



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

Ordinary Meeting

1st March 2021, (via Zoom only) @ 1.30p.m.

Presiding

Councillor David Gilroy, Cathaoirleach

Councillors Present:

Councillors Yemi Adenuga, Tom Behan, Joe Bonner, Mike Bray, Eugene Cassidy, Francis Deane, Aisling Dempsey, Seán Drew, Edward Fennessy, Brian Fitzgerald, Padraig Fitzsimons, Joe Fox, Noel French, Michael Gallagher, Trevor Golden, Wayne Harding, Suzanne Jamal, Geraldine Keogan, Nick Killian, Alan Lawes, Paul McCabe, Elaine McGinty, Stephen McKee, Paddy Meade, Ronan Moore, Maria Murphy, Gerry O'Connor, Aisling O'Neill, Damien O'Reilly, Sarah Reilly, Tommy Reilly, Amanda Smith, Alan Tobin, Emer Tóibín, Sharon Tolan, Gillian Toole, Conor Tormey.

Apologies: Councillor Deirdre Geraghty-Smith; Niamh Souhan.

Officials in attendance:

Chief Executive: Jackie Maguire

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

Meetings Administrator: Robert Collins

Senior Executive Officers: Dara McGowan

1 Confirmation of Minutes

1.1 Confirmation of minutes of Ordinary meeting held on 1st February 2021.

The minutes of the Ordinary meeting held on 1st February 2021 were confirmed on the proposal of **Councillor Nick Killian** and seconded by **Councillor Francis Deane**.

2 Matters arising from the Minutes

3 Expressions of Sympathy and Congratulations

There were none.

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

5 Statutory Business

5.1 Economic Development and Tourism

5.1.1 To receive a presentation from Waterways Ireland on the Royal Canal Greenway Integrated Development Plan and including the section of some 22 km within County Meath.

Mr Larry Whelan introduced the Royal Canal Greenway project and provided an overview on the role of Meath County Council in its development. This was followed by a presentation by Ms. Sharon



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Lavin, Head of Marketing and Communications, Waterways Ireland, who provided an overview of: the Royal Canal project and the product offering; the value of Greenways generally on the regional economy; and marketing and promotion activities planned. There were a number of interventions from the following **Councillors: Aisling Dempsey; Joe Fox; Noel French; Ronan Moore; Wayne Harding; Alan Tobin; Paddy Meade; Eddie Fennessy; and Yemi Adenuga.**

Ms Lavin and Mr John McKeown, Waterways Ireland, responded to a number of questions posed during the debate. An Cathaoirleach thanked the speakers and also the board and staff of Boyne Valley Tourism and the other relevant staff in the Council that supported the delivery of the project.

5.2 Housing

5.2.1 To adopt the draft Mid East Region Homeless Action Plan 2021-2023, as recommended by the Housing, Community and Cultural Development SPC.

This item was deferred.

5.3 Community

5.3.1 To receive and note the Local Community Development Committee Annual Report 2020.

Councillor Gillian Toole requested information on the selection criteria of the Evaluation Committee. The report was noted by the Elected Members.

5.4 Finance

5.4.1 Report on the Schedule of Uncollected Rates for year ended 31st December 2020 - In accordance with Article 26(2) of the Local Government (Financial and Audit Procedures) Regulations 2014.

The Chief Executive and Head of Finance provided a short introduction to the report. There were a number of questions and comments from the following: **Councillors Michael Gallagher; Wayne Harding; Pdraig Fitzsimons; Sean Drew; Nick Killian; Paul McCabe; Tom Behan; and Joe Fox.** Responses and clarifications were provided by Ms Fiona Lawless, Head of Finance.

The report was noted by the Elected Members.

5.5 Corporate Services

5.5.1 To receive the 2020 Annual Report on the Municipal District Allocation Scheme

The report was noted by the Elected Members. **Councillor Gillian Toole** thanked the MD staff for their work in administering the scheme. She also asked that the agreement to include reference to the scheme being funded by the LPT be included on the relevant forms.

