



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

Ordinary Meeting

4th July 2016, Council Chamber

Presiding

Cathaoirleach, Councillor Maria Murphy

Councillors Present:

Councillors, Joe Bonner, Sinéad Burke, Eugene Cassidy, Francis Deane, Seán Drew, Brian Fitzgerald, Pádraig 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, Gerry O'Connor, Claire O' Driscoll, Maria O' Kane, Damien O' Reilly, Darren O'Rourke, Bryan Reilly, Joe Reilly, Sarah Reilly, Tommy Reilly, Alan Tobin, Gillian Toole.

Apologies: Cllrs. Eimear Ferguson, Seán Smith, Sharon Tolan

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, David Jones

1 Confirmation of Minutes

1.1 Confirmation of minutes of Annual meeting held on 13th June 2016.

The minutes of the Annual meeting held on 13th June 2016 were confirmed on the proposal of **Councillor Tommy Reilly** and seconded by **Councillor Ronan McKenna**.

1.2 Confirmation of minutes of Ordinary meeting held on 13th June 2016.

The minutes of the Ordinary meeting held on 13th June 2016 were confirmed on the proposal of **Councillor Claire O' Driscoll** and seconded by **Councillor Ronan McKenna**.



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2 Matters arising from the Minutes

The Cathaoirleach advised in regard to the following:

- Councillor Sharon Tolan had requested that her motion, which had been deferred from the June meeting, would now be deferred until the September meeting.
- In regard to Councillor Alan Tobin's emergency motion re Brexit, it was noted that as it was not possible to hold a special meeting of the Council. It was noted that the matter was resolved and an email sent to each Councillor.

Councillor Sharon Keogan suggested that an SPC for European Affairs should be established. **Councillor Trevor Golden** suggested that an adjustment should be made to the Council's Economic Strategy to take account of the outcome of Brexit. The Chief Executive advised and noted that, while it was unclear what might happen in the future, strong partnerships had been established through various frameworks and that the Council would continue to monitor developments.

Councillor Noel French requested a suspension of Standing Orders to discuss homelessness.

The Cathaoirleach declined the request but noted that the matter would be discussed at a future time.

3 Expressions of Sympathy and Congratulations

Sympathy was extended to:

- Denise Maguire, Library Service, on the death of her mother Imelda Maguire.
- Joan Cunningham, Payroll Unit, on the death of her mother Ann (Nancy) Cunningham.
- Helen Smith, Environment Department, on the death of her mother Nuala Smith.
- Edita Zolotuchina, former employee on the death of her mother-in-law Vitalija Asaciova.

Congratulations were extended to:

- Kells Playground Restoration Committee on the work to refurbish the playground in the town.
- Meath U14 Girls on reaching the All Ireland Football final.
- Navan, Trim and Ratoath Musical Societies on winning awards at the Musical Awards in Killarney.



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- All involved in regard to:
 - The activities during National Bike Week.
 - The Hay Festival in Kells.
 - Taste of the Boyne Valley event.
 - Dunshaughlin Athletic Club on the Michael Manning memorial 10k event.
- Meath Hurlers on winning the Christy Ring Cup.
- The Irish Soccer Teams (North & South) and the Irish fans on their success at the European Championships.
- Dunshaughlin Tidy Towns on winning a gold medal in the Council's Anti-litter league.
- Sean Hughes, Dunboyne Athletic Club on his success at the world shot putt championships.

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 note the 2015 Meath County Council Annual Report.

Noted by the Councillors

5.2 Planning

- 5.2.1 To receive presentation on the Vacant Site Levy as introduced under the Urban Regeneration and Housing Act, 2015.

Wendy Bagnall made a presentation to the meeting which included information on the purpose of the levy, the legislation and the application and implementation of the levy.

Following the presentation, a lengthy debate took place and Councillors raised a number of issues including the resources required to implement the legislation, the timeframes involved and the need to activate land as quickly as possible, given the current housing situation. **Councillor Darren O' Rourke** proposed,



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seconded by **Councillor Nick Killian**, to write to the Minister and outline the concerns raised, and to request a review of the current legislation with a view to making it more effective. The proposal was unanimously agreed by the Councillors.

5.3 Community

5.3.1 Approval of advance funding arrangements for the LEADER Programme under Section 66 of the Local Government Act 2001.

