



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

Ordinary Meeting 14th January, 2013, Council Chamber

An Cathaoirleach, Councillor Niamh McGowan presided.

Members Present:

Councillors Joe Bonner, William Carey, Shane Cassells, Eugene Cassidy, Jimmy Cudden, Francis Deane, Ann Dillon-Gallagher, John V. Farrelly, Jimmy Fegan, Brian Fitzgerald, Joe Fox, Oliver Fox, Wayne Harding, Jim Holloway, Eoin Holmes, Suzanne Jamal, Nick Killian, Noel Leonard, Tracy McElhinney, Jenny McHugh, Maria Murphy, Gerry O'Connor, Bryan Reilly, Joe Reilly, Tommy Reilly, Catherine Yore.

Apologies: Cllrs. Sirena Campbell, Arian Keogan

Officials in Attendance:

County Manager Brendan McGrath

Directors of Service: Kevin Stewart, Fiona Lawless, Gerry Boyle (A), Des Foley. Joe Fahy (Acting)

Meetings Administrator Shane Donnelly

Senior Executive Officers: Larry Whelan, Michael Griffin, Brendan Fulham(A)

Administrative Officer: Olive Falsey

1.0 Confirmation of Minutes

- 1.1 Confirmation of minutes of Ordinary meeting held on 3rd December 2012.
The minutes of Ordinary meeting held on 3rd December, 2012 were confirmed on the proposal of **Councillor Nick Killian** and seconded by **Councillor Francis Deane**.
- 1.2 Confirmation of minutes of Preliminary Budget meeting held on 10th December 2012.
The minutes of the Preliminary Budget meeting held on 10th December, 2012 were confirmed on the proposal of **Councillor Willie Carey** and seconded by **Councillor Gerry O' Connor**.
- 1.3 Confirmation of minutes of Statutory Budget meeting held on 17th December 2012.
The minutes of the Statutory Budget meeting held on 17th December, 2012 were confirmed on the proposal of **Councillor Suzanne Jamal** and seconded by **Councillor John V. Farrelly**.
- 1.4 Confirmation of minutes of Special Planning meeting held on 17th December 2012.
The minutes of the Special Planning meeting held on 17th December, 2012 were confirmed on the proposal of **Councillor Willie Carey** and seconded by **Councillor Francis Deane**.



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2.0 Matters arising from the Minutes

No matters arising.

3.0 Expressions of Sympathy and Congratulations

Sympathy was extended to:

- The family of the late Shane McEntee, T.D. and Minister of State.
- The family of the late Peter O' Toole, former employee.
- Angelus Crosbie, Corporate Services, on the death of his nephew Reece Crahan
- Audrey Norris, Navan Town Council, on the death of her father, Patrick Halligan.
- James O' Hagan, Water Services, on the death of his wife.
- Fiona O' Connor, Environment Department, on the death of her father, Paul Earley.
- Maura McCormack, Transportation, on the death of her father-in-law, Laurence McCormack.
- Donal Heaney, Transportation, on the death of his grandmother, Rose Heaney
- Eoin Heaney, former Councillor on the death of his mother, Rose Heaney.
- The family of James Gargan, former employee.
- The family of Joe Fitzsimons former councillor Trim UDC/Area.
- The family of the late David Drew.
- The family of the late Tom (Benny) Downes, former employee.
- The family of the late John Meleady, former employee Navan Town Council.

Representatives from all parties extended their sympathy to the family of the late Shane McEntee, T.D., Minister of State and many tributes were paid with regard to his tireless work in politics and his passion for County Meath and its people. The County Manager, on behalf of the staff of Meath County Council, extended sympathy to the family of Shane McEntee and to all those who were bereaved over the Christmas period.

The Meeting was adjourned for 10 minutes as a mark of respect.

Congratulations were extended to:

- None

4.0 Statutory Business

4.1 Planning

- 4.1.1 Review of Development Contribution Schemes (update)
Noted

4.2 Corporate Services

- 4.2.1 To receive an update on 'Putting People First – An Action Programme for Effective Local Government'.



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At the outset, on the proposal of Cllr John V. Farrelly, seconded by Cllr Noel Leonard, it was agreed by the Members that Items 6.1 and 6.2 would be included for discussion as part of this Item. Kevin Stewart, Director of Services, made the presentation, which was followed by a lengthy debate and comment on the various issues regarding the proposed changes. In particular, a discussion took place in relation to the Review of the Local Electoral Area Boundary. The Members were informed that the closing date for receipt of submissions was the 25th January and it was open to anyone who wished to, to make a submission as part of this process (including any member(s) of the Council). The Members also noted that the draft document in respect of the Local Electoral Area Review as circulated was an information document. It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor John V. Farrelly and seconded by Councillor Shane Cassells to have a workshop on Tuesday 22nd January at 2.00p.m. to further discuss the matter. It was also agreed that Council officials would complete the draft document and circulate it in advance of the meeting.

