



Miontuairiscí Meeting Minutes

Ordinary Meeting 9th May 2011, Council Chamber

An Cathaoirleach, Councillor Ann Dillon-Gallagher presided.

Members Present:

Councillors Joseph Bonner, Sirena Campbell, William Carey, Shane Cassells, Eugene Cassidy, Jimmy Cudden, 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, Niamh McGowan, Jenny McHugh, Maria Murphy, Gerry O'Connor, Bryan Reilly, Tommy Reilly, Joe Reilly, Catherine Yore.

Apologies: Councillors Francis Deane, Seamus O'Neill

Officials in Attendance:

County Manager Tom Dowling

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

Meetings Administrator Martin Rogers

Senior Executive Officers: Larry Whelan, Michael Griffin, Ger Murphy (Acting)

Planning Staff: Pat Gallagher, Orla O'Brien.

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

Administrative Officer: Olive Falsey

Standing orders were suspended on the proposal of **Councillor Catherine Yore** and seconded by **Councillor Tommy Reilly** to allow discussion on the closure of Boynabought Bridge. Councillors expressed concern at the length of time it is taking to repair the bridge and reopen it to traffic and the effect of its closure on business in the surrounding area.

Kevin Stewart, Director of Services responded and provided a report to the Councillors, which stated that during routine vegetation removal works being carried out by a specialist bridge repair contractor on the Bridge, the structure was inspected on Thursday 24th March 2011 with major defects noted including severe cracking in the arch and bulging of the spandrel/retaining walls. On Friday 25th March 2011, a specialist consultant inspected the structure and recommended that the bridge be closed to traffic with immediate effect. The spandrel/retaining walls are up to 8m high. As a result, specialised high tensile steel tie bars and buttress plates are required for the remedial works. The design of the remedial works was finalised on the 20th of April 2011.

A specialist bridge repair contractor was asked to price the remedial works and submitted a tender on 28th April 2011. The submitted price was assessed by the consultant who advised that the price appeared excessive and that substantial savings could be achieved by seeking 3 prices. Tender documents were issued by the Council to 3 contractors for pricing on 5th May 2011. The prices are scheduled for return today, Monday, 9th May 2011 with a view that the contractor should commence works without delay thereafter.

It is anticipated that the works will take approximately 5-6 weeks with the road therefore remaining closed until approximately the end of June to mid July.

Copy of the report was circulated.



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1.0 Confirmation of Minutes

- 1.1 Confirmation of minutes of monthly meeting held on 4th April 2011.
The minutes of the monthly meeting held on 4th April 2011 were confirmed on the proposal of **Councillor John V. Farrelly** and seconded by **Councillor Tommy Reilly**

2.0 Matters arising from the Minutes

No matters arising.

3.0 Expressions of Sympathy and Congratulations

Sympathy was extended to:

- 3.1 Cllr. Francis Deane on the death of his father.
- 3.2 Jim Donnellan, Enterprise Centre, on the death of his wife.
- 3.3 Tommy Luddy, former employee & Donal Heaney, Environment Dept., on the death of John Luddy (son & brother-in-law).
- 3.4 Una Daly, Housing Dept. on the death of her mother.
- 3.5 Angela Loughran, HR Dept. on the death of her mother-in-law.
- 3.6 Maurice Kelly, National Roads Design Office, on the death of his mother.

Congratulations were extended to:

- 3.7 The anti-litter groups on their recent success in the Anti-litter Awards and Julianstown on being awarded the title of cleanest town in Co. Meath.
- 3.8 North Meath Rugby Club on their recent success.
- 3.9 Nina Carberry & Arthur Moore on the recent Irish Grand National win.

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 To consider and if thought fit the taking in charge of the following estates as recommended by the Members of Dunshaughlin Electoral Area at their meeting of 18th April 2011



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- Foxlodge Woods, Ratoath, Co. Meath
Approved on the proposal of **Councillor Nick Killian** and seconded by Councillor **Niamh McGowan**.
- Bective Lodge, Kilmessan, Co. Meath
Approved on the proposal of **Councillor Noel Leonard** and seconded by Councillor **Niamh McGowan**.

