

COMHAIRLE CHONTAE UÍBH FHAILÍ

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

**HELD IN ÁRAS AN CHONTAE, CHARLEVILLE ROAD, TULLAMORE
ON MONDAY, 18TH FEBRUARY 2019 AT 2.00 P.M.**

PRESENT:	Cllr. D. Owens, Cathaoirleach (Presiding), Cllrs. N. Bourke, J. Carroll, J. Clendennen, N. Cribbin, A. Davy, D. Dolan, E. Fitzpatrick, J. Foley, D. Harvey, J. Leahy, S. Maher, T. McCormack, T. McKeigue, F. Moran, P. Ormond and L. Quinn
IN ATTENDANCE:	Ms. A. Delaney, Chief Executive; Mr. D. Conlon, H.O.F.; Mr. S. Murray, D.O.S.; Mr. T. Shanahan, D.O.S.; Mr. M. Daly, A/D.O.S.; Ms. M. Flynn Kenny, Meetings Administrator; Ms. S. O’Leary, Arts Officer; Ms. M. Cleary, S.E.O.; Mr. D. Egan, S.O.; Ms. F. Flaherty, C.O.; Mr. Kenneth Fitzpatrick, H.A.P. Administrator, Ms. L. Carbery, C.O. and Comhairle na nÓg members, Aaron Masterson Weir, Caitlin Guinan, Cathal Claffey, Cian Fleming, Ciara Ennis, Jamie Phelan, Jiahao Huang, Joseph Heffernan, Kenneth Bracken, Mya Ennis, Niamh McNelis, Rebecca O’Neill, Ross McLoughlin and Sarah Delaney
APOLOGIES	Cllrs. E. Dooley and B. Killeavy
VOTES OF SYMPATHY:	<p>Votes of sympathy were unanimously extended to the following: -</p> <p>Mr. J. Colgan, Annamoe, Portarlinton, on the death of his brother Matt Colgan;</p> <p>Mr. Bobby Dunne, St. Olivers Estate, Geashill, on the death of his wife Sarah Dunne;</p> <p>Mrs. Bridie Mooney, 7 Botley Court, Portarlinton, on the death of her husband Charlie Mooney;</p> <p>Mr. Damian Flattery, Raheen, Clara, on the death of his brother Oliver Flattery;</p> <p>Mr. Noel Marshall, Loughroe, Rahan, on the death of his wife Mary Marshall;</p> <p>Ms. Sarah Morgan, Rosenallis, Co. Laois on the death of her father James Coffey.</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>
CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES:	On the proposal of Cllr. J. Clendennen, seconded by Cllr. J. Leahy, the members resolved to adopt the minutes of the

	<p>January meeting of Offaly County Council held in Áras an Chontae, Charleville Road, Tullamore, on Monday, 21st January 2019.</p>
<p>MINUTES FOR NOTING:</p>	<p>The members noted –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The minutes of Corporate Policy Group Meeting held in Áras an Chontae, Charleville Road, Tullamore, Co. Offaly on Monday, 17th December 2018; - Minutes of the Economic Development, Enterprise and Planning Strategic Policy Committee held on Tuesday 11th December 2018 in Áras an Chontae, Charleville Road, Tullamore.
<p>SECTION 183 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001, AS AMENDED- SALE OF SITE NO. 7 AT CLUNY, FERBANE</p>	<p>On the proposal of Cllr. J. Leahy, seconded by Cllr. J. Clendennen, the members resolved to the sale of Site No. 7 at Cluny, Ferbane, in accordance with the terms of the Section 183 Notice dated 7th February 2019 which had previously circulated.</p>
<p>SECTION 183 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001, AS AMENDED - DISPOSAL OF INDUSTRIAL UNIT 25J AXIS BUSINESS PARK, TULLAMORE</p>	<p>On the proposal of Cllr. T. McKeigue, seconded by Cllr. T. McCormack, the members resolved to disposal of industrial unit 25J Axis Business Park, Tullamore, by way of a 20-year lease to Offaly Innovation & Design Centre CLG, Co. Offaly, in accordance with the terms of the Section 183 Notice dated 6th February 2019 which had previously circulated.</p>
<p>ARTS ACT GRANTS 2019:</p>	<p>Mr. M. Daly, A/D.O.S. introduced Ms. Sally O’Leary, Arts Officer, to the members. Ms. O’Leary provided the members with a presentation on the proposed schedule of awards under the 2019 Arts Act Grant Scheme. Cllr. F. Moran queried the shortfall in the allocated funding and Mr. M. Daly confirmed that proposals for other areas would be considered or the existing applications may get increased funding.</p> <p>On the proposal of Cllr. D. Dolan, seconded by Cllr. J. Carroll, the members resolved to adopt the 2019 Arts Act Grants, as circulated.</p>
<p>2018 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE OFFALY LOCAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE</p>	<p>Mr. M. Daly, A/D.O.S., drew the members attention to the 2018 Annual Report of the Offaly Local Community Development Committee. He informed the members that the committee had increased from 18 to 19 members in 2018. He outlined the various programmes such as the Leader Programme, promoting social inclusion, poverty reduction and Economic Development in Rural areas. He informed the members on the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) to support communities and individuals and of the Community Enhancement Programme providing grants for voluntary Groups. He highlighted the success of the Health Offaly Programme, Sports Partnership and the Public Participation Network. He noted that the Tourism Officer had been appointed to continue to promote and develop Offalys unique brand Irelands Hidden Gem.</p>

