



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

Ordinary Meeting 5th March 2012, Council Chamber

An Cathaoirleach, Councillor Eoin Holmes presided.

Members Present:

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

Apologies: Councillor Jimmy Cudden

Officials in Attendance:

County Manager Tom Dowling

Directors of Service: Kevin Stewart, Fiona Lawless, Tadhg McDonnell, Brendan McGrath, Des Foley

Meetings Administrator Ger Murphy

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

Planning Staff: Bernard Green, Pdraig O' Shea, Caroline Power

Administrative Officer: Olive Falsey

Councillor Nick Killian sought a suspension of Standing Orders to discuss the issue of 'low rent allowances in Meath'. The Cathaoirleach advised that this item would be taken under any other business. Councillor Killian continued to highlight the issue resulting in the suspension of the meeting by the Cathaoirleach for a short period.

1.0 Confirmation of Minutes

- 1.1 Confirmation of minutes of monthly meeting held on 6th February 2012.
The minutes of the monthly meeting held on 6th February 2012 were confirmed on the proposal of **Councillor John V. Farrelly** and seconded by **Councillor Jim Holloway**.

2.0 Matters arising from the Minutes

There were no matters arising.

3.0 Expressions of Sympathy and Congratulations

Sympathy was extended to:

- Gerry Martin, Environment & Water Services Department on the death of his brother.

Congratulations were extended to:

- Oldcastle GAA club on its recent success.



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- The Council and all involved in winning the Best Public Campaign Award for the staging of the Solheim Cup at the recent LAMA awards ceremony and also on being shortlisted for the Council of the Year Award.
- The staff members who retired on 29th February.

4.0 Disposal of Land in accordance with Statutory Notices circulated pursuant to the provisions of Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001.

5.0 Statutory Business

5.1 Planning

- 5.1.1 Review of existing Kells Development Plan 2007 – 2013 and Preparation of a new Kells Development Plan 2013-2019.

‘To receive the Manager’s Report in respect of submissions and observations received as a result of the display of the Strategic Issues Paper for the Kells Development Plan 2013 – 2019 in accordance with Section 11 of the Planning and Development Acts 2000-2011’.

A joint presentation was made by Bernard Green and Pdraig O’ Shea, Planning Department. It was suggested that a workshop would be held in Kells in advance of the full Council Meeting in May. This was agreed on the proposal of **Councillor John V. Farrelly** and seconded by **Councillor Oliver Fox**.

- 5.1.2 To receive an indicative timetable for the review of Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019.
Brendan McGrath, D.O.S. outlined the timeframe for the completion of the County Development Plan and explained that the closing date for pre-draft submissions from Councillors is Friday 29th April, 2012. The meeting was informed that two Special Meetings of the Council would take place on the 11th and 12th April, 2012 to provide updates on the process. A draft schedule of special Planning meetings was circulated and noted by the Councillors.

- 5.1.3 To receive an update on Variation No. 12, to incorporate a Core Strategy into the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013 and if thought fit:

‘To consider the proposed variation and the Manager’s Report on submissions received in respect of proposed material alterations and to resolve to make the variation, or to further modify the variation, in accordance with Section 13 of the Planning & Development Acts 2000 - 2011’.

It was agreed on the proposal of **Councillor Brian Fitzgerald** and seconded by **Councillor Jim Holloway** that the item would be deferred to the next meeting to allow time to consider the proposed variation and the Manager’s Report.

- 5.1.4 To receive a Quarterly Review Report in respect of the Planning and Strategic Transportation Department.



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Received and noted on the proposal of **Councillor Noel Leonard** and seconded by **Councillor Joe Bonner**.

5.2 **Transport**

- 5.2.1 To adopt the 2012 Roadworks' Programme.
Brendan McGrath, D.O.S. provided a summary breakdown of the allocation of €24.23 million expenditure for 2012. There was welcome expressed for the funding together with the opportunities nowadays for better value for money. It was noted that there was no provision for the proposed Slane Bypass. The 2012 Roadworks' Programme was adopted on the proposal of **Councillor John V. Farrelly** and seconded by **Councillor Jim Holloway**.