5.1.2 To consider the taking in charge of roads at Slan Duff, Phase 1, Kentstown, Navan, Co. Meath as recommended by the Members of Navan Electoral Area at their meeting of 13th April 2011.
Approved on the proposal of **Councillor Tommy Reilly** and seconded by **Councillor Suzanne Jamal**.

5.1.3 To receive a briefing on proposed amendments to the Dunshaughlin Local Area Plan 2009-2015 relating to the Navan Rail Project.
Pat Gallagher, Senior Planner made a presentation on the proposed amendments and this was followed by a lengthy discussion with the following issues raised:

- Dunshaughlin Councillors should have a proper opportunity to discuss the matter instead of being called to a meeting at short notice.
- It was not in the best interests of the Council to make changes to the LAP for Dunshaughlin, which included both rail lines (East & West) when put forward by the Planning Department and adopted by the Council.
- Members now being asked to change what was agreed and to accommodate Iarnróid Eireann's preferred route even though in the context of community gain Route B seems to be the more desirable line.
- There is concern about the financial viability of the line proposed by Iarnróid Eireann.
- Members need to be united on this important project. The opportunity cannot be missed for a rail line to Navan even if Iarnróid Eireann has chosen Route A rather than the preferred Route B. No obstacles or impediments should be put in the way of the delivery of the project.

The Co. Manager explained that the proposed amendments, as an executive function, will be going on display but that Councillors will have the final say in the adoption of the amendments to the LAP. He informed that three meetings had taken place with the Dunshaughlin Area but that it needed to be recognised that this is a county-wide project. He outlined the work done to date and the importance of the project to the growth of Dunshaughlin whether the rail station is to the east or to the west of the village. He emphasised that the project is now part of a national rail policy and it is considered that this amendment should be made. The Cathaoirleach concurred with the remarks of the Co. Manager and stressed that no obstacles should be put in the way of this strategically important development.

5.2 Housing, Social Community & Cultural

5.2.1 Meath County Council Bursaries & Awards 2011 Recommendations for approval.



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Approved on the proposal of **Councillor Tommy Reilly** and seconded by Councillor **Sirena Campbell**.

5.3 Corporate Services

- 5.3.1 To receive Audit Committee Report 2010.
Report was received.
Some Councillors expressed concern regarding the need for an Anti-Fraud Policy since these matters are covered in the Local Government Act. Fiona Lawless advised that the DOEHLG recommended that the policy should be developed. She indicated that the Audit Committee is currently working on a draft document and following their consideration it will be brought to the Council.

5.4 Finance

- 5.4.1 To receive Annual Financial Statement 2010 (Circulated).
Paul Timoney, Financial Accountant, presented the AFS and this was followed by comments and questions from the Members. The main issues raised were:

- Reasons for loans.
- Increase in contract payments.
- The tenant purchase scheme.
- Development levies balance at end of 2010.
- Arrears in commercial rates and water collections.

Fiona Lawless, Head of Finance responded and explained that:

- Money on deposit stays on deposit and it is the normal procedure to seek loans for specific purposes.
- The increase in contract payments is the result of additional funding re the roads programme and the need for associated consultancy and legal fees.
- Every tenant has been written to regarding the sale of houses.
- Historical problem re water collection. Substantial increase in customers with no additional resources.
- IMF reporting has required different structures in the way figures are presented.

It was noted that in general Meath is in a positive position and DOEHLG has recognised the work that has been done in managing the finances. More funding has been allocated for roads. Unfunded balances are reducing year on year.