	<p>The members thanked Mr. Daly for his report and congratulated him and the staff of the Local Community Development Committee. They acknowledged how they have successfully joined various groups and accessed funding. They noted that, a variety of programmes have been implemented and delivered with excellent participation. They acknowledged that the Public Participation Network is a valuable forum that is working well. A query was raised on the provision of broadband.</p> <p>Mr. M. Daly thanked the members for their positive comments and confirmed that broadband funding is to fund connectivity points in various communities.</p> <p>On the proposal of Cllr. J. Clendennen, seconded by Cllr. J. Leahy the members resolved to adopt the 2018 Annual Report of the Offaly Local Community and Development Committee.</p>
<p>COMHAIRLE NA NÓG PRESENTATION</p>	<p>Mr. D. Egan, A/A.O. introduced the members to the Comhairle na nÓg participants. Ms. Niamh McNelis and Mr. Kenneth Bracken provided the members with a presentation on Comhairle na nÓg and informed the members that it is a forum for young people to get involved in development of local services and policies. They outlined their meeting regime and their programme of activities. They highlighted the number of participants, their presence on social media and noted that new members usually join in November at their Annual meeting.</p> <p>The members congratulated them for their informative presentation and suggested that they should give one on an annual basis. They noted that they face many challenges and how important it is to have the next generation involved. They queried how they deal with mental health and social media issues.</p> <p>Ms. N. McNelis responded that they plan to run workshops and are looking into a project on social media and mental health.</p> <p>Ms. A. Delaney, C.E. congratulated them and noted that their participation would help develop their confidence and presentation skills. She thanked the schools and parents for allowing attendance at activities and events.</p>
<p>HOUSING REPORT:</p>	<p>Ms. M. Cleary, S.E.O. provided the members with a presentation on the services provided by the Housing Section, the current housing statistics, the Council's housing acquisition programme, the home loans and the Grants Scheme. She introduced Mr. Kenneth Fitzpatrick, Administrator for Offaly and Laois HAP homeless place finder service.</p> <p>Mr. Fitzpatrick provided the members with a detailed presentation on the HAP Finder Service. He informed the members that the service provides additional financial and related supports to tenants and landlords, along with all of the benefits of the national HAP scheme. He outlined the criteria of the scheme and informed the members that Offaly County</p>

