



Miontuairiscí/Meeting Minutes

Statutory Budget Meeting

25th November, 2019 – 1.30pm. - Council Chamber

Presiding

Cathaoirleach, Councillor Wayne Harding

Councillors Present:

Councillors Yemi Adenuga, Tom Behan, Joe Bonner, Mike Bray, Eugene Cassidy, Francis Deane, Aisling Dempsey, Seán Drew, Eddie Fennessy, Brian Fitzgerald, Pdraig Fitzsimons, Joe Fox, Noel French, Deirdre Geraghty-Smith, David Gilroy, Trevor Golden, Johnny Guirke, Wayne Harding, Annie Hoey, Suzanne Jamal, Sharon Keogan, Nick Killian, Alan Lawes, Paul McCabe, Stephen McKee, Paddy Meade, Ronan Moore, Maria Murphy, Gerry O'Connor, Damien O'Reilly, Darren O'Rourke, Sarah Reilly, Tommy Reilly, Amanda Smith, , Emer Tóibín, Sharon Tolan, Conor Tormey.

Apologies: Niamh Souhan, Alan Tobin, Gillian Toole

Officials in attendance:

Chief Executive: Jackie Maguire

Directors of Service: Des Foley, Fiona Lawless, Barry Lynch

Meetings Administrator: Robert Collins

Senior Executive Officers: David Jones, Ger Murphy, Larry Whelan

Finance Staff: Paul Timoney, Sheila Harkin, Ger Soady, Ailie Dempsey.

1. To consider the Draft Budget circulated herewith for the Financial Year on 31st December, 2020.

The Cathaoirleach opened the meeting and it was noted that the Statutory Budget book including Tables A-F had been circulated to Councillors in advance of the Preliminary Budget meeting.

Chief Executive, Jackie Maguire, addressed the meeting and noted that the Budget for 2020 provides for expenditure of over €139 million, which is an increase of over €15 million on the 2019 budget and over €40 million in the last seven years. She also noted that Budget 2020 has no increase in rents, rates or property tax.

The Chief Executive underlined the requirement to present a balanced budget, whereby expenditure matches income and noted that the process for finalising the budget this year has been complicated by the Revaluation process. She highlighted a number of areas where it was proposed to increase investment in 2020.



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Fiona Lawless, Head of Finance, made a presentation on the Draft Budget for the Financial Year ending 31st December 2020. The presentation included information on:

- Analysis of Income and Income Sources
- Overview of the Rates Revaluation Process and likely impacts
- Analysis of Expenditure

The presentation also outlined the Annual Budget 2020 by Service Division as follows:

- Service Division A – Housing and Building
- Service Division B – Road Transport and Safety
- Service Division C – Water Services
- Service Division D – Development Management
- Service division E – Environmental Services
- Service Division F – Recreation and Amenity
- Service Division G – Agriculture, Education, Health and Welfare
- Service Division H – Miscellaneous Services
- Service Division J – Central Management Charges

Following the presentation, the Cathaoirleach thanked the Chief Executive and the Head of Finance for their work in preparing and presenting the budget. The Elected Members were then given an opportunity for questions and comments, with interventions by the following: **Councillor Damien O'Reilly; Sean Drew; Brian Fitzgerald; Gerry O'Connor; Johnny Guirke; Tommy Reilly; Ronan Moore; Paddy Meade; Alan Lawes; Joe Bonner; Nick Killian; Emer Tóibín; Trevor Golden; David Gilroy; Sharon Keogan; Noel French; Eugene Cassidy; Padraig Fitzsimons; and An Cathaoirleach.**

The main comments and items discussed included:

- The increases in expenditure, with no increases in LPT or commercial rates, over the five year period were noted.
- It was noted that central funding per head of population is the lowest in the country, and reflected in the NOAC Reports.
- Welcome for the extension of the Winter Gritting programme.
- The provision of a Discretionary Fund – arguments for and against this budget line, with suggestions as to how this budget could otherwise be deployed.
- Question on legal and professional costs and the collection of motor taxation.
- The need to address the condition of the road network throughout the county.
- The provision of Turnkey housing at competitive prices.
- The inclusion of cycling and sustainable transport in the budget.
- Provision for an Irish Language Development Officer
- Civic amenity site for Ashbourne and south county area.
- The level and use of Community Grants
- The positive developments in tourism and food development. The need to work on the strengths of the county.