Barry Lynch, Director of Services, provided the background information in regard to this item and informed that a detailed presentation would be made on the Rural Development Programme at the September meeting.

Approved on the proposal of **Councillor Tommy Reilly** and seconded by **Councillor Sharon Keogan**.

6 Reports

6.1 Chief Executive's Report

The Chief Executive's Report was noted by the Councillors.

The Chief Executive advised Councillors in regard to Variation 3 and the Draft Direction received from the Minister for Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government in relation to the lands at Dunboyne. It was noted that the draft direction was now on public display for a 2 week period from 29th June to 13th July. It was noted that the Chief Executive's Report must be submitted to the Department no later than 10th August and that Councillors could make submissions directly to the Minister within the 2 week period and any such submission must be considered by the Minister. The Chief Executive also advised that an information meeting would be held on Wednesday 20th July to update Councillors on the matter.

The other main issues discussed included: homelessness numbers in the county; funding in regard to building houses; transitional housing opportunities; refurbishment works on vacant houses; funding allocation in regard to non-national roads; Navan's Healthy Town Project: Councillor O Driscoll requested information on the progress in regard to her motion, which was referred to the Planning Economic Development and Enterprise SPC following the April meeting.

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



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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 the reports from the following SPC meetings: Housing Community and Cultural Development SPC held on the 29th June and the Environmental SPC on 1st July.

6.3 Report from the Protocol Committee

The Meetings Administrator advised the meeting of the following:

- Dara McGowan, Senior Executive Officer, advised the meeting of a proposal to develop a protocol for commemorations in collaboration with the Arts Officer, the Heritage Officer and the Conservation Officer. It was agreed that the draft document would be presented at the September meeting of the Protocol Committee.
- The draft twinning protocol was discussed and it was agreed that Dara McGowan would make a presentation to the September meeting of the Municipal Districts.
- The issues in regard to Notices of Questions and Motions were discussed both at the CPG and Protocol Committee. A report prepared by the Meetings Administrator was presented. It was agreed that the Whips would discuss the report with their members and provide feedback so that a proposal could be presented at the September 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.

7 Correspondence

7.1 Correspondence from Office of the Minister for Education and Skills in response to Notice of Motion 9.10 adopted at the April meeting of the Full Council re. the Technological Universities Bill, 2015.

Noted by the Councillors.

7.2 Correspondence from the Office of the Commissioner, Garda Headquarters in response



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to Notice of Motion 9.11 adopted at the April meeting of the Full Council re. request to reverse the decision to merge the Ashbourne and Laytown Garda Districts.

Noted by the Councillors.

- 7.3 Correspondence from the Minister for Health in response to Notice of Motion 9.10 adopted at the May meeting of the Full Council re. downgrading of Acute Psychiatric unit 24/7 in Navan.

Noted by the Councillors. **Councillor Forde** expressed his disappointment with the response.

- 7.4 Correspondence from TII in response to Notice of Motion 9.8 adopted at the May meeting of the Full Council re. 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.

Noted by the Councillors. Councillor Cassidy requested that a response would be issued to the Department outlining the costings that have been prepared in relation to above.

8 Notice of Question

8.1 Submitted by Councillor Francis Deane

“In relation to the excellent work being carried out by the Gateway staff may I ask the executive (a) how many of Gateway staff are employed by the Council and (b) if there has been confirmation from a national level as to whether the scheme will be continued?”

Response

The Council currently employs 74 part-time outdoor-based staff on the Gateway scheme. These staff members are located throughout the county in a variety of roles. In addition, the Council employs 19 staff on the scheme in office based roles. At this point there is no indication as to whether there will be a continuation of the Gateway scheme beyond the current intake.

Noted by the Councillors.

9 Notice of Motion



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9.1 Submitted by Councillor Alan Tobin (motion deferred from June meeting)

“With the economic confidence increasing, can I ask that a committee from Ashbourne and Ratoath Districts with help, and resources from Meath Co. Council, set up a cross county forum with Fingal Co. Council to encourage cooperation in infrastructural projects, broadband, water and waste water, public amenities and help represent citizens that straddle the border areas with matter including crime, theft, isolation and illegal dumping.”

