

**COMHAIRLE CHONTAE UÍBH FHAILÍ**

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

**HELD IN ÁRAS AN CHONTAE, CHARLEVILLE ROAD, TULLAMORE  
ON MONDAY, 19TH FEBRUARY 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, J. Foley, D. Harvey, B. Killeavy, J. Leahy, S. Maher, T. McCormack, M. O'Reilly, P. Ormond and D. Owens.
<b>IN ATTENDANCE:</b>	Ms. A. Delaney, Chief Executive; Mr. D. Conlon, H.O.F.; Mr. F. Heslin, D.O.S.; Mr. S. Murray, D.O.S.; Mr. T. Shanahan, D.O.S.; Ms. M. Cleary, Meetings Administrator; Ms. B. Maher, E.P.; Mr. A. Murray, S.P.; Ms. A. Dillon S.E.O.; Ms. M. Flynn Kenny, A.O.; Mr. J. Cunningham, S.E.E., Ms. M. Brady, Arts Officer; Ms. M. Hussey, S.E.; Mr. M. Maken Finley, S.O.; Ms. O. Cummins, A.O.; and, Ms. L. Carbery, C.O.
<b>APOLOGIES</b>	Cllrs. T. McKeigue and F. Moran
<b>VOTES OF SYMPATHY:</b>	<p>Votes of sympathy were unanimously extended to the following: -</p> <p>Mr. Declan Conlon, Killane, Edendery on the death of his mother Mrs. Mary Conlon;</p> <p>Ms. Ann Dillon, Graigueakilleen, Portumna, Co. Galway on the death of her sister Delores Dillon;</p> <p>Mrs. Maeve Buckley, Moyclare, Belmont, Birr on death of her father Mr. Sean Egan;</p> <p>Mrs. Rose Byrne, Cloneyhurke, Portarlinton, on the death of her brother Mr. Pat Brophy;</p> <p>Mr. Carthage Lowry, Garryhinch, Potarlinton on the death of his father Mr. Philip Lowry;</p> <p>Mr. Pat Conlon, Connolly Park, Tullamore on the death of his mother Mrs. Angela Conlon.</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. N. Cribbin, seconded by Cllr. J. Clendennen, the members resolved to adopt the minutes of the January meeting of Offaly County Council held in Áras an Chontae, Charleville Road, Tullamore, on Monday, 15 <sup>th</sup> January 2018.