5.5.2 To note the NOAC Local Authority Performance Indicator Report 2019

The report was noted by the Elected Members.

6 Reports

6.1 Chief Executive's Report



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There were comments and clarifications sought by **Councillors Nick Killian; Sharon Tolan; Eugene Cassidy; Michael Gallagher; Paul McCabe; Paddy Meade; Alan Tobin; Sean Drew; Wayne Harding; Damien O'Reilly; Gillian Toole; Elaine McGinty; and Mike Bray** on a number of matters in the Report. The main issues focused on:

Housing – purchase of lands for social housing; affordable sites in Dunshaughlin; impact of Covid restrictions on construction of houses; delays in delivery due to planning/procurement processes; Sheppard's Lodge development; new social housing development in Kells; Housing Adaptation grants; Ledwidge Hall delivery; affordable sites in other housing developments; change information in CE Report on delivered housing units.

Planning – number of planning applications and their impact on workload; one-off housing applications; rural housing – messaging to Oireachtas Members; report on unauthorised development.

Environment – Green Kilometre scheme; illegal waste and littering fines; illegal dumping.

Community – Pride of Place; National Broadband survey work – update.

Finance – number of home loans.

Transportation – TII grants; progress with Spine Road; vehicle charging points; tender for bus shelters; road conditions following the winter weather; leaflet drop for Navan Rail consultation; spend per capita on roads in Meath; road conditions on the R125 outside Ashbourne.

Responses and clarifications were provided, on the issues raised, by the Management Team.

6.2 Report from the Corporate Policy Group

There was no report from the CPG.

6.2.1 To approve, as agreed by the CPG, the recommendation of the Transportation SPC

“To review and prepare a multi-annual programme for the provision of raised tables/speed ramps at country schools, on a priority basis, and to identify the necessary sources of funding to improve safety at schools across the county.”

Director of Services, Mr Des Foley introduced the recommendation and outlined the work undertaken thus far and the commitment to develop a suitable programme. **Councillor Emer Tóibín** expressed some concerns about the lapse in time since she tabled the original motion and called for a plan with clear priorities and timelines. The recommendation was approved on a proposal of **Councillor Elaine McGinty** and seconded by **Councillor Paddy Meade**.

6.3 Report from the Protocol Committee

The Meetings Administrator informed the meeting that the Protocol Committee had a first opportunity to consider the Standing Orders governing the holding of Remote Meetings, which were adopted with a six-month review clause in November 2020. There were suggested changes proposed and a revised set of draft Standing Orders would be brought to a future Council Meeting for consideration. The Committee also discussed possible improvements in how Notices of Motion and Question can be submitted and processed.



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7 Correspondence

7.1 Correspondence from Minister for Defence and Foreign Affairs in response to Notice of Motion 10.9 adopted at the February 2021 meeting of the full Council re. Jadotville and the establishment of an Independent Review Group.

Councillor Elaine McGinty welcomed the response from the Minister and the establishment of the Review Group. Noted by the Elected Members.

7.2 Correspondence from Minister for Justice in response to Notice of Motion 9.6 adopted at the December 2020 meeting of the full Council re. Proceeds of Crime Legislation.

Councillor Gillian Toole requested that the Ministers for Finance and Public Expenditure be written to again, as a follow-up on the original correspondence. Noted by the Elected Members.

7.3 Correspondence from Minister for Justice in response to Notice of Motion 10.4 adopted at the February 2021 meeting of the full Council re. request on the Government to review both the Litter Pollution Act 1997 and the Waste Management Act 1996.

Noted by the Elected Members.

7.4 Correspondence from Minister for Housing, Local Government & Heritage in response to Notice of Motion 9.6 adopted at the November 2020 meeting re. income eligibility criteria for the Housing Adaptation Grants.

Noted by the Elected Members.

7.5 Correspondence from Cllr Darcy Lonergan, Chair of the Dublin City Council Women's Committee to Minister O'Gorman, Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth and Minister O'Brien, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

Noted by the Elected Members.

