



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

Ordinary Meeting

9th May 2016, Council Chamber

Presiding

Cathaoirleach, Councillor Brian Fitzgerald

Councillors Present:

Councillors, Joe Bonner, Sinéad Burke, Eugene Cassidy, Francis Deane, Seán Drew, Eimear Ferguson, Pdraig Fitzsimons, Enda Flynn, Wayne Forde, 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, Ronan McKenna, Paddy Meade, Maria Murphy, Gerry O'Connor, 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:

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, Ger Murphy, Fiona Fallon, Michael Griffin

1 Confirmation of Minutes

1.1 Confirmation of minutes of Ordinary meeting held on 4th April 2016.

The minutes of Ordinary meeting held on 4th April 2016 were confirmed on the proposal of **Councillor Joe Reilly** and seconded by **Councillor Tommy Reilly**.

2 Matters arising from the Minutes

No matters arising



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3 Expressions of Sympathy and Congratulations

Sympathy was extended to:

- John Farrell, Kells MD, on the death of his sister Mary Farrell.
- Theresa Russell, Corporate Services, on the death of her brother-in-law Jim Lynch.
- The family of the late Joe Ward, employee of Meath County Council.
- Anthony Conlon, Trim MD, on the death of his mother Maureen Conlon.
- Fiona Skehan, Corporate Services, on the death of her father Thomas Skehan.
- Deirdre McDermott, Corporate Services, on the death of her aunt.
- Niall Gallagher, Corporate Services, on the death of his grandfather.

Congratulations were extended to:

- Deputy Regina Doherty on her appointment as Government Chief Whip and Minister of State at the Department of An Taoiseach.
- Meath Macra na Feirme on winning the bid to host the 2017 Macra Rally.
- The Executive of Meath County Council on the announcement that the biotechnology firm SHIRE plans to develop a new manufacturing campus in Meath.
- All those involved in:
 - The naming of the James McCormack Bridge.
 - The development and opening of the 1916 Remembrance Gardens across the county.
 - The commemorative project to honour the centenarians of the county.
 - The 'Darkness into Light' events across the county.
 - The organisation of the Navan Choral Festival.
 - The recent Sister Cities Summit and the events organised to welcome the guests from Meath's Sister City i.e. Cary, North Carolina.
 - The organisation of GAA clubs that participated in the 'Lá na nGael' events.
 - The organisation of the Age Friendly Day in Trim.
- Coláiste na hInse, Bettystown, on winning the Really Rubbish Film Festival.



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- Natalya Coyle and Edward Lannigan O' Keeffe on their recent sporting success.

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

5 Statutory Business

5.1 Corporate Services

- 5.1.1 To adopt the proposal to name the bridge over the M1 motorway bridge MH-M01-012-00 the "James McCormack Bridge" (as agreed by the Laytown/Bettystown MD Councillors).

Adopted on the proposal of **Councillor Tom Kelly** and seconded by **Councillor Eimear Ferguson**.

- 5.1.2 To receive a report on the Local Authority Performance Indicators 2014.

Claire King, Administrative Officer, made a presentation on the report, which was published by the National Oversight & Audit Commission (NOAC) in December 2015. Following the presentation, Councillors raised a number of issues and responses were provided by Claire King and the Management Team.

It was then agreed that Councillors could refer other issues and questions to the relevant SPC's.

5.2 Planning

- 5.2.1 To consider the proposed variation and the Chief Executive's report on submissions received in respect of material alterations to variation No 3 of the Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019 and if thought fit to resolve to make the variation with or without further modification or refuse to make the variation, pursuant to Section 13 of the Planning & Development Acts 2000-2015.

It was unanimously agreed, on the proposal of the Cathaoirleach, to adjourn item 5.2.1 to a special meeting of the Council on 23rd May.



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5.3 Social, Community & Cultural

5.3.1 To consider Arts Act Funding Awards and Bursaries 2016 recommendations.

Approved on the proposal of **Councillor Joe Reilly** and seconded by **Councillor Paddy Meade**.

6 Reports

6.1 Chief Executive's Report

Noted by the Councillors.

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. The CPG also noted reports from the following SPC meetings: Housing Community and Cultural Development 20th April, Environmental 21st April, Transportation 27th April.

