



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

Ordinary Meeting

2nd November 2015, Council Chamber

Presiding

Cathaoirleach, Councillor Brian Fitzgerald

Councillors Present:

Councillors, Joe Bonner, Sinéad Burke, Shane Cassells, Eugene Cassidy, Francis Deane, Seán Drew, Eimear Ferguson, 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: Ger Murphy, David Jones, Michael Griffin, Dara McGowan, Larry Whelan

Planning Staff: Wendy Bagnal, Senior Executive Planner

Fire Service: Dermot Brannigan, Chief Fire Officer, Pdraig Ó Longaigh, Assistant Chief Fire Officer

1 Confirmation of Minutes

1.1 Confirmation of minutes of Ordinary meeting held on 5th October 2015.

The minutes of Ordinary meeting held on 5th October 2015 were confirmed on the proposal of **Councillor Tommy Reilly** and seconded by **Councillor Francis Deane**.



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2 Matters arising from the Minutes

- Councillor Darren O' Rourke raised the matter of Motion 9.6 and the manner in which it was debated and resolved by Councillors. He suggested that the Standing Orders of the Council should be circulated again to all Councillors. He also requested that a follow-up letter would be issued to the Minister requesting the immediate publication of the Windfarm Guidelines. This was unanimously agreed by the Councillors.
- Councillor Nick Killian requested that it would be noted in the minutes that the Chief Fire Officer advised that the Report prepared in July highlighted fire safety deficiencies in the Riverwalk Court Apartments but that there was no immediate risk to residents in the building.

3 Expressions of Sympathy and Congratulations

Sympathy was extended to:

- Vincent Collins, Housing Department on the death of his brother Patrick Collins.
- Pat Gallagher, Planning Department on the death of his mother-in-law Cissie (Mary) Farrell.
- Vincent Clarke, Navan MD on the death of his brother Robbie Clarke.
- Toddy O'Brien, Navan MD on the death of his brother Brendan (Bella) O'Brien.
- Claire Mullins, Planning Department on the death of her sister Sue Dunne.
- The family of the late Frank O'Brien, former County Manager of Meath County Council.
- Mark Farrell, Planning Department, and Peter Farrell, Trim Municipal District on the death of their mother.
- The family of the late Garda Anthony Golden, Blackrock, Co. Louth.
- The families of the victims of the Carrickmines fire tragedy.
- The family of the late Cian McDonnell Lynch.

Congratulations were extended to:

- LeeAnn Gilmartin and Noel Nevin, Corporate Services, on their recent marriage.
- Beuaden Barrett, who lived in Ballinacree and played under age football in Meath, on his success with the All Blacks rugby team.



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- Stephen Moore, the Australian Rugby captain, who has family links with Slane, on his success in reaching the Rugby World Cup final.
- Meath Tourism on the success of the 'Spirits of Meath' festival.
- The Ratoath and Kells Pride of Place winners.
- The following Gaelic Football Clubs on their recent success: Ballivor Ladies, Dunboyne Ladies, Kiltale Hurlers, Summerhill Minors, Curraha Juniors, Clann na nGael
- The 2015 Meath Young Entrepreneurs who recently received their awards.
- All those involved in the Save Navan Hospital Campaign and on the official opening of the A & E Department at Our Lady's Hospital Navan.
- The Economic and Enterprise Team on the successful Boyne Valley Food Conference and all involved in the positive economic developments in the county.
- The organising committee of the encore AIMS 50th celebration concert in the Bord Gáis Theatre and the Meath representatives involved both on the committee and in the show.
- The Flexibus organisation on the service provided throughout the County.

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 & Fire and Emergency Services

- 5.1.1 To enter into a Fire Service Agreement with Louth County Council under Section 10 of the Fire Service Acts 1981 and 2003.

Des Foley, Director of Services, provided information on the matter and outlined that the agreement would formalise the current longstanding arrangements with regard to the fire cover being provided by Louth in the East Meath area. **Councillor Tom Kelly** proposed that the agreement would be reviewed every five years, this was seconded by **Councillor Sharon Tolan**.

Des Foley informed that the agreement provides for a regular review by the Chief Fire Officers in both Meath and Louth and that the operational plan for the Fire Service provides for regular reviews of fire cover throughout the county.