7.6 Correspondence from TII (Transport Infrastructure Ireland) in response to Notice of Motion 10.5 adopted at the February 2021 meeting of the full Council re. request for a full audit of any structural deficits along the M3 Clonee - Kells motorway and all fly-overs, bridges and junctions.

Councillor Gillian Toole expressed concern on this response.

Noted by the Elected Members.

7.7 Sustainable Transport Measures Grants (STMG) 2021 Allocations.

Noted by the Elected Members.

7.8 Meath Regional and Local Road Grant Allocations 2021.

Noted by the Elected Members.

8 Notice of Question

8.1 Submitted by Councillor Elaine McGinty



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“To ask if Meath County Council is paying off land loans taken on lands for Social Housing that didn’t get into the Land Aggregation Scheme. If this is the case, then to provide details of the Loan to Value and remaining term of any such loan?”

Response

Meath County Council is currently repaying three loans which were drawn down to fund the acquisition of lands for Social Housing. These loans did not meet the qualifying criteria for the Land Aggregation Scheme prior to the closure of the scheme in 2013.

The opening balance on these loans including rolled up interest at 31/12/2014 was €30,250,157 with a closing balance at 31/12/ 2020 of €22,641,350. Loan duration is 25 years with loans maturing on June 30th and July 1st, 2040.

The 2021 Revenue budget has a provision of €1,063,453 for repayments of these land acquisition loans (interest €280k and principal €780k).

To date Meath County Council has redeemed €2.3m from the land acquisition loans which was the recoupment of the land costs for Connaught Grove, Athboy. There will be an additional recoupment of €3.3 million for Farganstown (Phase I) when it progresses to the appropriate stage.

Councillor Elaine McGinty sought clarity on the response, which was provided by Ms. Fiona Lawless, Head of Finance.

Noted by the Elected Members.

8.2 Submitted by Councillor Damien O’Reilly

“How much has Meath County Council paid out in HAP rent allowance support in 2019 and 2020 to council housing applicants?”

Response

Meath County Council joined the Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) scheme in November 2015. HAP was intended to largely replace Rent Supplement which was designed as a short term support and the Rental Accommodation Scheme.

Under HAP payments are made in accordance with the ceilings set out in circular 48/2016 and are as follows:

One adult in shared accommodation	€310
A couple in shared accommodation	€350
One adult	€575
A couple	€700
One adult or a couple with one child	€975



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One adult or a couple or a couple with two children	€1,050
One adult or a couple with three children	€1,100

In certain circumstances a local authority can apply flexibility of 20% to the above ceilings.

A total of 3,482 tenancies were set up for Meath between November 2015 and December 2020. At 31/12/2020, Meath had 2,275 live tenancies. The equivalent figure at the end of 2019 was 2,089.

HAP rent payments to landlords in respect of HAP tenancies in County Meath are paid through the Shared Service Centre (SSC) for HAP (hosted by Limerick City & County Council).

The following data has been obtained from the SSC in respect of the total monetary value of HAP rent payments paid in respect of Meath HAP tenancies for the years concerned:

- 2019 - €21,352,114
- 2020 - €24,821,153

Noted by the Elected Members.

8.3 Submitted by Councillor Mike Bray

“To ask Meath County Council to provide an update on the actions taken following my motion in June 2020 in relation to the need for a focus on mental health and wellbeing in Meath during the Covid-19 pandemic as part of the community response?”

Response

Following the adoption of the Notice of Motion, Cllr Bray was invited to attend the Community Response Meeting on July 9th, 2020 to discuss the motion and how best to address the issues raised. Given that the membership of the Response Forum is similar to the LCDC, it was agreed that the matter could be discussed at the next LCDC meeting. At the July LCDC meeting, further discussion took place and details of all available mental health supports were circulated to the members. Details of these resources are available through the Community Call Line and also through each organisation’s website and are still operating at present.

The primary responsibility for mental health matters rests with the HSE, who are represented on the Community Response Forum. However, the local authority sector through its coordination role gives effect at local level to the objectives of the national Keep Well Campaign, which encompasses a range of agencies as appropriate.

