

Minutes of Monthly Meeting of Offaly County Council

Held on 18 November 2024 at 4.00pm, in Áras an Chontae, Charleville Road,
Tullamore and via Teams

The Meetings Administrator carried out a roll call to confirm attendance.

Present

Cllr. Tony McCormack, Cathaoirleach

Bryant, Ollie	Maher, Sean
Clendennen, John	Masterson, Aoife
Cribbin, Noel	McDonnell, Fergus
Egan, Hugh	Moran, Frank
Feighery, Neil	Murray, Claire (SF)
Fitzpatrick, Eddie	Murray-Smale, Claire (FF)
Harvey, Declan	O'Brien, Sean
Hennessy-Kennedy, Audrey	Ormond, Peter
Leahy, John	Quinn, Liam

Apologies

None

Officials in Attendance

Ms. A. Delaney, Chief Executive; Ms. F. Millane, D.O.F.; Ms. A. Dillon, D.O.S.; Mr. T. Shanahan, D.O.S.; Mr. N. Gorman, D.O.S.; Mr. A. Murray, A/D.O.S.; Mr. T. Mawe, F.M.A; Mr. B. Pey, A.O.; Ms. L. Giles, A/S.E.O. Meetings Administrator; Mr. G. Bruton, A.O; Ms. L. Carbery, C.O.

1. Confirmation of Minutes

On the proposal of Cllr. S. Maher, seconded by Cllr. J. Clendennen, the members resolved to adopt the minutes of the Ordinary meeting of Offaly County Council held on Monday 21 October 2024.

2. Minutes for Noting

The Members noted the minutes of the Meetings below:

- Minutes of the Climate Action, Environment, Water and Transportation Strategic Policy Committee meeting held on 31 December 2023
- Minutes of the Community, Culture and Emergency Services Strategic Policy Committee meeting held on 7 March 2024
- Minutes of the Community, Culture and Emergency Services Strategic Policy Committee meeting held on 9 May 2024

- Minutes of Meeting of Land Use, Planning and Economic Development Strategic Policy Committee meeting held on 21 May 2024
- Minutes of the Climate Action, Environment, Water and Transportation Strategic Policy Committee meeting held on 23 May 2024
- Minutes of the Corporate Policy Group meeting held on 9 September 2024

3. Taking In Charge of Estates -Section 11 of the Roads Act 1993 and Section 180 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended

On the proposal of Cllr. E. Fitzpatrick, seconded by Cllr. J. Leahy, the members resolved in accordance with Section 11 of the Roads Act 1993 and Section 180 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended, to proceed with the Taking in Charge of Estates:

- **Ard Glas, Ferbane**
- **Island Lodge Walsh Island**

4. Planning and Development Act, 2000 as amended, Part 8 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 as Amended Chief Executives report on Part 8 submissions

On the proposal of Cllr. F. Moran, seconded by Cllr. N. Feighery, the members resolved in accordance with the Planning and Development Act, 2000 as amended, Part 8 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 as Amended to proceed with the Chief Executives report on Part 8 submissions for Tubber Bus Stop and Pedestrian Crossing Upgrade.

Cllr. J. Clendennen sought a plan for the county outlining the network of proposed bus stops. In response Mr. T. Shanahan advised that not all bus stops will require Part 8 planning permission and the proposed network is designed in consultation with Rural Link and the transport providers. He agreed to provide a plan of the network, when available.

5. Audit Committee Charter 2024 - 2029 - SI 244, Audit Committee Regulations 2014

On the proposal of Cllr. S. O'Brien, seconded by Cllr. H. Egan, the members resolved in accordance with SI 244 Audit Committee Regulations 2014 to adopt the Audit Committee Charter 2024 – 2029.

6. Local Economic and Community Plan 2024-2029 - Local Government Reform Act 2014

Ms. A. Dillon brought the members attention to the Local Economic and Community Implementation Plan 2024-2025. She informed the members that the implementation plan covers the first 2 years of the 6 year Local Economic and Community framework 2024-2029.

She acknowledged the work of the LCDC, the Land Use, Planning and Economic Development SPC, Offaly PPN and the statutory and non-statutory bodies who have contributed so much to the preparation of the Plan. She noted that the Plan is a Statutory Plan as per Section 44 of the Local

Government Reform Act 2014 and that future funding streams may require applications to be aligned with the county's LECP.

Mr. B. Pey provided the members with a presentation on the Local Economic and Community Plan 2024-2029 and the associated Implementation Plan for 2024-2025. He noted that in accordance with the Local Government Reform Act 2014, the purpose of the LECP is to set out, for a six-year period, the objectives and actions needed to promote and support the economic development and the community development of the area, both by the Local Authority directly and in partnership with other economic and community development stakeholders.

The LECP and Implementation Plan have been assessed to comply with Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening. The LECP Implementation Plan conforms with the Regional Strategy and with the County Development Plan.

He informed the members the LECP Framework Plan was prepared following extensive consultation process with all stakeholders. The Initial Plan for 2024-2025 was developed following workshops held with key local agencies. The plan takes a flexible approach and will be reviewed regularly and changed where necessary.