<p><b>MINUTES FOR NOTING:</b></p>	<p>The members noted the minutes of Corporate Policy Group Meeting held in Áras an Chontae, Charleville Road, Tullamore, Co. Offaly on Monday, 18<sup>th</sup> December 2017.</p>
<p><b>ARTS ACT GRANTS 2018:</b></p>	<p>Mr. F. Heslin, D.O.S. drew the members' attention to the proposed schedule of awards under the 2018 Arts Act Grant Scheme. On the proposal of Cllr. D. Dolan, seconded by Cllr. D. Harvey, the members resolved to adopt the 2018 Arts Act Grants, as circulated.</p>
<p><b>SN.183 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001, AS AMENDED, SALE OF 0.1574 ACRES AT SITE NO. 8 KYLEBEG, BANAGHER, CO. OFFALY:</b></p>	<p>On the proposal of Cllr. J. Leahy, seconded by Cllr. P. Ormond, the members resolved to the sale of 0.1574 acres at Site No. 8 Kylebeg, Banagher, Co. Offaly, in accordance with the terms of the Section 183 Notice dated 7<sup>th</sup> February 2018 which had previously circulated.</p>
<p><b>SN. 183 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001, AS AMENDED, DISPOSAL OF SITE NO. 13 FERBANE BUSINESS PARK, FERBANE:</b></p>	<p>On the proposal of Cllr. E. Dooley, seconded by Cllr. J. Leahy, the members resolved to the disposal of site no. 13 Ferbane Business Park, Ferbane, Co. Offaly, in accordance with the terms of the Section 183 Notice dated 8<sup>th</sup> February 2018 which had previously circulated.</p>
<p><b>URBAN REGENERATION AND HOUSING ACT 2015 - CE REPORT ON SUBMISSIONS RECEIVED:</b></p>	<p>Ms. B. Maher, E.P., drew the member's attention to the three number proposed variations undertaken in compliance with the provisions of the Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015 and the Chief Executive's Report on the submissions received to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Proposed variation No. 1 of the Offaly County Development Plan 2014-2020;</li> <li>- Proposed variation No. 3 of the Tullamore Town and Environs Development Plan 2010 (as extended); and</li> <li>- Proposed variation No. 2 of the Birr Town and Environs Development Plan 2010 (as extended).</li> </ul> <p>Ms. B. Maher, E. P., informed the members that fifteen (15) submissions were received within the statutory timeframe and that these were set out in the report circulated to the members on 20<sup>th</sup> January 2018.</p> <p>Ms. B. Maher, E.P., drew the meetings attention to Submission Number 1/09, 1/08, and 1/07 received from the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government (DHPLG) and Submission Number 1/12, 1/11, and 1/10 received from the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly (EMRA). She noted the Chief Executive's response to all submissions received from the DHPLG and EMRA. On the proposal by Cllr. D. Dolan, seconded by Cllr. E. Fitzpatrick, the members resolved to adopt the Chief Executive's recommendation on submission numbers 1/09, 1/08, and 1/07 (DHPLG) and submission numbers 1/12, 1/11, and 1/10 (EMRA) of no change to the proposed variation No. 1 of the Offaly County Development Plan 2014-2020; proposed variation No. 3 of the Tullamore Town and Environs Development Plan 2010 (as extended); and</p>

	<p>proposed variation No. 2 of the Birr Town and Environs Development Plan 2010 (as extended).</p> <p>Ms. B. Maher, E.P., drew the members' attention to Submission Numbers 1/01 from Meath County Council; 1/02 from Transport Infrastructure Ireland; 1/04 from Irish Water; 1/05 from the Health and Safety Authority; and 1/06 from Dublin Airport Authority. She then drew the members' attention to Submission Number 1/03 from Fergal McCabe in relation to the proposed variation No. 3 of the Tullamore Town and Environs Development Plan 2010 (as extended). The Department of Education and Skills Submission Numbers 1/13; 1/14; and 1/15 were also noted. She advised that the Chief Executive's recommendation to the aforementioned submissions was for no change to the three proposed variations. On the proposal of Cllr. J. Leahy, seconded by Cllr. J. Carroll, the members resolved to adopt the Chief Executive's recommendation of no change to the proposed variation No. 1 of the Offaly County Development Plan 2014-2020; proposed variation No. 3 of the Tullamore Town and Environs Development Plan 2010 (as extended); and proposed variation No. 2 of the Birr Town and Environs Development Plan 2010 (as extended).</p> <p>The members resolved, on the proposal of Cllr. D. Dolan and seconded by Cllr. J. Clendennen, that pursuant to Section 13(6) of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, to adopt the proposed variations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No. 1 of the Offaly County Development Plan 2014-2020;</li> <li>- No. 3 of the Tullamore Town and Environs Development Plan 2010 (as extended); and</li> <li>- No. 2 of the Birr Town and Environs Development Plan 2010 (as extended),</li> </ul> <p>and as considered alongside the Chief Executive's Report on submissions received to the proposed variations at the monthly meeting of Offaly County Council on the 19<sup>th</sup> February 2018.</p> <p>In responding to questions raised Ms. B. Maher, E.P., informed the members that the variations to the three development plans as adopted by the members allows for the second stage of the implementation of the vacant site levy in accordance with the provisions of the Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015. Individual sites will be evaluated against the criteria for determining a vacant site as prescribed in the legislation. This is a separate process which can be subject to appeal by the landowner to An Bord Pleanála at the stage of registration on the Vacant Site Register and also that a landowner can appeal the valuation of the vacant site to the Valuation Office.</p> <p>Cllr. L. Quinn, Cathaoirleach, thanked Ms. B. Maher, E.P., for presenting the report.</p>
<p><b>COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN REVIEW:</b></p>	<p>Mr. T. Shanahan, D.O.S., advised that a review of the Offaly County Development Plan 2014 - 2020 is legislatively required four years after its adoption. He informed the members, that the preparatory work will commence in the coming months and accordingly it was proposed to hold a workshop for the elected</p>

