



Miontuairiscí/Meeting Minutes

Ordinary Meeting 11th January 2010, Council Chamber

An Leas-Cathaoirleach, Councillor Noel Leonard, presided.

Members Present:

Councillors Joseph Bonner, Ray Butler, Shane Cassells, Eugene Cassidy, Sirena Campbell, Francis Deane, Anne Dillon Gallagher, Regina Doherty, Jimmy Fegan, Brian Fitzgerald, Oliver Fox, Wayne Harding, Jim Holloway, Eoin Holmes, Nick Killian, Suzanne Jamal, Jimmy Cudden, Tracy McElhinney, Niamh McGowan, Jenny McHugh, Maria Murphy, Seamus O'Neill, Bryan Reilly, Joe Reilly, Tommy Reilly, Catherine Yore.

Officials in Attendance:

County Manager: Tadhg McDonnell, Deputy

Head of Finance: Fiona Lawless,

Directors of Service: Kevin Stewart, Eugene Cummins, Brendan McGrath, Liam Henry, Michael Killeen.

Meetings Administrator Bill Sweeney

Senior Planners: Pat Gallagher

Senior Executive Officers: Martin Rogers, Michael Griffin, Larry Whelan

Administrative Officers: Olive Falsey

Apologies:

Cllr William Carey, Cllr John V Farrelly

1.0 Confirmation of Minutes

- 1.1 Confirmation of Minutes of Monthly Meeting held on 7th December 2009.
Minutes of Monthly Meeting held on 7th December 2009 confirmed on the proposal of **Councillor Jimmy Fegan** and seconded by **Councillor Shane Cassells**.
- 1.2 Confirmation of Minutes of Statutory Budget Meeting held on 7th December 2009.
Minutes of Statutory Budget Meeting held on 7th December 2009 confirmed on the proposal of **Councillor Jimmy Fegan** and seconded by **Councillor Shane Cassells**.
- 1.3 Confirmation of Minutes of Adjourned Statutory Budget Meeting held on 18th December 2009
Minutes of Adjourned Statutory Budget Meeting held on 18th December 2009 confirmed on the proposal of **Councillor Jimmy Fegan** and seconded by **Councillor Shane Cassells**.
- 1.4 Confirmation of Minutes of Preliminary Budget Meeting held on 23rd November 2009
Minutes of Preliminary Budget Meeting held on 23rd November 2009 confirmed on the proposal of **Councillor Jimmy Fegan** and seconded by **Councillor Shane Cassells**.

Suspension of Standing Orders

Standing orders were suspended on the proposal of **Councillor Jimmy Fegan** seconded by **Councillor Shane Cassells** to allow discussion on the recent period of



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abnormal weather. Members raised a number of issues on the Council's response to the events over the Christmas.

Concerns were raised about gritting routes, communications and gritting of footpaths.

Many tributes were paid to the outdoor staff, the Gardaí and Meath Co. Council's Civil Defence for their commitment and work over the period.

The following detailed report was circulated by T McDonnell Deputy Manager

Meath County Council - Report on Severe Weather Conditions

1. Introduction

Since the weather conditions deteriorated, Meath Local Authorities continued to keep County Meath open for business, allowed the commuter work force to travel safely and enabled national and regional economic activity to continue as normal. It must be accepted by the public at large that significant inconvenience is a consequence of severe weather conditions and that as weather deteriorates and temperatures plummet the Local Authority must respond by mobilizing its resources to maintain essential services and provide support to citizens of the County.

2. Roads

The decision to salt roads is taken by the duty Engineer based on location specific weather information provided by Met Eireann and a number of local weather stations which is fed into a computerised information system known as *Icecast*.

The lengths of roads salted by Meath County Council directly are as follows:

Motorway (Ashbourne Bypass)	15.5km
National Primary	98.1km
National Secondary	77.8 km
Regional	269.2km

Total = **461kms**

There are 9 predetermined strategic routes, including public transport corridors, covered on each salting run. Routes have been chosen based on road classification and strategic importance. There are 2,484kms of county roads and 490kms. of regional roads in Co. Meath.

The following routes are fully salted:

N2, N3, N51, N52, R132, R148, R152, R153, R155, R157, R158, R162

In addition sections of the following routes are also salted:

R125, R150, R154, R156, R160, R161, R163, R164.

The salting of the M1 and M4 Motorways is carried out by concessionaires.

Significantly, secondary roads in Britain are not salted by the Local Authorities.

2.1. Salting during the severe weather

In the past month Meath County Council has successfully implemented an extensive salting programme on the 9 designated routes in response to local weather conditions and national weather forecasts.



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Approximately, 2,000 tonnes of salt on almost 20,000kms of road have been spread throughout the County since mid-December. Each gritting run covers 460kms. of the strategic road network with two runs carried out on some nights.

