

**Minutes of Monthly Meeting of Offaly County Council**

Held on 16 December 2024 at 2.00pm, in Áras an Chontae, Charleville Road,  
Tullamore and via Teams

The Meetings Administrator carried out a roll call to confirm attendance.

**Present**

Cllr. Audrey Hennessy Kennedy, Leas Chathaoirleach

Bryant, Ollie	Masterson, Aoife
Cribbin, Noel	McDonnell, Fergus
Egan, Hugh	Moran, Frank
Feighery, Neil	Murray, Claire (SF)
Fitzpatrick, Eddie	Murray-Smale, Claire (FF)
Harvey, Declan	O’Brien, Sean
Leahy, John	Ormond, Peter
Maher, Sean	Quinn, Liam

**Apologies**

None

**Officials in Attendance**

Ms. A. Delaney, Chief Executive; Ms. F. Millane, D.O.F.; Ms. A. Dillon, D.O.S.; Mr. T. Shanahan, D.O.S.; Mr. N. Gorman, D.O.S.; Mr. A. Murray, A/D.O.S.; Ms. A.M. Kelly, A.O.; Mr. D. Keyes, T.S.O.; Ms. L. Giles, A/S.E.O. Meetings Administrator; Mr. G. Bruton, A.O; Ms. L. Carbery, C.O.

**1. Confirmation of Minutes**

- On the proposal of Cllr. P. Ormond, seconded by Cllr. F. Moran, the members resolved to adopt the Minutes of the In Committee Budget meeting of Offaly County Council held on Monday 11 November 2024.
- On the proposal of Cllr. N. Feighery, seconded by Cllr. J. Leahy, the members resolved to adopt Minutes of the Statutory Budget meeting of Offaly County Council held on Monday 18 November 2024.
- On the proposal of Cllr. D. Harvey, seconded by Cllr. N. Cribbin, the members resolved to adopt Minutes of the Ordinary meeting of Offaly County Council held on Monday 18 November 2024.

## 2. Minutes for Noting

The Members noted the minutes of the Meetings below:

- Minutes of the Corporate Policy Group meeting held on Monday 14 October 2024.
- Minutes of the Economic Development, Planning and Regeneration Strategic Policy Committee meeting held on 22 October 2024.

## 3. Filling of Casual Vacancies - Section 19 of the Local Government Act 2001

Cllr. A. Hennessy Kennedy, Leas Cathaoirleach, congratulated the candidates who recently ran in the General Election and extended her best wishes to Deputy Tony McCormack and Deputy John Clendennen who were elected to the Dáil. She congratulated Deputy Carol Nolan on her re-election to the Dáil.

She advised the members that Section 19 (3) of the Local Government Act 2001 deals with the filling of casual vacancies and that in accordance with the relevant legislation, Fianna Fail and Fine Gael had been asked for their nominations to fill to fill the casual vacancies created by the election of Tony McCormack and John Clendennen. The Meetings Administrator confirmed that both nominees had provided their written consent to be nominated.

On the proposal of Cllr. P. Ormond, seconded by Cllr. D. Harvey, the members resolved to co-opt Mr. Shane Murray to Offaly County Council to fill the vacancy created by the election of Tony McCormack to Dáil Éireann.

The members welcomed Cllr. S. Murray and wished him well in the position. Cllr. A. Hennessy Kennedy, Leas Cathaoirleach, invited Cllr. S. Murray to take his seat in the chamber.

On the proposal of Cllr. L. Quinn, seconded by Cllr. H. Egan the members resolved to co-opt Ms. Eleanor Clendennen to Offaly County Council to fill the vacancy created by the election of John Clendennen to Dáil Éireann.

The members welcomed Cllr. E. Clendennen and wished her well in the position. Cllr. A. Hennessy Kennedy, Leas Cathaoirleach, invited Cllr. E. Clendennen to take her seat in the chamber.

## 4. Election/Nomination/Appointment of members to the following Bodies/Committees - Local Government Act 2001, as amended

The members agreed to defer the appointment to the Midlands Regional Transition Team Steering Committee, until after the election of the Cathaoirleach.

On the proposal of Cllr. P. Ormond, seconded by Cllr. F. Moran, the members resolved to appoint Cllr. S. O'Brien to the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly.