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The Agreement was approved on the proposal of **Councillor Shane Cassells** and seconded by **Councillor Paddy Meade**.

- 5.1.2 To receive an update on the preparation of Variation No. 3 of the Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019. This variation will align the County Development Plan with the key tenets of the Meath Economic Strategy.

Wendy Bagnal, Senior Executive Planner, made the presentation which included information regarding the context of Variation No. 3. The objectives were outlined and it was noted that the Variation would drive the economic transformation of the county. Councillors raised a number of issues and responses were provided by Wendy Bagnal. The Chief Executive acknowledged the positive comments and noted that the Variation would align the County Development Plan with the Economic Strategy, which would make it easier and more attractive for business development in the County.

It was approved to put the Variation on public display on the proposal of **Councillor Joe Bonner** and seconded by **Councillor Claire O' Driscoll**.

- 5.1.3 To receive the Chief Executive's report on submissions received following publication of the Draft Meath Development Contribution Scheme 2016-2021.

Received and noted by the Councillors. Michael Griffin, Senior Executive Officer, noted that the submissions would be considered at the SPC meeting on 17th November and that it would be back on the agenda of the December meeting for adoption. Councillors raised a number of issues and responses were provided by Michael Griffin.

5.2 Transportation

- 5.2.1 To consider the making of submissions and observations regarding the Draft Transport Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area 2016-2035

Barry Lynch, Director of Services, advised that a submission was being prepared and that Nicholas Whyatt, Senior Engineer, would make a presentation on the key points in relation to Meath as outlined in the Draft Transport Strategy.

The presentation included information on the following:

- **Rail:** Based on population and employment forecasts, the level of travel demand between Navan, Dunshaughlin and various stations to the city



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centre is insufficient to justify the development of a high-capacity rail link.

- **DART** Expansion Programme across the GDA and in particular, to Maynooth and to the M3 Parkway
- **Bus:** “**Core Bus Network**” for the region comprising: 16 radial bus corridors; 3 orbital bus corridors; and 6 regional bus corridors (incl. M1;M2;M3 & M4). BRT; Bus Interchange for Navan
- **Cycling Network:** Construct the GDA Cycle Network, expanding the urban cycle network to over 1,485 kilometres in length, and with over 1,300 kilometres of new connections between towns in the rural areas of the GDA.
- **Road**
 - Junction upgrades and other capacity improvements on the M1 motorway; Enhancements of the N2/M2 national route inclusive of a bypass of Slane; Widening of the N3 between Junction 1 (M50) and Junction 4 (Clonee), plus related junction and necessary changes to the existing national road network; Enhance orbital routes outside M50 (N3-N4-N7). LOR as before.
 - **Other:** Develop the provision of local park and ride facilities for bus and rail (N2/M50); Demand Management (Car Parking; M50 and M50 approaches)

Following the presentation, Councillors had an opportunity to make contributions and matters raised included: Rail services from Dunboyne to Dublin, the extension of the Navan/Dublin rail line, Bus services throughout the county, the bypass for Slane, road tolling etc. The Cathaoirleach summarised and highlighted the need for reference to economic development in the submission.

Responses were provided by Nicholas Whyatt. It was noted that the deadline for the submission was Friday 13th November and that Councillors could forward written comments by Wednesday 11th and that the observations of the Councillors would be reflected in the submission.

6 Reports

6.1 Chief Executive’s Report



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Noted by the Councillors. The following issues were raised by Councillors with responses provided by the Chief Executive and Management Team:

- An update on the progress regarding old Kilcarn Bridge.
- Pyrite repairs to houses in Summerhill.
- The commencement of the HAP Scheme. It was noted that the HAP scheme had commenced and that Councillors would receive a briefing on the HAP scheme as soon as possible.
- Funding re 2016 commemorative activities.
- Progress re Housing at Alverno Heights.
- Traveller Accommodation

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 received an update on Economic Development from Kevin Stewart, Director of Services.

6.3 Report from the Protocol Committee

The Meetings Administrator informed that the Protocol Committee had considered and approved the draft protocol for civic events. Reports on conferences submitted by Councillors were noted and a list of conferences relevant to the business of the Council was approved.

