

COMHAIRLE CHONTAE UÍBH FHAILÍ

**MINUTES OF MAY MONTHLY MEETING
OF OFFALY COUNTY COUNCIL**

**HELD IN ST. BRIGID'S SOCIAL CLUB, GARRYHINCH,
PORTARLINGTON ON MONDAY, 15TH MAY 2017 AT 2.00 P.M.**

PRESENT:	Cllr. E. Fitzpatrick, Cathaoirleach (Presiding), Cllrs. N. Bourke, J. Carroll, J. Clendennen, N. Cribbin, D. Dolan, E. Dooley, S. Dooley, J. Foley, D. Harvey, J. Leahy, S. Maher, F. Moran, T. McKeigue, P. Ormond, D. Owens and L. Quinn.
APOLOGIES:	Cllrs. B. Killeavy, M. O'Reilly
IN ATTENDANCE:	Ms. A. Delaney, Chief Executive; Mr. D. Conlon, H.O.F.; Mr. F. Heslin, D.O.S; Mr. D. Kirrane, D.O.S; Mr. S. Murray, D.O.S; Mr. G. Bruton, A/Meetings Administrator; Mr. M. Quinn, CEO Bord na Móna; Ms. A. Curry, Company Secretary, Bord na Móna; Mr. P. Riordan, Head of Peat Division, Bord na Móna; Ms. A. Dillon, S.E.O.; Mr. D. Grennan, S.E.E.; Mr. A. Murray, S.P.; Ms. F. Flaherty, C.O.
VOTES OF SYMPATHY:	<p>Votes of sympathy were unanimously extended to the following:-</p> <p>Mr Kieran Lowry, Raheen, Clara, on the death of his mother, Mrs Rose Lowry</p> <p>Mr Dermot Kenny, Bridge Street, Clara, on the death of his brother, Mr Michael Kenny.</p> <p>Mr Declan Currams, Ballycumber, on the death of his mother, Mrs Evelyn Currams.</p> <p>The Chief Executive, on her own behalf and on behalf of the staff of the Council joined with the members in these votes of sympathy.</p>
CIVIC WELCOME:	Cllr. E. Fitzpatrick, Cathaoirleach welcomed the members to St. Brigid's Social Club, Garryhinch. He formally welcomed Ms. Nicole Turner and her family to the Council Meeting, presenting her with a scroll and a gift in recognition of her outstanding sporting excellence and winning silver and bronze medals at the 2016 IPC Swimming European Open Championships.
CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES:	On the proposal of Cllr. L. Quinn, seconded by Cllr. F. Moran, the members resolved to adopt the minutes of the April meeting of Offaly County Council held in Áras an Chontae, Charleville Road, Tullamore on 24 th April 2017.

<p>MINUTES FOR NOTING:</p>	<p>The minutes of the Corporate Policy Group Meeting held in Áras an Chontae, Charleville Road, Tullamore, Co. Offaly on 20th March 2017 were noted by the members.</p>
<p>PRESENTATION BY BORD NA MÓNA:</p>	<p>Cllr. E. Fitzpatrick, Cathaoirleach welcomed Mr. Mike Quinn, CEO Bord na Móna, Ms. AnnaMarie Curry, Company Secretary, Bord na Móna and Mr. Paul Riordan, Head of Peat Division, Bord na Móna to the meeting.</p> <p>Mr Quinn gave a comprehensive overview of the Bord na Móna strategy and business goals until 2030. He reported that the Company were the largest landholder in the country, managing approximately 80,000 hectares, across 40 sites, with over 2,200 employees working in the 6 business units of the company. He noted that the Company was 80 years in existence and was household name across the country.</p> <p>He advised that the Company had set itself the goals of being the No 1 in a number of areas, notably</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Generation of renewable energy in Ireland ✓ Resource Recovery on the island of Ireland ✓ Supplier and demand source for Biomass ✓ Supplier of sustainable solid fuels ✓ Supplier of retail and professional growing media in selected markets globally <p>The Company was also committed to sustaining current employment levels and to increase the number employed to 3,000 by 2030.</p> <p>He outlined for the members the number of awards and accreditations made to the company in recent years, which demonstrated the Company's commitment to quality.</p> <p>He gave a brief outline of the key projects and strategies in each of the 6 business units of the Company.</p> <p>He reported to the members on Bord na Móna's contribution to Offaly. He noted that the Company paid in excess of €2 million in rates in the County. He noted that the Company was investing approximately €10 million in a Biomass briquette venture in Derrinlough Briquette Factory; he noted that the Company expected to make a Planning Application for the development in late 2017/ early 2018. He noted the other significant developments in the County; Cloncreen Wind Farm, Lough Boora Discovery Park, the Company's support of the Cycle Way.</p> <p>During the ensuing discussion Mr. M. Quinn advised that Bord na Móna is committed to engaging and working with communities to secure the future viability of the company. He acknowledged that Bord na Móna is a significant employer in Offaly and advised that every effort continues to be made to secure employment opportunities in the midlands.</p> <p>The members noted that Peat production was expected to cease within 10 years, and queried what the Company's plans</p>