6.3 Report from the Protocol Committee

The Meetings Administrator advised the meeting of the following recommendations agreed at the Protocol Committee meeting:

- That the Council would support and assist the County Board in honouring the memory of Richard Blake 1st National Secretary of the GAA with the erection of a plaque at Pairc Tailteann.
- That the Council would make a presentation to the students of St. Oliver's Post Primary School who won 1st prize at the national final of the Student Enterprise Awards.
- That Comhairle na nÓg would make a presentation to the full Council at the June meeting.

The Meetings Administrator also advised that 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.



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7 Correspondence

- 7.1 Correspondence from Transport Infrastructure Ireland in response to Notice of Motion 8.4 adopted at the February meeting of the Full Council re. toll charges within County Meath.

Noted by the Councillors.

- 7.2 Correspondence from the Department of Health in response to Notice of Motion 9.11 adopted at the March meeting of the Full Council re. reintroduction of the Motorised Transport Grant Scheme.

Noted by the Councillors.

- 7.3 Correspondence from Iarnród Éireann in response to Notice of Motion 9.12 adopted at the March meeting of the Full Council re. scrapping of car park charges for commuters.

Noted by the Councillors.

- 7.4 Correspondence from the Department of Health in response to Notice of Motion 9.10 adopted at the March meeting of the Full Council re. location of new children's hospital.

The Cathaoirleach advised the meeting of a written request to discuss the matter of the agreed location of the new children's hospital. The request was discussed at the Protocol Committee and it was agreed to allow the Whips or a designated Member to speak on the matter. The main points of the discussion included:

- That at no stage was a green field site considered for the hospital.
- The view was put forward that Blanchardstown would be a more accessible location with regard to travel.
- The importance of building the children's hospital was acknowledged and that, despite any reservations with regard to the location, there should be no further delay.
- It was noted that the project is not just about the provision of a children's hospital but an amalgamation of children's services.



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- It was noted that St. James' Hospital is classed as a Level 4 hospital and Connolly, Blanchardstown is classed as a Level 3 hospital. The classification is based on the delivery of services, the specialties, sub-specialties, staffing levels etc.
- The decision was broadly welcomed and it was noted that both children and parents will benefit from this state of the art facility.

8 Notice of Question

8.1 Submitted by Councillor Francis Deane

"In recent months, have there been any prosecutions or criminal charges brought against those who spray graffiti on local authority signage?"

Response

The Transportation (Operations) Department has not initiated any prosecutions against any person for graffiti on local authority signage in recent months.

Noted by the Councillors.

8.2 Submitted by Councillor Wayne Forde

"Can I ask the Executive how many new houses will be built by Meath Co. Council in Meath for 2016?"

Response

Meath County Council has secured approval for the progression of five direct construction projects (117 units) throughout Co. Meath under the current Social Housing Strategy. Construction works are to commence on site on 3rd May 2016, in respect to the 16 unit project in Bettystown, while the remaining construction projects are progressing at various stages, as detailed in the Chief Executive's Report circulated at the May Council meeting, with anticipated delivery during 2017.

Direct construction projects by Meath County Council represent one mechanism in our strategy to deliver social housing units in the County, in conjunction with an acquisition programme, the return of vacant stock to productive use, Part V, RAS, HAP and delivery of units through the Approved Housing Bodies.

Noted by the Councillors.



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8.3 Submitted by Councillor Sharon Tolan

“To ask the Executive if a pre-planning meeting was held with Aldi in relation to their application for development on Strand Road, Laytown. Who met them and what advice was given?”

Response

I can confirm that Meath County Council staff met with Aldi representatives on 23rd March 2016. The minutes of that meeting are appended to the Planning file and are available for inspection.

Noted by the Councillors.

8.4 Submitted by Councillor Eimear Ferguson

“Is the tow-path at Roughgrange now under the responsibility of Meath County Council / An bhfuil an cosán tarrainthe sa Ghráinseach Gharbh faoi chúram Comhairle Chontae na Mí faoi láthair?”

Response

Meath County Council is the landowner of the tow-path at Roughgrange in the vicinity of the visitors' centre. Further details can be made available on request.

Noted by the Councillors.

8.5 Submitted by Councillor Wayne Harding

“Is the Chief Executive yet in a position to say what additional rates income will be generated by the recent major job announcements in the county and can it be confirmed that the benefits accruing from these developments will enable the Council to provide additional funding for the provision of services to our communities in the future?”

