

**COMHAIRLE CHONTAE UÍBH FHAILÍ**

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

**HELD IN ÁRAS AN CHONTAE, CHARLEVILLE ROAD, TULLAMORE  
ON MONDAY, 16TH FEBRUARY 2015 AT 2.00 P.M.**

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| <b>PRESENT:</b>           | Cllr. S. Dooley, Cathaoirleach (Presiding), Cllrs. N. Bourke, J. Carroll, J. Clendennen, N. Cribbin, D. Dolan, E. Dooley, E. Fitzpatrick, D. Harvey, B. Killeavy, J. Leahy, T. McKeigue, F. Moran, C. Nolan, M. O'Reilly, P. Ormond, D. Owens and L. Quinn.  |
| <b>APOLOGIES:</b>         | Cllr. J. Foley.  |
| <b>IN ATTENDANCE:</b>     | Ms. C. Byrne, Chief Executive, Mr. D. Conlon, H.O.F, Mr. F. Heslin, D.O.S., Mr. M. Daly, A/D.O.S, Mr. T. Shanahan, A/D.O.S, Ms. M. Cleary, Meetings Administrator, Mr. H. O'Donoghue, Head of Information Systems, Mr. R. Bell, I.S. Project Leader, Ms. A. Dillon, S.E.O Housing, Ms. F. Flaherty C.O.  |
| <b>VOTES OF SYMPATHY:</b> | <p>Votes of sympathy were unanimously extended to the following:-</p> <p>Mr. Jackie Cahill and family Bulfin Park, Birr on the death of his wife, Eileen;</p> <p>Ms. Tess Purcell, 48 The Green, Clara on the death of her sister Margaret (Bunty) Recks;</p> <p>Mr. Noel Connell and family, 37 Blundell Wood, Edenderry on the death of his wife, May;</p> <p>Ms. P. Box, 10 Sister Senan Avenue, Edenderry on the death of her partner, Brendan Bruncker;</p> <p>Mr. John Hackett, Ballinvoher, Cloneygowan on the death on his father, Cyril;</p> <p>Mrs. Frances Maher, Gracefield, Portarlinton on the death of her husband, Paddy;</p> <p>Mrs. Elizabeth Dwane, 7 Eden Road, Birr on the death of her husband, Pat;</p> <p>Mrs. Anastasia Carroll, Mount Mask, Sharavogue, Birr on the death of her husband, John (Jack);</p> <p>Mrs. Noreen Cormican, Castletown, Kinnitty on the death of her husband, Anthony; and</p> <p>Mr. Brendan Dolan, Cuba Avenue, Banagher on the death of his father, Martin.</p> |

