



## Clár / Meeting Agenda

## **Special Meeting**

## **Navan Municipal District**

# 11:30 a.m., 11<sup>th</sup> November 2020, Solstice

An Meára, Councillor Francis Deane, presided.

Councillors Present: Yemi Adenuga, Francis Deane, Edward Fennessy, Padraig Fitzsimons, Alan

Lawes, Tommy Reilly, Emer Tóibín.

Officials in Attendance:

**Chief Executive:** Jackie Maguire **Head of Finance:** Fiona Lawless

**A/Director of Service**: Larry Whelan **Meetings Administrator**: Claire King

Staff Officer: Triona Keating

Councillors were reminded of fire safety issues in the venue, including the fire exits, and also of the need to comply with public health guidance.

To consider and adopt the Draft Budgetary Plan of Navan Municipal District issued under Section 102 (4A) of the Local Government Act, 2001 as amended by the Local Government Reform Act, 2014.

The Report on the 2021 Draft Budgetary Plan of Navan, Kells, Trim, Laytown-Bettystown, Ashbourne and Ratoath Municipal Districts had been circulated to Councillors in advance of the meeting. This report provided the background to the Draft Budgetary Plan, the approach to its preparation, general statistics and the proposed General Municipal Allocation for each of the six Municipal Districts, as follows:

Description of Service	GMA -	GMA –	GMA –	GMA –	GMA-	GMA –	Total
	Ashbourne	Kells MD	Laytown-	Navan	Trim MD	Ratoath	GMA
	MD		Bettystown	MD		MD	2021
			MD				





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Members Discretionary	30,000	35,000	35,000	35,000	30,000	35,000	200,000
Fund							
Housing Estates /	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	300,000
Footpaths							
Litter Control Initiatives	6,500	6,500	6,500	6,500	6,500	6,500	39,000
Environmental Initiatives	4,500	4,500	4,500	4,500	4,500	4,500	27,000
Community Grants	12,500	12,500	12,500	23,000	12,500	12,500	85,500
Community Facilities	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	30,000
(Pride of Place)							
Arts, Festivals, Festive	10,000	10,000	10,000	20,000	10,000	10,000	70,000
Decoration & MD							
Renewal							
Total	118,500	123,500	123,500	144,000	118,500	123,500	751,500

The challenges posed by the budget process were acknowledged, particularly in the current year, and these challenges were referenced in the cover letter that was circulated with the draft budgetary plan. As it stands, the budget is not yet balanced and an amount of uncertainty still surrounds the level and stability of income for 2021.

Whilst it is currently assumed that the rates income will remain the same in 2021 as for 2020, the rates waiver scheme provided by central government this year was outlined. Whilst some rates are still due, the collection of this remains a challenge as many businesses remain closed. The level of vacancies will increase, as will the bad debt provision, and this will present a cost to the council in 2021. The main budget, to be presented on 30<sup>th</sup> November, includes no reduction in funding for front facing services. A number of small additional provisions have been made for areas such as housing and transportation. The cuts to the budget have focused on corporate areas, such as corporate buildings, finance, HR, print and stationary, etc. Uncertainty remains as to whether central government funding will be made available to cover reduced income arising from goods & services and COVID related costs. If additional supports for 2021 become available, these will be fed into the overall budget.

With regard to discretionary expenditure, it is currently proposed that the funding for the Municipal District Allocation Scheme, which was increased in 2020, be reduced to contribute towards a balanced budget.

Matters raised by councillors included:

- Commended the executive on managing to maintain front facing services and acknowledged the difficulty in achieving a balanced budget.
- Queried what income was arising from the vacant sites levy, with many tranches of zoned land remaining inactive for many years.





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• Expressed unanimous opposition to the proposal to reduce the MD Allocation Scheme, due to its importance to community groups, particularly now as they are unable to fund raise, and the value it adds within the community.

It was unanimously agreed, that having considered the Draft Budgetary Plan for Navan Municipal District, to note the plan with a view to reconsidering the overall budgetary position at the main council meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> November, when further information on available supports may have become available.

2 To discuss the rate of refund to owners of vacant premises.

It was unanimously agreed, on the proposal of **Councillor Edward Fennessy** and seconded by **Councillor Yemi Adenuga**, that given the current uncertainty around rates income, to leave the rate at 100%.

#### 3 Other

There was no other business.

The Mayor and councillors thanked the Chief Executive, Head of Finance and Director of Service.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

An	Meá	ira	

Signed: