

**COMHAIRLE CHONTAE UÍBH FHAILÍ**

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

**HELD IN ÁRAS AN CHONTAE, CHARLEVILLE ROAD, TULLAMORE  
ON MONDAY, 26TH MARCH 2018 AT 2.00 P.M.**

<b>PRESENT:</b>	Cllr. L. Quinn, Cathaoirleach (Presiding), Cllrs. N. Bourke, J. Carroll, J. Clendennen, N. Cribbin, D. Dolan, E. Dooley, E. Fitzpatrick, D. Harvey, B. Killeavy, J. Leahy, T. McCormack, T. McKeigue, M. O'Reilly, P. Ormond and D. Owens.
<b>IN ATTENDANCE:</b>	Ms. A. Delaney, Chief Executive; Mr. D. Conlon, H.O.F.; Mr. S. Murray, D.O.S.; Mr. T. Shanahan, D.O.S.; Mr. E. O'Ceilleachair, A/D.O.S.; Ms. M. Cleary, Meetings Administrator; Mr. A. Murray S.P.; Mr. B. Pey, A.O.; Ms. J. Ryan, S.E.; Ms. D. Livingstone, C.E.O. Waterways Ireland; P. Graham, S.E., Waterways Ireland; Mr. Peter Scully, Chairperson Offaly Audit Committee; and, Ms. L. Carbery, C.O.
<b>APOLOGIES</b>	Cllrs. J. Foley, S. Maher and F. Moran
<b>VOTES OF SYMPATHY:</b>	<p>Votes of sympathy were unanimously extended to the following: -</p> <p>Mr. David Hutton Bury on the death of his mother, Mrs. Bly Mildred Hutton Bury;</p> <p>The Flanagan Family on the death of their daughter, Ms. Rachel Flanagan;</p> <p>Mrs. Phil Sherlock on the death of her husband, Mr. James Sherlock;</p> <p>Mrs. Katrina Jones on the death of her husband, Mr. Michael Jones;</p> <p>Mr. Dermot Hanlon on the death of his wife, Mrs. Lynda Hanlon.</p> <p>The Chief Executive, on her own behalf and on behalf of the staff of Offaly County Council, joined with the members in these votes of sympathy.</p>
<b>CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES:</b>	On the proposal of Cllr. E. Dooley, seconded by Cllr. J. Clendennen, the members resolved to adopt the minutes of the February meeting of Offaly County Council held in Áras an Chontae, Charleville Road, Tullamore, on Monday, 19 <sup>th</sup> February 2018.
<b>MINUTES FOR NOTING:</b>	The members noted:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the minutes of Corporate Policy Group Meeting held in Áras an Chontae, Charleville Road, Tullamore, Co. Offaly on Monday, 15<sup>th</sup> January 2018; and</li> <li>- the minutes of the Environment, Water &amp; Drainage Services Strategic Policy Committee meeting held in Áras an Chontae, Charleville Road, Tullamore Co. Offaly on 24<sup>th</sup> October 2017.</li> </ul>
<b>SECTION 183, LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT, 2001 AS AMENDED - DISPOSAL OF 0.314 ACRES OF LAND AT THE RAHAN ROAD/RELIEF ROAD JUNCTION IN THE TOWNLAND OF SRAH, TULLAMORE</b>	On the proposal of Cllr. D. Harvey, seconded by Cllr. D. Owens, the members resolved to the disposal of 0.314 acres of land at the Rahan Road/Relief Road Junction in the townland of Srah, Tullamore in accordance with the terms of the Section 183 Notice, dated 21 <sup>st</sup> February 2018, which had previously circulated.
<b>SECTION. 183 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001, AS AMENDED - DISPOSAL OF LAND AT ARDEN, TULLAMORE</b>	On the proposal of Cllr. T. McKeigue, seconded by Cllr. D. Harvey, the members resolved to the disposal of land at Arden, Tullamore in accordance with the terms of the Section 183 Notice, dated 22 <sup>nd</sup> February 2018, which had previously circulated.
<b>SECTION 183 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001, AS AMENDED - DISPOSAL OF LAND AT BLUNDELL, EDENDERRY</b>	On the proposal of Cllr. N. Cribbin, seconded by Cllr. N. Bourke, the members resolved to the disposal of land at Blundell, Edenderry in accordance with the terms of the Section 183 Notice, dated 13 <sup>th</sup> March 2018, which had previously circulated.
<b>SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS:</b>	On the proposal of Cllr. D. Dolan, seconded by Cllr. J. Leahy, the members agreed to suspend Standing Orders to allow Item 12, Waterways Ireland Presentation and Item 8, Audit Committee Report to be held at the start of the meeting.
<b>WATERWAYS IRELAND PRESENTATION</b>	<p>Ms. Dawn Livingstone, CEO and Mr. Peter Graham, Senior Engineer, Waterways Ireland gave a comprehensive presentation on Waterways Ireland outlining their role in managing and promoting the inland waterways. They reiterated their commitment to increasing local and visitor usage through the development of blueway cycle and walking paths. They highlighted the potential for Offaly and informed the meeting that they had, in partnership with Offaly County Council, commissioned a feasibility study on the development of Tullamore Harbour.</p> <p>The members thanked Ms. D. Livingstone, CEO Waterways Ireland for the presentation, welcomed the approach to the development of Tullamore Harbour, and, acknowledged their contribution to the development of the Daingean playground. She advised that Waterways Ireland welcomed the opportunity to work with community groups and clubs and where possible to open access onto the canal.</p> <p>In responding to the concerns raised by the members with regard to the condition of the roads, Mr. P. Graham, S.E., outlined the rationale behind the road surface being used. He agreed to work with the Council to review this matter. Mr. P.</p>