It was also noted that invitations had been issued to Councillors for the civic reception for the Rose of Tralee, Elysha Brennan.

7 Correspondence

7.1 To note the proposed Winter Maintenance Plan 2015/2016.

It was agreed to refer the Winter Maintenance Plan 2015/2016 to the Municipal District meetings for consideration.



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- 7.2 Association of Irish Local Government re. Consultation regarding technical changes to AILG Constitution.

Noted by the Councillors.

- 7.3 National Transport Authority re. Draft Transport Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area 2016-2035.

Noted by the Councillors.

- 7.4 Circular WP 14/15 – Department of Environment, Community and Local Government re. Establishment of Waste Enforcement Regional Lead Authorities.

Noted by the Councillors.

8 Notice of Question

8.1 Submitted by Councillor Francis Deane

“As the problem of overgrown trees is a big issue may I please ask for clarification in relation to tree planting with respect to new housing developments. What are the planning conditions pertaining to the variety of trees which are to be planted and the planting distances from houses?”

Response

The Planning Authority will consider a development proposal supported by a landscape plan in the context of making its decision on a large multi-unit development. The following condition is typically included in any subsequent grant of permission:

1. (a)The site shall be landscaped, using only indigenous deciduous trees and hedging species, in accordance with a landscaping scheme prepared by a suitably qualified person to be submitted to the planning authority

(b)Any plants which die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased, within a period of five years from the completion of the development, shall be replaced within the next planting season with others of similar size and species, unless otherwise agreed in writing with the planning authority.

Reason: To protect the visual amenity and natural heritage of the area



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Landscaping schemes prepared by suitably qualified persons are generally prepared cognisant of the need to propose suitably sized trees in built up areas. The impact of inappropriate landscape measures can impinge on road safety, the effectiveness of public lighting and structural issues. The Planning Authority through its Development Management, Taking in Charge and Public Lighting functions consider the merit of each proposal. In some cases trees may be removed where they impinge on the effectiveness of public lighting and traffic safety.

Response noted by the Councillors.

8.2 Submitted by Councillor Nick Killian

“Can the CEO give assurances that all of our Traveller Accommodation in charge of Meath County Council fully meets all fire regulations as laid down by statute?”

Response

Meath County Council can confirm that all Traveller Accommodation in its charge has been designed and constructed in accordance with the appropriate Fire Safety Building Regulations, and statutory periodic maintenance and improvement works conducted and recorded. In light of the recent tragic events in Carrickmines, Dublin, a full review of fire safety measures will be initiated and practical steps taken to ensure the safety of all residents.

Response noted by the Councillors.

8.3 Submitted by Councillor Damien O’ Reilly

“Can Meath County Council add Kilmessan and Dunsany to the winter gritting route linking to the N3 gritting route?”

Response:

Meath County Council salts over 580km. of roads across 10 routes in the county each time icy roads are predicted. All National Primary (120km/h – Priority 1), all National Secondary (80km/h – Priority 1) and approx. 80% of all Regional Routes (80km/h – Priority 1/2) are salted. Approximately 15% (by length) of all roads in the county are treated. The M1 (Dublin - Belfast), M2 (Ashbourne By-Pass), M3 (Clonee - Kells) and M4 (Dublin -Sligo - Galway) are taken care of by private entities. The NRA provides full funding to the Council for the salting of the National Road network. There is however no central funding for the Non-National (Regional & Local) Road Network. The Council makes limited resources available from its maintenance funds towards the salting of the regional routes. The Council’s resources are fully utilised at present and the only way to



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add a new route to the Winter Maintenance Plan is to drop an existing route. Meath County Council is not in a position to increase resources or to drop an existing route. However, Meath County Council carries out full reviews during and at the end of each season for the preparation of the following seasons Network.

The Salting Network is agreed with Councillors and represents the best prioritised extent of coverage based on road classification, historic weather data, available funding and resources. A map of the salting routes is available on the Council's website www.meath.ie.

Response noted by the Councillors.

8.4 Submitted by Councillor Noel French

“What projects and measures were undertaken this year by Meath County Council which would not have gone ahead had the LPT been reduced by 15 percent for 2015?”

