

**COMHAIRLE CHONTAE UÍBH FHAILÍ**

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

**HELD IN ÁRAS AN CHONTAE, CHARLEVILLE ROAD, TULLAMORE ON  
MONDAY 21<sup>ST</sup> JUNE 2021 AT 2.00 P.M.**

<b>PRESENT:</b>	Cllr. J. Carroll, Cathaoirleach, Cllrs. C. Claffey (R), J. Clendennen (R), N. Cribbin (R), E. Dooley (R), N. Feighery (R), E. Fitzpatrick (R), J. Foley (R), M. Hackett (R), D. Harvey (R), J. Leahy (R), T. McCormack (R), R. McDermott (R), F. Moran (R), S. O'Brien (R), P. Ormond (R), D. Owens (R) and K. Smollen (R)
<b>APOLOGIES</b>	Cllr. L. Quinn
<b>IN ATTENDANCE:</b>	Ms. A. Delaney, Chief Executive; Mr. T. Shanahan, D.O.S. (R); Ms. S. Kennedy, D.O.S. (R); Mr. S. Duclot (R); Mr. M. Connolly, H.O.F. (R); Mr. E. Fennell, S.E.O.(R); Mr. G. Bruton, Meetings Administrator; Mr. R. Bell, H. of I.S. and Ms. L. Carbery, C.O. (R)
<b>VOTES OF SYMPATHY</b>	<p>Votes of sympathy were unanimously extended to the following:</p> <p>Mr. Enda Daly, Killurin, Tullamore on the death of his father Noel Daly.</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. Feighery, seconded by Cllr. T. McCormack, the members resolved to adopt the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Offaly County Council held in Áras an Chontae, Charleville Road, Tullamore, Co. Offaly on Monday 17 <sup>th</sup> May 2021.
<b>MINUTES FOR NOTING</b>	<p>The members noted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Minutes of the Corporate Policy Group Meeting held on Friday 16<sup>th</sup> April 2021;</li><li>• Minutes of the Land Use, Planning and Economic Development Strategic Policy Committee Meeting held on 3rd February 2021;</li><li>• Minutes of the Housing Strategic Policy Committee Meeting held on 24th February 2021.</li></ul>
<b>DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT 2020</b>	On the proposal of Cllr. P. Ormond, seconded by Cllr. J. Leahy, the members resolved to adopt the Annual Report 2020.
<b>LCDC MEMBERSHIP</b>	Ms. S. Kennedy advised the members that due to the resignation of Colin Flaherty from the Laois Offaly Education Training Board a vacancy has arisen on the Local Community

	<p>Development Committee. Ms. Anne-Marie Keane, Further Education and Training Manager, has been nominated for this position.</p> <p>On the proposal of Cllr. D. Harvey, seconded by Cllr. E. Fitzpatrick, the members resolved to elect Ms. Anne-Marie Keane, LOETB, to the Local Community and Development Committee.</p>
<p><b>DRAFT POLICY ON COUNCIL FUNDING OF GOVERNING BODIES OF SPORT</b></p>	<p>Ms. S. Kennedy, Director of Services, updated the members on the Draft Policy on funding of National Governing Bodies of Sport for the delivery of local projects in the county. She advised the members that the Community SPC reviewed how to fund future sporting projects to ensure social inclusion measures are met. This will involve a targeted approach in determining where funding of sporting organisations will be directed. Applications must be targeted to at least two of the following target groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- people with a disability,</li> <li>- older people,</li> <li>- the unemployed,</li> <li>- new communities and people of an ethnic minority background (including members of the Traveller community),</li> <li>- women and girls,</li> <li>- areas of urban disadvantage or deprivation,</li> <li>- areas of rural disadvantage or deprivation,</li> <li>- young people at risk.</li> </ul> <p>She informed the members that applications will be made through the National Governing Body and they need to show how they can provide supports to the targeted groups. Joint applications can be submitted with one organisation acting as lead applicant.</p> <p>In response the members highlighted the benefits of sport to communities and getting young people involved in sports. They agreed that current funding in the amount of €30k may need to be increased in the future and queried if the policy will be reviewed.</p> <p>Ms. S. Kennedy responded that an annual report will be submitted to the Community SPC and amendments made if necessary. She thanked the members for their support and advised that the money will be used judiciously and the policy will work within a suite of LCDC measures.</p> <p>On the proposal of Cllr. D Harvey, seconded by Cllr. R. McDermott the members resolved to adopt the Policy on Council Funding of Governing Bodies of Sport.</p>
<p><b>JUST TRANSITION</b></p>	<p>Cllr. J. Carroll advised the members that a meeting had taken place earlier in the day to update the MEPs and Oireachtas members on Just Transition and to seek their support for funding.</p> <p>Ms. A. Delaney informed the members that the meeting with MEPs and the Oireachtas members was very positive and the MRTT are making progress from a national perspective.</p>