	<p>Graham, S.E., advised that they had procured four new dredging boats which will enable better maintenance for all their inland waterway canals. He informed the meeting that they are currently updating their Bye Laws to help them address the situation with regard to abandoned boats.</p> <p>Ms. D. Livingstone, CEO advised that Brexit will not impact on their legal status. The development of the Ballycommon to Kilbeggan route, Edenderry harbour, Shannonharbour and Lough Boora developments were discussed.</p> <p>Mr. P. Graham, S.E., advised that he would endeavour, by maintaining the Tullamore canal, support Tullamore's Entente Florale commitments.</p> <p>The Chief Executive acknowledged their continued support and commitment to developing the Tourism potential of the canals. She also highlighted the work that IDA Ireland and the Local Enterprise Office are doing to assist potential businesses and to develop facilities along the routes.</p> <p>In drawing the discussion to a conclusion Cllr. L. Quinn Cathaoirleach thanked Waterways Ireland for attending the meeting.</p>
<p><b>AUDIT COMMITTEE REPORT</b></p>	<p>Mr. Peter Scully, Chairperson of the Audit Committee, gave a brief overview of the <i>Audit Committee Annual Report 2017</i> that was circulated in advance of the meeting.</p> <p>He noted the number of meetings and audits held during the year and stressed the importance of follow-up audits.</p> <p>In concluding his report Mr. P. Scully complemented the members' commitment to the continued reduction of the Council's revenue deficit. He thanked the committee members, council staff and elected members for their continued support.</p> <p>The members acknowledged the work of the Audit Committee and thanked Mr. P. Scully for his comprehensive report. On the proposal of Cllr. D. Dolan, seconded by Cllr. J. Leahy, the members resolved to adopt the <i>Audit Committee Annual Report 2017</i>.</p>
<p><b>PROPOSED ADDITION OF CARRIGEEN THATCH, CARRIGEEN, FIVEALLEY, CO. OFFALY TO THE OFFALY RECORD OF PROTECTED STRUCTURES</b></p>	<p>On the proposal of Cllr. J. Carroll, seconded by Cllr. P. Ormond, the members resolved to the addition of Carrigeen Thatch, Carrigeen, Fivealley, Co. Offaly to the Offaly Record of Protected Structures.</p>
<p><b>2018 ROAD PROGRAMME</b></p>	<p>Ms. J. Ryan, A/S.E. provided the members with an overview of the 2018 Roads Programme.</p> <p>In the discussion that followed a number of members' highlighted the deteriorating state of the roads and enquired if additional funding could be sought. The Chief Executive informed the meeting that she anticipated that funding would</p>

	<p>be made available for the costs incurred during the recent severe weather conditions. However, she advised, that the percentage of roads on peatlands was always a factor. She agreed to seek a further meeting with the Department to outline the situation particular to Offaly. Mr. S. Murray, D.O.S., informed the meeting that the Council is currently testing a velocity patching unit to ascertain if they will improve the quality of restoration works.</p> <p>In responding to questions raised Mr. S. Murray confirmed that the N52 Tullamore to Kilbeggan will continue to be a priority for the Council.</p>
<p><b>2017 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE OFFALY LOCAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE</b></p>	<p>Mr. E. O’Ceilleachair, A/D.O.S., drew the members’ attention to the <i>Offaly Local Community Development Committee 2017 Annual Report</i>, which had circulated with the agenda.</p> <p>The members welcomed the reduced matched funding requirement that was introduced during the year. It was agreed that a quarterly report on the activities of the LCDC be provided to the Council. Mr. B. Pey, A.O., advised the meeting that the Rural Environment 2017 allocation is currently outstanding.</p> <p>On the proposal of Cllr. J. Clendennen and seconded by Cllr. D. Harvey, the members resolved the adopt the <i>2017 Annual Report of the Offaly Local Community Development Committee</i>.</p>
<p><b>MONTHLY MANAGEMENT REPORT:</b></p>	<p>Ms. A. Delaney, Chief Executive, drew the members’ attention to the monthly management report. She acknowledged the co-operation of all the major emergency groups, in particular An Gardaí Síochána and H.S.E. staff, local community groups, the farming community, contractors and staff of Offaly County Council for their assistance during the severe weather conditions. She advised that the costs incurred are being collated and that she anticipated that some funding would be made available towards these costs. She informed the members that the Winter Maintenance Plan, including the Priority Routes, will be reviewed and considered by the relevant SPC.</p> <p>She informed the members of the visit to the Netherlands in relation to the LOFAR project and advised that she was hopeful that some valuable partnerships could be developed.</p> <p>The members thanked the Chief Executive for the report and in responding to their questions she advised that the recent weather conditions had contributed to the delay in completing some Town and Village Renewal works.</p> <p>Cllr. P. Ormond raised his concerns and frustration with regard to the delay with the appointment of a Tourism Officer. He informed the meeting that he was a candidate for the position. Cllr. L. Quinn, Cathaoirleach requested that he refrain from discussing the interview process. Ms. A. Delaney, Chief Executive informed the meeting that a staff member and support staff will be assigned to Tourism as an interim measure. She noted that significant works had continued to take place,</p>