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| <b>VOTES OF SYMPATHY:<br/>(contd)</b>   | 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.   |
| <b>CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES:</b>   | On the proposal of Cllr. F. Moran, seconded by Cllr. D. Owens, the members resolved to adopt the minutes of January Monthly Meeting held in Áras an Chontae, Tullamore, Co. Offaly on 19th January 2015.   |
| <b>MINUTES FOR NOTING:</b>  | The minutes of the Corporate Policy Group Meetings held in Áras an Chontae, Tullamore, Co. Offaly on 8 <sup>th</sup> November 2014 and 12 <sup>th</sup> January 2015 were noted.   |
| <b>S183 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001, AS AMMENDED – LEASE OF LANDS TO EDENDERRY PITCH &amp; PUTT CLUB:</b>                         | On the proposal of Cllr. N. Bourke, seconded by Cllr. E. Fitzpatrick, the members resolved to the lease of lands to Edenderry Pitch and Putt Club in accordance with the terms of the S.183, Local Government Act 2001 Notice dated 3 <sup>rd</sup> February 2015, which had previously circulated.  |
| <b>S183 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001, AS AMMENDED – DISPOSAL OF FREEHOLD INTEREST IN LANDS AT SITE 103, ARDAN VALE, TULLAMORE:</b> | On the proposal of Cllr. T. McKeigue, seconded by Cllr. P. Ormond, the members resolved to the disposal of freehold interest in lands at Site 103, Ardan Vale, Tullamore in accordance with the terms of the S.183, Local Government Act 2001 Notice dated 4 <sup>th</sup> February 2015, which had previously circulated.   |
| <b>S183 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001, AS AMMENDED – SALE OF LANDS AT SPRINGFIELD /CLONBEALE BEG GLEBE, RATH, BIRR:</b>             | On the proposal of Cllr. P. Ormond, seconded by Cllr. J. Leahy, the members resolved to the sale of 24.49 acres approx. at Springfield/Clonbeale Beg Glebe, Rath, Birr, Co. Offaly in accordance with the terms of the S.183, Local Government Act 2001 Notice dated 2 <sup>nd</sup> February 2015, which had previously circulated.   |
| <b>HALTING SITE MANAGEMENT PLAN 2015-2019:</b>  | Mr. T. Shanahan, A/D.O.S drew the members' attention to the <i>Halting Site Management Plan 2015-2019</i> . Cllr. P. Ormond, in proposing the Plan for adoption advised that it was endorsed by the Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee. Cllr. J. Leahy seconded the proposal. The members resolved to adopt the <i>Halting Site Management Plan 2015-2019</i> .  |
| <b>LOCAL ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY PLAN UPDATE:</b>  | Mr. M. Daly, A/D.O.S. noted that the members had received a comprehensive presentation on the Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) at the Municipal District meetings.   |
| <b>FRAMEWORK POLICY FOR LOCAL AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CONSULTATION:</b>   | Mr. M. Daly, A/D.O.S. drew the members' attention to the Draft <i>Our Communities: Framework Policy for Local and Community Development in Ireland</i> which was circulated at the meeting. A lengthy discussion ensued. In responding to questions raised Ms. C. Byrne, Chief Executive welcomed the development of an Enterprise Strategy for the midlands by Enterprise Ireland. She informed the members that the Council will engage with Enterprise Ireland and the IDA in an effort to maximise job creation in Offaly. She acknowledged that |

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| <p><b>FRAMEWORK POLICY FOR LOCAL AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CONSULTATION: (contd)</b></p> | <p>Offaly is not benefiting from the funding for an IDA advance facility but reiterated that every effort will be made to try secure funding through competitive bidding processes. She further advised that the Local Enterprise Offices in the midlands will, where appropriate work on joint application.</p>   |
| <p><b>ORGANISATION OF MEETINGS VIA MINUTEPAD:</b></p>                                    | <p>Ms. M. Cleary, Meetings Administrator noted that the <i>Local Government (Reform) Act 2014</i> and a number of subsequent circulars encouraged the electronic distribution of agendas, documents etc. to members. She advised that I.S. staff had examined a number of possible I.T. solutions. Mr. R. Bell, I.S. Project Leader gave a presentation on the MinutePad programme and demonstrated its functionality.</p> <p>The members welcomed the initiative and it was agreed to proceed with its rollout over the coming months at CPG, Municipal District and Council meetings.</p>  |
| <p><b>BUSINESS INCENTIVE GRANT SCHEME:</b></p>   | <p>Mr. D. Conlon, H.O.F. drew the members' attention to the <i>Offaly Open for Business Incentive Grant Scheme</i> that had circulated with the agenda. The members in welcoming the Scheme stated that it was a positive initiative that they hoped would bring competitive advantage to the county and encourage small business to set up and expand. In responding to questions raised Mr. D. Conlon, H.O.F. advised that it was not possible to provide an exemption to rates and that the payment of a grant was the most feasible manner of providing support. He advised that the terms of the Scheme will apply to all business, other than those listed as excluded.</p> <p>On the proposal of Cllr. J. Carroll, seconded by Cllr. D. Dolan, the members agreed to insert '<i>normally</i>' into the clause which can allow flexibility for the executive to consider allowing eligibility of a subsequent grant application should a new venture in the same property have closed within the one year specified.</p> <p>It was agreed that the Scheme should be widely promoted with auctioneers, Chambers of Commerce, Local Enterprise Office and within other Council service areas. The members approved the annual review mechanism but acknowledged that should issues arise that it can be considered before that timeframe.</p> <p>On the proposal of Cllr. D. Dolan, seconded by Cllr. J. Clendennen, the members resolved to adopt the <i>Offaly Open for Business Incentive Grant Scheme</i>, as amended.</p> |
| <p><b>TOURISM REPORT:</b></p>  | <p>Mr. M. Daly, A/D.O.S. informed the meeting that the initiatives currently being progressed by the Offaly Tourism Group included the development of a brand for Offaly, the development of a website to promote the county and the development of an action plan for marketing the county. He advised that the group proposed to have the brand by May/June 2015.</p>  |