He detailed the high-level goals focussing on sustainable empowered communities, healthy place making, economic opportunity and climate action. Following adoption, LECP Plans will be designed and published and agencies will regularly report back on progress. The most critical aspect of entire process is the effectiveness of the execution of the specific actions and each action will be monitored on an ongoing basis. A summary report will be provided to the full Council once a year and further Implementation Plans will be developed for 2026-2027 and 2028-2029 following review of initial Plan.

Cllr. J. Leahy welcomed the comprehensive and action-packed plan and the members acknowledged the importance of the plan.

On the proposal of Cllr. P. Ormond, seconded by Cllr. J. Leahy, the members resolved in accordance with Local Government Reform Act 2014 to adopt the Local Economic and Community Plan 2024-2029 and the associated Local Economic and Community Implementation Plan 2024-2025.

7. Draft Traveller Accommodation Programme 2025 - 2029 - The Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act 1998

Mr. N. Gorman advised the members that under the provisions of the Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act 1998, Offaly County Council is required to prepare, adopt and implement a Traveller Accommodation Programme. Circular Letter Housing 46/2023, issued by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, requires Housing Authorities to prepare, for Adoption and Implementation, a Traveller Accommodation Programme for the period from 1st January, 2025 to 31st December, 2029 as per Section 10(1) of the 1998 Act. The Minister has specified 31st December, 2024 as the latest date by which Accommodation Programmes must be adopted.

He noted one submission was received from Birr Travellers and Settled People's Group in regard to no provision for temporary halting site arrangements. In response it is considered that priority should be given to delivering permanent accommodation requirements identified in this Programme. The Programme also provides for refurbishment works at permanent halting sites during the lifetime of

the Programme. Therefore, there is no provision for temporary or transient accommodation in the 2025-2029 Programme.

On the proposal of Cllr. N. Cribbin, seconded by Cllr. D. Harvey, the members resolved in accordance with the Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act 1998 to adopt the Draft Traveller Accommodation Programme 2025 – 2029

8. Local Government Code of Governance - Local Government Act 2001, amended by the Local Government Reform Act 2014

Ms. A. Dillon brought the members' attention to the Local Government Code of Governance - Local Government Act 2001, amended by the Local Government Reform Act 2014 and advised the members this was for noting. The Code was drafted by the Department of Housing Local Government and Heritage and was approved by the Minister and circulated to all Local Authorities in June 2024. The Code consolidates a previous governance framework for Local Government 2015. The rollout of the Code in the coming years will include a requirement to include a Statement of Internal Financial Control and a high level Governance Statement, both to be signed by the CE and the Cathaoirleach, in Annual Reports.

9. Monthly Management Report

Ms. A. Delaney brought the Members attention to the October monthly management report. She highlighted the opening of €12.5m housing scheme in Raheen, Clara, the opening of Grand Canal Greenway by Minister James Lawless TD and the launch of Púca Spooka 2024. She noted the 2024 Winter Maintenance Program commenced on the 14th of October and will run up to the end of April 2025.

She welcomed the appointment of a dedicated person for FilmOffaly provided under Just Transition funding of €253K. She noted the excellent turnout at the Town Centre First public meetings in Ferbane, Daingean and Kilmalogue. She highlighted the successful events hosted by the Local Enterprise Office including National Women's Enterprise day and the Offaly Business Lunch and Learn. She noted Offaly PPN staff were facilitators at the Comhairle Na nÓg AGM. She encouraged the members to avail of an online teams course on Corporate Enforcement.

10. Corporate Policy Group Report

Cllr. T. McCormack informed the Members that at the Corporate Policy Group meeting the budget and council meeting agenda were discussed.

11. Notices of Motion

On the proposal of Cllr. S. Maher, seconded Cllr. A. Masterson, the members resolved that Offaly County Council is calling on the Government to enact the Occupied Territories Bill.

Following discussion, it was noted that this would be referred to the newly formed government after the general election.

On the proposal of Cllr Tony McCormack, seconded by Cllr. A. Masterson, the members resolved that Offaly County Council publish a list of estates taken in charge on their website. This will facilitate house purchasers when requested by financial institutions to provide evidence of the estate being taken in charge.

In response Mr. T. Shanahan agreed the list would be published on the council website by end of Q1 2025 and that it would be a useful guide for house buyers, however it may not be sufficient in legal terms.

12. Comhdhálacha / Conferences

The members noted the training and conferences as approved at CPG.

13. Comhfhreagras / Correspondence

The Members noted the correspondence that issued with the agenda.

14. Any Other Business

Cllr. O. Bryant was joined by the members in wishing the best of luck to the members who are candidates in the upcoming the General Election.

Annual Financial Statements (AFS) 2023

Ms. F. Millane, DOF, advised the members that there had been no changes from the draft AFS 2023 as presented to the members previously. The members noted the Annual Financial Statement 2023.

Local Government Auditor's Statutory Audit Report 2023

The members noted the Local Government Auditor's statutory Audit Report 2023.

MINUTES CONFIRMED

CATHAOIRLEACH

RUNAÍ

16 December 2024

