



Miontuairiscí/Meeting Minutes

Statutory Budget Meeting

27th November, 2017 – 1.30pm. - Council Chamber

An Chathaoirleach, Councillor Gerry O' Connor, presided.

Councillors Present:

Councillors Joe Bonner, Sinéad Burke, Eugene Cassidy, Francis Deane, Seán Drew, Eimear Ferguson, Brian Fitzgerald, Pdraig Fitzsimons, Enda Flynn, Joe Fox, Noel French, Michael Gallagher, David Gilroy, Johnny Guirke, Trevor Golden Wayne Harding, Suzanne Jamal, Tom Kelly, Sharon Keogan, Nick Killian, Caroline Lynch, Ronan McKenna, Paddy Meade, Maria Murphy, Claire O' Driscoll, 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. Stephen McKee, Wayne Forde

Officials in Attendance:

Chief Executive: Jackie Maguire

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

Meetings Administrator Olive Falsey

Senior Executive Officers: Dara McGowan

Finance Staff: Paul Timoney, Sheila Harkin, Ger Soady, Ailie Dempsey

1. To consider the Draft Budget circulated herewith for the Financial Year on 31st. December, 2018.

The Cathaoirleach opened the meeting and called on the Chief Executive to address the Councillors.

Chief Executive, Jackie Maguire, noted that the Budget for 2018 provides for expenditure of €110,833,406, which is an increase of €6.2m. on the 2017 budget. It was noted that the 2018 budget has no increase in rents, rates or property tax.

It was also noted that the benefits of the Council's decision to continue to retain the Local Property Tax at its current rate had enabled the Council to continue the financial provision in following areas:

- Economic Development and implementation of the actions agreed in the Council's Economic Strategy - €300,000
- €350k provided for the continuation and expansion of the Small Business Support Scheme
- Planned programme of road and footpath improvements in Housing Estates - €300,000



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- Municipal District Allocation - €480,000

The Chief Executive also noted that the focus of the budget would be to ensure the continuation of existing levels of services and make increased provisions to include:

- Maintenance and Improvement of LA Housing Units has again increased by a further €370k.
- Homeless Services has also increased by a further €127k.
- Mobility Aids Housing Grants has increased by a further €100k to a total budget in 2018 of €1.6m.
- A provision of €600k. has been made for risk mitigation projects on footpaths/roads
- Additional staffing in Housing, Environment, Transportation (capital projects) and outdoor areas
- Increased provision for Library book purchase, parks/open spaces and Meath Local Sports Partnership
- Provision has also been made for increases in Representational Payments and Expenses incurred by Councillors as per Circular LG 01/2017
- Provision has also been made for essential works and upgrades to comply with health and safety audits
- The increased expenditure of €2m. in the Housing sub-programme A07 RAS and Social Leasing, demonstrates the significant work programme undertaken, over the past 18 months, by the Council to ensure an increase in the delivery of housing units under the leasing mechanism between the local authorities and the affordable housing agencies.

Fiona Lawless, Head of Finance, then made two presentations to the Councillors on the Draft Budget for the Financial Year ending 31st December 2018. The first presentation provided detailed information on:

- Budgeted expenditure 2015 v 2018
- Revenue expenditure 2015-2018
- Analysis of income 2018 V 2015
- 2018 LPT Calculation for Meath County Council – Circular 14/2014
- Commercial Rates
- Analysis of Expenditure

The second presentation outlined the Annual Budget 2018 by Service division as follows:

- Service Division A – Housing and Building



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- Service Division B – Road Transport and Safety
- Service Division C – Water Services
- Service Division D – Development Management
- Service Division E – Environmental Services
- Service Division F – Recreation and Amenity
- Service Division G – Agriculture, Education, Health and Welfare
- Service Division H – Miscellaneous Services
- Service Division J – Central Management Charges

Following the presentations, the Cathaoirleach thanked the Chief Executive and the Head of Finance for their work in preparing and presenting the budget and particularly for the detailed presentation of information at the Municipal District meetings.

Councillors were given an opportunity for questions and comments.

The budget was generally welcomed as progressive and positive for the county and the level of engagement with all the Councillors to build an understanding of the complexities associated with the various aspects of the preparation was noted.