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| <b>TOURISM REPORT:<br/>(contd)</b>    | The members welcomed the significant work being done in the Tourism area.   |
| <b>MONTHLY MANAGEMENT REPORT:</b>     | Cllr. S. Dooley, Cathaoirleach drew the members' attention to the comprehensive management report that had circulated. She advised members to contact the section heads if there were any particular issues they wished to discuss.   |
| <b>CORPORATE POLICY GROUP REPORT:</b> | Cllr. S. Dooley, Cathaoirleach advised that the Corporate Policy Group met on 9 <sup>th</sup> February 2015 to consider the February Monthly Council Agenda and approve the list of conferences and training courses for circulation. She advised the members that the Offaly Association in New York had invited the Cathaoirleach to attend their annual St. Patricks Day events. She assured members that she would use this opportunity to promote Offaly and link with the diaspora while abroad.  |
| <b>NOTICES OF MOTION:</b>             | <p>i. The following motion was proposed by Cllr. T. McKeigue and seconded by Cllr. J. Clendennen:</p> <p><i>“As democrats elected by the people of Co. Offaly, today this council condemns targeting the President of Ireland Michael D. Higgins for any protests or demonstrations. This is an attack on our constitution and if allowed to continue will lead to a breakdown of normal politics.”</i></p> <p>Cllr. T. McKeigue requested that the motion be circulated to all councils. Cllr. B. Killeavy proposed an amendment to the motion as follows:</p> <p><i>“As democrats elected by the people of Co. Offaly, today this Council condemns people who use personal insults as a form of protest.”</i></p> <p>The motion was seconded by Cllr. C. Nolan. It was agreed, following consideration of the Standing Orders that this was a separate Motion rather than an amendment.</p> <p>It was agreed to take a roll call on the motion proposed by Cllr. T. McKeigue and seconded by Cllr. J. Clendennen. The roll call result was as follows:<br/> For: Cllrs. J. Clendennen, N. Cribben, S. Dooley, E. Fitzpatrick, T. McKeigue, F. Moran, P. Ormond and D. Owens.<br/> Abstain: Cllrs. J. Carroll, D. Harvey, B. Killeavy, J. Leahy, C. Nolan and M. O'Reilly.</p> <p>The Cathaoirleach deemed the motion carried.</p> |

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| <p><b>NOTICES OF MOTION:<br/>(contd)</b></p> | <p>ii. The following motion was proposed by Cllr .T. McKeigue , seconded by Cllr. J. Clendennen and agreed:</p> <p><i>In view of the commitment by the Government to commence a Social Housing Programme that Offaly County Council carry out a survey on the type of housing best suited to the future needs of the people.</i></p> <p>Mr. T. Shanahan, A/D.O.S. in responding noted that the Council acknowledged the need to build a mix of housing units.</p> <p>iii. The following motion was proposed by Cllr .J. Clendennen, seconded by Cllr. T. McKeigue and agreed:</p> <p><i>Offaly County Council writes to each of the respective Government Departments outlining the concerns of people in relation to the excessive preservation guidelines surrounding the Hen Harrier and the negative impact it is having on local rural development, particularly in the Agriculture, Tourism and Construction sectors.</i></p> <p>iv. The following motion was proposed by Cllr. J. Clendennen, seconded by Cllr. T. McKeigue and agreed:</p> <p><i>Offaly County Council devise an ‘Energy Efficiency Strategy’ with a particular focus on the changeover of ALL Lighting across the county to LED Lighting in the medium term, providing better quality lighting in public areas, reducing the carbon footprint for the county and achieving exponential savings in operating costs.</i></p> <p>It was agreed to list this as an item for discussion at the next Transportation and Emergency Services Strategic Policy Committee Group meeting.</p> |
| <p><b>COMHDHÁLACHA:</b></p>                  | <p>On the proposal of Cllr. T. McKeigue, seconded by Cllr. P. Ormond, conferences and training seminars were approved as follows:</p> <p><b><u>CONFERENCES:</u></b><br/> Esperenza Enterprises<br/> Sustainable Tourism Development<br/> 20<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> February 2015<br/> The Connacht Hotel, Dublin Road, Galway<br/> <i>It was agreed Cllr. L. Quinn would attend.</i></p> <p>Colmcille Heritage Trust<br/> 26<sup>th</sup> Colmcille Winter School<br/> “The Future of Local Government in Ireland under the New System”<br/> 27<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> February 2015<br/> Colmcille Heritage Centre, Gartan, Church Hill, Co. Donegal<br/> <i>It was agreed no councillor would attend.</i></p>   |