Response

The Council is not yet in a position to estimate the rates income that will be generated in respect of the recently announced development in the Clonee/Dunboyne area. The Valuation Office is responsible for setting the valuation of all businesses, which includes a number of steps including an appeals process. However, given the scale of the



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developments proposed, it is likely that the rates income will be significant. As Councillors are aware, rates income forms an important part of our Annual Budget and it follows therefore, that all additional rates income is welcome and will in due course enable us to provide additional funding for the provision of services.

Noted by the Councillors.

8.6 Submitted by Councillor Alan Tobin

“How many housing units under the Part V obligation are 1) lying idle throughout the county and have not been delivered or transferred 2) why have they not been transferred 3) when do the Council expect them to be delivered?”

Response

- 1) Throughout the county, there are 11 houses outstanding to be delivered under Part V which have been built to various stages of completion.
- 2) There is a number of issues as to why these units have not been transferred to the Council, including Developers in Receivership, sites being sold on to new developers, structural guarantees not being submitted to the Council and other legal issues.
- 3) The Council’s law agents are actively engaged in all cases to try and secure the transfer of these units as quickly as possible. The Council is not in a position to advise as to how long this will take.

Noted by the Councillors.

9 Notice of Motion

9.1 Submitted by Councillor Wayne Forde

“Can I call on the support of my fellow Councillors to support my motion with immediate effect for Meath Co. Council to maintain and cut the green areas in housing estates that have been taken in charge by Meath County Council.”

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

The Council does not have the resources to maintain and cut grass in all housing estates within its charge. However, each year the Council allocates significant funding to



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residents and community groups to undertake these works through the amenity and lawnmower grants schemes. Financial and other supports are also available through such schemes as Tidy Towns, Pride of Place and Litter Leagues, in which there has been increased participation rates in recent years.

The motion was proposed by **Councillor Wayne Forde** and seconded by **Councillor Tom Kelly**

It was agreed on the proposal of **Councillor David Gilroy** and seconded by **Councillor Sharon Keogan** that the matter would be referred to the Transportation SPC.

9.2 Submitted by Councillor Sarah Reilly

“That Meath County Council, when renewing its contract with Oxigen, seeks to extend the opening hours of our recycle centres.”

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

Meath County Council entered into a service level agreement with Oxigen Environmental in December 2014 to operate, manage and maintain the Civic Amenity Sites at Navan, Kells and Trim, as well as the 33 Bring Bank sites across the County for a 4 year period.

The agreement provided for revised opening hours for the 3 civic amenity sites and specifically:

- November – April: Standard Opening Hours 9.00a.m. – 4.45p.m.
Additional Opening Hours until 7.00p.m. two evenings per week
- May to October: Standard Opening Hours 9.00a.m. – 4.45p.m.
Additional Opening Hours until 9.00p.m. two evenings per week.

The three sites initially operated in accordance with the extended opening hours. However, it soon became evident that despite advertising of this fact, little or no usage of the sites materialised during the late evening hours and the proposal became unviable. In addition, some Health & Safety issues became apparent during the late evenings in winter and specifically around the adequacy of public lighting.

While the late evening openings were ceased, the Company is now opening at 8.30a.m. each morning to facilitate early morning pre-work and school customers. The Council will continue to monitor usage of the sites and any demand for changes in the opening hours.



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The motion was proposed by **Councillor Sarah Reilly** and seconded by **Councillor Gerry O' Connor**.

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

9.3 Submitted by Councillor Noel French

"That Meath County Council buildings including libraries and all public offices adopt the "breast feeding welcome here" initiative and that all premises in the county be encouraged to support the initiative."

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

Meath County Council's Customer Service Plan and Customer Charter identifies a number of commitments to customer care and service e.g. *"We strive to deliver the best possible care to you in an effective and caring manner"* and in as far as is possible to *"provide clean, accessible public offices that ensure privacy, comply with occupational and safety standards and that facilitate access for people with disabilities and special needs."*

These commitments have been made with a genuine concern for the needs of all our customers. In that context, the Council is fully committed to facilitating nursing mothers and is already doing so throughout the network of libraries in the county. For fifteen years the Council's library service has been actively supporting La Leche League in terms of meetings and facilities for nursing mothers. It would appear that the support on the ground in the library service has preceded the recently launched North East "Breast Feeding Welcome Here" initiative.

The Council is committed to supporting this initiative and facilitating the needs of nursing mothers as required.

The motion, proposed by **Councillor Noel French** and seconded by **Councillor Maria Murphy** was unanimously adopted.