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Responses and clarifications were provided by the Chief Executive and the Head of Finance.

2. That Meath County Council adopts, for the financial year ending 31st December 2020 the Annual Budget set out in Tables A – F

It was proposed to adopt the Annual Budget on the proposal of **Councillor Damien O'Reilly** and seconded by **Councillor Brian Fitzgerald**.

A vote on the proposal to adopt the Budget was called as follows:

Councillor	For	Against	Abstain	Absent
Cllr. Yemi Adenuga	X			
Cllr. Tom Behan	X			
Cllr. Joseph Bonner	X			
Cllr. Mike Bray	X			
Cllr. Eugene Cassidy	X			
Cllr. Francis Deane	X			
Cllr. Aisling Dempsey	X			
Cllr. Sean Drew	X			
Cllr. Edward Fennessy		X		
Cllr. Brian Fitzgerald	X			
Cllr Padraig Fitzsimons	X			
Cllr. Joe Fox	X			
Cllr. Noel French	X			
Cllr. Deirdre Geraghty-Smith	X			
Cllr. David Gilroy	X			
Cllr. Trevor Golden	X			
Cllr. Johnny Guirke		X		
Cllr. Wayne Harding	X			
Cllr. Annie Hoey	X			
Cllr. Suzanne Jamal	X			
Cllr. Sharon Keogan	X			
Cllr. Nick Killian	X			
Cllr. Alan Lawes		X		
Cllr. Paul McCabe	X			
Cllr. Stephen McKee				X
Cllr. Paddy Meade				X
Cllr. Ronan Moore		X		
Cllr. Maria Murphy	X			
Cllr. Gerry O' Connor	X			



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Cllr. Damien O' Reilly	X			
Cllr. Darren O' Rourke		X		
Cllr. Sarah Reilly	X			
Cllr. Tommy Reilly	X			
Cllr. Amanda Smith	X			
Cllr. Niamh Souhan				X
Cllr. Alan Tobin				X
Cllr. Emer Tóibín	X			
Cllr. Sharon Tolan	X			
Cllr. Gillian Toole				X
Cllr. Conor Tormey	X			
Result	30	5	0	5

The Statutory Budget was duly adopted.

- 3. That Meath County Council determines in accordance with the Budget as adopted the rate as set out in Table A and Table C to be the annual rate on valuation to be levied for the financial year ending 31st December 2020 for the purposes set out in Table A and Table C**

Unanimously adopted on the proposal of **Councillor Damien O'Reilly** and seconded by **Councillor Tommy Reilly**.

4. Formal Determination of the Rates Vacancy Refund Rate

Unanimously adopted on the proposal of **Councillor Paul McCabe** and seconded by **Councillor Sharon Keogan**.

- 5. That Meath County Council approves of the transfer to capital account of the sums provided for various capital purposes in the Annual Budget for 2020 as adopted.**

Unanimously adopted, on the proposal of **Councillor Eugene Cassidy** and seconded by **Councillor Brian Fitzgerald**.

- 6. That Meath County Council approves the estimated over expenditure for financial year 31st December 2019 as set out in Table A – F and outturn details.**

Unanimously adopted on the proposal of **Councillor Sharon Keogan** and seconded by **Councillor Brian Fitzgerald**.



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7. To adopt the Business Support Scheme, 2020 in accordance with Section 66 of the Local Government Act 2001

Unanimously adopted on the proposal of **Councillor Sharon Tolan** and seconded by **Councillor Yemi Adenuga**.

The Chief Executive concluded by thanking the Head of Finance and her staff for their work in compiling the Draft Budget.

This concluded the business of the meeting.