



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

Ordinary Meeting

12th April 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, Deirdre Geraghty-Smith, 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, Niamh Souhan, Alan Tobin, Emer Tóibín, Sharon Tolan, Gillian Toole, Conor Tormey.

Apologies:

Officials in attendance:

Chief Executive: Jackie Maguire

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

Meetings Administrator: Robert Collins

Senior Executive Officers: David Jones, Dara McGowan, Sean Clarke, Larry Whelan

Law Agent: Rory McEntee

At the outset of the meeting, the Chief Executive introduced the new Director of Services, Mr Martin Murray and he was formally welcomed by An Cathaoirleach who also acknowledged the contribution of Mr Larry Whelan as Acting Director.

1 Confirmation of Minutes

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

The minutes of the Ordinary meeting held on 1st March 2021 were confirmed on the proposal of **Councillor Tommy Reilly** and seconded by **Councillor Gillian Toole**.

1.2 Confirmation of minutes of the Special Planning meeting held from 16th November 2020 to the 6th March 2021.

A number of members raised questions regarding the draft minutes and recordings of the Special Planning Meeting. **Councillor Brian Fitzgerald** on behalf of the Technical Group requested a hard copy of the draft minutes and also a copy of all the recordings for the members of his group. **Councillor Nick Killian** indicated that he had great difficulty with the draft minutes and suggested that they were incomplete, as the Motions and Motions from the Floor were not included in the



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

draft minutes but part of a separate document. **Councillor Gillian Toole** indicated that there were 5-6 omissions and proposed that the observations and recommendations of the prescribed bodies should also be included. **Councillor Damien O'Reilly** informed the meeting that the Fianna Fail Group was satisfied with the minutes, as presented, while **Councillor Gerry O'Connor** indicated that the draft minutes were easy to follow and that no issues were raised about the minutes, when the CPG met on Friday to discuss the meeting agenda.

Councillors Elaine McGinty and **Aisling O'Neill** proposed that the public needs to have access to the recordings. There were also related inputs from **Councillors: Michael Gallagher; Alan Lawes; Noel French; Maria Murphy** and **Alan Tobin**, with the latter asking what a delay in adopting the minutes would mean, why those who boycotted the Special Planning Meetings are now the ones objecting to the minutes and underlining that the minutes are not a transcript of a meeting.

In response, An Cathaoirleach asked members to identify inaccuracies or omissions for the meeting. Councillor Toole mentioned five issues she considered absent from the draft minutes. No other member identified example of such.

In response, the Chief Executive informed the meeting that the minutes, when adopted, are the official record of the meeting and not the recordings. The minutes, by their nature, record the decisions of the meeting and not every detail of what was said at a meeting. In terms of the inclusion of all the motion, submissions and other recommendations she questioned how legible and useful such a document would be, given that one motion was at least 35 pages long. She considered the draft minutes and the separate supporting documents containing the detail of the motions and motions from the floor to be the most pragmatic and user-friendly way of presenting the proceedings of the meeting. She requested that if members considered the draft minutes to contain inaccuracies or omissions that these should be provided in writing.

In relation to the recordings, the Chief Executive reminded the elected members of the decision they had taken in October 2020 regarding the recording of the meeting. The Executive was implementing that decision and she emphasised that the Council will honour its legal obligations in relation to Freedom of Information and Data Protection legislation and rejected any suggestions to the contrary. She also reminded the meeting of the purpose of the recordings, that they were an aide memoire for the compilation of the minutes and she underlined that no Councillor has been denied access to the recordings, nor is there any intention to deny access.

The Council's Law Agent made reference to Schedule 10 of the Local Government Act, specifically paragraph 14 relating to minutes of meetings and what they shall include. In relation to the recordings he re-stated that they were an aide memoire for the purposes of compiling the minutes but that they should be retained for a period until the statutory review process is complete and the new County Development Plan is in place. At that stage, they should be destroyed, unless there is an extant challenge. He considered this to be in line with the decision of the Council in October 2020 and in line data protection principles.



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

In conclusion, An Cathaoirleach proposed that the confirmation of the minutes be deferred until the next meeting. This deferral was agreed on a show of hands vote with 29 members in agreement. **Councillors Sean Drew, Damien O'Reilly and Alan Tobin** were not in agreement.

2 Matters arising from the Minutes

A proposal by **Councillor Damien O'Reilly**, seconded by **Councillor Wayne Harding**, to suspend Standing Order 5 – Hour of the Meeting, was not agreed by a show of hands vote, with 10 members in agreement and 22 members not in agreement.