The National Keep Well campaign which is currently being run also seeks to encourage participation in activities under the headings of Keeping Active, Switching Off, Getting Creative, Minding Your Mood and Eating Well to encourage people to mind their physical and mental wellbeing. As part of this campaign, funding was allocated to each Local Authority and in response to this campaign, sub-groups of the Meath Community Response Forum were established under the headings of Staying



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Connected/Managing your Mood and Switching Off/Being Creative/Eating Well to develop local initiatives. Some initiatives that have been implemented under 'Managing Your Mood' include: How to cope better during uncertain times – 10 Tips to Build Resilience and Thrive; Sleep Well During Covid-19; Stress Management & Wellbeing; and Ceol Comfort - Meath County Council Arts Office Ceol Comfort Series.

All the initiatives being run locally are set out on the Meath County Council website through the Keep Well link on the main page and are updated regularly: <https://www.meath.ie/notices/keepwell-campaign-mind-your-physical-and-mental-health> The Keep Well campaign will continue throughout March and April.

Noted by the Elected Members.

8.4 Submitted by Councillor Ronan Moore

"To ask Meath County Council if all homeless accommodation being provided in Meath, particularly by private providers adheres to the National Quality Standards Framework; and if not, have any plans or timelines been formulated to transition to accommodation that does adhere to these standards; and if plans or timelines have been formulated, details of such?"

Response

The provision of effective services to individuals and families experiencing homelessness is a key priority for Meath County Council, and endeavours to ensure a sufficient provision of quality emergency accommodation across the various models of provision, which includes facilities provided by both Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and the private sector.

The National Quality Standards Framework (NQSF) for Homeless Services in Ireland was introduced in 2019 to assist in ensuring that homeless services provided are of a high standard, and pertains to services delivered by NGOs and are funded by Section 10 Homeless funding. The Framework is applied across eight themes, including Theme 3: Safe Services, of which an element relates to the physical environment of emergency accommodation.

In this context, the Housing, Community & Cultural Strategic Policy Committee developed a Policy Statement on the Standards of Emergency Accommodation supplied by the Private Sector, which was adopted by full Council on 5th October 2020. This policy document provides a local structure to guide a process of continuous review of the standards of the physical environment of emergency accommodation, through defined standards, site visits and review. The standards and relevant features relating to the physical environment of emergency accommodation as contained in the NQSF were utilised for the purposes of the policy statement.

The strategic development of Meath County Council's homeless service in recent years has been to transition towards increased provision of supported emergency accommodation models through the



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NGO sector, which has been advanced, and remains one of the key strategic objectives for Meath County Council in the context of the Mid East Region Homeless Action Plan 2021-2023.

Councillor Ronan Moore sought clarity on private providers, which was provided by Mr Barry Lynch, Director of Services.

Noted by the Elected Members.

8.5 Submitted by Councillor Alan Tobin

“Is it possible to get a breakdown of the following information

- *Numbers of dog licences in the county*
- *A breakdown per district*
- *Per electoral area*
- *How many licences have chip details attached*
- *% of male/female*
- *What are the top 5 breeds?”*

Response

The following information has been obtained from the National Dog Registration System (NDRS) which has been in operation since July 2018.

Numbers of dog licences in the county	4,678 in 2020 (Increased by 17% from 2019)
A breakdown per district	Not reportable on the NDRS
Per electoral area	Not reportable on the NDRS
How many licences have chip details attached	1,011: Approximately 22 %. Please note it is not a mandatory field when purchasing a dog licence
% of male/female	47% Female - 53% Male
What are the top 5 breeds	1) Jack Russell Terrier, (2) Retriever Labrador, (3) German Shepherd, (4) Collie Border, (5) Yorkshire Terrier

The NDRS system does generate reminders for Dog Licences due for renewal. All dog licences can now be purchased at your local post office or online at www.licences.ie

Noted by the Elected Members.

