



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

Ordinary Meeting

6th March, Council Chamber

Presiding

Cathaoirleach, Councillor Maria Murphy

Councillors Present:

Councillors, Sinéad Burke, Francis Deane, Eimear Ferguson, Brian Fitzgerald, Pdraig Fitzsimons, Enda Flynn, Joe Fox, Noel French, Michael Gallagher, David Gilroy, Trevor Golden, Johnny Guirke, Wayne Harding, Jim Holloway, Suzanne Jamal, Tom Kelly, Sharon Keogan, Nick Killian, Caroline Lynch, Stephen McKee, Paddy Meade, Gerry O'Connor, Maria O' Kane, Damien O' Reilly, Darren O'Rourke, Bryan Reilly, Joe Reilly, Sarah Reilly, Tommy Reilly, Seán Smith, Alan Tobin, Sharon Tolan, Gillian Toole.

Apologies: Cllrs. Joe Bonner, Eugene Cassidy, Seán Drew, Wayne Forde, Ronan McKenna, Claire O'Driscoll

Officials in attendance:

Chief Executive: Jackie Maguire

Directors of Service: Kevin Stewart, Des Foley, Fiona Lawless, Barry Lynch

Meetings' Administrator: Olive Falsey

Senior Executive Officers: Dara McGowan, Larry Whelan, Fiona Fallon

1 Confirmation of Minutes

1.1 Confirmation of minutes of Ordinary meeting held on 6th February 2017.

The minutes of the Ordinary meeting held on 6th February 2017 were confirmed on the proposal of **Councillor Tommy Reilly** and seconded by **Councillor Joe Fox**.

2 Matters arising from the Minutes

No matters arising.



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3 Expressions of Sympathy and Congratulations

Sympathy was extended to:

- The family of the late Teresa McKenna (centenarian), Hayestown, Navan.
- Bernie Kelly, Trim Library, on the death of her father John (Seán) McManus.
- Catherina O'Rourke, Community Department, on the death of her mother Teresa O'Rourke.
- Mary Harrington, Transport Department, on the death of her father-in-law Edward Harrington.
- Former Councillor Cyril Cole on the death of his wife.
- Sympathy was also extended to all the children who died at the Tuam Mother and Baby Home.

Congratulations were extended to:

- The winners in the Ireland's Best Young Entrepreneur final and Alvan Hunt of Hexafly on winning Best Business Idea.
- The Lobinstown A & B Rings team on their recent success.
- St. Colmcille's GAA Club on reaching the All Ireland Intermediate Club Final.
- The Travelling Community on being recognised as an ethnic group.
- All involved in the successful outcome of the Drogheda Boundary Review.
- David Rane and Neasa Ni Chiannáin on the production of In Loco Parentis film on Headfort School.
- Sinn Féin on its success in the Northern Ireland elections.
- Anthony Gogan, Dunshaughlin, on his nomination for the Community Games Golden Volunteer Award.
- The Conservation Officer, Jill Chadwick, on the production of the Shopfront Guidelines booklet.
- Trim Musical Society on the recent production of Guys and Dolls.
- Briody Bedding on being highly commended in the National Small Business Awards.

4 Disposal of Land in accordance with Statutory Notices circulated pursuant to the provisions of Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001



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5 Statutory Business

5.1 Corporate Services

5.1.1 To adopt the 2017 Annual Service Delivery Plan.

Following a debate on the matter, the 2017 Annual Service Delivery Plan was adopted on the proposal of **Councillor Tommy Reilly** and seconded by **Councillor Joe Reilly**.

5.2 Community

5.2.1 To receive the Local Community Development Committee Annual Report 2016.

Received and noted by the Councillors.

5.2.2 To receive the Joint Policing Committee Annual Report 2016.

Received and noted by the Councillors.

5.2.3 To approve the new member of the LCDC representing the Social Inclusion pillar of the Public Participation Network (PPN).

The item was deferred awaiting a nomination.

