



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

Ordinary Meeting 13th May, 2013, Council Chamber

An Cathaoirleach, Councillor Niamh McGowan presided.

Members Present:

Councillors Joe 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, 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: Cllr. Jimmy Cudden, Arian Keogan

Officials in Attendance:

County Manager: Brendan McGrath

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

Meetings Administrator: Shane Donnelly

Senior Executive Officers: Larry Whelan, Michael Griffin

Planning Staff: Pat Gallagher, Senior Planner, Bernard Greene, Senior Executive Planner, Fiona Redmond, Senior Executive Planner, Orla O'Brien, Executive Planner

Administrative Officers: Olive Falsey

Senior Engineer: Nicholas Whyatt

1.0 Confirmation of Minutes

- 1.1 Confirmation of minutes of Ordinary meeting held on 8th April 2013.
The minutes of the Ordinary meeting held on 8th April 2013 were confirmed on the proposal of **Councillor John V. Farrelly** and seconded by **Councillor Noel Leonard**.

2.0 Matters arising from the Minutes

No matters arising.

3.0 Expressions of Sympathy and Congratulations

Sympathy was extended to:

- Sean Boyle, Planning Strategic Infrastructure Section on the death of his mother Maisie (Mary) Boyle.
- James Beirne, Kells Area, on the death of his father Michael Beirne.
- Olive Falsey, Corporate Services on the death of her aunt, Sally Smith.



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- The family of the late Philomena Synnott, former Branch Librarian, Ashbourne

Congratulations were extended to:

- Fr. Denis Nulty, Slane native, on his appointment as Bishop of Kildare and Leighlin.
- Meath Vintners' organization on securing annual conference of 400 delegates taking place in Meath.

4.0 Appointment of County Manager

4.1 To consider the appointment of Ms Jackie Maguire to the office of Meath County Manager in accordance with Section 6 of the Local Authorities (Officers & Employees) Act, 1926, and Section 145 Local Government Act, 2001, as amended by Section 17 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 2012.

Approved on the proposal of **Councillor John V. Farrelly** and seconded by **Councillor Shane Cassells**.

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

6.0 Statutory Business

6.1 Corporate Services

6.1.1 To note the acquisition of an office building at the IDA Business Park, Navan for development as new civic offices.

Kevin Stewart, Director of Services made a presentation, which in summary outlined:

- The business case for the purchase of the building.
- The specifications of the building.
- How it will be funded and the cost savings to the organisation.
- The overall benefits for the citizens of County Meath.

A short discussion followed and it was agreed that the business case for the purchase of the building was very strong and that it represented excellent value for money. It was also agreed that the new facility would bring many benefits to all concerned.

6.2 Planning

6.2.1 To receive an update on Forward Planning work programme.

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Bernard Greene, Senior Executive Planner, made the presentation which covered:

- The Variation process to the County Development Plan re. the incorporation of development objectives for 31 no. centres for which existing Local Area Plans will be revoked.
- The amendment of 5 no. existing Local Area Plans
- Review of Trim Development Plan 2014-2020
- Review of Kells Development Plan 2013-2019
- Variation to Navan Development Plan 2009-2015
- Timeframes and proposed workshops.

A lengthy discussion followed and Bernard Greene responded and clarified issues raised by the Councillors.

6.2.2 To receive a report on Taking-in-Charge of residential estates. Michael Griffin, Senior Executive Officer, made the presentation which outlined:

- The taking in charge process
- Statutory position
- Issue of unfinished estates
- Taking in charge legislation and new TIC Bill

Following the presentation Michael Griffin responded to various Councillors' questions on the TIC process. The Councillors agreed to proceed in line with the protocol recommended in advance of the new Taking in Charge Act coming into effect

6.2.3 To resolve to direct the preparation of the Draft Trim Development plan 2014-2020 as recommended by the Trim Electoral area members at their workshop of 15th April 2013 pursuant to Section 11 of the Planning & Development Acts 2000-2012. Resolved on the proposal of **Councillor Willie Carey** and seconded by **Councillor John V. Farrelly**.