- 5.4.2 To approve (i) revised expenditure for the financial year ended 31st December 2010 as set out in Table A in accordance with S104 of the Local Government Act 2001 and (ii) transfers to and from Capital as set out in Table B. (Report circulated)
Approved on the proposal of **Councillor Willie Carey** and seconded by Councillor **John V. Farrelly**.
- 5.4.3 Notice of Commencement of Audit for financial year ended 31st December 2010.
Noted.



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6.0 Report from Protocol Committee

Councillor Yore welcomed the report on the St. Patrick's Day trips and asked about specific outcomes as a result of the travel. It was explained that Meath Tourism regularly meets with Fáilte Ireland and is continually working to promote tourism abroad. Kevin Stewart Director of Services referred to the recent presentation made to Councillors by Meath Tourism and of the plan to identify ten key destinations around the country. He explained that it is not about county boundaries but about key destinations an example being the Boyne Valley.

7.0 Correspondence

- 7.1 Correspondence from the Arts Council re funding 2011-2012.
Noted.
- 7.2 Correspondence from An Bord Pleanála re Increase in the Rate of Waste Acceptance, Extension of the Operational Footprint and New Waste Treatment Infrastructure at Residual Landfill, Knockharley, Co Meath.
Noted.
- 7.3 Circular Letter WP 06.11 – Civic Responsibility Week Grant Scheme and Tidy Towns.
Noted.
- 7.4 Correspondence from Office of the Revenue Commissioners re Revenue Audit Ref: 00172770.
Noted that this reflects positively on the Council and in particular on the Head of Finance and her team.
- 7.5 Correspondence from Cavan County Council re maintenance of the railway line between Kingscourt and Navan.
It was agreed to write to Cavan Co. Council suggesting that a delegation from both Councils meet to explore possible options for the disused railway line.

8.0 Notice of Question

- 8.1 Submitted by Cllr Francis Deane:
- “Can the Manager confirm that Meath County Council will consider an easy payment plan extended over a longer term for levies which must be paid by people who have been approved for planning for once-off houses and in considering this could he inform the Council how many once-off planning applications have been approved by Meath County Council in 2007 and 2010?”*
- Response circulated to the Council.

9.0 Notice of Motion

- 9.1 Submitted by Fianna Fáil Councillors:
- “The Members of Meath County Council resolve to contact by letter the Minister for Transport and Tourism, Dr. Leo Varadkar, T.D. requesting that he reaffirms his commitment to the completion of the proposed Rail Link to Navan from Pace within the pre-determined time scale. (2015)*
- We are seeking to establish the commitment of Dr. Varadkar's immediate predecessor restated by the current Minister in light of recent media reports that he has ordered a review of all major projects awaiting funding from his Department”.*



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The motion was proposed by **Councillor Shane Cassells** and seconded by **Councillor Oliver Fox**.

Following discussion, and on the proposal by **Councillor John V. Farrelly** seconded by **Councillor Shane Cassells**, it was agreed to amend the wording i.e. to remove 'that he reaffirms'

It was also agreed to write to the Minister seeking a meeting with him and a small delegation from the Council to enable the Members to reaffirm the case for this strategically important project.

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
- 10.3 Schedule of Approved Orders – Housing Construction
- 10.4 Schedule of Manager's Orders – Community & Enterprise

Noted.

11.0 Presentations

- 11.1 Address from proposed Presidential Candidate Senator David Norris. (5.00pm)
Senator David Norris addressed the Council and sought a nomination to be a candidate in the forthcoming Presidential Election.
Following the address, Senator Norris' nomination was proposed by **Councillor Tommy Reilly** and seconded by **Councillor Shane Cassells**. The Cathaoirleach suggested that more time be given to allow consideration on the matter by the full Council. The nomination was subsequently withdrawn by **Councillors Reilly and Cassells** and it was agreed to defer the matter until the next meeting.
- 11.2 Address from proposed Presidential Candidate Anthony Roe. (5.15pm)
It was noted that Mr. Roe had withdrawn his request to address the Council.

12.0 Any Other Business

None.