5.3 Planning

5.3.1 To receive an update on the National Planning Framework.

Kevin Stewart, Director of Services, made the presentation which included information on:

- ❖ The initial consultation process and the schedule of regional events.
- ❖ Changes in population, location of jobs 2011, housing vacancy rate 2016
- ❖ Future Growth – Modelled projections –
- ❖ Place Making Challenges:- What should Ireland look like in 2040, Shared Goals, Planning, Regions/Narrative, Delivery Alignment.
- ❖ Issues:-People's Health & Well Being, Cities, Regions, Rural, All Island Context, Protecting our Unique Environment, Investment in Infrastructure, Implementation.



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Following the presentation, Councillors raised a number of issues in relation to the future development of County Meath. Kevin Stewart, Director of Services, provided responses and informed that a draft submission was being prepared and that the final submission would be circulated to all Councillors. He noted that a meeting of the Planning Economic Development and Enterprise SPC, would be arranged to discuss the matter further, and that all Councillors would be invited to attend this meeting. It was also noted that the Oireachtas Members would be briefed on the submission, when made to the Department. The closing date of 16th March for submissions was noted.*

*The closing date was subsequently extended to the 31st. March.

- 5.3.2 To fix a date with the Councillors for a Special Meeting to consider the Chief Executive's Report and if thought fit, to proceed with the preparation of a Draft Development Plan.

It was agreed that this meeting would take place on Monday 24th April at 10.00a.m.

6 Reports

6.1 Chief Executive's Report

Councillors sought clarification on a number of matters in the Chief Executive's report. The main issues raised and discussed included:

Housing: Delays in relation to the building of houses. The issue of squatting in houses, refusal of housing offers, and how this affects the housing list.

Transportation: Appointment of consultants for Slane bypass welcomed. The progress and timeframe re the construction of a footpath in Dunshaughlin was queried.

Environment: The anti dumping initiative and the possibility of DNA testing of rubbish.

Community: SICAP and the constraints in regard to community development.

Libraries: The success of the Library Work Matters programme was noted.

The Chief Executive and the Management Team provided responses on all matters raised.

6.2 Report from the Corporate Policy Group

The Meetings Administrator advised that the Corporate Policy Group reviewed the agenda for the full Council meeting and received information on the particulars of some items. Reports from the following SPC meetings were noted:

- Housing Community and Cultural held on the 17th February.



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- Planning Economic Development and Enterprise held on the 23rd. February.

6.3 Report from the Protocol Committee

The Meetings Administrator advised the meeting that the Protocol Committee considered the following:

- Correspondence from **Councillor Wayne Harding** in regard to a motion *“calling on my fellow Councillors to support me in asking that no elected Member assume the responsibility of either the full chair of Meath County Council or a Municipal District chair more than once in the normal five year term of any elected Council.”*

The Committee noted that the rotation of Council and MD Chairs, over the five year period of the Council, is a matter for agreement by the relevant Councillors. It was noted that, to give effect to Councillor Harding’s motion would require an amendment to the Council’s Standing Orders.

- Correspondence from **Councillor Sharon Keogan** in relation to the setting up of a European Affairs SPC.

Having discussed the matter in detail, the Protocol Committee noted that the Council’s SPC Scheme 2014-2019, approved by the full Council in September 2014, provides for four SPC’s. It was agreed to recommend that a sub-committee of the Planning Economic Development and Enterprise SPC should be established to deal with European affairs. **Councillor Gerry O’ Connor** requested that his dissent would be noted in relation to this recommendation.

A lengthy debate took place on the process of setting up an additional SPC and particularly the implications for the membership of the existing SPC’s. Following advice from both the Chief Executive and Kevin Stewart, Director of Services, it was agreed that further discussion and reflection on the matter would be required. In the meantime, it was agreed that the matter would be dealt with by the Planning, Economic Development and Enterprise SPC.