8.6 Submitted by Councillor Emer Tóibín

“The democratically elected members of Meath County Council voted to provide traffic calming measures at schools throughout the county. Will the Officials update members on how this motion is being implemented? How many schools have had traffic calming measures implemented by the council since the motion was passed? How many schools are currently having traffic calming



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measures implemented now? How many schools will be completed this year and for each of the next 2 years?"

Response

On March 2, 2020, the Council considered a motion on the installation of specific traffic calming measures at country schools, which was amended and referred to the Transportation Strategic Policy Committee (SPC) for further consideration.

The motion was discussed at both the July and December meetings of the Transportation SPC. There was extensive debate on the motion and a list of direct and indirect works carried out at 25 schools was presented to the Committee. The SPC noted that the Council is very active on works for school safety but that no one solution addresses the specific circumstances for each school.

The December meeting of the SPC agreed a recommendation, which was approved by the Corporate Policy Group at its meeting on January 28, 2021. The recommendation is tabled for adoption by the Council under Item 6.2.1 above.

Noted by the Elected Members.

9 Notice of Motion

Emergency Motion (Standing Order 15)

It was agreed by the elected members to include the following Emergency Motion on the agenda, in accordance with Standing Order 15. The Emergency Motion was proposed by An Cathaoirleach, Councillor David Gilroy as follows:

“Due to the vitally important functions performed within every community across the country by Funeral Directors, Meath County Council calls on Minister for Health Stephen Donnelly T.D. to include Funeral Directors formally as Front Line staff and as such give due consideration to their vaccination priority as their front line worker status deserves”.

The motion was proposed by **Councillor David Gilroy** and seconded by **Councillor Sharon Tolan** and introduced by An Cathaoirleach. There were interventions from the following **Councillors: Sharon Tolan; Paul McCabe; Pdraig Fitzsimons; Gerry O'Connor; Aisling O'Neill; Nick Killian; Yemi Adenuga; Tom Behan; Maria Murphy; Sarah Reilly; and Alan Tobin**. There was general support for the sentiment of the motion but a number of members wished to include other workers such as An Garda Síochána; care workers, special needs assistants; members of the clergy and others. An Cathaoirleach suggested that the specific sensitive nature of the work of funeral directors merited consideration for vaccination priority and that this would be diluted by including other frontline staff. On the basis of this he proposed to withdraw the motion and this was agreed by the elected members.

9.1 Submitted by Councillor Ronan Moore (Deferred from February Meeting)



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"That in the spirit of inclusivity, Meath County Council replaces the prayer at the start of full county council meetings with a period of silent reflection to reflect the greater diversity that now exists within our county."

The motion was proposed by **Councillor Ronan Moore** and seconded by **Councillor Joe Bonner** and introduced by Councillor Moore. A number of elected members participated in the debate, including **Councillors: Noel French; Joe Bonner; Paddy Meade; Emer Tóibín; Nick Killian; Tom Behan; Aisling O'Neill; Sharon Tolan; Gillian Toole; Yemi Adenuga; Paul McCabe; Pdraig Fitzsimons; Brian Fitzgerald; and Alan Tobin.** There was a mix of views, with some members supporting the motion, others very much opposed to it, while others favoured some modifications or additions to current practice.

A proposal to refer the matter to the Protocol Committee was made by **Councillor Paul McCabe** and seconded by **Councillor Noel French** and was voted on by a show of hands, with 18 members agreeing and 12 not agreeing with the proposal. On the basis of this decision, the motion was referred to the Protocol Committee for further consideration.

9.2 Submitted by Councillor Edward Fennessy (Deferred from February Meeting)

"That Meath County Council stands ready to work with all statutory bodies and with civic society to plan and prepare for the referendum on Irish Unity and for a positive outcome to that referendum and calls on the British Government to agree to set a date for the Irish Unity referendum as provided for in the Good Friday Agreement and calls on the Irish Government to work for this outcome".

This motion was withdrawn by Councillor Edward Fennessy.