The main comments and items discussed included:

- should be a greater analysis of available grants and funding and how the Council can benefit
- concern expressed re the letter from TII in regard to a possible reduction in funding
- concern expressed in regard to any increase in commercial rates
- funding re LIS scheme and how it is managed
- funding for Ledwidge cottage welcomed
- support for communities and community involvement should be increased
- civic amenity site needed for Ashbourne
- Central funding per head of population still too low and Department should be consistently made aware of this situation
- full and detailed report of capital expenditure should be provided
- concern that no plan in the budget to recruit staff in the areas of disability access, community development, Irish language development, county architect
- need to expedite the building of houses and to address the lack of community facilities in Johnstown
- lack of Broadband facilities in rural areas of the county

Responses and clarifications were provided by the Chief Executive, the Head of Finance and the relevant Directors of Services.



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2. Meath County Council adopts, for the financial year ending 31st December 2018 the Annual Budget set out in Tables A – F, with amendment to B01 and B02 i.e. a reduction in expenditure of €80k. and a corresponding reduction in income of €80k.

It was proposed to adopt the annual Budget on the proposal of **Councillor Sharon Tolan** and seconded by **Councillor Brian Fitzgerald**.

A vote on the proposal to adopt the Budget was called as follows:

Councillor	For	Against	Abstain	Absent
Cllr. Joseph Bonner	For			
Cllr Sinead Burke		Against		
Cllr. Eugene Cassidy	For			
Cllr. Francis Deane	For			
Cllr Sean Drew	For			
Cllr. Eimear Ferguson		Against		
Cllr. Brian Fitzgerald	For			
Cllr Padraig Fitzsimons	For			
Cllr. Enda Flynn	For			
Cllr. Wayne Forde				Absent
Cllr. Joe Fox	For			
Cllr. Noel French	For			
Cllr. Michael Gallagher		Against		
Cllr. David Gilroy	For			
Cllr. Trevor Golden	For			
Cllr. Johnny Guirke		Against		
Cllr. Wayne Harding	For			
Cllr. James Holloway	For			
Cllr. Suzanne Jamal	For			
Cllr. Tom Kelly	For			
Cllr. Sharon Keogan	For			
Cllr. Nick Killian	For			
Cllr. Caroline Lynch		Against		
Cllr. Stephen McKee				Absent
Cllr. Ronan McKenna	For			
Cllr. Paddy Meade	For			
Cllr. Maria Murphy	For			
Cllr. Gerry O' Connor	For			



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Cllr. Claire O' Driscoll	For			
Cllr. Maria O' Kane		Against		
Cllr. Damien O' Reilly	For			
Cllr. Darren O' Rourke		Against		
Cllr. Bryan Reilly	For			
Cllr. Joe Reilly				Absent
Cllr. Sarah Reilly	For			
Cllr. Tommy Reilly	For			
Cllr. Sean Smith	For			
Cllr. Alan Tobin	For			
Cllr. Sharon Tolan	For			
Cllr. Gillian Toole	For			
Result	30	7		3

The Statutory Budget was duly adopted.

- That Meath County Council determines in accordance with the Budget as adopted the rate as set out in Table A and Column (7) of Table C to be the annual rate on valuation to be levied for the financial year ending 31st December 2018 for the purposes set out in Table A and Table C.

Unanimously adopted on the proposal of **Councillor Tommy Reilly** and seconded by **Councillor Francis Deane**.

- Formal Determination of the Rates Vacancy Refund Rate

Unanimously adopted on the proposal of **Councillor Ronan McKenna** and seconded by **Councillor Paddy Meade**.

- That Meath County Council approves of the transfer to capital account of the sums provided for various capital purposes in the Annual Budget for 2018 as adopted.

Adopted, on the proposal of **Councillor Ronan McKenna** and seconded by **Councillor Alan Tobin**, by all present with the exception of **Councillor Seán Drew** who noted his dissent.

- That Meath County Council approves the estimated over expenditure for financial year 31st December 2017 as set out in Table A – F and outturn details.

Unanimously adopted on the proposal of **Councillor Maria Murphy** and seconded by **Councillor Brian Fitzgerald**.



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7. To adopt the Business Support Scheme, 2018 in accordance with Section 66 of the Local Government Act 2001

Unanimously adopted on the proposal of **Councillor Trevor Golden** and seconded by **Councillor Tommy Reilly**.

The Chief Executive concluded by thanking the Head of Finance and her staff for their work in compiling the Draft Budget.

This concluded the business of the meeting.