- Correspondence from **Councillor Sharon Tolan** in the form of an emergency motion *“In light of the recent report published by the Drogheda Boundary Committee, I call on Meath County Council, in conjunction with our neighbours, Louth County Council, to establish a Drogheda Meath-Louth SPC, in order to deliver in the recommended time-frame, the recommendations of the Committee.”*

Having considered this matter, it was again noted that the SPC Scheme 2014-2019, provides for four SPC’s. It was the recommendation of the Protocol Committee that an additional SPC would not be necessary at this time.



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Following a further discussion on the matter, the Chief Executive advised that the Council was awaiting formal notification from the Department. It was noted that the six actions outlined in the report would be progressed in collaboration with Louth County Council and that Councillors would be involved in the process.

- Correspondence in relation to a motion adopted by the Kells Municipal District members to name a bridge on the Kells to Oldcastle road, the 'Brian O' Higgins' bridge. The committee duly approved the naming of the bridge.
- Approved the St. Patrick's Day travel arrangements following invitations from the Meath Associations of New York and London.
- The Protocol Committee received and noted reports on conferences submitted by Councillors, and a list of conferences relevant to the business of the Council was approved.

7 Correspondence

- 7.1 Correspondence from the Department of Communications, Climate Action & Environment in response to Notice of Motion 9.4 adopted at the December meeting of the Full Council re. Knockharley Landfill.

Noted by the Councillors.

- 7.2 Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government re. Ireland 2040 – Our Plan – National Planning Framework.

Noted by the Councillors.

- 7.3 Circular WP01.17 – Department of Communications, Climate Action & Environment re. 2017 Anti-Dumping Initiative.

Noted by the Councillors.

- 7.4 Correspondence from the Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government in response to Notice of Motion 9.3 adopted at the December 2016 meeting of the Full Council re. tax relief scheme for householders on private wells and domestic wastewater treatment systems.

Noted by the Councillors.



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8 Notice of Question

8.1 Submitted by Councillor Noel French

“What works are going to be undertaken this year by Meath County Council to address Climate Change?”

Response

A report and invitation was recently issued to the Elected Members and Members of the Environment SPC advising of a number of Climate Change initiatives to be undertaken by the Council, some of which are brought about by statutory obligations provided for in the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015.

The report in particular highlighted the integration of climate change considerations into the review process of the Meath County Development Plan 2019 -2025 and also of the intention to prepare A Climate Action Strategy and a Sustainable Energies and Climate Action Plan (SECAP). The preparation of the Strategy and the SECAP will form part of the Council’s application to become a signature to the Covenant of Mayors for Climate Change and Energy, an EU movement involving local and regional authorities, voluntarily committing to contribute to the EU target for reducing greenhouse gases emissions and increasing resilience by adapting to the impacts of climate change.

The report also advised of the establishment of a Climate Action Team within Meath County Council whose main role will be in promoting the Climate Change Strategy to the organisation, as well as the development and implementation of actions to be included in the SECAP document.

The Members attention is again drawn to the **to Lunch & Learn Climate Change talk & workshop to be held in the Council Chamber, County Hall, Navan on Tuesday 7th March 2017 commencing at 12 o clock** with the main speaker being Raul Empey, a Climate Change specialist who was personally trained by former U.S. Vice President Al Gore in 2015 to deliver Climate Reality presentations.

Noted by the Councillors.

9 Notice of Motion

9.1 Submitted by Councillor Nick Killian



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“That Meath County Council would adopt a policy of “Plain English” using National Adult Literacy Agency, Plain English guidelines when planning or revising new Meath County Council documents or ways of communicating and engaging with the public.”

Supporting Information subject to the motion being proposed, seconded and considered -

Meath County Council is aware of the different needs of people in accessing, interpreting and understanding information, reports and policy documents published by the Council. The Council is committed to using plain English as a means of removing barriers which make accessibility to information difficult for people. Easy to read information is normally used in the production of flyers, information leaflets, brochures etc. A review of all information on our website is currently taking place and a ‘writing for the web’ guide is available for staff in the various departments to ensure that information is written in a meaningful and simple format.