As the weather conditions deteriorated, demand for salt increased countrywide and it became more difficult to access supplies. With regard to the offers of free grit, MCC operates using proven methods and best practice. Stone grit is not the preferred or desirable way to treat icy roads. It does not dissolve the ice but simply provides additional traction.

However, as supplies of salt continued to deplete MCC reverted to using an alternative material to mix with the salt during this past weekend.

Meath County Council requested the assistance of the Army and crews worked, alongside MCC staff, on the gritting operation in Ratoath, Ashbourne Dunboyne, Dunshaughlin, Stamullen and Laytown/Bettystown,

2.2. Salting schedule

The following is a detailed schedule of the salting operation carried out by MCC during the recent severe weather conditions:

The routes were salted on the 27th Nov., 29th Nov., (2 runs) 30th Nov. (2 runs), 3rd Dec. (2 runs), 10th Dec., 12th Dec., 13th Dec., 15th Dec., 16th Dec. (2 runs), 18th Dec., 19th Dec., 20th Dec, 21st Dec., 22nd Dec., 23rd Dec., 24th Dec., 25th Dec., 26th Dec (2 runs), 27th Dec., 30th Dec, 31st Dec, 1st Jan., 3rd Jan., 4th Jan., 5th Jan. (2 runs), 6th Jan, 7th Jan., 8th Jan., 9th Jan., 10th Jan., & 11th using 2,230 tons of salt to date.

On Saturday, 19th, Meath County Council got a delivery of 6 articulated truck loads of salt, Tuesday and Wednesday, 22nd and 23rd Dec. Meath County Council collected 8 articulated truck loads of salt in the quarry in Co. Antrim, Tuesday and Wednesday 29th and 30th Dec. Meath Co. Co. collected another 6 articulated truck loads of salt from Co. Antrim.

Meath County Council collected 2 loads and 2 loads delivered on 4th Jan., 2010 from Antrim

Meath County Council collected 2 loads on 5th Jan., 2010 from Antrim & collected 1 load from Cork.

Meath County Council collected 2 loads on 6th Jan., 2010 from Antrim

Meath County Council collected 2 loads on 6th Jan., 2010 from Cork

Meath County Council collected 1 load on 7th Jan., 2010 from Antrim.

Meath County Council collected 1 load on 8th Jan., 2010 from Antrim.

Meath County Council collected 1 load on 9th Jan., 2010 from Antrim & collected 2 loads from Foynes, Limerick.

Since Thursday 7th January 2010, the NRA has assumed responsibility for securing and allocating salt supplies to all Local Authorities and Meath County Council collected 1 load on 10th Jan, 2010 from Antrim and collected a further load from Cork. Further deliveries are expected this week.

3. Water

Water supplies are continually being monitored and reservoirs checked on a frequent basis. Communications are continually being issued requesting all householders to conserve water and not leave taps running overnight.

Information is being provided on dealing with frozen pipes and burst pipes through our Customer service desk and through the website meath.ie

Issues of burst pipes are being dealt with and where houses become uninhabitable, emergency accommodation is being arranged for people who need it. Emergency accommodation was also provided to other homeless people where requested.

Water supply problems in Local Authority owned houses are receiving attention.

Burst water mains in Drogheda are affecting water supplies in East Meath including Ashbourne, Ratoath and Dunshaughlin.



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Navan has reached a critical stage as has other population centres such as Ballivor, Athboy, Oldcastle, Nobber and Drumconrath. As the thaw continues this situation will fluctuate and may further deteriorate.

Consumers are advised to listen to public service announcements and visit meath.ie for updated information. Consumers should report any bursts on public water supply pipes to the Local Authorities as soon as possible. Conservation of supplies by consumers is critical. It is vital that running taps are turned off immediately.

4. Fire Service

Seven fire stations and 71 retained fire fighters were available for emergency call out and provided support to the Local Authority and the HSE ambulance service.

5. Civil Defence

In excess of 60 of Meath County Council's Civil Defence personnel were available at eight locations throughout the County supported by the Council's fleet of 4x4 vehicles. They assisted in the delivery of medication and other essential supplies to vulnerable individuals. Contact was made with the clergy in the county who were asked to inform people of the Council's extended opening hours over the weekend and to advise of the availability of the Civil Defence to assist people in difficulty. This was read at all Masses (Saturday & Sunday). A co-ordination centre operated from Co. Hall for Civil Defence activity throughout Meath.

6. Customer Service

Meath Co. Council offices at Co. Hall, Navan opened on Saturday 9th January from 10.00 a.m. until 8.00p.m. and on Sunday 10th January from 8.00a.m. – 8.00p.m. to deal with requests for assistance, provide information and advice, and refer calls to specific areas as appropriate. Calls were returned to people where specific information was not available at the time of the original call.