6.2.4 To receive the Manager's Report on submissions received following the publication of the Draft Kells Development Plan 2013-2019 in accordance with Section 12(4) of the Planning & Development Acts 2000-2012.

It was agreed, on the proposal of **Councillor John V. Farrelly** and seconded by **Councillor Brian Reilly**, that the Manager's Report would be issued by the Planning Department to Councillors via post.

6.3 Finance

6.3.1 To receive Draft Annual Financial Statement 2012

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Paul Timoney, Financial Accountant, made the presentation, which included analysis of income and expenditure for 2012, summary of major collections and the key issues going forward.

Fiona Lawless, Head of Finance, concluded that, in the current economic climate, it was an achievement to have a small surplus and that this has been achieved each year since 2006.

Following a short debate, it was agreed that, while there are challenges ahead, the finances of the council have been very well managed.

The Draft Annual Financial Statement 2012 was approved by the Council, on the proposal of Cllr John V Farrelly and seconded by Cllr Shane Cassells.

- 6.3.2 To approve (i) revised expenditure for the financial year ended 31st December 2012 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.

Approved on the proposal of **Councillor Francis Deane** and seconded by **Councillor Brian Fitzgerald**.

- 6.3.3 To receive update on Revenue Position for Quarter 1 of 2013. The Revenue Account Income and Expenditure Summary by Service Division was provided and noted.

Received on the proposal of **Councillor John V. Farrelly** and seconded by **Councillor Wayne Harding**.

- 6.3.4 Presentation of the Annual Report (2012) of the Audit Committee. Frank McLoughlin, Chair of the Audit Committee, presented the Committee's Annual Report. The role of the Audit Committee was outlined and a summary of the committee's activities during 2012 was provided together with the objectives for 2013.

6.4 Water Services

- 6.4.1 Update on Irish Water.

Gerry Boyle, Senior Engineer, made the presentation, which provided information on:

- Metering and billing
- Transfer of assets and responsibilities
- Service level agreements
- Capital investment

Following the presentation, a lengthy debate took place and many issues were raised including the pricing process, installation works and reinstatement of footpaths/roads and customer service.



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Gerry Boyle responded and outlined that the transfer to Irish Water is at an early stage and a lot of progress and clarity is expected over the coming months when service level agreements are put in place.

On the proposal of **Councillor Shane Cassells**, seconded by **Councillor Wayne Harding** it was resolved by the Council to write to the MD of Irish Water to ensure that:

1.0 Irish Water would include in its submission to the CER a basic allowance for consumer usage before charging commences, having regard to international guidelines for best practise on health and hygiene

2.0 That the unit price set upon by the CER would be taken as a stable unit price for a minimum period of 3 years to bring stability to domestic consumers.

6.5 Transportation

- 6.5.1 Non-PPP Motorway Maintenance Contracts.
Noted

6.6 Social, Community & Cultural

- 6.6.1 To approve Bursaries and Awards 2013 recommendations as per the Arts Act 2003.
Approved on the proposal of **Councillor John V. Farrelly** and seconded by **Councillor Wayne Harding**.

7.0 Report from Protocol Committee

- 7.1 To consider amendment(s) to Standing Orders in accordance with Schedule 10.16 Local Government Act 2001(as recommended by the Protocol Committee).
The Meetings Administrator asked that this matter be deferred until the next meeting of the Council. The request was approved on the proposal of Cllr Brian Fitzgerald, seconded by Cllr Francis Deane.
It was also noted that the naming of the Boyne Bridge as the Mary McAleese Boyne Valley Bridge would take place at Oldbridge House on the 8th June at 2.00p.m.