9.3 Submitted by Councillor Damien O'Reilly

"That Meath County Council dedicates a new website page on www.Meath.ie to provide contractors with ease of access to review all tenders uploaded to www.eTenders.ie and www.supplygov.ie"

Supporting Information subject to the motion being proposed, seconded and considered.

Currently there is a link on the www.meath.ie website that will bring all contractors/suppliers to view all tenders uploaded to e-Tenders. <https://www.meath.ie/council/your-council/finance-and-procurement/tenders-and-contracts>

Meath County Council use the SupplyGov portal, which was designed and developed by Kerry County Council. www.supplygov.ie is a closed website and there is no facility to view any tenders issued on this website. Interested contractors /suppliers can register as suppliers and select which competitions and contracting authorities they wish to get competition notifications of. We can include a link on the www.meath.ie website to direct contractors to SupplyGov, there they will need to register as a new supplier.



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In 2020, Meath County Council had a combined total of 254 competitions advertised on eTenders and SupplyGov.

There were interventions from **Councillors Ronan Moore; Paddy Meade; Michael Gallagher; Joe Fox; Trevor Golden; Wayne Harding** and **Alan Tobin** on this motion, with suggestions as to how better to inform local contractors on bidding for contracts. Ms Fiona Lawless provided an overview on some actions that the Council had undertaken in the past to inform contractors. The supporting information and the motion, proposed by **Councillor Damien O'Reilly** and seconded by **Councillor Nick Killian** was agreed.

9.4 Submitted by Councillor Damien O'Reilly

"That Meath County Council reviews the Casual Trading Licence's procedure for the county and the list of designated casual trading areas within."

Supporting Information subject to the motion being proposed, seconded and considered.

Meath County Council has in accordance with the Casual Trading Act 1995 responsibility for making Casual Trading Bye Laws and may designate casual trading areas within the county. Casual trading can only take place at the locations, specified in the relevant Bye laws, and the Council regulates the use of these areas by way of licence. Casual Trading means selling goods on the public road or at a place where the public has access as of right and any other place that is a designated casual trading area.

A casual trading licence is a requirement under the Casual Trading Act to sell goods on the public road and it is an offence under this Act to trade without a valid casual trading licence. Persons looking to engage in casual trading on private lands may be subject to consents under other codes such as planning or where the sale of food is concerned to obtain approvals from the HSE.

Meath County Council adopted Casual Trading Bye Laws in 1997 and designated areas within Athboy (2 locations) Oldcastle and Laytown Bettystown for trading. The allocation of 6 trading pitches at the Beach in Bettystown is governed by the County Foreshore Bye Laws 2010 as amended.

The Council when previously looking at amending the Casual Trading Bye Laws was advised by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment of its intention to amend the 1995 Act to bring it in to line with the EU Services Directive. While the Act was amended by Regulation (S.I. No. 308 of 2018), the Department has advised that more detailed work is required on the review of the legislation but that the timeline on this has been impacted by staff issues and other priorities in the current climate.

The changes in the 2018 Regulations relate to:

1. selection procedures used by local authorities in issuing licences;
2. the issue of charges and fees and
3. the duration of casual trading licences



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While the Council is examining these with a view to amending the current Bye Laws, it will seek further clarification from the Department if their review is likely to impact on the content of any amended Bye Laws the Council might make.

There were interventions from **Councillors Paddy Meade; Noel French; Edward Fennessy; Trevor Golden; Sharon Tolan; Wayne Harding; Paul McCabe; Tom Behan; Alan Tobin; Sarah Reilly** and **Nick Killian** on this motion. Members were supportive of the motion but also of the response provided. Mr Larry Whelan provided an overview of the casual trading licence regime and clarified a number of points raised. The supporting information and the motion, proposed by **Councillor Damien O'Reilly** and seconded by **Councillor Paddy Meade** was agreed.

On a proposal from Councillor Alan Tobin and seconded by Councillor Sharon Tolan , it was agreed to take two 15 minute extensions to 6.30pm.
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9.5 Submitted by Councillor Mike Bray

"That Meath County Council increases public awareness regarding the need for dog owners to keep their pets under control due to the increase in dog attacks on farm animals and the growing number of people using public parks and walkways."