9.4 Submitted by Councillor Gillian Toole

"That Meath County Council will review the SUGAR customer service system on a quarterly basis against the Mission & vision statements of the various Council strategy documents, inviting feedback of the system from staff members, Executive members, public representatives & members of the public."



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

With regard to the Sugar system, cases are logged and referred to the appropriate department when submitted. The system has been in place since June 2015. During this period 13,224 cases have been logged via the system. The breakdown is as follows:

CST – Case Status – 23 Jun.2015 – 30 Apr.2016

Members Reps – Case Status – 1 Aug. 2015 – 30 Apr.2016

	Closed	Closed with Commitment	In Progress	No Action Taken	On Hold	Open	Total
Customer Service Cases	9283	139	286	48	15	1716	11487
Members Representation Cases	1310	29	48	0	2	348	1737

The new process has involved the assignment of specific Customer Service staff to receive, acknowledge, log, refer and then monitor representations as well as follow up with appropriate staff and departments.

In order to assist with the implementation of this relatively new procedure reports are prepared on a monthly basis to identify open calls and to ensure that they are followed up and processed in as timely a manner as possible given the volume of reps received and organisational priority workloads.

As a result of implementing the new system the status of individual representations may be followed up at any point by contacting the Customer Service Team.

The motion was proposed by **Councillor Gillian Toole** and seconded by **Councillor Sharon Tolan**. Following a short discussion and based on the supporting information, the motion was noted.

9.5 Submitted by Councillor Wayne Harding

“That Meath County Council initiates a review of planning practices in Brú na Bóinne to ensure that local people with a housing need can continue to live in their locality while at the same time ensuring that World Heritage status is maintained”.



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

The County Development Plan sets out the plans and policies of the Council as they apply to various developments types and areas of the county.

Chapters 9 (Cultural and Natural Assets) and 10 (Rural Development) set out the existing policies of the plan and the criteria used in determining the merits of individual planning applications. Chapter 9 includes specific policies for the Brú Na Bóinne area.

Councillors will also be aware that the Brú Na Bóinne Management Plan is currently being reviewed and it is envisaged that the revised management plan will inform and be part of any new development plan policies for this area.

The review of the Meath County Development Plan is due to commence in the final quarter of 2016, with a view to having a plan in place before 17th December 2018.

The appropriate forum to initiate a review of the Council's plans and policies for the Brú na Bóinne area is through the statutory review of the County Development Plan, which is due to commence later this year.

The motion was proposed by **Councillor Wayne Harding** and seconded by **Councillor Tommy Reilly**. Based on the supporting information, the motion was noted.

9.6 Submitted by Councillor Noel French

"That all new and renovated buildings completed in the county and used by the public are assessed by the Council with regard to meeting the needs of those with limited mobility, including wheelchair users, in accordance with the standards new buildings have to reach regarding accessibility"

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

It should be noted that all developments which are required to submit a commencement notice and are also required to demonstrate full compliance with the Building Regulations.

Part M of the Building Regulations deals with accessibility and mobility requirements. Assessments are conducted by the Council's Building Control Section as part of the processing of commencement notices under Building Control Management system.

The Council's role in this regard is to assess all submissions at commencement notice stage.



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The Council is also required to undertake building control site inspections for not less than 15% of new buildings notified to it each year. The Building Control Team inspected 30% of new buildings in 2015.

For clarity, the burden of compliance with the Building Regulations rests at all times, with the person carrying out the development.

The motion, proposed by **Councillor Noel French** and seconded by **Councillor Enda Flynn**, was adopted.

9.7 Submitted by Councillor Eugene Cassidy

"I'm calling on Meath County Council to request the Minister and the Department of Transport to prioritise in the Capital Program the upgrade of the N2 road network, with particular emphasis on Kilmoon Cross, Slane bridge and the town of Ardee. Safety is compromised as these areas have now reached critical levels of traffic congestion."

The motion was proposed by **Councillor Eugene Cassidy** and seconded by **Councillor Sharon Keogan**.

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

9.8 Submitted by Councillor Eugene Cassidy

"I'm calling on Meath County Council to request the Minister and TII to retrofit, where necessary, footpaths on national road structures, particularly where these schemes form by-passes of towns and villages that have become recreational walking routes e.g. Kells, Dunshaughlin and Dunboyne."