	<p>noting in particular the development of the greenways and the mountain bike trail in the Slieve Blooms. She advised that the Chairperson of Offaly Tourism Marketing CLG had been advised of the interim arrangements.</p> <p>The Chief Executive informed the meeting that Mr. Ken Whitelaw had been appointed Manager, Midlands Regional Business Development, IDA Ireland and that she had invited him to meet with the members at a Council meeting in the near future.</p>
<p><b>NATIONAL PLANNING FRAMEWORK PRESENTATION</b></p>	<p>Mr. A. Murray, S.P., provided an informative presentation on the National Planning Framework noting the implications and opportunities that it presented for Offaly. He proposed that the Council should seek to influence the Regional Planning Strategy where possible and accordingly, he suggested, that the review of the County Development Plan at this time was timely.</p> <p>In responding to questions raised Mr. A. Murray, S.P., advised that further clarification on the likely outcome of an exercise by the Regional Assembly to map the ‘catchments’ of large (&gt;10,000 population) towns and the associated required designation of the rural area as an area ‘under urban influence’ will be required in addition to the role of the Office of the Planning Regulator. Noting that Offaly County Council’s submission had sought the retention of the Midlands Gateway, he proposed that every effort should now be made to maximise the opportunities for Offaly following the designation of Athlone in the National Planning Framework.</p> <p>Mr. A. Murray, S.P., informed the meeting that a workshop on the County Development Plan process will be held on 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2018. In drawing the debate to a conclusion the Cathaoirleach suggested that the operation of SSP18 and SSP19 could be reviewed at the workshop and requested the members to email any questions they have to Mr. A. Murray, S.P., in advance of the workshop.</p>
<p><b>CORPORATE POLICY GROUP REPORT:</b></p>	<p>Cllr. L. Quinn, Cathaoirleach informed the members that the Corporate Policy Group met earlier that day to consider the various items on the Council agenda. He briefed the members on the meetings he and Mr. S. Murray, D.O.S., had attended during their visit to New York, expressly noting the meetings held with IDA Ireland and Tourism Ireland.</p>
<p><b>COMHDHÁLACHA:</b></p>	<p><b><u>Conferences</u></b>  Cross Border Tourism Conference 2018, 11th April 2018  Four Seasons Hotel, Carlingford, Co. Louth.  <i>It was agreed that no member would attend.</i></p> <p>Irish Planning Institute Annual Planning Conference 2018  Ireland: 2040 and Beyond, 19-20th April,  The Rose Hotel, Tralee, Co. Kerry  <i>It was agreed that no member would attend.</i></p> <p><b><u>Training</u></b>  LAMA Spring Training Seminar, 6th - 7th April 2018</p>

	<p>Central Hotel, Donegal <i>It was agreed that no member would attend.</i></p> <p>AILG 2018 Annual Conference, 12th &amp; 13th April 2018 Park Hotel, Dungarvan, Co. Waterford <i>It was agreed that no member would attend.</i></p> <p>On the proposal of Cllr. D. Harvey, seconded by Cllr. E. Fitzpatrick, the members' noted and approved the conferences and training seminars.</p> <p><b><u>Retrospective Approval</u></b> The members, retrospectively approved the attendance of Cllr. E. Fitzpatrick at the European Energy Poverty Conference 2018: 'A United Approach", held in the Croke Park Hotel, Dublin on 29<sup>th</sup> March 2018.</p>
<b>COMHFHREAGRAS:</b>	The correspondences that issued with the Agenda were noted.
<b>ANY OTHER BUSINESS:</b>	Cllr. D. Dolan drew the members' attention to the recently reported loss of jobs in Sennheiser, stating that they are in Tullamore since 1990 and employ approximately 120 people. The Chief Executive confirmed that there was no further information available to her, however, she had contacted IDA Ireland and the Council's Local Enterprise Office had contacted Sennheiser's Human Resources section with regard to assisting and detailing the supports that could be made available.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

**MINUTES CONFIRMED:**

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**CATHAOIRLEACH**

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