Councillor Gillian Toole welcomed the inclusion of information on planning enforcement in the Chief Executive's Report, as requested at the previous meeting.

3 Expressions of Sympathy and Congratulations

Sympathy was extended to:

- The family of the late Paul Monahan, former employee.
- Martin Weldon, Finance on the death of his father, Tommy Weldon.
- The family of the late Mai Foley, retired Branch Librarian, Dunshaughlin.
- Frank Carroll, Water Services on the death of his father, Francis (Frank) Carroll, former employee.
- Deirdre Mac Dermott, Corporate Services on the death of her sister, Jean Mac Dermott.
- Marie Yore, Local Enterprise Office on the death of her father, Larry (Leo) Glennon.
- The Family of the late Ger Dowd, former county footballer and jockey
- The Family of the late Bernadette Bradley, sister of former Councillor Tom Bradley
- The family of the later Linda Sherlock, former journalist with the Meath Chronicle.

Congratulations were extended to:

- Richie Murphy, new Head Coach of the Irish Rugby U-20s Team
- Dermot McLoughlin and Sheila Mangan, trainer and owner of Freewheelin Dylan winner of the Irish Grand National at Fairyhouse
- Rachel Blackmore on winning the Grand National
- All local communities and the MCC Environment Department for the successful Greenkilometre initiative.

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



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

5.1 Corporate Services

- 5.1.1 To receive the Audit Committee Annual Report 2020 as presented by Mr. Tom McGuinness, Chair of the Audit Committee.

Mr Tom McGuinness presented the Audit Committee's annual report to the elected members, with a particular focus on the governance aspects, the work of the internal Audit unit, the Council's finances and risk management policies and a number of other matters dealt with by the Committee in 2020.

Councillor Gillian Toole raised queries regarding planning enforcement and legal cases, which were addressed by the Chief Executive.

- 5.1.2 To receive the Audit Committee Report in relation to the AFS and LG Auditor's Report 2019.

Mr Tom McGuinness presented the Audit Committee's report, highlighting a number of aspects for members' attention.

There were questions and comments from **Councillors: Gillian Toole; Emer Tóibín; Elaine McGinty; Sarah Reilly; Sean Drew** and **Gerry O'Connor**. The questions were addressed by Mr McGuinness, the Chief Executive and the Head of Finance.

- 5.1.3 To Approve the Audit Committee Charter 2021.

The Audit Committee Charter 2021 was approved on a proposal of **Councillor Gillian Toole** and seconded by **Councillor Nick Killian**.

- 5.1.4 To Adopt the Audit Committee Annual Work Programme 2021.

The Audit Committee Work Programme 2021 was approved on a proposal of **Councillor Gerry O'Connor** and seconded by **Councillor Alan Tobin**.

5.2 Finance

- 5.2.1 To receive the Draft Annual Financial Statement 2020

The Draft Annual Financial Statement for 2020 was introduced by the Chief Executive and presented by the Head of Finance. The meeting received a presentation that set out an analysis of the annual income and expenditure for 2020, a summary of the major revenue collections and an overview of the key financial aspects associated with the Covid-19 pandemic. An overview of the 2021 state-of-play was also presented and the elected members were informed that as a result of a buoyant NPPR income there would be a reinstatement of the Members' Discretionary Fund and increased gritting of regional roads in 2021.



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

There were a number of responses and questions from the following **Councillors: Joe Fox; Paddy Meade; Sean Drew; Ronan Moore; Noel French; Gerry O'Connor; Alan Lawes; Gillian Toole; Wayne Harding; Sharon Tolan; and Emer Tóibín**. Many of the contributions welcomed the restoration of the €15k Discretionary Funding per member and the extension of the Winter Road Gritting Programme. Responses, where required, were provided by Ms. Fiona Lawless, Head of Finance.

5.2.2 To approve (i) revised expenditure for the financial year ended 31st December 2020 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.

The revised expenditure for the financial year ended 31st December 2020 as set out in Table A was approved on a proposal of **Councillor Alan Tobin** and seconded by **Councillor Gillian Toole**.

The transfers to and from Capital as set out in Table B was approved on a proposal of **Councillor Gerry O'Connor** and seconded by **Councillor Gillian Toole**.

5.3 Housing

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

There was a discussion on matters related to the Action Plan, with contributions from **Councillors Noel French; Gillian Toole; Alan Lawes; and Ronan Moore**. Mr Barry Lynch and Mr David Jones responded to the issues raised.