**PRESENTATION BY
BORD NA MÓNA:
(cont/d)**

were for the major plants and buildings they had in the County. The members queried if the Company had plans for the co-location of Wind Farms and Solar Farms on their lands. They queried if the Company was considering establishing Community Gain Funds as part of the Wind and Solar Farm developments, and noted the importance of communication with local communities and elected representatives in advance of these developments. They welcomed the Company's continuing commitment to the Derrinlough Factory and its support of the Cycle Ways. They queried if the Company would be sourcing Biomass material locally. They sought further details on the Company's long term plans for Lough Boora Discovery Park.

The members noted that a possible further use of the Company's land-banks could be in the construction of Data Storage facilities, and they acknowledged the Company's contribution to training and apprenticeships in the past and suggested that Company would continue this policy.

Mr Quinn responded to the queries and the points raised by the members, he noted that the use of Peat in Power Generation would cease by 2020 but noted the other forms of Peat production would continue. In relation to the plants and buildings operated by the Company, he advised that they would be re-used for other projects either by the Company itself or in conjunction with other agencies.

In relation to the comments on Lough Boora, he noted that the Park was a shop window for the Company on what could be achieved with post peat production. He noted that the Company was currently developing an "Industrial Heritage Program" to tell the social and commercial historical importance of peat in the midlands. He advised that the Company was committed to working with local agencies to open up its land banks for the development of Cycle Ways, where production permitted. He advised that Bord Na Móna made provision in its annual budget for ongoing maintenance of Lough Boora. He noted no scope for the Company to provide funding toward cycle ways.

In relation to Solar Farms he advised that it required 5.5 acres of solar panels to produce 1 mw of electricity, to be viable a Solar Farm would have to cover over 5,000 acres to produce a minimum of 50 mw, comparable to a small power station.

He noted that the process of producing Biomass briquettes was very similar to the traditional peat briquette and the existing plant at Derrinlough only required a facility to dry-out the biomass to be converted to biomass production. He noted that the Company was endeavouring to source biomass material locally, they were examining the use of willow and were considering 15 year contracts with local producers. They were also conducting trials of growing biomass material on worked-out bogs, with initial results proving successful. He noted that the Company were continuing with their training and apprenticeship programmes, and the biomass project was

<p>PRESENTATION BY BORD NA MÓNA: (cont/d)</p>	<p>successful in this regard, the Company was also supporting training initiatives in Accounting and Business studies. He noted that in relation to the sale of Biomass products that imports from Northern Ireland were a challenge to the Company, as these imports did not attract Carbon Tax and VAT and so were cheaper than those produced in the Republic.</p> <p>He noted the comments on Wind Farms and communication with the local communities, he advised that the Company did engage with the communities however at the early stages of these developments they didn't have a lot of information themselves. He advised that plans for the proposed Gas fired Power Station at Derrygreenagh were still active and the Company was to seek an extension of the Planning Permission in the coming months.</p> <p>The members thanked Bord na Móna for their detailed presentation and acknowledged the significant role that Bord na Móna plays in the life and employment of people throughout County Offaly.</p>
<p>SECTION 85 AGREEMENT UNDER THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001, AS AMENDED BETWEEN OFFALY COUNTY COUNCIL AND WESTMEATH COUNTY COUNCIL:</p>	<p>On the proposal of Cllr. D. Harvey, seconded by Cllr. T. McKeigue, the members resolved to adopt the Section 85 Agreement between Offaly County Council and Westmeath County Council for the purpose of the administration of the Midland Regional Local Authorities (MRLA) Contract for Paid Parking cash collection & operation and maintenance of Pay & Display machines, as previously circulated.</p>
<p>SECTION 183 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001, AS AMENDED –DISPOSAL OF 0.3264 ACRES/0.1321HA AT BLUNDELL WOOD, EDENDERRY:</p>	<p>On the proposal of Cllr. N. Cribbin, seconded by Cllr. L. Quinn, the members resolved to dispose of 0.3264 acres / 0.132 ha at Blundell Wood, Edenderry in accordance with the terms of the Section183 notice dated 11th April 2017, which had previously circulated.</p>
<p>PART VIII PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS, 2001 AS AMENDED – PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF 18 HOUSES BY OFFALY COUNTY COUNCIL AT CHANCERY LANE, TULLAMORE, CO. OFFALY:</p>	<p>Mr. Sean Murray, D.O.S., and Mr D. Grennan, S.E, briefed the members on this development. The members noted that it was timely to proceed with the development at this stage. Mr Grennan reported that the Council had fully complied with the requirements of public notification required by the Regulations. In relation to a query regarding the provision of Sheds in the development, Mr. Murray advised that the Housing Section would examine the issue.</p> <p>On the proposal of Cllr. T. McKeigue, seconded by Cllr. S. Dooley, the members agreed to adopt the Part VIII proposal for the development of 18 houses by Offaly County Council at Chancery Lane, Tullamore, as previously circulated.</p>
<p>MONTHLY MANAGEMENT REPORT:</p>	<p>Ms. A. Delaney, Chief Executive, drew the members' attention to the monthly management report which had circulated with the agenda.</p>