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

Meath County Council already has formal contact arrangements in place with Fingal County Council with regard to a range of cross county border proposals, including the Council’s Economic Strategy, respective County Development Plan proposals, National Roads Infrastructure etc. The Council can now explore the possibility of setting up other cross county boundary contacts in relation to some of the matters referred to in the Notice of Motion. However, it should be noted that, in some of instances, Meath and Fingal operate in different regional structures and also that some of the matters identified may be the responsibility of national bodies rather than being under the remit of either Local Authority.

The motion was proposed by **Councillor Alan Tobin** and seconded by **Councillor Joe Bonner**.

A lengthy debate took place on the matter and the views put forward by the contributors were widely varied. The Chief Executive provided advice to the Councillors and noted areas where the two counties collaborate and work together.

It was unanimously agreed that the motion would be referred to the Municipal Districts in question.

9.2 Submitted by Councillor Wayne Harding (motion deferred from June meeting)

“That the Council adapt or amend telecommunications policy to ensure that any civil works of note (over 20metres in length), to be carried out by the County Council, relating to roads, footpaths or related activities carried out in towns around the county include the provision and installation of telecommunications ducting for future sale or lease to the telecommunications sector. Those other opportunities such as new roads, greenways, and cycle ways be included in a plan for the future-proofing of the county’s infrastructure be considered as a matter of course.



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

Meath County Council is committed to providing ducting as part of schemes, where feasible and practical. In addition, Meath County Council sets conditions for developers of private schemes, for example housing developments, to provide an appropriate level of broadband service infrastructure on an open access basis.

However, providing ducting as part of smaller infrastructural schemes on an ad hoc basis, without any joint up thinking or overall plan, would not be beneficial. The Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019 recognises the importance of providing ducting in conjunction with significant public infrastructure works. EC POL 30 refers as follows: To seek to have appropriate modern ICT, including open access fibre connections in all new developments and carrier neutral ducting installed during significant public infrastructure works such as roads, water and sewerage, where feasible.

The review of the Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019 will commence in Q4 of 2016, telecommunications policy will form part of the review process.

The motion was proposed by **Councillor Wayne Harding** and seconded by **Councillor Ronan McKenna**.

Following a debate on the matter, the motion was adopted subject to the supporting information provided.

9.3 Submitted by Councillor Claire O'Driscoll (motion deferred from June meeting)

"That Meath County Council invites the TII to present their plans for the N2 to the members of this Council at a meeting in the Council Chamber in the coming months"

The motion, proposed by **Councillor Claire O' Driscoll** and seconded by **Councillor Sharon Keogan**, was unanimously adopted.

9.4 Submitted by Councillor Joe Bonner (motion deferred from June meeting)

"That Meath County Council, before the end of 2016, applies a 30 kilometre per hour speed limit in all housing estates taken in charge."

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

New national guidelines for Setting and Managing Speed Limits in Ireland were issued to all local authorities in April 2015.



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The Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport has requested that all Local Authorities carry out a review and update speed limits within their administrative area in accordance with the 2015 Guidelines, with new Special Speed Limit Bye-Laws to be implemented by the end of April 2017. All estates where a 30 km/h speed limit is proposed require a detailed review including traffic / speed surveys in order to design appropriate signage at each location.

At the Transport SPC meeting of 30th September 2015, the proposed Speed Limit Review for the County was discussed in some detail. Following on from this meeting the Transportation Department amended its original proposals to allow for an additional byelaw to be introduced in 2016. This Bye-law will implement a 30 kph speed limit within 121 appropriate Meath County Council owned estates and 54 estates which have been taken in charge by MCC for which specific concerns have been raised to date as part of the public consultation process that the Council undertook in 2014 / 2015.

The Transportation Department has prepared a draft Road Traffic (Special Speed Limits) (Housing Estates) Bye-Law (No. 1) 2016 and will be seeking approval from each of the Municipal Districts at their June meetings to commence the statutory process and put the Draft Bye-Law on public display.

The full County review will also continue with regard to drafting the April 2017 Special Speed Limit Bye-Law for County Meath.

The Council also intends to update the 2016 30 km/h Housing Estate SSL Bye-Law to take into account any additional estates which may be highlighted following on from 2016 Bye-Law public consultation. This will then be issued as a separate combined 2017 Meath Housing Estate Bye-Law.

The Special Speed Limit review is a large undertaking and will form a major work package for the Transportation Department in 2016/17. Given the resources currently available, it is not possible to fast track the review to include all housing estates within the county which have been taken in charge.