The motion, proposed by **Councillor Eugene Cassidy** and seconded by **Councillor Maria Murphy**, was unanimously adopted.

9.9 Submitted by Councillor Gerry O'Connor

"That Meath County Council requests the Government to consider separating the need for Social Housing from the need for Rent allowance to enable (a) to quantify the actual need for Social Housing and (b) to quantify the actual need for private rental accommodation support."

The motion, proposed by **Councillor Gerry O'Connor** and seconded by **Councillor Maria Murphy**, was unanimously adopted.



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9.10 Submitted by Councillor Wayne Forde

“Can I call on the support of my fellow Councillors to fully support my motion of total opposition to the proposed downgrading of our Acute Psychiatric unit 24/7 in Navan , and for a letter to this effect be sent to the Minister for Health and Minister for Mental Health and our 6 recently elected Meath Oireachtas members.”

The motion was proposed by **Councillor Wayne Forde** and seconded by **Councillor Tom Kelly**.

Councillor Gillian Toole proposed a change in the wording of the motion. Following a debate on the matter and advice from the Cathaoirleach, the motion was adopted.

9.11 Submitted by Councillor Sharon Keogan

“We call on the Minister for the Environment, Community & Local Government to carefully consider a regional EPA office to be placed in Duleek, Co. Meath.

We ask this because of a number of ongoing concerns relating to the 4 large scale commercial operations and a significant number of bio solid storage facilities in the Duleek & District Area.

We also ask that a national environmental & health unit should be formed to assess alleged risks to public health from these local environment stressors.

This motion we ask in the best interest of the health & safety of the residents in the Duleek & District Area.”

The motion was proposed by **Councillor Sharon Keogan** and seconded by **Councillor Sharon Tolan**. Following a debate on the matter, the motion was unanimously adopted.

9.12 Submitted by Councillors Damien O’Reilly, Tommy Reilly & Ronan McKenna

“We call for the abolishment of Irish Water and the return of all staff and assets to the local authorities across Ireland.”

The motion was proposed by Councillor Tommy Reilly and seconded by **Councillor Wayne Harding**.

Following a lengthy debate on the matter it was clarified that the concern was in relation to the maintenance of sewerage systems. It was unanimously agreed that Gerry



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Boyle, Senior Engineer, Water Services, would be invited to attend the next meeting of the Environmental SPC to provide an update. The motion was duly withdrawn.

9.13 Submitted by Sinn Féin Councillors

“Meath County Councillors calls on Tesco Ireland to withdraw their threat to unilaterally cut pay and conditions of employment for Tesco workers and urges them to meaningfully engage with the Mandate Trade Union and to utilise the state's industrial machinery, the Labour Court, if necessary and to fully implement its recommendations / Éilíonn na Comhairleoirí Comhairle Chontae na Mí ar Tesco Ireland an bagairt ar pá agus coinníollacha fostaíochta d'oibríthe Tesco a ghearradh go haontaobhach a aisghaireadh agus impíonn siad orthu plé go fóinteach leis an gCeardchumann Mandate agus leas a bhaint as córas tionsclaíoch an Stáit; é sin ná an Chúirt Oibreachais, más gá, agus a moltaí a fhorfheidhmiú san iomlán.”

The motion was proposed by **Councillor Sinéad Burke** and seconded by **Councillor Eimear Ferguson**.

Following a short debate an amendment was proposed by **Councillor Maria O' Kane** and seconded by **Councillor Sinéad Burke i.e.** to remove the text *‘to withdraw their threat to unilaterally cut pay and conditions of employment for Tesco workers and urges them’*

The amended motion as outlined below was duly adopted.

“Meath County Councillors calls on Tesco Ireland to meaningfully engage with the Mandate Trade Union and to utilise the state's industrial machinery, the Labour Court, if necessary, and to fully implement its recommendations / Éilíonn na Comhairleoirí Comhairle Chontae na Mí ar Tesco Ireland plé go fóinteach leis an gCeardchumann Mandate agus leas a bhaint as córas tionsclaíoch an Stáit; é sin ná an Chúirt Oibreachais, más gá, agus a moltaí a fhorfheidhmiú san iomlán.”

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

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



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Noted by the Councillors.

11 Any Other Business

The social media comments with regard to recently erected signage on restricted dog breeds was discussed. It was unanimously agreed that the nature and volume of the comments made were unwarranted. The Meetings Administrator provided the prepared media statement and noted that it would be issued after the meeting.