration of €40,000

(vii) Disposal of Site No. 4 comprising 0.377 acres at Durrow, Co. Laois

On the proposition of Councillor Ollie Clooney seconded by Councillor John King, the Members unanimously agreed to the disposal of Site No. 4 comprising 0.377 acres at Durrow, Co. Laois in the townland of Course for a consideration of €40,000.

(viii) Disposal of Site No. 1 comprising 0.195 acres at Ballyroan, Co. Laois

On the proposition of Councillor Willie Aird seconded by Councillor Barry Walsh, the Members unanimously agreed to the disposal of Site No. 1 comprising 0.195 acres at Ballyroan, Co. Laois in the townland of Ballyroan for a consideration of €30,000

(ix) Disposal of Site No. 2 comprising 0.198 acres at Ballyroan, Co. Laois

On the proposition of Councillor Thomasina Connell seconded by Councillor Barry Walsh, the Members unanimously agreed to the disposal of Site NO. 2 comprising 0.198 acres at Ballyroan, Co. Laois for a consideration of €30,000.

(x) Disposal of Site No. 3 comprising 0.195 acres at Ballyroan, Co. Laois

On the proposition of Councillor Barry Walsh seconded by Councillor Thomasina Connell, the Members unanimously agreed to the disposal of Site No. 3 comprising 0.195 acres at Ballyroan, Co. Laois in the townland of Ballyroan for a consideration of €30,000.

(xi) Disposal of Site No. 4 comprising 0.198 acres at Ballyroan, Co. Laois

On the proposition of Councillor Barry Walsh seconded by Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald, the Members unanimously agreed to the disposal of Site No. 4 comprising 0.198 acres at Ballyroan, Co. Laois in the townland of Ballyroan for a consideration of €30,000.

9. TAKING IN CHARGE OF BORRIS AVENUE AND BORRIS MEADOWS, BORRIS ROAD, PORTLAOISE, CO. LAOIS

On the proposition of Councillor Caroline Dwane Stanley seconded by Councillor Thomasina Connell, the Members unanimously agreed to the taking of charge of Borris Avenue and Borris Meadows & Borris Road, Portlaoise.

10. TAKING IN CHARGE OF LAKE EDGE AND LAKESIDE GARDENS, KILMINCHY, PORTLAOISE, CO. LAOIS

On the proposition of Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald seconded by Councillor Thomasina Connell the Members unanimously agreed to the taking in charge of Lake Edge and Lakeside Gardens, Kilminchy, Portlaoise, Co. Laois.

11. TAKING IN CHARGE OF RATHGLEN RATHILLION AND RATHVARNA, KILLESHTIN, CO. LAOIS.

On the proposition of Councillor Ben Brennan & Padriag Fleming seconded by Councillor Aisling Moran, the Members unanimously agreed to the taking in charge of Rathglen, Rathillion and Rathvarna, Killeshtin, Co. Laois.

12. Official Invitation to the St. Patrick's Day Parade, 15th – 18th of March 2024 New York from the Laois Association New York

On the proposition of Councillor John Joe Fennelly seconded by Councillor Barry Walsh the Members unanimously agreed the official invitation to the St. Patrick's Day Parade – 15th – 18th of March 2023 New York from the Laois Association New York.

13. Nomination of Mr. Martin O' Toole representing the Department of Social Protection on the Laois Local Community Development Committee

On the proposition of Councillor John Joe Fennelly seconded by Councillor John King, the Members unanimously agreed to the nomination of Mr. Martin O' Toole representing the Department of Social Protection on the Laois Local Community Development Committee.

14. Adoption of Laois Climate Action Plan 2024-2029

On the proposition of Councillor Pdraig Fleming seconded by Councillor Seamus McDonald the Members unanimously agreed to adopt the Laois Climate action Plan 2024-2029 as circulated in accordance with the recommendation in the Chief Executive's report including that: That Members of Laois County Council that, having considered the draft Laois County Council Climate Action Plan 2024-2029, along with Strategic Environmental Assessment and Appropriate Assessment screenings and determinations, having hereby determined that the Plan shall not adversely affect the integrity of a European Site(s) in line with SI 477 (EU Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 as amended, and having considered this Chief Executive's Report on the Draft Plan and on the public consultation, the Council approve the Laois County Council Climate Action Plan 2024-2029 subject to the Chief Executive's recommendations contained in section 4 of his report and the modifications summarised in section 5 of his report.

15. Update on the Implementation of the Corporate Plan 2019-2024

The Members noted the updated on the implementation of the Corporate Plan as circulated.

16. Draft 2024 Training & Development Programme for Elected Members of Laois County Council

On the proposition of Councillor Ollie Clooney seconded by Councillor John King, the Members unanimously agreed the draft 2024 Training & Development Programme for Elected Members of Laois County Council as circulated.

17. Section 174(1)(a) of the Local Government Act, 2001, as amended – Annual Ethics Declarations

The Members noted the requirement to furnish an annual Declaration in accordance with the requirements under Section 174(1)(a) of the Local Government Act, 2001 as amended for the Annual Ethics Declarations.