Saturday – 153 calls

Sunday – 167 calls

Monday - 110 calls (to 2.00p.m.)

Basic advice was assembled on dealing with frozen and burst pipes for communication through the customer service desk and on the website.

7. Communications

A communications' plan was put in place using all media for information updates and advice. Press statements were issued regularly and local radio was used to communicate updates.

Regular updates were issued to the elected Members.

The Council's website was frequently updated with information and practical advice on coping with the current weather situation and included the provision of links to other national, regional and local websites.

2.0 Matters arising from the minutes

Cllr Sirena Campbell raised the circulation of the Mazars report and requested time to consider its content before the matter would be debated. It was agreed on the proposal of **Cllr Sirena Campbell** seconded by **Cllr Regina Doherty** to discuss the report at the February meeting.

3.0 Expressions of Sympathy and Congratulations

Sympathy was extended to:



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Yvonne Watters, NRDO office on the death of her brother, Noel Watters.
Enda Collins, Infrastructure on the death of his father, Tommy Collins.

Congratulations were extended to:

- Longwood GFHC on becoming Leinster Junior Champions.

4.0 Correspondence

- 4.1 Circular No. 12/2009 from NRA re Service Areas.
- 4.2 Correspondence from DoEHLG re Guidelines on the Planning System and Flood Risk Management.
- 4.3 Circular PD 7/09 re Waste Water Discharge (Authorisation) Regulations SI No. 684 of 2007.
- 4.4 Correspondence from Community & Enterprise re Meath Comhairle na nÓg.
- 4.5 Circular WP 11.09 re Waste Management (Landfill Levy) Order 2009 (SI No. 496 of 2009) and Waste Management (Landfill Levy) Amendment Regulations 2009 (SI No. 550 of 2009).
- 4.6 Circular LG 26 09 from Department of Environment, Heritage & Local Government re Representational Payment for Councillors.

5.0 E.U. Correspondence

- 5.1 EU News Bulletin – Number 65 – November 2009
- 5.2 EU Policy Review – Number 6/09 Oct/Nov 2009
- 5.3 EU News Bulletin – Number 66 – December 2009

6.0 Report from Protocol Committee

The Meetings' Administrator reported as follows:

- Recommended to take the jigsaw project at 4p.m.
- All members reminded of the requirement to submit Disclosure of Donations declarations on or before the 31 January 2010.
- Members reminded of new mobile phone arrangement .

It was agreed that a meeting should be held by the Meetings' Administrator with Non-Party Councillors in relation to the review of Standing Orders in respect of co-option to fill casual vacancies.

The report was adopted on the proposal of **Cllr. Bryan Reilly** seconded by **Cllr. Jimmy Cudden**.

7.0 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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8.0 Other Statutory Business

8.1 Finance

8.1.1 To receive Mazar's Report to Meath County Council.

Report received and discussion deferred as per item **2.0**

8.2 Environment

8.2.1 To consider raising a loan of €1,350,000 for costs which will be incurred as a result of development of new Dunshaughlin burial ground, and extensions to Dunboyne and Kilcloon burial grounds.

Brendan McGrath, DOS, advised that the cost involved may be less and that there will be a tender process. Land has to be acquired by the Council. Bye Laws will be adopted to regulate the operation of these burial grounds.

8.3 Corporate Services

8.3.1 To receive presentation on Polling Scheme for County Meath.

Bill Sweeney made the presentation and advised that he will also attend upcoming Area Meetings.

9.0 Notice of Question

9.1 Submitted by Councillor Catherine Yore:

“To ask the County Manager if he can clarify in minute detail the figure of 61.6million euro, outturn, for the R158 Trim/Kilcock road, when the job was originally estimated, to cost 28.57 million euro”

The response was circulated.

10.0 Notice of Motion

10.1 Submitted by Councillor Suzanne Jamal:

“I am calling on the HSE to immediately restore full Dental Services to the Children of County Meath”.

Motion proposed by **Councillor Suzanne Jamal**, seconded by **Councillor Ann Dillon-Gallagher** and unanimously adopted.

11.0 Schedule of Manager's Orders (For Information Only)

11.1 Schedule of Manager's Orders - Infrastructure

11.2 Schedule of Manager's Orders - Environment

11.3 Schedule of Manager's Orders – Housing Construction



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11.4 Schedule of Manager's Orders – Community & Enterprise

Noted

12.0 Presentations from Other Bodies

11.1 To receive presentation from Health Service Executive regarding the JIGSAW Project – (Interagency approach to providing services for young people). Kathryn Morris from the HSE made the presentation, which was followed by a question and answer session.

13.0 Any Other Business

NB Please ensure Mobile phones are switched off during council meeting.