Policy documents are also written, where possible, in a reader friendly format with a strong emphasis on the avoidance of the excessive use of jargon, acronyms etc. Illustrations, charts, headings, bullet lists are regularly used to help explain information in a simple and factual way.

However, it is noted that some statutory policy documents are technical in nature and contain specific terms that cannot be diluted in any way, so as to ensure that there is no ambiguity or misinterpretation on the part of the public due to deviation from the technical language used.

The Council will also continue to avail of the resources of the National Adult Literacy Agency to ensure that people can easily access and interpret the Council’s published information and documents.

The motion, proposed by **Councillor Nick Killian** and seconded by **Councillor Darren O’Rourke**, was unanimously adopted.

9.2 Submitted by Ratoath Municipal District Councillors

“That the funds deducted for CIS schemes from the Ratoath Municipal District Roads budget be used for CIS schemes in the Ratoath Municipal District only.”

Supporting Information subject to the motion being proposed, seconded and considered –

At the Transportation SPC meeting, held on 26th January 2017, it was recommended by the committee that 7.5% of the Restoration Improvement Grant from the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport would continue to be deducted from the overall allocation, for the purpose of funding Community Improvement Schemes, before the



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grant was then distributed to each of the Municipal Districts. This recommendation was approved at the Corporate Policy Group meeting held on the 6th February and was also considered and approved at the Full Council meeting on the same date.

Details of the Community Involvement Scheme applications were subsequently discussed at each of the Municipal District meetings in February, when the Schedule of Municipal District Works for each Municipal District was adopted.

The motion was proposed by **Councillor Gerry O Connor** and seconded by **Councillor Damien O' Reilly**. Following a lengthy debate on the matter, and advice from Des Foley, Director of Services, the motion was withdrawn.

9.3 Submitted by Councillor Sinéad Burke

“That Meath County Council supports the completion of the construction of the Navan to Dublin Rail Line as soon as is possible. That Meath County Council protect and prepare the alignment to ensure that construction can be expedited as soon as possible. That Meath County Council seek to have the construction of the line included in the National Planning Framework. Meath population has doubled to 200,000 in 35 years and it’s expected that there will be ¼ million people living in the county in the next 30 years / Go dtacaíonn Comhairle Chontae na Mí le tógáil an iarnród An Uaimh/Baile Átha Cliath comh tapa agus is féidir. Go n-ullmhóidh Comhairle Chontae na Mí an ailíniúcháin go gcríochneofar comh tapa agus is féidir é. Go n-éileoidh Comhairle Chontae na Mí tógáil an líne a bheith mar chuid den Chomhchreat Pleanála Náisiúnta. Tá daonra Chontae na Mí dúbailte go 200,000 i 35 bliain agus táthar ag tnúth go mbeidh ¼ miliúin duine ina gcónaí ann i gceann 30 bliain.”

Supporting Information subject to the motion being proposed, seconded and considered.

Meath County Council fully supports the proposal to reinstate the rail line from Dublin to Navan and this is reflected in the Transportation Section of the County Development Plan 2013 to 2019. This includes a specific objective to protect and safeguard the proposed alignment.

Tran Pol 6 states that it is a policy of the Council to *“promote, facilitate and advance the development of Phase 2 of the Navan railway line project and rail services in co-operation with other relevant agencies”*

Tran Obj 1 is to *“protect and safeguard the detailed designed alignment of Phase II of the Navan rail route and surrounding lands (including identified station locations) ... free development and any encroachment by inappropriate uses which could compromise its future development as a rail facility”*



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These policies and objectives are also reflected in the relevant Local Area Plans for Dunshaughlin and Navan.