The Action Plan was adopted on a proposal of **Councillor Damien O'Reilly** and seconded by **Councillor Alan Tobin**.

5.4 Community

5.4.1 To receive and note the Joint Policing Committee Annual Report 2020.

This was noted by the elected members.

5.4.2 To receive details and approve the allocations under the Community Grants Scheme 2021, as recommended by the Housing, Community & Cultural Development SPC on April 7, 2021.

The allocations under the Community Grants Scheme 2021 were approved on a proposal of **Councillor Noel French** and seconded by **Councillor Maria Murphy**.

6 Reports

6.1 Chief Executive's Report



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

There were comments and clarifications sought by **Councillors Joe Fox; Nick Killian; Noel French; Alan Lawes; Gillian Toole; Alan Tobin** and **Tom Behan** on a number of matters in the Report. The main issues focused on:

Housing – purchase of lands for social housing; Alverno Court residents; housing units in Enfield; housing allocations and HAP Payments in 2020; housing units in Rathmolyon; Central Government social housing policies;

Planning – progress report and tabular data on planning enforcement;

Corporate – work with the HSE on Covid messaging and lighting of public buildings; up-date on Chamber at Buvinda House;

Environment – Climate Action Plans;

Community – Pride of Place;

Water – public sewers on private property.

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

6.2 Report from the Corporate Policy Group

The Meetings Administrator provided a report on the CPM meeting which included an up-date on the development of a new Council Chamber at Buvinda House, which will go for pre-planning to An Bord Pleanála. The CPG also noted reports from the Housing and Community SPC and the Climate Change and Environment SPC.

6.3 Report from the Protocol Committee

The Meetings Administrator provided a report on the Protocol Committee meeting which agreed a revision of the Council's Standing Orders on Remote Meetings for approval by the full Council in May. The Committee also agreed a recommendation from the Civic Commemorations Committee on the naming of a new road in the Navan MD and agreed a recommendation regarding the Prayer at Council Meetings. Both will be presented to the Council for adoption in May. The Committee noted that the Council will be responding to a call for proposals issued by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage on establishing a local level caucus for women Councillors. The Committee approved the AILG Training Programme 2021 for attendance by members.

7 Correspondence

7.1 Correspondence from the Minister for Environment, Climate and Communications in response to Notice of Motion 10.4 adopted at the February 2021 meeting of the full Council re. review of the Litter Pollution Act 1997 and the Waste Management Act 1996.

Noted by the Elected Members.



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

- 7.2 Correspondence from the Minister of State with Responsibility for Public Health, Wellbeing and National Drugs Strategy in response to Notice of Motion 9.6 adopted at the October 2020 meeting of the full Council re. recommendation that a ban on the use of E-cigarettes and vaping, similar to that of the smoking ban, be implemented immediately.

Noted by the Elected Members.

- 7.3 Correspondence from the Minister for Justice in response to Notice of Motion 9.12 adopted at the July 2020 meeting of the full Council re. parental alienation.

Noted by the Elected Members.

- 7.4 Correspondence from the Minister for Planning and Local Government in response to Notice of Motion 9.10 adopted at the March 2021 meeting of the full Council re. request 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).

Noted by the Elected Members.

- 7.5 Correspondence from the Minister for Finance relating to Notice of Motion 9.6 adopted at the December 2020 meeting of the full Council and related correspondence Item 7.2 noted at the March 2021 meeting of the full Council re. Proceeds of Crime Legislation.

Councillor Gillian Toole expressed her dis-satisfaction with the response.

Noted by the Elected Members

- 7.6 Correspondence from Cllr. Mary Hoade, AILG President re. concerns in relation to the Land Development Agency Bill 2021.

Noted by the Elected Members.

8 Notice of Question

8.1 Submitted by Councillor Damien O'Reilly

"To call on Meath County Council to provide in tabular format, the social housing need per each application for every settlement in Meath's towns, villages and townlands." Please include Kilcock and Drogheda County Meath

Response

Outlined below is the gross housing demand (i.e. before deducting live HAP tenancies (currently 2,283 no)) per first preference area of choice accordingly to house type. Kilcock and Drogheda have only been listed as areas of choice within the last year. Therefore, the details provided for these two



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

areas relate to recent new applications. Where units become available in these two areas, an exercise will also be completed to ascertain the interest in such properties from applicants in the adjoining areas, with allocations taking place thereafter in accordance with Meath County Council's Allocation Scheme. The requirement for such an exercise will cease with the introduction of Choice Base Letting later this year.