Supporting Information subject to the motion being proposed, seconded and considered.

Over the last number of years, the Council has been involved in a wide range of educational and awareness initiatives designed to promote responsible dog ownership, as well as, using the enforcement powers provided for in the Control of Dogs Act 1986.

These include:

- Radio and Billboard Campaign
- Cinema Advertising Campaign
- Social Media campaigns
- Radio Interviews with Dog Warden
- Green Dog Walkers
- Signage and Stencils
- 'Responsible Dog Ownership' Leaflets
- National Tidy Towns Seminar with speaker on Dog Ownership

In recent weeks, the Council has re-tweeted on its social media sites the statement made by Minister for Rural and Community Development, Heather Humphreys highlighting the responsibilities of dog owners and the vulnerability of sheep to dog attacks, particularly during lambing season.



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There were interventions from **Councillors Mike Bray; Joe Fox; Paddy Meade; Alan Tobin; Paul McCabe; Sharon Tolan;** and **Wayne Harding** on this motion. The supporting information and the motion, proposed by **Councillor Mike Bray** and seconded by **Councillor Joe Fox** was agreed.

9.6 Submitted by Councillor Mike Bray

“That Meath County Council looks to increase the capacity at Bottle Bank/Bring Bank sites and seeks new locations for such facilities in light of the large increase in the volume of recycling at such facilities.”

Supporting Information subject to the motion being proposed, seconded and considered.

The various Covid related lockdowns have resulted in very significant increases in the usage of the Council’s Civic Amenity Sites and the Bottle/Bring bank network across the county. Such increases are reflected in data submitted by Glasco Recycling, who are contracted to service the bottle bank networks, which shows an average of 55% increase in the volume of glass and cans collected over the last year.

To counteract the demand levels, Glasco has put in place a number of new measures including running collection vehicles 7 days a week and running additional collection vehicles.

In response to capacity issues, particularly for glass, the Council has placed orders for additional banks for Kells, Slane and Oldcastle. Other sites will be examined on an identified needs basis, including new locations, however it is pointed out that the identification of new sites often presents considerable challenges especially where lands are not in the ownership of the Council.

The supporting information and the motion, proposed by **Councillor Mike Bray** and seconded by **Councillor Paul McCabe** was agreed without discussion.

9.7 Submitted by Councillor David Gilroy

“That Meath County Council agrees to become a signatory to the EU Covenant of Mayors, as 20 other Irish local authorities have done to date, and in doing so commits to adopting an integrated approach to climate change mitigation and adaptation, to a Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan with the aims of cutting CO2 emissions by at least 40% by 2030 and increasing resilience to climate change.”

Supporting Information subject to the motion being proposed, seconded and considered.

The Council is committed to becoming signatories to the Covenant of Mayors (COM). The proposed Climate Action and Low Carbon (amendment) Bill and the national Climate Action Plan 2021, both of which should be enacted and published at the end of Q2 2021, will embed ambitious targets and pathways to a low carbon society. Achieving these targets will take a collaborative approach, from national government, the public and service sectors, businesses, communities and all the way to individuals.



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Local authorities, including the Elected Members, will be forefront of the leadership in climate action, as we committed in our Climate Action Charter signed in December 2019.

Joining the Covenant of Mayors will commit us to preparing a Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan (SECAP) within 2 years which will assist us in achieving our energy targets and align energy and climate work. As a signatory to the CoM it opens us to expertise across the EU and beyond, to learn from each other and perhaps develop partnerships, additionally it is of benefit when making EU funding applications, as for some being a signatory is a requirement. Finally, joining the CoM reaffirms our commitment to stakeholders to address the climate crisis and move towards an transition to clean energy.

The supporting information and the motion, proposed by **Councillor David Gilroy** and seconded by **Councillor Trevor Golden** was agreed without discussion.