Mr. S. Duclot, Director of Services, updated the members on the National Just Transition fund noting its three priority areas are enterprise and employment, training and the community. He advised €1.2m has been allocated to Strand 1 projects and €27m to Strand 2 projects. However only 30% of Strand 2 projects have received their final offer. As many Strand 2 applications have not been finalised the deadline of three years for completion may not be achievable and the possibility of an extension has been raised. He noted that a number of projects are having difficulty in raising match funding and that Offaly County Council cannot provide funding for them.

He advised the members that Offaly County Council will fill the role of administrating the Territorial Plan, with details such as staffing, location and additional resources to be finalised. It is anticipated that Offaly County Council will take on the role in late 2021.

He informed the members that there is €77m allocated from the EU Just Transition and with match funding this will amount to a total fund of €150m. The Territorial Plan is due to be completed by the end of June and submitted to the EU in September.

He further advised the members that the ESB community gain fund has not yet been finalised and discussions are on-going with the ESB, Offaly County Council and Longford County Council. He noted that the ESB have requested a meeting in regard to de-commissioning of Shannonbridge Power Station and of the handover of the Dalton Centre adjacent to the power station to the Shannon Action Group.

Cllr. E. Dooley joined with the members in thanking Mr. S. Duclot for his report, noting the challenges that face Offaly due to de-carbonisation and the need to target areas where the majority of job losses are. He advised that Deputy Barry Cowen has arranged a meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> July with the Taoiseach. He queried if the ESB had sought to recoup the €5m community gain funding through the PSO.

Cllr. J. Leahy welcomed the unanimous support from MEPs and Oireachtas members and sought a review of match funding requirements for community groups from the Department. Cllr. D. Owens queried if the members would have access to the Territorial Plan before its submission to the EU and joined with members in highlighting the issue of match funding for community projects.

Cllr. J. Clendennen sought an update on job creation. Cllr. K. Smollen raised the issue of unaffordable cost of retrofitting on private householders. Cllr. N. Cribbin queried the planning timeline for the de-commissioning of Shannonbridge power station.

Ms. A. Delaney thanked members for their input and looked forward to the outcome of the meeting organised with the Taoiseach on 9<sup>th</sup> July. She advised that a land management plan

	<p>has been sought from Bord na Mona and is due in Q3 2021. She noted the Just Transition Commissioner’s third report is pending from the Department. She informed the members that the retrofitting of Local Authority housing is on-going and she accepts that private homeowners may find it more difficult to fund same. She advised that grants are available through SEAI and she would expect more funding may become available in the future. She confirmed that the ESB have not sought recoupment of the €5m community gain fund and that Mr. K. Mulvey is facilitating a meeting with ESB to discuss splitting €1m between Shannonbridge and Lanesboro.</p> <p>Mr. S. Duclot advised the members that only Strand 1 job creation figures are available with 28 new jobs created and 175 indirect jobs. He confirmed that the planning expiry on Shannonbridge power station was 31/12/2020 with de-commissioning by 2022.</p> <p>On the proposal of Cllr. J. Clendennen, seconded by Cllr. E. Dooley the members called for a meeting to be arranged with the ESB.</p>
<p><b>MONTHLY MANAGEMENT REPORT</b></p>	<p>Ms. A. Delaney, brought the members attention to the monthly management report. She noted that the proposed material alterations for the Draft County Development plan are on public display since 17th June. Following engagement with the community groups and stakeholders the closing date for the Outdoor Recreational Infrastructure Scheme is in July.</p> <p>She advised the members that the public consultation stage 3 for the N52 Tullamore to Kilbeggan link will commence in July/August and construction of Edenderry Town Inner Relief Road Phase 1 is anticipated to begin in Quarter 3 of 2021. She highlighted car parking and facilities for the Greenways are progressing and an update will be presented to the Corporate Policy Group at their next meeting.</p> <p>She noted that litter management is still an issue right across the country, but further funding has been received for clean ups to combat littering and that a great response was received with regard to waste management survey letters sent out in Tullamore.</p> <p>She brought the members attention to a full range of housing updates, highlighting that a number of projects and DPGS are progressing. She advised that not withstanding delays due to Covid-19, targets are being met.</p> <p>She advised that the Community Response help-line is currently less busy than previously but remains available to the public. She congratulated the nominees and winners of the Community Recognition awards that were held on 18th June and the two Pride of Place entrants, Glendaniel Residents Association and Lusmagh Development Group.</p> <p>She brought the members attention to the Arts and Sports report. She noted that the Tourism team are busy carrying out advertising campaigns and LEO continue to provide a range of</p>