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| <p><b>COMHDHÁLACHA:</b><br/>(contd)</p> | <p>ACE Management &amp; Training<br/>“EU Support Programmes for Irish Regions”<br/>Four Seasons Hotel, Carlingford, Co. Louth<br/>27<sup>th</sup> February – 1<sup>st</sup> March 2015<br/><i>It was agreed no councillor would attend.</i></p> <p>ACE Management &amp; Training<br/>“The New Companies Act 2014”<br/>Clonakilty Hotel, Clonakilty, Co. Cork<br/>6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> March 2015<br/><i>It was agreed no councillor would attend.</i></p> <p>ACE Management &amp; Training<br/>“Domestic Water Charges – Preparation and Practicalities”<br/>Four Seasons Hotel, Carlingford, Co. Louth<br/>20<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2015<br/><i>It was agreed no councillor would attend.</i></p> <p><b><u>TRAINING:</u></b><br/>Association of Irish Local Government (AILG)<br/>Second Annual Conference 2015<br/>Nuremore Hotel, Carrickmacross, Co. Monaghan<br/>12<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> March 2015<br/><i>It was agreed Cllrs. E. Fitzpatrick, T. McKeigue, L. Quinn and J. Clendennen would attend.</i></p> <p>AILG “In Service” Training Dates for Elected Members 2015<br/>Various dates and venues in February, April, May, June, October &amp; November 2015<br/><i>It was agreed Cllr. E. Fitzpatrick &amp; P. Ormond would attend.</i></p> <p>Local Authority Members Association (LAMA)<br/>Spring Training Seminar<br/>Ard Ri House Hotel, Milltown Road, Tuam Co. Galway<br/>10<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> April 2015<br/><i>It was agreed Cllrs. T. McKeigue, L. Quinn, E. Fitzpatrick and J. Clendennen would attend.</i></p> |
| <p><b>COMHFHREAGRAS:</b></p>            | <p>The correspondences that issued with the Agenda were noted.</p>  |
| <p><b>ANY OTHER BUSINESS:</b></p>       | <p><b><u>Library Services in Offaly</u></b><br/>Cllr. P. Ormond proposed that the Council write to the Minister to ascertain what savings will result from the Library Shared Services initiative and requested that a copy of the business case supporting the initiative is circulated to the members. A number of members expressed their concerns that the initiative would ultimately result in the closure of smaller libraries. His proposal was seconded by Cllr. E. Fitzpatrick. Ms. C. Byrne, Chief Executive in responding outlined the current proposal; a shared library headquarters with Laois and shared management resources. The adoption of the Library Services Plan, the budget and the management of branches would continue to be a function of the individual authority.</p>  |

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| <b>ANY OTHER BUSINESS:</b><br><b>(contd)</b> | <p><b><u>Future of Bord na Móna</u></b><br/>Cllr. P. Ormond proposed to invite representatives from Bord na Móna to attend an in-committee meeting with the members to discuss the future plans for the company in Co. Offaly. He suggested that the impact of job losses for the county would be significant. The proposal was seconded by Cllr. E. Fitzpatrick and agreed.</p> <p><b><u>Enterprising Offaly Week 23<sup>rd</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> February 2015</u></b><br/>Cllr. S. Dooley, Cathaoirleach encouraged the members to support and to raise awareness of the many informative events and training seminars that are being organised by Offaly Local Enterprise Office and that will be of benefit to many of the counties businesses.</p> |
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This concluded the business of the meeting.

**MINUTES CONFIRMED:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**CATHAOIRLEACH** **RUNAÍ**

**23<sup>rd</sup> March 2015**