	<p>Council has the discretion to exceed the limits, up to 20%, on a case by case basis where suitable accommodation cannot be found for a household within the HAP rent limits. He noted that deposit and advance rent can be paid and highlighted that a tenancy under the HAP scheme is considered social housing support and the tenant is no longer homeless. He pointed out that the tenant remains eligible to apply for other social housing supports through the housing transfer list and their time accrued to date on the social housing waiting list is not lost and continues to build while on the transfer list.</p> <p>The members complimented the housing staff and acknowledged the difficulties that they encounter on a daily basis. They raised queries with regard to housing availability, disabled housing provision, take up of the repair and lease scheme, Traveller Accommodation and Approved Housing Bodies. They further queried if Offaly could provide hostel accommodation and nationally if a tax incentive scheme would improve the availability of housing.</p> <p>Ms. M. Cleary, in responding to questions raised, informed the members that the Traveller Accommodation Plan is due in April, HAP tenants remain on housing list, the place finder Scheme is there to assist in finding available accommodation, the database of vacant properties is being developed and deposits paid on behalf of tenants are refunded by the Department. She welcomed any assistance from the members that may have knowledge of available accommodation or property owners interested in Repair and Lease Scheme and noted that they are working with developers to avail of social housing. She advised that they are working with people who need alterations or specialised housing in line with available resources and acknowledged the co-operation of the Department in funding housing grants. Mr. K. Fitzpatrick advised that the discretionary funding brings social housing tenants on par with private tenants.</p> <p>Mr. T. Shanahan agreed with the members that the Vacant Houses Scheme has had limited success and advised that the provision of a hostel is being investigated.</p> <p>Ms. A. Delaney, C.E. thanked the members for their support. She informed them that a meeting with Minister Murphy, Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government had taken place the previous week and Offaly had achieved 126% of their overall target in 2018. She advised that the Repair and Lease Scheme had been raised with the Minister and that Banagher is one of six towns chosen to participate in a Residential Occupancy pilot scheme.</p>
<p>COMMUNITY CCTV</p>	<p>Mr. M. Daly, A/D.O.S. advised the members of the proposed Code of Practice for Community CCTV members and outlined the definitions, with Offaly County Council as the Data Controller, the CCTV groups as the owners and operators, all to be overseen by a Federation of Group CCTV owners. He informed the members that a data processor would be assigned by the Federation and would process data in agreement with the</p>

	<p>Data Controller – Offaly County Council. He noted that only the Data Processor could access the footage and could also provide access to the Gardai. He advised the members that the community CCTV groups would be responsible for the day to day maintenance and operation of the system and Offaly County Council would monitor compliance and provide training. He advised that a Federation Information meeting is scheduled for 27th March 2019 in conjunction with Community Watch.</p> <p>The members welcomed the clarity and noted that there would be added responsibility for Offaly County Council. Cllr. J. Leahy recommended that all applications be made under the auspices of Offaly Neighbourhood Watch in conjunction with local Area Engineers and Gardai. He also requested that any future council road openings/path renovations would incorporate ducting for CCTV.</p> <p>In response to the members queries Mr. M. Daly agreed that consultation with Neighbourhood Watch would be beneficial. He agreed the application process should be as streamline as much as possible in consultation with the communities, the Gardai and JPC.</p>
<p>MONTHLY MANAGEMENT REPORT:</p>	<p>Ms. A. Delaney, Chief Executive, drew the members’ attention to the monthly management report. She outlined the Launch of Midlands Regional Enterprise Plans to promote an action plan for jobs, the planning statistics and the success in gaining funding for the Outdoor Recreation for both Ballycommon to Kilbeggan Branch of Greenway in the amount of €200,000 and Pollagh to Lough Boora Discovery Park in the amount of €200,000. She highlighted the extra funding for the improvement of Edenderry Inner Relief Road of €285k and €165k for a pilot scheme - testing on peat roads. She advised the members that Offaly County Council remain committed to providing the Arts Centre and that a revised business and fund raising plan is required to be submitted by the Board. The €2m access funding has been ring fenced. However, there is a €900,000 shortfall. She updated the members on the Rural Regeneration Scheme, the roads allocation including the Tullamore to Kilbeggan link funding, the Noise Action plan and Water Quality. She thanked the members for adopting the Local Community and Development Report 2018 and brought their attention to the National Community Weekend scheduled for 4-6th May. She advised the members that €10k has been allocated to local communities to stage events and the headline event will take place in Lough Boora. She further advised the members of Enterprise week scheduled for 4-8th March and the trial opening hours in Daingean Library.</p> <p>The members thanked the Chief Executive for the report and welcomed the commitment to the Arts Centre and the funding for the Edenderry Relief Road. The members queried how the funding for the peat roads and Tullamore Kilbeggan Link would be spent and if other forms of funding such as borrowing could be sourced to provide match funding for the various approved projects, such as the Slieve Blooms.</p>

