



## *Miontuairiscí/Meeting Minutes*

### *Adjourned Statutory Budget Meeting 18<sup>th</sup>. December 2009, Council Chamber*

An Leas Cathaoirleach, Councillor Noel Leonard, presided.

#### **Members Present:**

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

#### **Officials in Attendance:**

**County Manager:** Tom Dowling

**Directors of Service:** Eugene Cummins, Liam Henry, Kevin Stewart, Tadhg McDonnell, Fiona Lawless, Michael Killeen, Brendan McGrath.

**Meetings Administrator** Olive Falsey

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

**Finance Staff:** Barry Lynch, Pat McHugh, Sheila Harkin.

#### **Apologies:**

An Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Willie Carey, Councillors Seamus O'Neill, Bryan Reilly

1. To adopt by resolution for the **Financial Year ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2010 the Annual Budget in Tables A – F** to determine in accordance with the said Budget, the General Annual Rate on Valuation set out in Table A to be the General Annual Rate on valuation to be levied that year for the purposes set out in that Table.

The Leas Cathaoirleach, Councillor Noel Leonard opened the meeting and asked Tom Dowling, Co. Manager to address the Council. The Members were informed that the outcome of the Budget on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> December was positive for Meath County Council in that the Local Government fund allocation was reduced by .81%, the 2<sup>nd</sup> lowest reduction in the Country. The allocation of €23,377,684 shows a recognition of the strong recommendation and submission made to the DOEHLG. This figure represents an increase in available funding from the original estimate and it is intended to allocate this funding taking into account the needs identified from the issues raised by the Councillors. i.e.

- Housing maintenance
- Roads
- Amenity: Pride of Place & Street Pride
- Fire Service
- Planning and Economic Development
- Tourism

(see attached)

The Manager outlined that there may be costs in relation to the outcome of forthcoming Labour Court Hearing but stressed that the Council is now in a stronger position. He stated that this budget represents good value for money and commended it to the Councillors.

The Members were then given an opportunity for comments and further questions.

- Cllr. Cudden expressed disappointment that the Housing Estate Awards were not held in 2009 and will transfer to Pride of Place. Brendan McGrath explained that due to



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staff shortages the competition could not be held in 2009. It is intended to hold the competition in early 2010. It was also clarified that the Pride of Place team will manage the Estate awards on behalf of Housing but the Awards will be held on a separate occasion.

- Cllr. Farrelly raised the issue of the assessment of DPG's and that it was unacceptable that sites were not visited. In response, Brendan McGrath explained that in 2006 there was a backlog of 1258 applications, which by 2008 was reduced to 850, and is now fully cleared. A new DPG scheme has been implemented with over 100 applications in 2009, 90 of which were funded. He stressed that the DPG applications are processed in a very professional manner with the highest category of medical need being prioritised.

The proposed budget was adopted on the proposition of Councillor J.V. Farrelly and seconded by Councillor Shane Cassells following the role call vote:

Councillor	Vote
Cllr. Joseph Bonner	Yes
Cllr Ray Butler	Yes
Cllr. Sirena Campbell	Yes
Cllr. William Carey	Absent
Cllr. Shane Cassells	Yes
Cllr. Eugene Cassidy	Yes
Cllr. Jimmy Cudden	Yes
Cllr. Francis Deane	Yes
Cllr. Anne Dillon-Gallagher	Yes
Cllr. Regina Doherty	Yes
Cllr. John Farrelly	Yes
Cllr. Jimmy Fegan	Yes
Cllr. Brian Fitzgerald	Yes
Cllr. Oliver Fox	Yes
Cllr. Wayne Harding	Yes
Cllr. James Holloway	Yes
Cllr. Eoin Holmes	Yes
Cllr. Suzanne Jamal	Yes
Cllr. Nick Killian	Yes
Cllr. Noel Leonard	Yes
Cllr. Tracy McElhinney	Yes
Cllr. Niamh McGowan	Yes
Cllr. Jenny McHugh	Yes
Cllr. Maria Murphy	Yes
Cllr. Seamus O' Neill	Absent
Cllr. Joe Reilly	Yes
Cllr. Bryan Reilly	Absent
Cllr. Tommy Reilly	Yes
Cllr. Catherine Yore	Yes

Result: For= 26, Against = 0, Absent = 3



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The Leas Cathaoirleach extended good wishes to An Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Willie Carey and wished him a speedy recovery.

He also thanked the Co. Manager, the Head of Finance and her staff for their hard work in balancing a very difficult budget and wished the Members and staff a happy Christmas.

The Co. Manager thanked the Leas Cathaoirleach for presiding over the meeting and extended his good wishes to the Cathaoirleach.

Pat McHugh, Management Accountant was welcomed back and Barry Lynch, Financial Accountant was congratulated on his new position as Head of Finance in Longford Co. Council.

This concluded the business of the meeting.