ASHBOURNE MD					
	NO. OF APPLICANTS	ONE BEDROOM	TWO BEDROOM	THREE BEDROOM	FOUR BEDROOM
Ardcath	6	2	4	0	0
Ashbourne	505	155	235	100	15
Bellewstown	6	3	2	1	0
Julianstown	7	3	4	0	0
Kentstown	30	12	15	2	1
Kilbride	5	3	1	1	0
Skryne	6	3	3	0	0
Stamullen	22	7	8	4	3
TOTAL	587	188	272	108	19

KELLS MD					
	NO. OF APPLICANTS	ONE BEDROOM	TWO BEDROOM	THREE BEDROOM	FOUR BEDROOM
Athboy	121	54	45	16	6
Carlanstown	29	9	14	6	0
Carnaross	15	5	8	1	1
Cortown	11	5	3	1	2
Crossakiel	12	6	6	0	0
Drumconrath	11	7	3	1	0
Kells	250	110	93	36	11
Kilberry	7	1	6	0	0
Kilmainhamwood	9	5	3	1	0
Meath Hill	1	1	0	0	0
Moynalty	10	5	5	0	0
Nobber	15	8	5	1	1
Oldcastle	50	32	14	2	2
TOTAL	541	248	205	65	23

LAYTOWN/BETTYSTOWN MD					
	NO. OF APPLICANTS	ONE BEDROOM	TWO BEDROOM	THREE BEDROOM	FOUR BEDROOM
Bettystown	308	121	154	29	4



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

Donacarney	24	4	15	3	2
Donore	32	11	21	0	0
Drogheda (Meath)	12	6	4	2	0
Duleek	89	30	42	11	6
Grangerath	34	13	18	1	2
Laytown	25	17	6	2	0
Lobinstown	6	1	3	2	0
Mornington	15	5	6	4	0
RathKenny	1	1	0	0	0
Slane	36	12	17	7	0
TOTAL	582	221	286	61	14

NAVAN MD					
	NO. OF APPLICANTS	ONE BEDROOM	TWO BEDROOM	THREE BEDROOM	FOUR BEDROOM
Bohermeen	10	4	5	1	0
Castletown	13	3	4	4	2
Dunderry	5	2	3	0	0
Navan	1410	579	550	214	67
Rathkenny	1	1	0	0	0
Robinstown	6	1	2	1	2
TOTAL	1445	590	564	220	71

RATOATH MD					
	NO. OF APPLICANTS	ONE BEDROOM	TWO BEDROOM	THREE BEDROOM	FOUR BEDROOM
Batterstown	10	4	4	2	0
Clonee	71	21	34	15	1
Dunboyne	97	32	43	15	7
Dunsany	8	2	4	1	1
Dunshaughlin	127	52	44	22	9
Kilmessan	18	6	6	3	3
Ratoath	59	20	26	9	4
TOTAL	390	137	161	67	25

TRIM MD					
	NO. OF APPLICANTS	ONE BEDROOM	TWO BEDROOM	THREE BEDROOM	FOUR BEDROOM
Ballinabrackey	2	1	0	0	1
Ballivor	48	14	26	5	3
Clonard	6	2	3	1	0
Dunderry	5	2	3	0	0



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

Enfield	72	33	20	12	7
Kilcock	6	0	6	0	0
Kildalkey	7	2	4	0	1
Longwood	17	4	9	2	2
Rathmolyon	14	7	4	2	1
Summerhill	28	10	13	4	1
Trim	279	117	108	44	10
TOTAL	484	192	196	70	26

Noted by the Elected Members

8.2 Submitted by Councillor Sarah Reilly

“To ask Meath County Council

(a) how many one/two bed properties we have in our current housing stock,

(b) how many one/two beds are scheduled for construction in our current programme,

(b) on average how much longer is a person who is entitled to a one/two bed property waiting on the housing list when compared to those entitled to a three-bed property.”

Please differentiate for each question.

Response

(a) There are currently 1,358 one/two bed units in Meath County Council’s social housing stock at present (367 one bed units/991 two bed units), representing 36% of overall stock.

(b) Meath County Council Council’s approved pipeline of direct construction projects currently stands at 376 units, across 12 sites. Of this total number of units, 76% are one/two bed unit types (one bed – 89 units; two bed – 197 units), reflective of the need to increase delivery on these tenure types in future delivery. In addition, there are a further 167 one/two bed units within the current approved pipeline of Approved Housing Body activity (41% of total AHB approved pipeline units).