Response

The benefits of the Council's decision to retain the Local Property Tax at its current rate in 2015 enabled the Council to make financial provision in the Budget for new items of expenditure including:

- Economic Development and implementation of the actions agreed in the Council's Economic Strategy.
- Planned programme of road and footpath improvements in Housing Estates.
- Recruitment of additional outdoor staff.
- General Municipal Allocation for each Municipal District.

It was also possible due to the available resources in 2015 to make increased provisions in the following areas:

- Homeless Services
- Mobility Aids Housing Grants
- The Gateway Scheme - Programme with approximately 80 outdoor workers in 2015 across the Municipal Districts.
- Recovery and Recycling Facilities.
- Purchase of additional Library Books.



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- The introduction of the Small Business Support Scheme.

Response noted by the Councillors.

9 Notice of Motion

9.1 Submitted by Councillor Noel French

“That Meath County Council dim lights on outskirts of towns from midnight to 6.00a.m. to save on electricity consumption as is done on the Navan Road in Trim.”

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

The public lighting on the Navan Road into Trim was installed approximately 3 years ago with technology which permits the Council to alter the light output of the route lighting units, hence reducing the required electrical consumption required to run the lighting system. In order to alter the light output of the light, the light must have been installed with this technology/capability, which is not the case with the majority of public lighting units in the Council’s charge. Therefore, the Councillor’s request is not feasible at this time. The Council is currently introducing similar energy saving technologies within its public lighting stock in order to reduce its annual electrical consumption, and is currently developing a public lighting policy in order to achieve the Council’s energy efficiency objectives.

The motion, proposed by **Councillor Noel French** and seconded by **Councillor Alan Tobin**, was adopted.

9.2 Submitted by Councillor Wayne Forde

“Can I call on my fellow Councillors, to lead by my example, and not accept the €12,000 discretionary spending for 2016, as this €480,000 in 2016 could go towards the housing crisis, we have at present in County Meath.”

The Cathaoirleach proposed that the subject of the motion would be referred to the Statutory Budget meeting. **Councillor Forde** agreed with the Cathaoirleach’s proposal.

9.3 Submitted by Councillor Damien O’ Reilly

“To call on Meath County Council to request Transport Infrastructure Ireland (formerly the National Roads Authority) to begin the public consultation process for a new Dublin



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bound ramp onto the M3 from Fairyhouse / Blackbull roundabout (R154/R155). This ramp would dramatically decrease the time on the morning Dublin City centre bound commute from Ratoath, Dunshaughlin and Dunboyne.”

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

A study of junctions on the M3 is being carried out by Transport Infrastructure Ireland in conjunction with Fingal County Council and Meath County Council, with a view to assessing various upgrades which may be required on the route. The study is to include Junction 5 (Pace) and will inform any improvements which are identified as necessary at this location.

The motion was proposed by **Councillor Damien O’ Reilly** and seconded by **Councillor Claire O’ Driscoll**.

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

9.4 Submitted by Councillor Damien O’ Reilly

“To call on Meath County Council to request Fingal County Council to clearly identify the Fingal County border with extra signage when leaving Dublin 15, Fingal County and entering Clonee, County Meath.”

The motion, proposed by **Councillor Damien O’ Reilly** and seconded by **Councillor Claire O’ Driscoll**, was unanimously adopted.

9.5 Submitted by Councillor Michael Gallagher

“That Meath County Council notes the importance of promoting social inclusion through job creation and training. Meath County Council will ensure that any future procurement contracts will, in line with EU law, include particular conditions to promote opportunities for local employment, employment for young people and the long term unemployed as well as vocational training and education. Further the Council will write to the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation requesting that social clauses be included on all major public contracts. / Go dtugann Comhairle Chontae na Mí faoi deara an tabhacht a bhaineann le cuimsiú sóisialta a chur chun chinn trí postchruthúcháin agus oiliúint a chur ar fáil. Cinnteoidh Comhairle Chontae na Mí go mbainfidh coinníollacha speisialta le aon chonarthaí soláthair todhcháioch chun deiseanna fostaíochta áitiúla, fostaíocht do dhaoine óga agus dóibh siúd atá difhosaithe le fada mar aon le gairmoiliúint agus oideachas a chur chun chinn. Ina theannta sin scríobhfaidh an Chomhairle chuig an Aire Post, Fiontar agus Nuálaíochta ag iarraidh air go mbeadh clásal sóisialta san áireamh le gach mórchonradh poiblí.”



