

COMHAIRLE CHONTAE UÍBH FHAILÍ

**MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING
OF OFFALY COUNTY COUNCIL
HELD TO DISCUSS BORD NA MONA RESTRUCTURING PLANS –
IMPLICATIONS FOR OFFALY**

**HELD IN ÁRAS AN CHONTAE, CHARLEVILLE ROAD, TULLAMORE
ON WEDNESDAY 31ST OCTOBER 2018 AT 2.00 P.M.**

PRESENT:	Cllr. D. Owens, Cathaoirleach (Presiding), Cllrs. N. Bourke, J. Carroll, J. Clendennen, N. Cribbin, D. Dolan, E. Dooley, E. Fitzpatrick, D. Harvey, J. Leahy, S. Maher, T. McCormack, T. McKeigue, F. Moran, B. Killeavy; M. O'Reilly and P. Ormond.
APOLOGIES	Cllrs. J. Foley and L. Quinn
IN ATTENDANCE:	Ms. A. Delaney, Chief Executive; Mr. S. Murray, D.O.S. Mr. T. Shanahan, D.O.S. Mr. D. Conlon, H.O.F; Ms. M. Flynn Kenny, Meetings Administrator; Mr. T. Mawe, Financial Accountant; Mr. A. Murray, Senior Planner; Ms. M. Needham, A/County Librarian; Ms. M. Cleary, S.E.O. Mr. J. Hogan, A.O. and Ms. L. Carbery, C.O.

Cllr. D. Owens, Cathaoirleach welcomed the members to the special meeting to discuss Bord na Mona's restructuring plans and its implications for Offaly. He brought the members attention to press release issued by Bord na Mona on the 24th October noting that the timeline to move to renewable energies has changed from 2030 to 2025.

Cllr. E. Dooley acknowledged that while Bord Na Mona's plans are not new, what is new is that we now have less bogs and the move away from peat production to renewable energy is progressing quicker than originally planned. He proposed that a working group be set up to provide a forum, led by Offaly County Council to implement training and upskilling for the Bord na Mona workers and to investigate alternative sustainable employment and funding sources. Cllr. D. Harvey seconded this proposal.

The members acknowledged Cllr. E. Dooley ongoing concerns and agreed that Bord na Mona are part of the fabric of the local community, contributing to employment, housing and the community. They voiced their concerns at the potential loss of employment, loss of rates and the decline of rural Ireland. Following a lengthy discussion, the members agreed that the working group should include all the relevant stakeholders, that European Globalisation funding should be investigated and that Offaly as the county most effected by the restructuring should take the lead on the working group.

In responding to the member's issues, Ms. A. Delaney advised that meetings have taken place with the Chief Executive of Bord na Mona, Mr. Tom Donellan and she confirmed that he would attend the December Monthly Council Meeting. She informed the members of the various agencies that would be attending the working group on Wednesday 7th November, including IDA, Enterprise Ireland, Laois Offaly ETB, AIT, Department of Social Protection, Bord Na Mona and

representative from the construction industry. She outlined the objectives of the working group as a means to pursue funding opportunities, to examine alternative forms of employment and access the European Globalisation fund.

The members further discussed the benefit of the working group having a regional focus in order to access European Funding.

On the proposal of Cllr. J. Leahy and seconded by Cllr. J. Carroll, the members resolved that Cllr. E. Dooley would represent Birr Municipal District on the working group.

On the proposal of Cllr. F. Moran and seconded by Cllr. D. Owens the members resolved that Cllr. T. McCormack would represent Tullamore Municipal District on the working group.

On the proposal of Cllr. T. McKeigue, seconded by Cllr. J. Clendennen the members resolved that Cllr. N. Cribbin would represent Edenderry Municipal District on the working group.

In summary Cllr. D. Owens, Cathoirleach, confirmed that the Council would write to write to Minister Richard Bruton to request him to establish a regional forum to discuss the job losses and to progress funding from the European Globalisation fund.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

MINUTES CONFIRMED: _____
CATHAOIRLEACH

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