(c) It should be noted that prior to the more recent scaling up of local authority construction, the provision of social housing was determined by what type of units were available in the market for acquisition on a turnkey basis by the Council or the Approved Housing Bodies. This availability was determined by extant permissions and tended towards larger units. As a consequence greater progress has been made in reducing the three and four bed lists. The average waiting time, calculated across all Areas of Choice, is as follows, for the main house tenure; one bed unit – 10 years; two bed unit – 8 years; 3 bed unit – 5 years; 4 bed unit – 5 years. In order to help address the current composition of the Housing list the Council, as outlined at (b) above, is ensuring the vast majority of units to be constructed in its own Social Housing schemes are either one or two bed.



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

Noted by the Elected Members

8.3 Submitted by Councillor Edward Fennessy

"To ask the Executive for a breakdown by LEA of long term leasing and long term leased Part V approvals for 2018, 2019 and 2020; the annual cost of each lease; the lease review period in each case; the length of each lease; and if the property remains in private ownership at the end of the lease term or ownership transfers to the local authority or AHB, in tabular form."

Response

For the years highlighted, long term leasing arrangements have been entered into in relation to two developments, both within the Navan Municipal District (2020), through an Approved Housing Body. Requested details are outlined below:

No. of Units	Annual Lease Cost	Duration of Lease	Review Period	Status of Ownership at end of Lease Period
54	€734,400	25 Years	3 Years	Private
12	€144,840	25 Years	3 Years	Private

In respect of Part V, since the introduction of long term leasing as an option for the fulfilment of a developer's Part V obligation, one Part V agreement has been agreed utilising this option (2020 - Kells Municipal District – units yet to be delivered). Please note that the entire development (15 units inclusive of Part V) is to be subject to a long term lease for the purposes of social housing. The Part V discount is achieved by way of a reduction in the lease cost and is based on the cost that would apply to 10% of the development. Requested details are outlined below showing the Part V element only:

Annual Lease Cost	Duration of Lease	Review Period	Status of Ownership at end of Lease Period
€14,330	25 Years	4 Years	Private

Noted by the Elected Members

8.4 Submitted by Councillor Emer Tóibín

"To ask Meath County Council what plans are there for a Blue Way to be incorporated into proposals for the Boyne Greenway, Navan to Oldcastle?"

Response



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

As part of the proposed Navan to Oldbridge Greenway, the restoration of the navigation system is being considered and this navigation system could facilitate the provision of a blueway. In addition to an accessible waterway, further interventions such as access, signage, availability of water based activities, as well as, other activity specific facilities would need to be provided. As most of the required facilities are location or activity specific, there are no proposals to provide additional infrastructure beyond the accessible waterway at the moment.

Noted by the Elected Members

9 Notice of Motion

9.1 Submitted by Councillor Elaine McGinty (Deferred from March Meeting)

“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 previously proposed by **Councillor Elaine McGinty** and seconded by **Councillor Gillian Toole** at the March Council Meeting. Both Item 9.1 and 9.2 were considered together.

9.2 Submitted by Councillor Ronan Moore (Deferred from March Meeting)

“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 previously proposed by **Councillor Ronan Moore** and seconded by **Councillor Nick Killian** at the March Council Meeting.

Both motions were introduced by Councillors McGinty and Moore, with supporting contributions from **Councillors Aisling O’Neill; Paddy Meade; Gillian Toole and Nick Killian** who wished to have the agreed cross-party position of the AILG regarding the removal of the Section 183 reserved functions included in the minutes as follows: *“As a national representative body we can never support or accept any diminution in the reserved functions and powers of our Elected Members and*



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

we will be seeking that this section of the bill be removed". Opposition to the motions was expressed by **Councillors Joe Fox and Gerry O'Connor**.

A roll call vote was conducted on these motions as follows:

	Agree	Not Agree	Abstain	Absent
ADENUGA, Yemi		X		
BEHAN, Tom		X		
BONNER, Joseph	X			
BRAY, Mike		X		
CASSIDY, Eugene		X		
DEANE, Francis				X
DEMPSEY, Aisling		X		
DREW, Sean	X			
FENNESSY, Eddie				X
FITZGERALD, Brian	X			
FITZSIMONS, Padraig	X			
FOX, Joe		X		
FRENCH, Noel		X		
GALLAGHER, Michael	X			
GERAGHTY-SMITH, Deirdre		X		
GILROY, David	X			
GOLDEN, Trevor	X			
HARDING, Wayne		X		
JAMAL, Suzanne		X		
KEOGAN, Geraldine	X			
KILLIAN, Nick	X			
LAWES, Alan	X			
MC CABE, Paul		X		
MC GINTY, Elaine	X			
MC KEE, Stephen	X			
MEADE, Paddy	X			
MOORE, Ronan	X			
MURPHY, Maria		X		
O'CONNOR, Gerry		X		
O'NEILL, Aisling	X			
O'REILLY, Damien	X			
REILLY, Sarah		X		
REILLY, Tommy				X
SMITH, Amanda	X			
SOUHAN, Niamh		X		
TOBIN, Alan		X		
TÓIBÍN, Emer	X			
TOLAN, Sharon		X		
TOOLE, Gillian	X			
TORMEY, Conor				X



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

In agreement = 19, Not in agreement = 17, Abstain = 0, Absent = 4. In accordance with this decision, the motions were agreed.

9.3 Submitted by Councillor Joe Fox (Deferred from March Meeting)

"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."

The motion was proposed by **Councillor Joe Fox** and seconded by **Councillor Alan Tobin** and it was agreed that this should be referred to the Climate Action and Environment SPC for further consideration.

9.4 Submitted by Councillor Emer Tóibín (Deferred from March Meeting)

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

The motion was introduced by Councillor Emer Tóibín who cited the lack of discussion on this significant trade agreement. There were a number of other contributions, both in support and against the motion, from **Councillors: Paddy Meade; Joe Fox; Aisling O'Neill; Noel French; Nick Killian; Ronan Moore; and Eugene Cassidy.**

The motion was proposed by **Councillor Emer Tóibín** and seconded by **Councillor Paddy Meade** and was not agreed on a show of hands vote, with 11 members in agreement, 14 members not in agreement and 2 abstentions.

<p>On a proposal from Councillor Sharon Tolan and seconded by Councillor Damien O'Reilly, it was agreed to take two 15 minute extensions to 6.30pm.</p>

9.5 Submitted by Councillor Sharon Tolan

"In light of the overwhelming success of car free beaches in Meath, from both a public and an environmental perspective, to call on Meath County Council to make this ban of vehicles from the beaches permanent, with the exception of the disability and age friendly parking provision already made."

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

This matter was referred to the Climate Action, Environment and Emergency Services SPC by the Council in July 2020 and was considered at the July and September SPC meetings. Arising from these



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

meetings, the Council agreed to a continued prohibition of vehicles on the beaches during the Covid pandemic but to consider the matter further, at the March SPC meeting.

The proceedings from the March SPC meeting are as follows:

A presentation was made to the meeting setting out the key considerations in respect of this matter including:

- The objective contained within the Beach Management Plan February 2019 for the phased removal of cars from Bettystown Beach but subject to the availability of appropriate alternative parking
- The closure of the beaches from March 2020 to vehicular traffic on Covid grounds and following consultation with the Gardai – the exception being a dedicated parking area South of Seaview Terrace for older people and people with disabilities and also to facilitate a local business. Access will also be facilitated for emergency services.
- Subject to a number of risk assessments and consultation with the Gardai, and the HSE, limited Casual Trading may be facilitated in close proximity to the dedicated area.
- The receipt of circa 400 unsolicited submissions from members of the public with 93% favoring the retention of car free beaches and having experienced what conditions were like since the closures came into effect.
- Main Issues raised in support of car free beaches were – safety, noise, pollution, ecology, anti-social behavior, litter and waste, aesthetic appearance, scenery, regeneration of the beaches as recreational areas for swimmers, runners, walkers and other forms of group exercises.
- Submissions of support received from many different organizations including - An Garda Síochána, Meath Local Sports Partnership and the Beach Management Committee.
- The submissions received from those favoring allowing cars on the beach referred mostly to facilitation of parking for the elderly, the disabled and families with special needs.
- Powers contained within the Meath County Council Foreshore Bye-Laws 2010 as amended to regulate parking.
- An outline of the various sites investigated in the area as alternatives to beach parking – a number of sites were discounted following environmental assessment and likely damage to the dunes system as well some owners wishing to retain areas for private use.
- Sites available or being progressed –
 1. Funtasia - 184 spaces to be opened as a commercial car park during the current pandemic on a temporary basis.
 2. Colaiste na hInse - 120 spaces – route to the beach via Brookside Lane but acknowledged the need for improved signage and promotion.
 3. Spine Road Development - 83 spaces due for completion in July



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

There is on-going engagement with the owners of lands to the rear of Funtasia, which is convenient to the beach in Bettystown

- An additional 20 car parking spaces arising from the redevelopment of the car park across from Laytown Train Station and the re-location of the Bottle Banks
- Significant parking space available at Seafield.
- Following engagement with National Parks and Wildlife (NPWS) proposals are being worked up to regulate car parking in Mornington, which will serve to prevent vehicles driving on to the dunes – circa 40 parking spaces /pull in areas to be created and subject to agreement with NPWS and landowners where relevant.