4.3 Housing

4.3.1 Review of Regional Homelessness Action Plan 2010 - 2013

To consider and if thought fit to adopt the Report prepared by the Management Group of the Mid East Region in relation to the implementation of the existing Homelessness Action Plan in accordance with Section 37 (3) (d) of the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2009.

Des Foley, DoS, gave a briefing on the Report and informed the meeting that Meath is part of the Mid East Region for the provision of homeless services. It was noted that even though Meath does not have a homeless shelter, homelessness has been successfully managed with 49 households being provided with emergency accommodation in 2012. The Council has a service level agreement with Drogheda Homeless Aid.

On the proposal of **Councillor Ann Dillon-Gallagher**, seconded by **Councillor Maria Murphy**, it was resolved by the Members to adopt the existing plan for a further three year period 2013-2016 on the basis that an immediate review of the Plan is undertaken and any proposed amendments are brought before the Council for consideration.

5.0 Report from Protocol Committee

Nothing to report

6.0 Correspondence

- 6.1 Press release by Minister Bruton and Minister Perry re. New Centre of Excellence for Micro and Small Businesses established as part of enhanced support model and extension of deadline to Friday 18th January 2013 for receipt of submissions in relation to Consultation on the Reform of the National Micro & Small Business Support Infrastructure.



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Discussed under Item 4.2.1 and noted

- 6.2 Local Electoral Area Boundary Committee re. Invitation for Submissions.
Discussed under Item 4.2.1 and noted
- 6.3 Circular Letter EPS/1/2012 – Ratification of the Aarhus Convention and associated obligations for public authorities.
Noted
- 6.4 Letter from Leo Varadkar TD, Minister for Transport, Tourism & Sport re. funding for essential roadworks in the Kells area.
Councillors expressed disappointment with the response and a lengthy debate took place on the issue of funding for repairs to the roads in North Meath. The County Manager advised the Councillors that as soon as the final allocations are received all areas, including Kells will be consulted and proposals brought forward. He also advised that, where appropriate, additional staff recruited through the job bridge scheme could be allocated to this work.
- 6.5 Household Charge update
Fiona Lawless, Head of Finance, advised that the collection rate is now 65.3% and that a letter has been issued to the Department requesting the return of money withheld in Q4.

It was suggested that in some cases the Revenue Commissioners may request confirmation of payment of the Household Charge before issuing tax clearance certificates.
The County Manager advised the Councillors that Meath County Council does not have a policy to withhold any grant or award due to the non-payment of the household charge.
- 6.6 Invitation to make Submissions on the Rural Development Programme for Ireland (RDP) 2014 – 2020
Noted

7.0 Notice of Question

- 7.1 Submitted by Councillor Francis Deane:

“With reference to Wind Energy Production in the County Development Plan could the Manager please clarify

- a) *What is the maximum height recommended for wind turbines?*
b) *What distance from private residences is considered to be acceptable when wind turbines are in production?”*

A response to the question was provided by Michael Griffin, Senior Executive Officer, Planning Department.



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8.0 Notice of Motion

8.1 Submitted by Councillor Shane Cassells:

“In light of reports from the Health Forum meeting in November that there is no commitment from the Minister of Health to progress the construction of a Regional Hospital in Navan that Meath County Council request a meeting with the four government TDs in Meath to request an official update on where this project stands, to put on public record efforts taken to secure private investment and to establish whether the commitment to have this facility constructed within five years from 2011 remains.”

The motion was proposed by **Councillor Shane Cassells** and seconded by **Councillor Tommy Reilly**.

An amendment to the motion i.e. the insertion of the words ‘**when appropriate**’ after “TDs in Meath”, was proposed by **Councillor Eugene Cassidy** and seconded by **Councillor Joe Fox**.

A show of hands vote was taken in respect of the amended motion as proposed which resulted as follows: 21 For – 1 Against – 2 Abstain – 5 Absent. As a result the following amended Motion was adopted by the Council

“In light of reports from the Health Forum meeting in November that there is no commitment from the Minister of Health to progress the construction of a Regional Hospital in Navan that Meath County Council request a meeting with the four government TDs in Meath, when appropriate, to request an official update on where this project stands, to put on public record efforts taken to secure private investment and to establish whether the commitment to have this facility constructed within five years from 2011 remains.”

9.0 Schedule of Manager’s & Approved Orders (For Information Only)

9.1 Schedule of Manager’s Orders - Infrastructure

9.2 Schedule of Manager’s Orders - Environment

9.3 Schedule of Manager’s Orders – Housing Construction

Noted.



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10.0 Presentations by other Bodies/Statutory Agencies

- 10.1 Presentation from Mark Scanlon, FAI Development Officer.
The presentation provided information on the 24 development programmes currently available in Meath. The support of Meath County Council over the past four years was acknowledged.

The Cathaoirleach, on behalf of the Councillors commended the work being done to promote participation in sport and wished all concerned every success in the future.

11.0 Any Other Business

None