8.0 Correspondence

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- 8.1 Non-Use of Motor Vehicles Bill 2013 – Explanatory Memorandum.
Noted
- 8.2 The Blackfriary Community Archaeology Project makes world Top 10 list.
Noted. Councillors advised to visit web site for further information.
- 8.3 Eirgrid – North-South 400kV Interconnection Development. **Noted**
- 8.4 Mid-East Economic Development Action Plan – April 2013.
Noted.
- 8.5 Launch of CCMA Report on “Supporting Enterprise, Local Development and Economic Growth-Analysis of Local Authority Activities for 2012”.
Noted
- 8.6 Launch of Forfás Report – Making it in Ireland – Manufacturing 2020 – Overview. **Noted**
- 8.7 Update on Bremore Ireland Port. **Noted**
- 8.8 Nitrates Action Programme – Public Consultation. **Noted**
- 8.9 Regional Planning Guidelines Economic Update 2013. **Noted**
- 8.10 Update on Inaugural meeting Meath Economic Forum and preparation of Economic strategy. **Noted**
- 8.11 Establishment of frontrunner Socio-Economic Committees in local authority areas (FAQ’s). **Noted**
- 8.12 Department of Health – Healthy Ireland – A Framework for Improved Health and Wellbeing 2013-2025. **Noted**
- 8.13 Planning and Development(Planning Enforcement) General Policy Directive, 2013 - **Noted**
- 8.14 Correspondence regarding National Rehab Awards. - **Noted**

9.0 Notice of Question

- 9.1 Submitted by Councillor Francis Deane:

“To date what percentage of Meath householders have paid the household charge and is there a plan in place to issue reminder notices for outstanding payments before the deadline?”

A response was provided by Gerard Soady, Administrative Officer, Finance Department, and it was noted that the Council was not in a position to send reminder notices.

- 9.2 Submitted by Councillor John V. Farrelly:

“To ask the County Manager if he can give me an update on what discussions have taken place with the Department of Tourism and Transport in relation to our request for Further monies for County and class 3 roads especially those roads in North Meath and if he intends to have further discussions regarding the problem.”

A response was provided by Joe Fahy, A/ Director of Transportation and Environment.

10.0 Notice of Motion



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- 10.1 Submitted by Cllrs. Shane Cassells, Noel Leonard, Nick Killian, Wayne Harding, Oliver Fox, Jimmy Fegan, Bryan Reilly, Tommy Reilly (Fianna Fáil Group):

“That Meath County Council request the Minister for Finance to instruct the Valuations Office to carry out a nationwide review of commercial rates with a view to assisting hard pressed business owners concurrent with the introduction of the Local Property Tax.”

The motion was proposed by **Councillor Jimmy Fegan** and seconded by **Councillor Wayne Harding**

Following a debate a show of hands vote was taken on the motion and it was defeated. Result: **6 For, 14 Against.**

- 10.2 Submitted by Cllrs. Shane Cassells, Noel Leonard, Nick Killian, Wayne Harding, Oliver Fox, Jimmy Fegan, Bryan Reilly, Tommy Reilly (Fianna Fáil Group):

“That Meath County Council calls on the Minister for Social Protection to reinstate the household benefits such as electricity, phone and fuel allowances to their original levels in order to assist people in financial difficulties.”

The motion was proposed by **Councillor Oliver Fox** and seconded by **Councillor Wayne Harding**. Following a debate an amendment was proposed by Councillor John V. Farrelly and seconded by Councillor Catherine Yore

The amended motion:

“That Meath County Council calls on the Minister for Social Protection to reinstate the household benefits such as electricity, phone and fuel allowances to their original levels, when the present Government successfully leaves the bail out programme and adequate finances are available, in order to assist people in financial difficulties.”

was adopted following a show of hands vote. **Result: 15 For, 6 Against.**

- 10.3 Submitted by Councillor John V. Farrelly:

“Members of Meath County Council welcome the introduction of the Insolvency Bill as the first step to helping people who are in difficulty with mortgage repayments. It is a way to have their situations resolved in a fair and equitable way and we call on the financial institutions to start treating people as normal individuals in dealing with this most sensitive issue and allow them to breath, live and rear their families without the constant threat of letters and phone calls from these institutions.”



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

An extension of time (30 minutes) was granted on the proposal of **Councillor John V. Farrelly**, seconded by **Councillor Shane Cassells**.

10.4 Submitted by Councillor Eugene Cassidy:

"In the light of deteriorating road conditions throughout County Meath, particularly in North Meath, especially on lower category roads, I hereby call on Meath County Council, as a priority, to explore all options, in consultation with all stakeholders, to seek to bring about additional investment in the repair and maintenance of our roads. Allowing some roads to remain in their present, damaged and unusable condition for up to 12 months is not an option."

The motion, proposed by **Councillor Eugene Cassidy** and seconded by **Councillor Catherine Yore**, was unanimously adopted.

10.5 Submitted by Councillor Eugene Cassidy:

"In welcoming the recent completion of the very positive Feasibility Study proving the business case for the 'Boyne Valley to Lakelands County Greenway, along the disused Navan to Kingscourt Rail Line, I now call on Meath County Council to drive the delivery of this economic, tourism, amenity and recreation project through the heart of County Meath into County Cavan by engaging and co-operating with all stakeholders, pursuing all funding options / opportunities and undertaking an immediate Part 8 Planning Process to facilitate the early delivery of the project, in addition to any other necessary actions."

The motion was adjourned as it was agreed that agenda item 12.1 would address the matter.

10.6 Submitted by Councillor Willie Carey:

"That Meath County Council call on the Government to review the pension entitlements of former Taoisigh, Presidents, Attorneys General, Ministers and Senior Civil and Public Servants."

The motion was proposed by **Councillor Willie Carey** and seconded by **Councillor John V. Farrelly**.

An amended motion was proposed by **Councillor Nick Killian** seconded by **Councillor Tommy Reilly**.

The amended motion;

"That Meath County Council call on the Government to review downwards the pension entitlements of former Taoisigh, Presidents, Attorneys General, Ministers, Judges and CEOs of semi state companies." was unanimously adopted.



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11.0 Schedule of Manager's & Approved Orders (For Information Only)

- 11.1 Schedule of Manager's Orders - Infrastructure
- 11.2 Schedule of Manager's Orders - Environment
- 11.3 Schedule of Manager's Orders – Housing Construction
- 11.4 Schedule of Manager's Orders – Community & Enterprise

Noted

An extension of time (30 minutes) was granted on the proposal of **Councillor John V. Farrelly**, seconded by **Councillor Shane Cassells**.

12.0 Presentations by other Bodies/Statutory Agencies

12.1 To receive a presentation on feasibility study for the proposed Navan / Kingscourt Greenway.

Nicholas Whyatt, Senior Engineer, Strategic Transportation, made the presentation, which outlined the background to the study. Information was also provided on the business case, route context, route specification and estimated cost. A discussion took place following the presentation and all agreed that the project would bring great benefits to the area. It was noted that the next step for the project is progression to Part 8 of the planning process.

13.0 Any Other Business

County Manager, Brendan McGrath, informed the meeting of a proposal to initiate a planned programme of erection of the local place names for the more familiar crossroads in the county to preserve the cultural heritage of the county.

Approved on the proposal of **Councillor Oliver Fox** and seconded by **Councillor Willie Carey**.

The Cathaoirleach noted that this was the County Manager's last meeting before his departure to Galway as City Manager. She thanked Brendan for his work and achievements especially during his time as County Manager. Many tributes were paid to Brendan for his dedication and loyalty as a public servant and he was wished every success in his new position in Galway.

Kevin Stewart, on behalf of the Management and staff wished Brendan every success and acknowledged his immense knowledge of Local Government and his generosity in sharing this knowledge and his capacity to give good advice when needed.



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The County Manager responded and thanked everyone for their kind words. He acknowledged the cooperation he received from Councillors and staff throughout his years with Meath County Council and particularly as County Manager.