5.3 **Housing, Social, Community & Cultural**

- 5.3.1 Having considered a grant application from the Kentstown Village Project Committee, as agreed by the Knockharley Community Liaison Committee and recommended by the Navan Electoral Area Committee at their Meeting held on the 15th February 2012, that the Kentstown Village Project Committee procure Consultants for the purpose of commissioning the preparation of a Master Plan (to include as part of this, the examination of the provision of a Community Meeting Centre) on a section of lands in Kentstown, Navan, Co. Meath and if thought fit to approve same.
Approved on the proposal of **Councillor Jim Holloway** and seconded by **Councillor Shane Cassells**.

6.0 **Report from Protocol Committee**

The Meetings' Administrator advised regarding the St. Patrick's Day events in New York and London. The Protocol Committee proposed that three Councillors (including the Cathaoirleach) would travel to New York and that one Councillor would travel to London.

The proposed trips were approved on the proposal of **Councillor John V. Farrelly** and seconded by **Councillor Noel Leonard**.

The Meetings' Administrator advised that the Protocol Committee had agreed to honour Mr. Brian Smyth, Captain of the All-Ireland winning Meath Senior Football team in 1949 and Mr. Mattie Gilsenan Captain of the 1939 All-Ireland Meath Senior Football team. It is proposed to have the ceremony after the Council meeting in May.

Approved on the proposal of **Councillor John V. Farrelly** and seconded by **Councillor Bryan Reilly**.

7.0 **Correspondence**

- 7.1 Correspondence regarding proposals in relation to the future of micro-enterprise supports and structures including CEB restructuring.
Noted



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- 7.2 Household Charge Publicity.
Ger Soady, Administrative Officer, Finance Department, advised in relation to the Household Charge due by 31st March. He outlined the publicity campaign at national and local level and explained the Council's plan to extend the opening hours at the payment office during the last two weeks of March to include Saturday opening.
- 7.3 Correspondence from Department of the Environment, Community & Local Government re Local Authorities New "One Stop Shop" will Support Job Creation. Noted
- 7.4 Spatial Planning and National Roads: Guidelines for Planning Authorities, 2012.
- Councillor Brian Fitzgerald** noted the importance of this issue and proposed that the Planning Department to provide a presentation to the full Council on the implications of the Report. The proposal was seconded by **Councillor Jimmy Fegan**. It was also suggested that the matter would be raised at the next meeting of the Mid-East Regional Authority.
- 7.5 Additional Correspondence
Correspondence from the National Transport Authority regarding the Navan Rail Line was noted and it was agreed that the lines of communication should remain open with the NTA to ensure that if and when funds become available during the lifetime of the Government that the rail line to Navan may be progressed. It was proposed by **Councillor Shane Cassells** and seconded by **Councillor Tommy Reilly** that a reply should be issued to the NTA.

8.0 Notice of Question

- 8.1 Submitted by Councillor Wayne Harding:

"Can I ask the Manager to get an update from the Office of Public Works on the tender for the tourist information office at the Bru na Boinne centre? It is now five months since Fáilte Ireland indicated its intention to close the office."

A written response was provided to the Councillors by Kevin Stewart DoS, Corporate Services & Economic Development.

- 8.2 Submitted by Councillor Francis Deane:

"During the current academic year (2011-2012) 937 new applications for Higher Education Grants were processed by Meath County Council."

"Taking in to consideration the importance of advice clinics during the application process, will Meath County Council be in a position to accommodate applications locally in 2012-2013 or are there plans in place to centralise the process?"

A written response was provided to the Councillors by Ger Murphy SEO, Corporate Services & Human Resources.



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9.0 Notice of Motion

9.1 Submitted by Councillor Nick Killian:

“Meath County Council calls on the Minister for Education to reverse the short-sighted education cuts in the interest of equity of access to education and prioritising expenditure in areas likely to be of major benefit to our society and economy in the long term.”

The motion as proposed by **Councillor Nick Killian** and seconded by **Councillor Tommy Reilly** was debated.

An amended motion:

“Meath County Council welcomes the decision by the Minister for Education and Skills to reverse his decision regarding 227 teachers in DEIS schools and the announcement of €35m. to replace the rented pre-fab classrooms for 6000 pupils in 200 schools, and look forward to his continuing targeting of expenditure for the betterment of the education of our children and hitherto society “ proposed by **Councillor Jenny McHugh** and seconded by **Councillor J.V. Farrelly** was adopted following a show of hands vote.

