

COMHAIRLE CHONTAE UÍBH FHAILÍ

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

**HELD IN ÁRAS AN CHONTAE, TULLAMORE
ON MONDAY, 16TH APRIL 2012 AT 2.00 P.M.**

PRESENT:	Cllr. D. Owens (Presiding), Cllrs. N. Bourke, M. Buckley, J. Butterfield, J. Carroll, P. Clendennen, D. Dolan, E. Dooley, S. Dooley, E. Fitzpatrick, J. Foley, T. McKeigue, T. McLoughlin, J. Leahy, S. Moylan-Ryan, P. Ormond, , L. Quinn and P. Rowland.
APOLOGIES:	Cllrs. C. Hanniffy, G. Plunkett, N. Hogan.
IN ATTENDANCE:	Mr. P. Gallagher, County Manager, Mr. D. Kirrane, D.O.S., Mr. D. Conlon, H.O.F., Mr. F. Heslin, D.O.S., Ms. M. Stuart A/D.O.S., Ms. S. O'Reilly, Arts Officer, Ms. M. Cleary, Meetings Administrator, Ms. N. Troy, C.O.
VOTES OF SYMPATHY:	<p>Votes of sympathy were unanimously extended to the following:-</p> <p>Marie Dillon-Spain, staff member of Offaly County Council on the death of her father, John.</p> <p>Suzanne O'Toole, staff member of Offaly County Council on the death of her father, Brendan.</p> <p>Thomas Gunning, Doon, Ballinahown, Athlone, Co Westmeath on the death of his mother, Mary.</p> <p>Tom & Angela Byrne, Cushina, Portarlinton, Co Laois on the death of their daughter in law, Lily.</p> <p>The Naughton Family, Knockcrockery, Roscommon on the death of their sister, Marian.</p> <p>Majella Sullivan, Moylena, Tullamore on the death of her father, Colm.</p> <p>Paddy Cloonan, New Road, Tullamore on the death his wife, Collette.</p> <p>Gerry Conway, Ballydaly, Tullamore on the death of his aunt, Celia.</p> <p>The County Manager on his own behalf and on behalf of the staff of the Council joined with the members in these votes of sympathy.</p>
CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES:	On the proposal of Cllr. M. Buckley, seconded by Cllr. D. Dolan, the minutes of March Monthly Meeting held in Áras an Chontae on 26th March 2012 were agreed and adopted.

MINUTES FOR NOTING:	<p>The following minutes were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planning and Economic Development SPC held on 14th November 2011; - Corporate Policy Group Meeting held on 20th February 2012.
ARTS ACT PLAN 2012-2016:	<p>On the proposal of Cllr. E. Dooley, seconded by Cllr. P. Ormond the members resolved to adopt the <i>Arts Act Plan 2012-2016</i>.</p> <p>The members agreed to invite the Director and Chairperson of the Arts Council to the launch of the plan.</p>
ANNUAL REPORT 2011:	<p>On the proposal of Cllr. J. Leahy, seconded by Cllr. J. Butterfield, the members resolved to adopt the Annual Report 2011.</p>
TULLAMORE DEW IRISH WHISKEY: PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT BY WILLIAM GRANT & SONS:	<p>The members joined with the Manager and Cathaoirleach in welcoming the announcement by W. Grant & Sons that they propose to develop a distillery for Tullamore Dew Irish Whiskey in Tullamore. The positive approach adopted by Council staff involved in the negotiations was acknowledged.</p> <p>Mr. D. Kirrane, D.O.S., informed the meeting that W. Grant & Sons proposed to submit a planning application in the coming months and hoped to commence construction in the Autumn. Mr. Kirrane noted that 100 jobs would be created during the construction phase and W. Grant & Sons proposed to employ 25 people at the distillery and Heritage Centre.</p> <p>The members acknowledged that the €35m investment was a vote of confidence in Tullamore and the county. They hoped that the opportunity to build on the reputation of the brand and to enhance the tourism potential to the county would be realised.</p>
CORPORATE POLICY GROUP REPORT:	<p>Cllr. D. Owens, Cathaoirleach informed the meeting that the Council Agenda was considered at the C.P.G. Meeting. He advised that the C.P.G. had agreed to invite the Minister of the Environment, Community and Local Government to formally open the Tullamore Wastewater Treatment Plant in early June. The members agreed to this proposal.</p>
NOTICES OF MOTION:	<p>(i) The following motion was proposed by Cllr. S. Moylan-Ryan, seconded by Cllr. E. Dooley, and adopted:</p> <p><i>"That Offaly County Council call on the Minister in the Department of Social Protection to reinstate Domiciliary Care Allowance payments for children and to stop reviews in their current form".</i></p>