<p>MONTHLY MANAGEMENT REPORT: (cont/d)</p>	<p>The Chief Executive noted that the Council had been advised of funding under the Built Heritage Investment Scheme, and this funding was significantly increased on the 2016 allocation. She advised that details of the Scheme and the Department letter would be circulated to the members.</p> <p>She also advised that the Council proposed to submit a joint application with Laois County Council and Coillte for funding for the Slieve Bloom Mountain Bike Trail, under the call for proposals for the Outdoor Recreation Scheme. If successful matching funding would be required.</p> <p>Following the report the members raised the issue of domestic rubbish being placed in public litter bins. It was agreed that this issue would be passed to the Environment Section for examination.</p>
<p>CORPORATE POLICY GROUP REPORT:</p>	<p>Cllr. E. Fitzpatrick, Cathaoirleach advised that the Corporate Policy Group met earlier that day to consider the Monthly Council Agenda and to approve the list of conferences and training courses for circulation.</p> <p>He advised that the date for the Annual Meeting of Offaly County Council has been set for 19th June 2017 and that noted that the membership of the SPC's were scheduled to be renewed at the AGM.</p>
<p>NOTICES OF MOTION:</p>	<p>(i) It was agreed to refer the notice of motion, proposed by Cllr. T. McKeigue, for consideration at the next meeting of the Roads, Transportation and Emergency Services SPC.</p> <p>“That this Council put in place a three year works programme for L.I.S. Schemes across the County and call on the Minister to provide the funding to implement same.”</p> <p>(ii) The following motion was proposed by Cllr. T. McKeigue, was seconded by Cllr. D. Harvey and agreed:</p> <p>“In view of the fact that Personal Injury Claims has increased by 15% in the past year across the country, I call on Offaly County Council to publish a list of people receiving settlements and also the unsuccessful claims.</p> <p>Cllr D. Doolan, noted that IPB issued an Annual Report on Public Liability Claims which included statistics on claims.</p> <p>The Chief Executive noted that there were data protection issues in relation to release of this information. She noted that the Council worked closely with IPB to manage claims.</p>

COMHDHÁLACHA:

On the proposal of Cllr. F. Moran, seconded by Cllr. D. Owens, the members noted and approved the conferences and training seminars as follows:

CONFERENCES:

Celtic Conferences

“What does a Hard Brexit mean for Ireland?”

The Clonakilty Hotel, Clonakilty, Co. Cork

23rd – 25th June 2017

€100 plus travel & expenses

It was agreed no Councillor would attend.

CMG Professional Events

“Irish Planning Conference 2017”

Royal Marine Hotel, Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin

14th June 2017

€365 plus travel & expenses

It was agreed no Councillor would attend.

CMG Events

“Key Updates & Developments in Environmental & Planning Law”

Apex Business Centre, Blackthorn Road, Sandyford, Dublin

18

15th June 2017

€395 plus travel & expenses

It was agreed no Councillor would attend.

Celtic Conferences

“The Local Authority Waters and Communities Office (LAWCO)”

The Clonakilty Hotel, Clonakilty, Co. Cork

16th – 18th June 2017

€100 plus travel & expenses

It was agreed no Councillor would attend.

Parnell Summer School 2017

“Crime, Punishment & Justice”

August 13th – 17th August 2017

Avondale House, Rathdrum, Co. Wicklow

€275 plus travel & subsistence

It was agreed no Councillor would attend.

TRAINING:

Association of Irish Regions (AIR) Training Event

“Brexit, Regional Planning and EU Affairs”

Friday 26th May, 2017

The Park Suite, Parkview Hotel, Main Street,

Newtownmountkennedy, Co. Wicklow

€100 plus travel & expenses

It was agreed no Councillor would attend.