9.2 Submitted by Councillor Shane Cassells:

“That Meath County Council seek to have an immediate meeting with the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation Richard Bruton and his staff in Kildare Street to discuss an appraisal of recent IDA strategy for Meath, to seek financial and practical supports for a specific jobs investment programme and a capital structural package for County Meath. This delegation to include the Cathaoirleach, representatives from each of the elected members’ groups, the County Manager and the Director of Economic Development.”

The motion was proposed by **Councillor Shane Cassells** and seconded by **Councillor Tommy Reilly**. Following a lengthy debate an amended motion was proposed by **Councillor Gerry O’Connor** and seconded by **Councillor Maria Murphy**

“Meath County Council seeks to have a meeting with the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation, Mr. Richard Bruton, and the IDA to discuss the IDA strategy for Meath, review their performance against that strategy for the last five years and to seek proactive support, going forward, for job creation in Meath.”

Further discussion and debate took place with a number of issues clarified by the Co. Manager Tom Dowling and Kevin Stewart DoS. The amended motion was unanimously adopted.

9.3 Submitted by Councillor Tommy Reilly:

“That Meath County Council challenge the legal status of anonymous planning objections received on planning files in this county in order to stamp out this practice of these un-named and often ‘mischievous’ pieces of correspondence.”
Motion withdrawn.

9.4 Submitted by Councillor Tommy Reilly:

“That Meath County Council seeks an immediate meeting with Minister for Tourism Leo Varadkar along with the relevant senior staff of Fáilte Ireland to



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discuss the tourism booking strategy for this county whereby thousands of visitors are being shipped into our main tourist sites for a period of hours and re-directed back to Dublin for their hotel accommodation. The delegation to include the Cathaoirleach, members from all of the groups, Meath Tourism and the Director of Economic Development and Tourism to attend this meeting with the Minister and Fáilte Ireland.”

The motion, proposed by **Councillor Tommy Reilly** and seconded by **Councillor Wayne Harding**, was defeated following a show of hands – 5 For, 12 Against.

9.5 Submitted by Councillor Shane Cassells:

“That Meath County Council and our Economic Development Team in conjunction with Meath Tourism, Navan Town Council and Meath CLG put in place an immediate plan of action across all areas of communication, transport and media to ensure as many of the confirmed 20,000 American visitors to Ireland for the Notre Dame/Navy American football game in the Aviva Stadium come to Navan for the series of games to be hosted in Pairc Tailteann on August 31st and that a detailed package on the county is circulated to visiting parties well in advance of their trip.”

The motion, proposed by **Councillor Shane Cassells** and seconded by **Councillor Noel Leonard**, was unanimously adopted.

9.6 Submitted by Councillor John V. Farrelly:

“The Members of Meath County Council call on the Minister for Communications Mr. Pat Rabbitte to recommend to the Government to underground the cables for the Batterstown Tyrone Eirgrid power lines especially now that it has been established by the independent commission set up by the Minister that it is only double the cost to do so.”

The motion, proposed by **Councillor John V. Farrelly** and seconded by **Councillor Jenny McHugh**, was unanimously adopted.

9.7 Submitted by Councillor Brian Fitzgerald:

“In view of the decision by An Bord Pleanála to refuse planning permission to build the new Children’s Hospital on the Mater site, this meeting of Meath County Council calls on the Government to consider the building of this hospital at Dunboyne close to the M3 Rail Station. This meeting further calls on the County Manager to request a meeting with the Minister for Health to explore the proposal further.”

The motion was proposed by **Councillor Brian Fitzgerald** and seconded by **Councillor Joe Reilly**.

An amendment to the motion i.e. the insertion of the words *“to include the regional hospital when meeting the minister”*

The amended motion, proposed by **Councillor Tommy Reilly** and seconded by **Councillor Nick Killian** was adopted following a show of hands vote.

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

10.1 Schedule of Manager’s Orders - Infrastructure

10.2 Schedule of Manager’s Orders - Environment



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10.3 Schedule of Manager's Orders – Housing Construction

10.4 Schedule of Manager's Orders – Community & Enterprise

Noted

11.0 Presentations

No Presentations

12.0 Any Other Business

Councillor Killian sought to raise the issue of 'low rent allowance in Meath' again but the Cathaoirleach did not accept his request and closed the meeting.