The SPC Members welcomed the presentation and proposals and noted the very significant level of public engagement with respect to this matter - points made in the discussion that followed included:

- That while the current debate is in respect of proposals to continue to prohibit vehicles on the beach for a further 3 month period on COVID grounds the decision for a permanent prohibition is one that will rest with the full Council.
- That every effort must be made to expedite the provision of the alternative parking sites and including for short term requirements.
- The need for the Council to work with the Gardai in discouraging parking along the Coast Road and illegal parking at other locations.
- The need for additional Life Guards in light of the greater usage of different parts of the beaches.
- That the recommendation from the Beach Management Plan for the use of Shuttle Buses should be pursued.
- That parking requirements for Gormanston also need to be addressed.
- That car should be allowed back on the beach on environmental and safety grounds and respecting the SAC and SPA designations.

The Members in conclusion agreed with the proposal: to maintain the COVID related restrictions for a three month period; to retain the dedicated car parking spaces for the disabled /elderly and those with special needs; and for investigations on the alternative sites to progress as quickly as possible.

The motion was proposal by **Councillor Sharon Tolan** and seconded by **Councillor Alan Tobin**, with Councillor Tolan introducing her motion and providing background in terms of the need for the development of a beach management plan. There were contributions from **Councillor Alan Tobin** and **Councillor Eugene Cassidy**, as chair of the Climate Change and Environment SPC and **Councillor Paddy Meade**, the latter opposing the motion. Mr Larry Whelan, SEO, Environment Department



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

gave an overview of the current restrictions in place and the on-going efforts of the Executive to address the parking requirements in the area.

Councillor Tom Behan proposed, seconded by **Councillor Gillian Toole**, an amendment to the motion as follows:

"In light of the overwhelming success of car free beaches in Meath, from both a public and an environmental perspective, to call on Meath County Council to extend the ban of vehicles from the beaches for a further six months, with the exception of the disability and age friendly parking provision already made."

At the request of **Councillor Gerry O'Connor**, the Meetings Administrator confirmed that this was a valid amendment under the Standing Orders. In advance of a decision on the amended motion, there was a further extensive debate with contributions and questions from the following **Councillors: Ronan Moore; Joe Bonner; Gillian Toole; Eugene Cassidy; Nick Killian; Geraldine Keogan; Maria Murphy; Wayne Harding; Paddy Meade; Amanda Smith; Emer Tóibín; Aisling O'Neill; Stephen McKee; Elaine McGinty; Yemi Adenuga; Sharon Tolan; and Tom Behan.** Mr Larry Whelan responded to some of the questions, in terms of the car parking sites; improved signage; the different aspects associated with parking at Gormanston; and managing the situation in an SAC.

A roll call vote was conducted on the motion, as amended, as follows:

	Agree	Not Agree	Abstain	Absent
ADENUGA, Yemi		X		
BEHAN, Tom	X			
BONNER, Joseph		X		
BRAY, Mike	X			
CASSIDY, Eugene		X		
DEANE, Francis				X
DEMPSEY, Aisling	X			
DREW, Sean	X			
FENNESSY, Eddie				X
FITZGERALD, Brian	X			
FITZSIMONS, Pdraig	X			
FOX, Joe		X		
FRENCH, Noel		X		
GALLAGHER, Michael		X		
GERAGHTY-SMITH, Deirdre	X			
GILROY, David	X			
GOLDEN, Trevor	X			
HARDING, Wayne	X			
JAMAL, Suzanne		X		
KEOGAN, Geraldine	X			
KILLIAN, Nick	X			
LAWES, Alan	X			



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

MC CABE, Paul	X			
MC GINTY, Elaine	X			
MC KEE, Stephen	X			
MEADE, Paddy	X			
MOORE, Ronan		X		
MURPHY, Maria		X		
O'CONNOR, Gerry		X		
O'NEILL, Aisling		X		
O'REILLY, Damien	X			
REILLY, Sarah		X		
REILLY, Tommy				X
SMITH, Amanda	X			
SOUHAN, Niamh		X		
TOBIN, Alan		X		
TÓIBÍN, Emer	X			
TOLAN, Sharon		X		
TOOLE, Gillian	X			
TORMEY, Conor				X

In agreement = 21, Not in agreement = 15, Abstain = 0, Absent = 4. In accordance with this decision, the amended motion was agreed.