Beyond 2017, the speed limit bye laws will be reviewed and amended on a periodic basis to include further housing estates in the County and take account of other updates.

The motion was proposed by **Councillor Joe Bonner** and seconded by **Councillor Alan Tobin**.

A lengthy debate took place on the matter. Barry Lynch, Director of Services, advised of the methodology involved and that the project was being undertaken in accordance with the national guidelines. Some Councillors expressed a view that the assessment of estates would result in undue delay in regard to the completion of the project.



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The Chief Executive strongly advised that the work would be completed in accordance with the national guidelines and that safety would be prioritised at all times.

Councillor Bonner then proposed an amendment to his motion i.e.

“That Meath County Council agrees to examine the need for 30km speed limit in all estates taken in charge”

The amended motion was unanimously adopted.

9.5 Submitted by Councillor Joe Fox

“I am calling Meath County Council to apply for funding from the Department under the “My Open Library Unlimited Access Initiative” which was recently announced.”

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

A call for proposals under the Open Library Initiative was received by the local authority on the 22nd June. This call is now being reviewed with a view to submitting an appropriate proposal by the 31st of July deadline set by the department.

The motion, proposed by **Councillor Joe Fox** and seconded by **Councillor Sarah Reilly**, was unanimously adopted.

9.6 Submitted by Councillor Caroline Lynch (motion deferred from June meeting)

“That this Council writes to the Minister of Education and Skills to request that school budgets are brought up to a realistic level to avoid school closures in County Meath./ Go scríobhfadh an chomhairle seo chuig an Aire Oideachais á n-iarraidh go n-ardófar buiséid scoileanna go leibhéil réadúla ionas nach ndúnfar scoileanna i gContae na Mí.”

The motion was proposed by **Councillor Caroline Lynch** and seconded by **Councillor Sinéad Burke**.

Following a lengthy debate on the motion, **Councillor Enda Flynn** proposed an amendment which was seconded by **Councillor Sarah Reilly**, as follows:

“That school budgets are improved to provide an improvement in educational facilities for children”

The amended motion was adopted following a show of hands vote. Result: For 21; Against 6.



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9.7 Submitted by Councillor Sinead Burke (motion deferred from June meeting)

“That this Council recognises the massive financial pressure being placed on drivers because of the huge increases in insurance premiums; Acknowledges the fact that young people and people in rural Ireland are disproportionately affected by these increases; Expresses its disbelief at the lack of explanation for the increases and the inconsistencies evident in the dramatic increases across the industry; Calls upon the Central Bank, the insurance industry and the Oireachtas to give this issue the priority it deserves; Will write to Minister for Finance and Insurance Ireland in this regard./Go n-aithnaíonn an chomhairle seo an brú ollmhór airgeadais a chuirtear ar tiománaithe mar gheall ar arduithe ollmhóra i bpréimheanna árachais; n-adhmaíonn an chomhairle seo go dtéann na harduithe seo i bhfeidhm ar dhaoine óga agus daoine ina gcónaí faoin tuath go díréireach; go gcuireann an chomhairle seo a díchreideamh in iúl ó thaobh an easpa mínithe maidir leis na harduithe agus na neamhréireachtaí soiléire a fheictear sna harduithe drámatúla trasna na earnála; n-éilíonn an chomhairle se ar Bhanc Ceannais na hÉireann agus an tOireachtas an tosaíocht cuí a thabhairt don saincheist seo; Scríobhfar chuig an Aire Airgeadais agus Insurance Ireland faoi.”

The motion was proposed by **Councillor Sinead Burke** and seconded by **Councillor Darren O’ Rourke**.

Following a debate on the matter, **Councillor Bryan Reilly** proposed an amendment to the motion as follows:

“Meath County Council wishes to express its serious concerns at the high cost of motor insurance premiums being charged to motorists and calls on you to carry out an immediate review of your rating structure and to reduce your rates/ premiums being charged, with a view to making motor insurance cover more affordable to motorists in Ireland.”

The amended motion was unanimously adopted.

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

Noted by the Councillors.



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11 Any Other Business

Councillor Gerry O' Connor raised the issue of the number of meetings scheduled towards the end of the year and suggested that, due to the timeframes in December that the Council would not meet in January 2017. It was agreed that the Council would meet in January but that there would be no questions or motions placed on the January agenda.