18. Monthly Management Report for January 2024 (documentation enclosed)

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

The Members were circulated with a copy of the Monthly Management Report for January 2024 and the Directors of Services responded to the various queries raised. In addition, Mr. John Mulholland, Chief Executive, in responding to a question raised regarding the size of the lift in the new County Library confirmed that the lift conforms with Part M Technical Guidance document under Irish Building Control Regulations.

19. Training & Conferences

On the proposition of Councillor John King seconded by Councillor Padraig Fleming, the Members unanimously agreed the details as circulated on Training & Conferences

20. Correspondence

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

- (i) Correspondence from Limerick City & County Council dated the 12th of December 2023 in relation to wind energy development guidelines
- (ii) Correspondence from Clare County Council dated the 12th of December 2023 in relation to the Multi Annual Rural Water Programme
- (iii) Correspondence from Clare County Council dated the 12th of December 2023 in relation to the current model of policing
- (iv) Correspondence from Clare County Council dated the 12th of December 2023 in relation to Part V obligations placed on private housing developers
- (v) Correspondence from Offaly County Council dated the 20th of December 2023 in relation to the sale of state lands where renewable energy projects have been developed
- (vi) Correspondence from Offaly County Council dated the 16th of January 2024 in relation to support for an ceasefire in Gaza
- (vii) Correspondence from Carlow County Council dated the 22nd of January 2024 in relation to the lack of funding opportunities for sports clubs
- (viii) Acknowledgment from the Minister of Justice dated the 11th of December 2023 in relation to the re-location of Portlaoise Courthouse
- (ix) Correspondence from the Minister for Finance in relation to Notice of Motion No: 27/2023 dated the 16th of January 2024
- (x) Correspondence from Minister Roderic O' Gorman in relation to Notice of Motion No: 45/2023 dated the 22nd of December 2023
- (xi) Correspondence from Minister Eamon Ryan in relation to Notice of Motion No: 51/2023 dated the 15th of December 2023
- (xii) Correspondence from the Minister for Health in relation to Notice of Motion 56/2023 dated the 18th of December 2023

- (xiii) Correspondence from the Minister for Finance in relation to Notice of Motion No: 59/2023 dated the 18th of December 2023
- (xiv) Correspondence from the Minister for Justice

21. NOTICE OF MOTIONS

Notice of Motion No: 01/2024

Councillor Barry Walsh proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That Laois County Council write to the Minister for Housing, Local Government & Heritage to consider introducing mandatory installation of automated defibrillators in all new housing developments going forward”

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor John Joe Fennelly. It was agreed that correspondence would issue to the Minister for Housing, Local Government & Heritage in this regard.

Notice of Motion No: 02/2024

Councillor P.J. Kelly proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That Laois County Council make contact with the owners of the Toll Plaza at Fatharnagh, Mountrath, Portlaoise (Midlink M7/M8) with the possibility that they might reduce the charge for heavy goods vehicles as this high cost is forcing those vehicles back into the towns and villages the motorway was built to take them out of”

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor John Joe Fennelly. The Members were advised that tolls charges are set by the Department of Transport and Transport Infrastructure Ireland. They are not set by toll plaza operators or motorway maintenance enterprises. Therefore, correspondence is more appropriately directed to the Department of Transport and to Transport Infrastructure Ireland. It was agreed that a letter issue to the Department of Transport and Transport Infrastructure Ireland.

Notice of Motion No: 03/2024

Councillor P.J. Kelly withdrew the following Notice of Motion was withdrawn following the agreement of the Members.

“That Laois County Council investigate as to why some car dealers/traders based in County Laois have reported to me that they have to use other County Councils to register vehicles for short-term use, i.e. renting or leasing and why this cant be facilitated in Laois County Council”

Notice of Motion No: 04/2024

Councillors Aisling Moran, Aidan Mullins and Ben Brennan proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That Laois County Council write to the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration & Youth of Ireland, to request that an agreed strategy is immediately put in

place to properly co-ordinate the provision of additional services for the communities hosting refugees and international protection applicants. Services must include medical, policing, accommodation, housing, education, transport, training etc and that delivery dates are set down for the roll out of these services”

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor James Kelly. It was agreed that correspondence issue to the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration & Youth in this regard.

Notice of Motion No: 04/2024

Councillor Aisling Moran proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That Laois County Council call on the Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment, Mr. Simon Coveney, T.D. and the Minister of State for Employment Affairs and Retail Businesses Mr. Neale Richmond, T.D., to put in place measures that will require businesses selling Israeli products to clearly identify the product as Israeli. This will allow the public to make a clear and informed decision when purchasing”

Following discussion on the Notice of Motion and on the proposition of Councillor James Kelly it was agreed that Russia also be included in the Notice of Motion. This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor James Kelly. The Members were advised that correspondence would issue to the Minister for Enterprise, Trade & Employment in this regard.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

SIGNED: _____
CATHAOIRLEACH

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