	<p>Ms. A. Delaney responded to the members queries and advised that the Part 8 for Edenderry Relief Road would be coming to March meeting of Council. The Board of the Arts Centre are working on the business and funding plan which will then be reviewed. She agreed that it is difficult to provide match funding but advised that the Slieve Bloom project is part funded 12.5% by Coillte and 6.5% each by Laois and Offaly. She advised that the funding for the Tullamore Kilbeggan link is to progress planning design and site investigation. Mr. S. Murray informed the members that a survey of peat roads would be carried out to provide innovative solutions and plans to improve the roads.</p>
<p>CORPORATE POLICY GROUP REPORT:</p>	<p>Cllr. D. Owens, Cathaoirleach informed the members that the Corporate Policy Group met earlier that day to consider the various items on the Council agenda. He advised the members that it was decided to invite an organisation Home for Life to give a presentation at the Housing Strategic Policy Committee on the new initiative under the Mortgage to Rent scheme.</p>
<p>COMHDHÁLACHA:</p>	<p><u>Conferences</u></p> <p>Celtic Conferences - Ireland and Plastic Waste, Four Seasons Hotel, Carlingford, Co. Louth, 8-10th March 2019; <i>It was agreed no member would attend</i></p> <p>Celtic Conferences - The Finance Act 2018 Cost Analysis, O'Donovan's Hotel, Main Street, Clonakilty, Co. Cork; <i>It was agreed no member would attend</i></p> <p>Louth County Council - Conference on Brexit - The Future For Border Businesses, Carrickdale Hotel & Spa, Wednesday 13th March 2019; <i>It was agreed no member would attend</i></p> <p>Louth County Council Major Tourism Conference – Learn from the Best and grow your visitor numbers Wednesday the 10th April 2019 in the Four Seasons Hotel Carlingford from 8.30am to 2pm; <i>It was agreed no member would attend</i></p> <p><u>Training</u></p> <p>AILG 2019 Annual Conference, 21st & 22nd February 2019 in the Longford Arms Hotel, Longford; <i>It was agreed Cllrs. N. Bourke, D. Harvey and F. Moran would attend</i></p> <p>Irish Planning Institute, 4th & 5th April 2019 in the Landmark Hotel, Carrick-on-Shannon, Leitrim; <i>It was agreed no member would attend</i></p>

	<p>RETROSPECTIVE APPROVAL: Retrospective approval was approved for: Cllrs. N. Bourke, D. Harvey and F. Moran to attend LAMA 2019 SPRING TRAINING SEMINAR on 7th & 8th March 2019 The Bush Hotel, Carrick-on-Shannon, Co Leitrim</p> <p>On the proposal of Cllr. T. McCormack, seconded by Cllr. N. Cribbin the members' noted and approved the conferences and training seminars.</p>
COMHFHREAGRAS:	The correspondences that issued with the Agenda were noted.
NOTICES OF MOTION:	<p>Cllr. L. Quinn:</p> <p><i>“That this council requests the government to accelerate its insurance reform programme in light of the continued increases in premiums being charged to businesses in Offaly.”</i></p> <p>Cllr. T. McCormack</p> <p><i>“That Offaly County Council, in view of the damage that spiralling insurance costs are causing to community groups, voluntary organisations, charities and small business, calls on the Government to accelerate its insurance reform programme. In particular, Offaly County Council calls on the Government to immediately establish a distinct Insurance Fraud Unit within an Garda Síochána, establish an interim Judicial Council which will address excessive awards made in our courts and insist on greater transparency in relation to claims and premiums from Irish insurers.”</i></p> <p>On the proposal of Cllr. L. Quinn, seconded by Cllr. T. McCormack the members resolved to write to the Junior Minister Michael D’Arcy, Department of Finance and Public Expenditure and Reform with special responsibility for Financial Services and Insurance.</p>
ANY OTHER BUSINESS:	<p>Cllr. D. Owens, Cathaoirleach advised the members that an Ecumenical Service is taking place on Thursday 21st February and all members are welcome.</p> <p>On the proposal of Cllr. L. Quinn, seconded by Cllr. T. McCormack the members approved Foreign Travel for 2019.</p>

This concluded the business of the meeting.

MINUTES CONFIRMED: _____

CATHAOIRLEACH

RUNAÍ

25th March 2019