<p>NOTICES OF MOTION (cont'd):</p>	<p>(ii) Cllr. T. McKeigue proposed the following motion, which was seconded by Cllr. M. Buckley and agreed:</p> <p><i>“That this Council calls on the Government not to allow the banks and semi-state companies to pay huge salaries and pension to Managers and Directors”.</i></p> <p>The members agreed to circulate the motion to all Local Authorities.</p> <p>(iii) Cllr. T. McKeigue proposed the following motion, which was seconded by Cllr. L. Quinn and agreed:</p> <p><i>“That Offaly County Council calls on the Government to reform the pension scheme for Ministers and T.Ds to bring it into line with public sector workers regards of age, qualification, length of service etc.”.</i></p> <p>The members agreed to circulate the motion to all Local Authorities.</p>
<p>COMHDHÁLACHA:</p>	<p>On the proposal of Cllr. E. Dooley, seconded by Cllr. P. Clendennen, conferences were approved as follows:</p> <p><i>“The Economic Potential of Arts and Cultural Tourism”</i> St. John’s Theatre & Arts Centre, Listowel, Co. Kerry. 26th – 27th April 2012. It was agreed that Cllr. J. Butterfield would attend..</p> <p><i>Nuclear Free Local Authorities Seminar</i> Council Chamber, Dundalk Town Hall, Co. Louth. 20th April, 2012. It was agreed that Cllrs. Plunkett and Owens would attend</p> <p><i>Sheehy Skeffington School “Putting Human Rights at the heart of the Good Society”</i> Liberty Hall, Dublin. 28th April 2012. No member expressed an interest in attending.</p> <p><i>“Contemporary Housing Issues in a changing Europe”</i> National University of Ireland Galway 20th – 21st April 2012. No member expressed an interest in attending.</p> <p><i>“ECAD 19th Mayors’ Conference (European Cities Against Drugs)”</i> Malton Hotel, Killarney, Co. Kerry. 9th – 11th May 2012 No member expressed an interest in attending.</p> <p><i>“ACCC Annual Conference”</i> Newpark Hotel, Kilkenny. 10th – 11th May 2012 It was agreed that Cllrs. Fitzpatrick and McKeigue would attend</p>

<p>COMHDHÁLACHA (cont'd):</p>	<p><i>“Living Landscape”</i> Clifden Station House Hotel, Clifden, Co. Galway. 17th – 18th May 2012 No member expressed an interest in attending.</p> <p><i>“The Councillor and the Environment”</i> Hylands Burren Hotel, Ballyvaughan, Co. Clare. 8th – 9th June 2012. It was agreed that Cllrs. Buckley and Clendennen would attend.</p> <p><i>“Impact of the Multi Unit Development Act for Social Housing Providers”</i> Jury’s Inn, Custom House Quay, Dublin 1 April 19th 2012 No member expressed an interest in attending.</p> <p><i>“Treasury Management for Housing Professionals”</i> Jury’s Inn, Custom House Quay, Dublin 1 May 10th 2012 No member expressed an interest in attending.</p> <p><i>Social Housing and Energy Efficiency and Affordability”</i> Jury’s Inn, Custom House Quay, Dublin 1 June 7th 2012 No member expressed an interest in attending.</p> <p><i>“BMW Regional Assembly Annual Conference – Renewal Energy – Revitalising Ireland’s Regions”</i> TF Royal Hotel, Castlebar, Co. Mayo 30th April 2012 Retrospective approval was sought for Cllr. Carroll to attend.</p>
<p>COMHFHREAGRAS:</p>	<p>The correspondences were noted.</p>
<p>ANY OTHER BUSINESS:</p>	<p>Extension of Planning Permissions and Percolation Tests: Cllr. J. Butterfield requested if applicants who wished to extend their planning permissions and/or build extensions to their dwellings could be exempted from paying the Percolation Test Fee. Mr. D. Kirrane, D.O.S., in responding, advised that new percolation tests were required to ensure all planning applications complied with the revised Percolation Standards. Mr. Kirrane, D.O.S., agreed to examine the extent of the issue with the Planning and Environment Sections but reiterated that all applications must comply with the revised standards.</p> <p>Tourism: Cllr. T. McLoughlin sought clarification as to who had responsibility for promoting tourism in the county. He suggested that Mid-Ireland Tourism should be supported by the Council.</p> <p>Mr. D. Kirrane, D.O.S., noted that that Offaly County Council, Fáilte Ireland, Shannon Development, Offaly</p>

County Enterprise Board, Offaly Local Development Company are represented on the County Development Board Tourism Interagency Sub Committee. He advised that the priorities agreed for 2012 included, Lough Boora, Durrow Abbey, Slieve Bloom Mountain Bike Trails, Canals and Waterways and Tullamore Dew.

The County Manager noted that he and a number of members are on the board of Offaly Local Development Company (OLDC) and that significant funds were invested very effectively by OLDC in recent years. He noted that there are a number of tourism opportunities being established throughout the county in recent months. He advised that the County Development Board Tourism Interagency Group would be seeking to maximise their impact.

The County Manager informed the members that Offaly County Council, Laois County Council and Coillte had recently agreed a Memorandum of Understanding on the introduction and operation of high quality bike trails in the Slieve Bloom mountains. He advised that Coillte were currently in the process of applying to Fáilte Ireland for funding. The members welcomed this development.

Household Charge:

In responding to questions raised Mr. D. Conlon, H.O.F., informed the meeting that there were no statistics available to date advising of the collection rate from the Household Charge in Offaly. During the ensuing discussion the members suggested that greater consideration be given to the implementation of the water metering project. The executive advised that the Department had issued no details on this matter to date.

Congratulations:

The members joined with Cllr. M. Buckley in wishing Cllr. N. Hogan every good wish following her wedding to Mr. Fiachra Scally the previous week.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

MINUTES CONFIRMED:

CATHAOIRLEACH

RUNAÍ

21st MAY 2012