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

There is currently no legislative requirement for contracts to include social clauses, the inclusion of social clauses is a matter for each contracting authority.

- European Union law leaves Member States the option to take social considerations into account provided the general principles of European Union law, i.e. the free movement and the principles of equal treatment, non-discrimination, mutual recognition, proportionality and transparency are respected when a contracting authority includes social clauses in Request for Tenders and Contracts.
- Nationally, the importance of social clauses are recognised and there is currently a number of pilot projects underway which are targeting employment i.e. the long term unemployed, apprentices and trainees. The Social Clauses Project Group established by Minister Howlin in June 2014 and chaired by the Office of Government's Director of Procurement Policy, is monitoring the outcome of these pilots and is actively working with colleagues within the Office of Government Procurement (OGP) and the sectors, Health, Defence, HSE and Education to identify additional suitable projects. The Chief State Solicitor Office is also involved in drafting Social Clauses.
- The Office of Government Procurement's Policy Unit is currently drafting guidance for buyers and contracting authorities on the inclusion of social clauses in Request for Tenders and Contract documentation.

Meath County Council will consider and comply with the Office of Government Procurement's guidance when it becomes available. It is, therefore, not recommended to correspond with the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation requesting that social clauses be included on all major public contracts, prior to receiving direction on the matter from the Office of Government Procurement.

The motion was proposed by **Councillor Michael Gallagher** and seconded by **Councillor Darren O' Rourke**.

Following a debate on the matter and advice from the Chief Executive, the motion was noted.

9.6 Submitted by Councillor Darren O' Rourke

"That Meath County Council recognises the level to which the county has been underfunded over a period of many years; calls for the immediate establishment of a temporary Crisis Funding Committee consisting of the Chief Executive, Director of



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Finance, Co. Meath TDs, County Council Chairperson, party whips and representatives of all groupings on the Council, as well as other stakeholders as deemed necessary, with the sole purpose of devising and implementing a strategy to increase the level of funding received by Meath County Council./ Go n-aithníonn Comhairle Chontae na Mí an méid go raibh an contae tearc-chistithe thar tréimhse neart blianta, go n-éilíonn sí go mbunfar Coiste Géarchistiúcháin sealadach leis an bPríomhfheidmeannach, An Oifigeach Airgeadais, TD na Mí, Cathaoirleach Chomhairle Chontae na Mí, cinnpháirtí agus ionadaithe de gach grúpa ar an gcomhairle mar aon le páirtithe leasmhara má cheaptar go bhfuil sé riachtanach, leis an t-aon aidhm amháin acu ná stráitéis a chur le chéile agus a chur i bhfeidhm chun an méid cistiúcháin a fhaigheann Comhairle Chontae na Mí a mhéadú.”

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

In July, Meath County Council prepared a comprehensive submission on the funding requirements of the Council. This financial report was prepared to address the scenario of the County's expanding population without the corresponding resources to deliver appropriate levels of service to the citizens of County Meath. As a follow up to the submission, the Head of Finance met with Department officials on two occasions to discuss the issues outlined in the submission and to reinforce the need for increased resources for the Council. The Department's initial response to the submission has been favourable and it has indicated that the funding requirements will be kept under review as part of budgetary considerations and in conjunction with the Thornhill Report. In light of this, the request to set up another committee, as outlined above, is not considered to be necessary at this time.

The motion was proposed by **Councillor Darren O' Rourke** and seconded by **Councillor Johnny Guirke**.

The Chief Executive advised that a detailed submission was prepared and submitted to the Department and that a number of meetings have taken place. The Chief Executive advised that time should be given for further discussions and that Councillors would be advised of progress.

The motion was duly noted.