	<p>services and one to one support to businesses. She welcomed the re-opening of many businesses.</p> <p>The members thanked her for her comprehensive and informative report, noting the progress on the Tullamore-Kilbeggan link, waste management and they welcomed the development of carparking facilities at Digby Bridge. They raised concerns in relation to HAP thresholds, refusal of tenant purchase requests, refurbishment of vacant houses and waiting time for grants. They requested clarification on the allocation for LIS between the three Municipal Districts, general operatives for Municipal Districts and concerns of the disability sector in relation to outdoor dining. Cllr. E. Fitzpatrick queried the upgrade of the road R402 in Edenderry.</p>
<p><b>SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS</b></p>	<p>On the proposal of Cllr. T. McCormack, seconded by Cllr. S. O’ Brien the members resolved to suspend standing orders to allow the meeting to continue past the timeline allocated.</p>
<p><b>MONTHLY MANAGEMENT REPORT</b></p>	<p>Ms. A. Dlelaney thanked the members for their positive comments and in responding to their queries she acknowledged their concerns with regard to the low income threshold for HAP and agreed to write to the Department to follow up on their previous resolution on this matter.</p> <p>She informed the members that General Operative recruitment is currently at stage 1 and she will revert with more information when available. She advised that the Housing Department tries to deal with vacant homes methodically. She acknowledged there was a backlog with DPGs due to Covid-19 restrictions but that over 50% of the list for 2021 has been dealt with and she advised that additional funding for DPGs is requested each year. She noted the concerns with outdoor dining and that efforts are made to ensure full accessibility in towns and villages.</p> <p>Mr. T. Shanahan advised the members that the Department is carrying out an overall review of the classification of roads next year including the R420. He confirmed that the LIS allocations across the Municipal Districts are based on the allocations for non national roads and each MD decides how to use their allocation. He confirmed that some funding has been allocated to the R402 this year and it is proposed to complete the upgrade over a number of years.</p> <p>Ms. S. Kennedy noted the members queries and concerns on housing issues and that she appreciates their frustration. She pointed out that the housing section are obliged to comply with the new circular issued in March re-affirming the HAP thresholds placing Offaly in the lower band along with a number of other counties. She agreed to write to the Department advising them of the members’ concerns. She noted that as per Government policy HAP is considered suitable accommodation for those on the housing list. The housing section are progressing turnkey housing and are trying to add to the housing stock as per the direction from government to increase housing units. She advised that the retrofit programme is progressing and confirmed</p>

	the source of heating is air to water heat pumps as per the national climate change programme. She confirmed that the DPGs for council owned homes have received an increased budget this year. She advised that progress is being made on private grants. She acknowledged that tenants should be given opportunity to purchase their home but pointed out that it is difficult as the sale price is low compared with replacement cost. She noted that this can be revisited as housing stock is increased and she pointed out that there is provision under tenancy agreements for tenants to nominate a successor. She confirmed she will revert with answers to the query on grants for doors and windows.
<b>CORPORATE POLICY GROUP REPORT</b>	Cllr. J. Carroll, Cathaoirleach advised the members that at the Corporate Policy Group Meeting they discussed the Agenda for this meeting.
<b>COMHDHÁLACHA</b>	AILG Online training session for local authority elected members on Friday, 9th July Delivering Effective Climate Action 2030 strategy and the six high-level strategic goals.
<b>COMHFHREAGRAS</b>	The members noted the correspondence issued with the agenda.
<b>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</b>	None

This concluded the business of the meeting.

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

**19<sup>th</sup> July 2021**