9.8 Submitted by Councillor Elaine McGinty

“That Meath County Council rejects the provisions contained in the Land Development Agency 2021 Bill published by the Government removing the role of the elected members of local authorities in approving the transfer or sale of lands to the Land Development Agency and in doing so agrees to write to the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage urging a removal of that provision and to ensure that elected members retain the right to control such sales or transfers and be able to prepare and plan for appropriate housing delivery on Council owned lands. The Council further agrees to circulate this motion to each Local Authority and the Association of Irish Local Government requesting their support for this.”

The motion was proposed by **Councillor Elaine McGinty** and seconded by **Councillor Gillian Toole**. It was agreed to consider this motion together with Item 9.9 (below).

9.9 Submitted by Councillor Ronan Moore

“That Meath County Council agrees to write to the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage: highlighting that Section 183 of the Local Government Act is one of the most important reserved functions delegated to elected members; expressing its opposition to the provisions in the Land Development Agency 2021 Bill (to be enacted) that overrides elected members in the transfer or sale of public land; and seeking to remove these provisions from the Bill”.

The motion was proposed by **Councillor Ronan Moore** and seconded by **Councillor Nick Killian**. It was agreed to consider this motion together with Item 9.8 (above).

Following introductions by the proposers of both motions, it was agreed to defer these items to the April Meeting to allow more time for discussion. This was agreed.

9.10 Submitted by Councillor Gerry O'Connor



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"That Meath County Council asks the Minister of Housing, Local Government and Heritage to investigate the potential of establishing a separate planning zone objective to cater for retirement villages and /or step down housing projects outside of the core strategy and Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy population limits (other than A1 or A2 Residential and while recognising that retirement/nursing homes can be built on G1 zoned lands)".

Supporting Information subject to the motion being proposed, seconded and considered.

Nursing homes/step down housing/retirement villages have not traditionally been included in Core Strategy calculations. The issue is addressed in the Housing Strategy provisions of the Act as a special requirement to be considered by the Local Authority. Local Authorities have generally stated a policy in the Housing Strategy to accommodate a certain level of niche housing such as elderly-specific or student accommodation, based on an estimate of local need, without this impacting on wider Core Strategy figures. The fact that these niche housing types are generally exempt from Part V, is further illustration of them sitting outside the 'normal' housing calculation.

Section 94(3)(c) of the Planning and Development Act states that the Housing Strategy shall take into account 'the need to ensure that a mixture of house types and sizes is developed to reasonably match the requirements of the different categories of households, as may be determined by the planning authority, and including the special requirements of elderly persons and persons with disabilities.

The supporting information and the motion, proposed by **Councillor Gerry O'Connor** and seconded by **Councillor Trevor Golden** was agreed without discussion.

9.11 Submitted by Councillor Joe Fox

"That Meath County Council calls on the Minister for the Environment, Climate and Communication to allow a longer lead in period to the banning Milled Peat due to the adverse effect that a sudden ban is having on the horticulture industry."

Not Considered – Deferred.

9.12 Submitted by Councillor Emer Tóibín

"That Meath County Council opposes the ratification of CETA by the Irish Government."

Not Considered – Deferred.

10 Schedule of Chief Executive & Approved Orders (For Information Only)

10.1 Schedule of Chief Executive's Orders – Transportation

10.2 Schedule of Chief Executive's Orders – Environment

10.3 Schedule of Chief Executive's Orders – Housing (see below)

10.4 Schedule of Chief Executive's Orders – Community & Enterprise

Not Considered.

11 Any Other Business



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

Councillor Sharon Tolan informed the meeting that she submitted an Emergency Motion that was not put to the Council for consideration and asked that it be considered by the relevant SPC. The meeting was informed that the chair of the Environment and Climate Change SPC had agreed to include this matter on the agenda of the SPC's next meeting. This was noted.

Councillor Nick Killian thanked An Garda Síochána for its response to the anti-mask/anti-restrictions demonstration held in Dublin at the weekend. He also wished to acknowledge the strong statements of the Minister for Justice and others on the demonstration.