On the proposal of Cllr. P. Ormond, seconded by Cllr. F. Moran, the members resolved to appoint Cllr. S. Murray to the Committees / companies below:

1. Offaly Innovation and Design Centre CLG
2. Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee

### 3. Economic Development, Planning and Regeneration Strategic Policy Committee

On the proposal of Cllr. L. Quinn, seconded by Cllr. F. Feighery, the members resolved to appoint Cllr. N. Cribbin to the Association of Irish Local Government (AILG).

On the proposal of Cllr. L. Quinn, seconded by Cllr. F. Feighery, the members resolved to appoint Cllr. E. Clendennen to the Committees / companies below:

1. Offaly Film Commission
2. Offaly Tourism Marketing CLG
3. Climate Action, Transport and Environment Strategic Policy Committee
4. Community, Culture and Emergency Services Strategic Policy Committee

### 5. Election of Cathaoirleach - Local Government Act 2001, as amended, S. 36 & 37

As per the Local Government Act 2001, as amended, under Sections 36 & 37, Cllr. A. Hennessy Kennedy invited nominations for the position of Cathaoirleach.

On the proposal of Cllr. P. Ormond, seconded Cllr. J. Leahy, the members resolved to elect Cllr. A. Hennessy Kennedy as Cathaoirleach. As there were no further nominations Cllr. A. Hennessy Kennedy was deemed elected as Cathaoirleach.

As the Leas Cathaoirleach was elected as Cathaoirleach, Standing Orders were suspended on the proposal of Cllr. P. Ormond, seconded by Cllr. F. Moran. Members agreed to suspend Standing Orders to consider the election of Leas Chathaoirleach.

On the proposal of Cllr. D. Harvey, seconded by Cllr. F. Moran, the members resolved to elect Cllr. O. Bryant as Leas Chathaoirleach.

As there were no further nominations Cllr. O. Bryant was deemed elected as Leas Chathaoirleach.

### 6. Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001

On the proposal of Cllr. N. Cribbin, seconded by Cllr. F. McDonell, the members resolved to adopt Section 183, Local Government Act 2001 to dispose of lands at Monasteroris, Edenderry to Úisce Éireann (valuation €40,000)

### 7. Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001

On the proposal of Cllr. H. Egan, seconded by Cllr. J. Leahy, the members resolved to adopt Section 183, Local Government Act 2001 to dispose of a plot of land measuring 0.034Ha (0.084Acres) in the Townland of Endrim, Ferbane to Ray Donoghue and Fiona Keenaghan for the sum of €500.00 plus legal cost.

### 8. Taking In Charge of Estates -Section 11 of the Roads Act 1993 and Section 180 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended

On the proposal of Cllr. P. Ormond, seconded by Cllr. J. Leahy, the members resolved in accordance with Section 11 of the Roads Act 1993 and Section 180 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended Taking in Charge of Estates –

- Avondale Birr
- Melsop Close Birr

### **9. Corporate Plan 2024 - 2029 - Section 134 of the Local Government Act 2001**

Ms. A. Dillon brought the members attention to the Draft Corporate Plan 2024 – 2029. Mr. D. Keyes and Ms. AM. Kelly, representing the Corporate Planning Team, provided the members with a presentation outlining the process undertaken to develop the draft plan, including consultation, and a summary of its contents. They highlighted the objectives of the Plan - Growing our Economy, Protecting the Environment, Supporting the Community and Developing the Organisation.

The members thanked the Corporate Planning Team for their work in developing the plan. They also took the opportunity to thank Ms. AM. Kelly, Communications Officer, for her support and professionalism. Cllr. L. Quinn queried if a discussion on the upcoming review of the RESS guidelines could be organised. Ms. A. Dillon agreed to email the councillors seeking their input on the RESS and, if required, an In-committee meeting could be organised to fully brief the members.

On the proposal of Cllr. P. Ormond, seconded by Cllr. J. Leahy, in accordance with Section 134 of the Local Government Act 2001, the members resolved to adopt the Corporate Plan 2024 – 2029.

### **10. Local Community Development Committee: Change of Membership - Section 128C of the Local Government Reform Act 2014**

Ms. A. Dillon informed the members that in accordance with Section 128C of the Local Government Reform Act 2014 it is a requirement that members nominated to represent ‘Local and Community Interests’ may serve no more than two consecutive three-year terms. In this regard, two vacancies have arisen on the ‘Non-Statutory Interests’ sector on the LCDC due to members having served two consecutive terms. She advised that Mr. Pat Walshe has been nominated to replace Mr. Richard Scally as Offaly IFA Representative and Mr. Robert McDermott has been nominated replace Mr. Fechin Daly, as Business Sector Representative. She thanked the outgoing members for their significant contribution and commitment to the LCDC.

On the proposal of Cllr. J. Leahy, seconded by Cllr. D. Harvey, in accordance with Section 128C of the Local Government Reform Act 2014, the members resolved to appoint Mr. Robert McDermott and Mr. Fechin Daly to the Local Community Development Committee.

### **11. Monthly Management Report**

Ms. A. Delaney, Chief Executive, brought the members’ attention to the November monthly management report. She congratulated the successful candidates in the General Election and she welcomed Cllrs. E. Clendennen and S. Murray to the council. She noted that the three Offaly TDs will be briefed on a number of priority issues for Offaly in the context of the new Programme for Government.

She welcomed the National Ploughing Championship back to Offaly from the 16-18 September 2025. She highlighted the new EnergyCloud project in Offaly with Amazon Web Services (AWS) and Offaly County Council, launched by Minister Peter Burke in December. She advised that following the recent €5 million investment under the EU Just Transition Fund the Mount Lucas Circular Bioeconomy Aquaculture will function as both an in-action and visual representation of bio-economy and a site visit will be organised for members.

Under Climate Action, she advised that as part of the SEAI 50% match funding Pathfinder programme tenders have been received and are being evaluated for energy efficiency projects for design and cost deep retrofit measures for the organisation's two most significant energy using buildings Áras an Chontae and Aura Tullamore Leisure Centre.

She highlighted the Edenderry Clean Air initiative, the regeneration and heritage grants and the LEO Dream Big Programme, full details are available in the report. She noted the Community, Arts, Library and Finance updates are also set out in the report. She acknowledged the success of the Civic Reception to celebrate the role of the Offaly Olympians and Para-Olympians in 2024.

## 12. Corporate Policy Group Report

Cllr. A. Hennessy Kennedy informed the Members that at the Corporate Policy Group meeting the monthly Council meeting agenda was discussed as was the draft Corporate Plan. She acknowledged work of staff on Corporate Plan. On the proposal of Cllr. F. Moran, the Corporate Policy group proposed and the members joined in thanking the emergency services for their work during the recent storm Darragh and welcomed the improved emergency services phone line.

## 13. Comhdhálacha / Conferences

The members noted the training and conferences as approved at CPG.

## 14. Comhfhreagras / Correspondence

The Members sought support for the resolution from Kerry County Council to write to the Minister of Finance seeking that 31 local authorities across Ireland would be provided €2 million of discretionary funding from the €14 billion surplus as a result of the Apple Tax ruling.

## 15. Any Other Business

On the proposal of Cllr. P. Ormond, seconded by Cllr. F. Moran, the members resolved to appoint Cllr. A. Hennessy Kennedy to the Midland Regional Transition Team Steering Committee following her election as Cathaoirleach.

On the proposal of Cllr. L. Quinn, seconded by Cllr. N. Feighery, the members sought more feedback/report from the Midland Regional Transition Team Steering Committee. In response Ms. A. Delaney advised the members the Steering Committee meets twice yearly and she will revert with information when it is available.

Cllr. A. Hennessy Kennedy, Cathaoirleach joined with the members in wishing Mr. T. Shanahan, D.O.S. best wishes in his upcoming retirement and also to Mr. J. Connelly, Senior Executive Engineer on his retirement.

Ms. A. Delaney joined with the members and the management team in extending best wishes to Mr. T. Shanahan and acknowledged his dedication, support, patience and mentoring since he joined Offaly County Council in 2004.

Mr. T. Shanahan thanked everyone and noted it was a privilege to work in Offaly County Council and to engage with the local community groups and stakeholders. He thanked his family for their support, and he acknowledged the media for their fair reporting.

On the proposal of Cllr. McDonnell, the members also extended their congratulations to David O'Malley of Edenderry Community First Responders for his win at the Safety & Emergency Services Award at the Volunteer Ireland Awards 2024.

**MINUTES CONFIRMED**

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**CATHAOIRLEACH**

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**RUNAÍ**

**20 January 2025**