The progression of the scheme is outside the direct control of the Council and will require action by the NTA and Iarnród Éireann who will be responsible for the preparation and implementation of the necessary Rail Order. The scheme is referenced in Section 4.2.2 of the current NTA Transport Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area 2016-2035 as follows:

The extension of the commuter rail line to Navan has been previously proposed and has been assessed in the examination of this corridor. Based on current population and employment forecasts, the level of travel demand between Navan, Dunshaughlin and various stations to the city centre is insufficient to justify the development of a high-capacity rail link at this time. To serve this corridor, it is proposed to provide an enhanced bus service along the M/N3 in conjunction with the development of a bus hub in Navan. It is intended that, as part of the next Strategy review, the likely future usage of a rail connection to Navan will be reassessed, taking into account the level of development that will have taken place over the next six years in Navan and Dunshaughlin and their environs. Pending that review, the corridor previously identified for a rail link to Navan should be protected from development intrusion.

This would clearly indicate that the NTA does not intend to revisit the scheme until the next review of the strategy which is due in 2022.

The Council remains fully committed to the project and we will restate our support in the context of our submission to the National Planning Framework. The Council will also continue to lobby the NTA and other relevant agencies in seeking to have it advanced.

The motion was proposed by **Councillor Sinéad Burke** and seconded by **Councillor Michael Gallagher**.

Following a debate on the matter, the motion was adopted.

9.4 Submitted by Councillor Caroline Lynch

“That Meath County Council begins to process the compulsory purchase of derelict sites as a matter of urgency in order to provide much needed social housing / Go dtosnóidh Comhairle Chontae na Mí an próiseas ceannach eigeántach ar shuíomhanna tréigthe, mar chás práinneach, ar mhaithe le le tithe sóisialta a chur ar fail.”

Supporting Information subject to the motion being proposed, seconded and considered.



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The potential of derelict sites, including derelict vacant units, as a mechanism to deliver social housing units, while simultaneously facilitating a dual objective of urban renewal in certain instances, is acknowledged.

The Derelict Sites Act, 1990, provides that a Local Authority may acquire by agreement, or compulsorily, any Derelict Site situate in its functional area. A prescribed process is set down in respect to the process that must be followed for any proposed compulsory purchase, including advertisement in local newspaper, the issuing of notice to the owner/occupier of the site, and information regarding the submission of objections. If an objection is made, the local authority cannot buy the land without the consent of An Bord Pleanála.

The use of Compulsory Purchase Order powers with regard to vacant/derelict units under Housing legislation (conferred by Section 76 of the Housing Act 1966, and the Third Schedule thereto (as amended by the Planning & Development Act, 2000)) to purchase same, will be duly examined in this context.

The Rebuilding Ireland: Action Plan for Housing & Homelessness contains a number of actions pertaining to existing vacant housing stock, including a pending National Vacant Housing Strategy and the recently announced national roll out of the Repair to Lease Initiative.

The Housing Department recognises that all potential social unit delivery mechanisms need to be examined in order to maximise the delivery of social units in the County, and will continue to advance our delivery programme accordingly.

The motion, proposed by **Councillor Caroline Lynch** and seconded by **Councillor Sinéad Burke**, was adopted subject to the supporting information provided.

9.5 Submitted by Cllr. Darren O'Rourke

“That this Council requests the Government to progress the Coroner’s Bill 2015 as a matter of urgency, and to ensure that the Coroner’s Bill will contain the clause to legislate for an automatic inquest into every maternal death in the state / Go n-éilíonn an Chomhairle seo ar an Rialtas, mar chás práinneach, An Bille Cróinéirí 2015 a chur chun cinn agus go gcinnteofar go mbeidh an clásal sa bhille go ndéanfadh ionchoisne usthoibríoch ar gach bás máthartha sa Stát.”

The motion, proposed by **Councillor Darren O’ Rourke** and seconded by **Councillor Sinéad Burke** was unanimously adopted.

10 Schedule of Chief Executive & Approved Orders (For Information Only)



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10.1 Schedule of Chief Executive's Orders – Transportation

10.2 Schedule of Chief Executive's Orders – Environment

10.3 Schedule of Chief Executive's Orders – Housing

10.4 Schedule of Chief Executive's Orders – Community & Enterprise

Noted by the Councillors.

11 Any Other Business

Councillor Killian raised the issue of the current traffic congestion from Ratoath on to the M3 into Dublin.