	<p>members on Tuesday, 10<sup>th</sup> April. The various stages involved will be outlined at the workshop. It will also afford the members an opportunity to examine the issues that will require consideration during the development of the next County Development Plan. He noted that the recently announced <i>Project Ireland 2040</i> will inform the next County Development Plan.</p> <p>In responding to questions raised Mr. T. Shanahan, D.O.S., agreed that Planning will provide a briefing on <i>Project Ireland 2040</i> and its implications for Offaly at the March Council meeting.</p>
<p><b>HOUSING REPORT:</b></p>	<p>Ms. M. Flynn, A.O., and Mr. J. Cunningham, S.E.E., provided a detailed presentation on Rebuilding Ireland; the services provided by the Housing Section; the current housing statistics; and, the Council's housing delivery programme, 2017-2021.</p> <p>The members complimented the housing staff and acknowledged the difficulties that they encounter on a daily basis. Mr. T. Shanahan, D.O.S., in responding to questions raised, provided an update on the capital projects being progressed throughout the county. He informed the meeting that the Department are endeavouring to streamline the construction process and have introduced a four phase process, which should be completed within a fifty-nine (59) week period. The Director of Services noted the low take-up of the <i>Repair and Lease Scheme</i> and advised that guidelines, scheduled to be released this week, will address the conversion of commercial units into accommodation units. Mr. J. Cunningham, S.E.E. informed the members that the Department had introduced a single stage process for eight (8) or less houses and he suggested that this should prove beneficial to progressing the construction of social housing in Offaly.</p> <p>Ms. A. Dillon, S.E.O., advised that there were one hundred and forty-three (143) new homeless presentations in Offaly in 2017. She assured the members that the Housing Section work closely with all parties, the homeless, the emergency services and landlords and have arrangements in place to ensure emergency accommodation places are available. Ms. A. Dillon, S.E.O., noted that the government strategy had changed in recent years and is now heavily reliant on the provision of new builds and acquisitions in preference to various lease arrangements. She accepted that increased housing prices will impact on the Council's capacity to purchase houses. In responding to a questions raised Ms. A. Dillon, S.E.O., advised that the Department are currently reviewing the qualifying income limit for social housing and confirmed that HAP landlords can only withdraw from their lease agreement if they are selling the property.</p> <p>On the proposal of Cllr. E. Fitzpatrick, seconded by Cllr. D. Dolan, the members resolved to suspend Standing Orders to address Cllr. M. O'Reilly's Notice of Motion. Cllr. M. O'Reilly proposed as follows:</p>

