

COMHAIRLE CHONTAE UÍBH FHAILÍ

MINUTES OF IN COMMITTEE BUDGET MEETING OF OFFALY COUNTY COUNCIL HELD IN ÁRAS AN CHONTAE, TULLAMORE ON THURSDAY, 15TH DECEMBER 2008 AT 10.30AM

PRESENT:

Cllr. B. Cowen (Presiding), Cllrs. M. Buckley, J. Butterfield, J. Carroll, P. Clendennen, M. Corcoran-Kennedy, D. Dolan, E. Dooley, T. Feighery, E. Fitzpatrick, M. Fox, C. Hanniffy, F. McDonnell, T. McKeigue, T. McLoughlin, S. Moylan Ryan, P. Ormond, D. Owens.

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr. Pat Gallagher, County Manager, Mr. Michael Roche, D.O.S., Mr. Declan Kirrane, D.O.S., Mr. Sean Murray D.O.S., Mr. Frank Heslin, D.O.S., Mr. Declan Conlon, Head of Finance, T. Mawe, Financial Accountant, Ann Dillon, Acting S.E.O. (Meetings Administrator), & Ms. Natasha Troy, C.O.

APOLOGIES:

Cllr. N. Bourke, J. Foran and G. Killally

The Cathaoirleach, Cllr. B. Cowen opened the meeting and informed the members that there were some outstanding issues which the Management Team will address.

COUNTY MANAGER & MANAGEMENT TEAM RESPONSE TO QUERIES:

Mr. D. Conlon in responding to queries raised by the members advised the following:

- Pay increase €356,000 – 2009 costs only
- Payment to HSE made under the Children's Act 1908/1957 - (G0506) – Children in Special Schools. G0505 – Statutory Contribution to the VEC made on an annual basis.
- Edenderry Parking – Capital Investment with at least two years before return.
- LAMA Contribution – taken from wages of Councillors.
- D0901 – Midland Regional Authority & Border Midlands Western levy paid on Statutory Basis.
- General Council of County Councillors – levy we get and give back.
- E.P.A. – no statutory levy, include application fees.
- Division E – €32,000 for Litter Warden Service Support Costs include salaries and costs for Environment.
- Cost of Provision of Veterinary Services
- Division F – Recreation & Amenities - Administration costs for Arts is up €30k. Under Budget last year. Contributions to other bodies haven't changed.
- We pay the R.S.P.C.A. for the services of the Dog Warden and these costs were under Budgeted in 2007.

**COUNTY MANAGER &
MANAGEMENT TEAM
RESPONSE TO
QUERIES (cont'd):**

The County Manager, Mr. P. Gallagher, advised in relation to the Dog/Litter/Traffic Wardens that it is intended to combine all these services into one. He informed the members that Edenderry are currently employing a Community Warden on a pilot phase. He also noted the value of Offaly Local Authority's Veterinary Services as shown over the past number of weeks with regard to the contaminated pork issue and how quickly they engaged with the farmers/plants. He acknowledged the good work of the County Vet.

Mr. Conlon continued as follows:

- Loan charges have come down and running costs have not changed.
- Table F: Superannuation - difference in 2008/2009 figures is due to the breakdown. Table of Rates previously circulated.

**ANNUAL RATE OF
VALUATION
(PROPOSALS FROM
MANAGEMENT):**

Mr. P. Gallagher, County Manager on foot of the request by the members to examined the affect of a 0% and a 2% increase in Rates and where further cuts could be made to accommodate the shortfall advised the following:

In the event of a 2% increase –

- Will result in a reduction in income of €1,527
- €25,000 cut in Urban & Village Renewal. Funding cut last year. New Offaly Integrated Company to fund works with no support
- Midland Regional Authority - reduction of €6,000
- Special Schools - reduction of €10,800
- Fleadh Ceoil – reduction in grant aid of €10,000
- Tourism support/promotion – reduction of €12,000
- Increase in Fire Charges of 5% will bring in €3,500
- Increase in Road Opening Licences of 10% will bring in €13,727
- Reduction in Support for Community Grants. €5,500 reduction in Environmental Grants, €1,000 in Housing Grants.
- Reduction of Statutory contribution to V.E.C. of €4,000.

In the event of a 0% increase a further €152,542 would need to be found

- Reduction of €7,000 in Arts budget
- Housing of Maintenance Programme reduction of 5% will equal €27,300
- Water charge – consolidate 2% €2.45
- Defer proportion of Capital repayment on loan for the Aras - €74,144 saving

In responding to questions raised Mr. P. Gallagher, County Manager advised:

- Travel expenses – 9% includes Management & Admin Staff. Will confirm figure.
- No members of staff are paid a bonus.
- Central Management Charge includes Corporate Buildings, Finance, Corp. Services, H.R. and I.T.
- Salaries determined by National Agreement. Not proposing any reduction.

The Cathaoirleach, Cllr. B. Cowen, in addressing the members emphasised that it is ultimately the responsibility of the Council to adopt the rate valuation and budget. Management only make suggestions.

Cllr. Cowen proposed a 15 minute adjournment to allow the members to discussion proposals. This was agreed.

ANNUAL RATE OF VALUATION (PROPOSALS FROM MEMBERS):

Following the adjournment the Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Cowen advised that following discussions, the members were now proposing a 0% increase in rates, with the following adjustments to the Draft Budget 2009:

		Total €
Conferences:	Reduction of €1,000 per member	21,000
Capital Loan:	Defer part of repayments for the Áras	74,000
Fleadh Ceoil:	Reduction in contribution	10,000
Midland Regional Authority:	Reduction in levy	6,000
Service Support Costs:	2.8% reduction	133,000
		€244,000

Members agreed that there was a consensus on these figures.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

MINUTES CONFIRMED: -

CATHAOIRLEACH

MEETINGS ADMINISTATOR

18TH MAY 2009