9.7 Submitted by Councillor Johnny Guirke

“That Meath County Council recognises the extreme frustration of residents living in unfinished housing estates and the often dangerous conditions that can exist due to this; calls on Meath County Council to work with residents to ensure that lights are taken in charge at the very earliest opportunity even when other parts of the development are



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not complete. /Go n-aithníonn Comhairle Chontae na Mí an frustrachas thar cuimse atá orthu siúd ina gcónaí in éastáit chónaithe nár chríochnaíodh agus go n-aithníonn sí na coinníollacha dáinsearacha a bhaineann leis: éilítear ar Chomhairle Chontae na Mí comhoibriú a dhéanamh leis na cónaitheoirí lena chinntiú go dtógfar na soilsí i gcúram na Comhairle ba luaithe agus is féidir cé nach bhfuil na codanna eile den fhorbraíocht críochnaithe.”

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

Meath Co Council has dedicated significant additional resources to the Taking Charge and compliance functions for residential housing estates. This year has already seen 30 estates taken in charge. A further 16 have recently come off public display and are awaiting reports to the Municipal District meetings. It is also intended to publish a further 16 estates for Taking in Charge before the end of the year. The Council expects to have progressed 62 estates substantially through the process in a 12 month period.

Councillors are also asked to note that with the advent of new Building Control requirements in 2014, the Council has had an opportunity to bring a coordinated inspection regime to all multi-unit residential developments. Developers are now required to liaise with the Planning Authority from commencement. During construction, compliance inspections are undertaken to ensure that the development is compliant on a phase by phase basis. It is expected that this approach will eliminate the number of compliance issues that could remain on completion of an estate.

It is acknowledged that a number of developers have gone into receivership and receivers have sought to minimise their outlay by attempting to pass the costs of public lighting to the Local Authority. In such circumstances, the Planning Authority and the Public Lighting section have engaged with the receivers and ensured that the receiver maintains the operation of public lighting until the estates are taken in charge.

It is the Council's position that Public Lighting will not be taken in charge until it is safe and fully operational. While the Council acknowledges that public lighting is an important aspect of estate infrastructure, it is one element of a suite of amenities and infrastructure that must be completed to the required standard and should not be separated away from broader compliance requirements placed on developers, receivers and sureties. A Local Authority has no right of access to undertake works to public lighting on an unfinished estate without a) the consent of the landowner, or b) after the estate is taken in charge or c) on foot of non compliance with an enforcement notice. Consequently there are logistical difficulties in attempting to separate out public lighting from the rest of the taking in charge requirements.



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The Council is committed to maintaining the significant progress in the taking in charge of estates in 2016 and will endeavour to deal with any specific public lighting problems on a case by case basis.

The motion was proposed by **Councillor Johnny Guirke** and seconded by **Councillor Darren O' Rourke**.

Following a debate and advice from Michael Griffin, Senior Executive Officer, regarding the taking in charge process, the motion was noted.

9.8 Submitted by Sinn Féin Councillors

“That Meath County Council would complete an audit before the end of 2015, using easy to access local knowledge, to identify all vacant properties and houses in the county with a view to making sure that the maximum number of units are occupied at any given time; that plans to return vacant properties and houses to use could then be developed with the relevant stakeholders; and that the possibility of establishing a County Meath Housing Trust be considered. / Go ndéanfaidh Comhairle Chontae na Mí iniúchadh roimh dheireadh 2015, ag baint úsáide as eolas áitiúil, le gach réadmhaoin agus teach folamh sa chontae a aithint ar mhaithe lena chinntiú go bhfuil cónaitheoirí sa mhéid is mó aonaid ag aon am ar bith; go ndéanfar beartaithe leis na páirtithe leasmhara an réadmhaoin agus na tithe folmha a shaorú agus go ndéanfar imscrúdú ar an bhféidearthacht lontaobhas Tithíochta na Mí a bhunú.”

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

Meath County Council acknowledges that the delivery of housing in the County has to be achieved through combining public, voluntary and private investment. Meath County Council is committed to fulfilling its leadership and coordination role in enabling social housing delivery, and where possible, facilitating the delivery of private units, either directly for social housing, or to increase the private rental housing stock.

With respect to vacant properties, Meath County Council's priority is to ensure that vacant stock within our ownership is minimised at any given time, and vacant units are returned to productive use as quickly as possible. Progress regarding same is cited in the Chief Executive's report.