	<p><i>“That this council recognises that homes to rent and purchase are becoming increasingly unaffordable and calls on government to; Immediately introduce ambitious affordable rental and purchase housing schemes led by Local Authorities, and where appropriate, Approved Housing Bodies and Housing Co-operatives with clear annual targets for all local authorities; and to design the Home Building Finance Ireland fund to prioritise loan finance to small and medium sized builders participating in Council led affordable housing schemes”</i></p> <p>The motion was seconded by Cllr. S. Maher and agreed by the members.</p> <p>Cllr. L. Quinn, Cathaoirleach, thanked the Housing Staff for their presentation.</p>
<p><b>LOCAL IMPROVEMENT SCHEME:</b></p>	<p>Mr. S. Murray, D.O.S., informed the meeting that Offaly County Council awarded Local Improvement Scheme (LIS) grants in the sum of €768,000 in 2017. He advised that the Strategic Policy Committee had reviewed the Scheme and that an advertisement will be placed in the local press inviting applications that could be considered should funding become available for LIS in 2018. In responding to questions raised Mr. S. Murray, D.O.S., agreed to write to the nine remaining applicants to inform them of the situation.</p>
<p><b>MONTHLY MANAGEMENT REPORT:</b></p>	<p>Ms. A. Delaney, Chief Executive, drew the members’ attention to the monthly management report. She noted the email that was circulated earlier giving an indicative timeframe for the announcement of various grant schemes in 2018. She also highlighted the press release, circulated earlier, in respect of the <i>Project Ireland 2040</i> and advised that the Planning staff would provide a briefing to the members on <i>Project Ireland 2040</i> at the March Council meeting.</p> <p>During the discussion that ensued the members welcomed the funding for the N52 Tullamore to Kilbeggan road and expressed concern for the deteriorating road network. The Chief Executive, in responding, advised that the N52 funding will allow for the Reappraisal Report to be updated. She acknowledged the limited benefit of road patching at this time and agreed to contact the Department seeking additional funding for road restoration works. Mr. T. Shanahan, D.O.S., advised that three parties had expressed an interest in tendering for the Slieve Bloom Mountain Bike Trail and that he was hopeful that these works would commence in the near future. In responding to a question raised on illegal dumping, Mr. S. Murray, D.O.S., advised that the Council prosecute all cases where there is adequate evidence available.</p> <p>The members thanked the Chief Executive for the report.</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</p>

	<p>various items on the Council agenda. He noted that the March Council meeting will be held on 26<sup>th</sup> March.</p>
<b>COMHDHÁLACHA:</b>	<p><b><u>Conferences</u></b></p> <p>European Energy Poverty Conference 2018: ‘A United Approach’, Croke Park Hotel, Dublin 29th March 2018 <i>It was agreed no member would attend.</i></p> <p>"29th Colmcille Winter School", Colmcille Heritage Centre, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal 23rd &amp; 24th February 2018 <i>It was agreed no member would attend.</i></p> <p>"New Affordable Houses Scheme", The Four Seasons Hotel, Carlingford, Co. Louth, 2nd to 4th March 2018 <i>It was agreed no member would attend.</i></p> <p>"The Eight Amendment: A Constitutional Minefield", The Clonakilty Hotel, Clonakilty, Co. Cork, 23rd to 25th March 2018 <i>It was agreed no member would attend.</i></p> <p><b><u>Training</u></b></p> <p>AILG Training Dates for Elected Members 2018 <i>It was agreed no member would attend.</i></p> <p>LAMA Spring Training Seminar 2018 <i>It was agreed no member would attend.</i></p> <p>On the proposal of Cllr. J. Clendennen, seconded by Cllr. T. McCormack, the members’ noted and approved the conferences and training seminars.</p>
<b>COMHFHREAGRAS:</b>	<p>The correspondences that issued with the Agenda were noted.</p>
<b>NOTICES OF MOTION:</b>	<p>Cllr. J. Carroll’s proposed the following motion: -</p> <p><i>“That this Council takes a more proactive approach in monitoring Wind turbines close to residential property. The nuisance been created by the extra high Turbines located just outside the 500 meter guidelines are proving intolerable for residents. We propose that the noise levels should and must be continuously monitored by independent evaluators to ensure the quality of life of the local community is not been adversely affected.”</i></p> <p>Cllr. J. Carroll in addressing the motion outlined the various planning conditions that require enforcement. He stated that it was unsatisfactory that wind farms should be self-monitoring and proposed that the Council appoint independent companies to monitor the operations. Cllr. E. Dooley, in seconding the motion, advised that it is an executive function of the Council</p>

