



## *Miontuairiscí/Meeting Minutes*

### **Statutory Budget Meeting**

**23<sup>rd</sup> November, 2015 - 2.00p.m. - Council Chamber**

**An Cathaoirleach**, Councillor Brian Fitzgerald, presided.

#### **Members Present:**

Councillors Joe Bonner, Sinéad Burke, Shane Cassells, Eugene Cassidy, Francis Deane, Seán Drew, Eimear Ferguson, Brian Fitzgerald, Enda Flynn, Wayne Forde, Joe Fox, Noel French, Michael Gallagher, David Gilroy, Trevor Golden, Johnny Guirke, Wayne Harding, Suzanne Jamal, Tom Kelly, Sharon Keogan, Nick Killian, Caroline Lynch, 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: Stephen McKee

#### **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:** Michael Griffin, Larry Whelan, Dara McGowan, Ger Murphy

**Finance Staff:** Paul Timoney, Sheila Harkin, Michael Murtagh, Ger Soady.

1. To consider the Draft Budget circulated herewith for the Financial Year on 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2016.

The Cathaoirleach opened the meeting and he called on the Chief Executive to address the meeting. The Chief Executive outlined that a budget of approximately €101m. was being put before the Council for adoption and that it was prepared in accordance with the various Circulars issued to the Local Authority by the DoECLG, and within the agreed timeframes.

She noted that the Council's decision to retain the Local Property Tax at its current rate had been hugely beneficial, enabling financial provision for:

- An increase of €780k for the maintenance and improvement of Local Authority housing units.
- Increased funding of €345k for homeless services.
- Mobility aids housing grants has increased by €100k to a total budget in 2016 of €1.3m.
- Provision of €350k for the continuation and expansion of the small business support scheme.

It was also explained that notification had been received from the DoECLG confirming that the Council would be allowed additional revenue in 2016 in



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compensation for loss of income with regard to the revaluation of the global utilities. The Chief Executive informed that the additional funding would be directed to the Roads Programme. The Chief Executive thanked the Cathaoirleach, the members of the CPG and the elected Councillors for their input into the Draft Budget and recommended the Statutory Budget for adoption.

Fiona Lawless, Head of Finance, presented the details of expenditure across the service divisions A – J as follows:

- Service Division A – Housing and Building
- 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 presentation, the Cathaoirleach thanked the Chief Executive and the Head of Finance for their work in preparing and presenting the budget and particularly for the openness and transparency in the presentation of information to all the Councillors at the Municipal District meetings. He noted that it was the seventh consecutive year of no increase in commercial rates and outlined the importance of increasing the rate base in the county.

The Cathaoirleach referred to a motion submitted by **Councillor Wayne Forde** at the November meeting, which was referred to the Statutory Budget meeting. As **Councillor Forde** was not present in the Chamber to propose his motion, the Cathaoirleach proceeded to invite comments from the Councillors.

The main comments and items discussed included:

- The allocation of funding and particularly the allocation of funding from central Government.
- The need for significantly more funding for housing services.
- The costs and issues regarding the Knockharley dump.
- Renewal of the tenant purchase scheme.
- The roadworks programme.
- The lack of control regarding local issues as a result of Better Local Government.
- Safety audits at schools.
- Councillor Darren O' Rourke proposed the scrapping of the Councillors' Discretionary fund and to direct it to a community development fund.
- The need to build on the tourism strategy and on Irish language services.
- The need to focus on adaptation grants for vulnerable households.



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- The need to support the community and voluntary sector and the sporting clubs.

Councillors noted and welcomed:

- The increase in Housing expenditure.
- No increase in rent or commercial rates.
- The extension of the Business Support Scheme.

**Councillor Wayne Forde** proposed a motion that all Councillors would release their discretionary fund to provide funding for the refurbishment of vacant units in the County. With no seconder for the motion, it could not proceed.

2. Meath County Council adopts, for the financial year ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2016 the Annual Budget set out in Tables A – F.

It was proposed to adopt the annual Budget on the proposal of **Councillor Brian Fitzgerald** and seconded by **Councillor Gerry O’ Connor**.

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

Councillor	For	Against	Abstain	Absent
<b>Cllr. Joseph Bonner</b>	For			
<b>Cllr Sinead Burke</b>		Against		
<b>Cllr. Shane Cassells</b>	For			
<b>Cllr. Eugene Cassidy</b>	For			
<b>Cllr. Francis Deane</b>	For			
<b>Cllr Sean Drew</b>	For			
<b>Cllr. Eimear Ferguson</b>		Against		
<b>Cllr. Brian Fitzgerald</b>	For			
<b>Cllr. Enda Flynn</b>	For			
<b>Cllr. Wayne Forde</b>		Against		
<b>Cllr. Joe Fox</b>	For			
<b>Cllr. Noel French</b>	For			
<b>Cllr. Michael Gallagher</b>		Against		
<b>Cllr. David Gilroy</b>	For			
<b>Cllr. Trevor Golden</b>	For			
<b>Cllr. Johnny Guirke</b>		Against		
<b>Cllr. Wayne Harding</b>	For			
<b>Cllr. James Holloway</b>	For			
<b>Cllr. Suzanne Jamal</b>	For			
<b>Cllr. Tom Kelly</b>	For			



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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			
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		Against		
Cllr. Sarah Reilly	For			
Cllr. Tommy Reilly	For			
Cllr. Sean Smith	For			
Cllr. Alan Tobin	For			
Cllr. Sharon Tolan	For			
Cllr. Gillian Toole	For			
<b>Result</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>9</b>		<b>1</b>

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 31<sup>st</sup> December 2016 for the purposes set out in Table A and Table C.

Unanimously adopted on the proposal of **Cathaoirleach Councillor Brian Fitzgerald** and seconded by **Councillor Gerry O' Connor** by a show of hands vote.

- Formal Determination of the Rates Vacancy Refund Rate

Unanimously adopted on the proposal of **Cathaoirleach Councillor Brian Fitzgerald** and seconded by **Councillor Gerry O' Connor** by a show of hands vote.

- That Meath County Council approves of the transfer to capital account of the sums provided for various capital purposes in the Annual Budget for 2016 as adopted.



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Unanimously adopted on the proposal of **Cathaoirleach Councillor Brian Fitzgerald** and seconded by **Councillor Gerry O' Connor** by a show of hands vote.

6. That Meath County Council approves the estimated over expenditure for financial year 31<sup>st</sup> December 2015 as set out in Table A – F and outturn details.

Unanimously adopted on the proposal of **Cathaoirleach Councillor Brian Fitzgerald** and seconded by **Councillor Gerry O' Connor** by a show of hands vote.

7. To adopt the Business Support Scheme, 2016 in accordance with Section 66 of the Local Government Act 2001

Unanimously adopted on the proposal of **Cathaoirleach Councillor Brian Fitzgerald** and seconded by **Councillor Gerry O' Connor** by a show of hands vote.

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.