It is worth noting that the 2011 Census of Population recorded 7,612 unoccupied properties in County Meath of which 6173 were classified as vacant. It is recommended that this matter be referred to the Housing, Community & Cultural Strategic Policy Committee to develop an approach to the completion of such an audit, and what options would be appropriate to explore in relation to progressing a strategy for



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productive use of certain vacant units identified, cognisant of the constraints that private ownership presents.

The motion was proposed by **Councillor Caroline Lynch** and seconded by **Councillor Darren O' Rourke**.

Following a debate on the matter, the motion was noted and it was agreed that it would be referred to the Housing Community and Cultural SPC.

9.9 Submitted by Councillor Claire O'Driscoll

"Due to the number of properties on the derelict Site register appearing low at eight in 2015, I call on the environment section of Meath county council to evaluate their assessment method giving cognisance to both the definition of a derelict site based on the derelicts site act 1990 and the new vacant site levy cited in the Urban Housing and Regeneration Act 2015 and as necessary to review and update outcomes on all sites reported as ones of concern in 2015."

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

The legal position and the various stages in the Derelict Sites Process is as set out in the report on the response to the Notice of Question submitted to the October meeting of the Council. The report highlighted the fact that the Council has dealt with and inspected over 400 properties since 2007 many of which were the subject of complaints by members of the public.

The majority of such complaints were in respect of buildings or structures which were in a ruinous, derelict or dangerous condition and, which in line with the Act, were in urban areas and detract, or were likely to detract, to a material degree from neighbouring properties while a smaller number were for sites which would be regarded as being in a neglected, unsightly or objectionable state due to lack of paint, overgrown gardens or sites subject to littering.

While the statutory processes provided for in the Derelict Sites Act 1990 including service of Notices, can be and are used for all such site conditions, it is often the case that the latter categories can be dealt with using other legislation such as the Litter and Waste Management Acts or through engagement and co-operation with the property owners. In this way, the limited staff resources involved in the implementation of the Derelict Sites processes can concentrate on requiring measures to be taken in respect of the buildings / structures which are considered to be in a ruinous, derelict or dangerous condition.



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Local Authorities are required to take all reasonable steps to ensure that land in their functional area does not become, or continue to become, a derelict site and in this regard every effort is made to attempt to work with property owners and address the dereliction issues before formal entries onto the Derelict Sites Register, which substantially represents the final stage in the process. In some cases and particularly where sites are for sale, it is considered that entry of the property into the Derelict Sites Register can often serve to stifle interest due to the burden of the derelict sites levy and leaving less funding available for remediating the site and making it non-derelict.

While there is a total of just 8 properties entered into the Derelict Sites Register in Meath, many of the aforementioned 400 properties would have been the subject of statutory notices and continuous engagement with the owners, and in many cases resulting in successful outcomes in that the sites are made non derelict. The remaining cases will be subject to continuous assessment and, where consultation fails, the Council will enforce the provisions of the derelict sites legislation and including entering the property into the register if this course of action is considered necessary and would achieve the desired outcome.

In respect of the recent enactment of the Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015 and particularly the Vacant site provision, it is submitted that same is designed to bringing underutilised vacant sites and buildings in urban areas into beneficial use. It shall apply to sites identified as being lands in need of regeneration in development plans and local area plans. Where a site is identified as being in need of regeneration and is the subject of the Vacant site levy, it shall not be liable for the application of the derelict sites levy. Likewise where a derelict sites levy is in place, the vacant site levy will not apply. The practical implementation of the vacant sites levy will be the subject of further communications by the Department of the Environment and planning authorities, and there will be engagement with Planning on an ongoing basis in the context of any implications for the Derelict Sites process.

The motion was proposed by **Councillor Claire O' Driscoll** and seconded by **Councillor Shane Cassells**.

Following a lengthy debate, the motion was unanimously adopted.

9.10 Submitted by Councillor Wayne Forde

"Can I call on the support of my fellow Councillors to support my motion of no confidence in the HSE and I am calling on the HSE to be abolished as soon as possible, and a letter to this effect be sent to the Minister for Health Leo Varadkar, and all Oireachtas Members."



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

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

The motion was defeated following a show of hands vote (Result: For = 2, Against = 24)

The Cathaoirleach reminded Councillor Forde that remarks made by him were unwarranted and to refrain from making such remarks in the future.

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

Noted by the Councillors.

11 Any Other Business