9.6 Submitted by Councillor Damien O'Reilly

"To call on Meath County Council to permit outdoor dining at all commercial premises until the COVID-19 vaccine programme has administered all second vaccines. This would entail the use of outdoor awnings, canopies, seating and tables on pathways along all commercial hospitality frontage. This motion will greatly assist commercial premises who had to close due to Covid-19 restrictions and can only reopen with limited socially distanced dining indoors."

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

There is currently a process to facilitate commercial properties requesting to place tables and chairs on footpaths/public spaces outside of their premises. While considering public health guidance, applications made under this Section 254 process will be administered as quickly as possible and for the remainder of 2021, all fees associated with this application process will be waived.

It is important to note, that when assessing the applications, those that can keep a clear 2m unobstructed footpath through the identified area and are approved by the MCC Access Officer, will not be unreasonable denied.

This motion was deferred.



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

9.7 Submitted by Councillor Yemi Adenuga

“To call on Meath County Council to provide a range of free, adequate, safe and suitable sanitary products on all public buildings and council so as to tackle period poverty and de-stigmatise and normalise menstruation”.

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

The current Programme for Government has committed to providing a range of free, adequate, safe and suitable period products in all publically funded educational settings in Ireland. At present there is a working group established, chaired by the Department of Health to examine the extent of period poverty and those at risk. This group is expected to publish their findings soon. Following the publication of this report and if the Department of Health proposes to introduce a scheme to provide a range of suitable sanitary products for free at various locations and requests the Council to facilitate this scheme through the use of some of the public buildings, the Council will consider this request at that time.

The supporting information and the motion, proposed by **Councillor Yemi Adenuga** and seconded by **Councillor Noel French** was agreed, with Councillor Adenuga underlining the need for implementation and follow-through of what is required.

Councillor Adenuga expressed her dissatisfaction with how consideration of the Notices of Motion was being rushed.

9.8 Submitted by Councillor Ronan Moore

“To call on Meath County Council to adopt in full the recommendations for local authorities in the 'More Women - Changing the Face of Politics' report by Dr. Fiona Buckley and Dr. Lisa Keenan published March 2021.”

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

This report was produced by Women for Election and funded by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. Its key findings are based on interviews with women who contested local, European and general elections during 2019 and 2020. The report sets out specific recommendations for Government, political parties and local authorities. The recommendations for local authorities are as follows:

“Local authorities need to work to demystify the role of the councillor and:

- *Run campaigns highlighting and explaining the role and impact of local councillors*
- *Provide post-election training on council structures and their functions*

To help change bring about cultural change local authorities should:

- *Provide equality, diversity and inclusion training for staff and elected representatives.”*



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

This report is part of a body of research on the role of women in politics, with other recent reports published by the National Women's Council of Ireland (NWCI). There is therefore a range of recommendations to local authorities to encourage and support a more active involvement of women in local government. In 2020, Meath County Council implemented the successful Women in Local Government project. It was part-funded by the Department Housing, Planning and Local Government and the project drew on the report commissioned by the NWCI entitled "Women Beyond the Dáil: More Women in Local Government".

The Council is currently responding to another call for proposals from the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, to establish a caucus for local women councillors. The 14 women councillors on Meath County Council have been invited to contribute to the Council's response. Should a caucus be established, then the findings of the report published in March 2021 could be considered further as part of a more tailored response to the key issues locally in Meath.

The supporting information and the motion, proposed by **Councillor Ronan Moore** and seconded by **Councillor Aisling O'Neill** was agreed.

9.9 Submitted by Councillor Tom Behan

"Call on Meath County Council to implement a 'Not Around Us' campaign similar to that of Limerick City and County Council which would focus on the creation of tobacco and vaping free zones, which would encourage adults not to smoke or vape in public spaces where members of the public are likely to gather, including but not limited to such locations as playgrounds, sports clubs, educational grounds and public parks."

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

Meath County Council, under Healthy Ireland, has commenced the engagement process with potential partners for the implementation of the "Not Around Us" initiative in Meath. It is hoped to launch the initiative in the coming months.

The aim of the campaign is to change people's approach to smoking around children by giving them assistance through the HSE Quit Smoking Cessation Services but also by highlighting in specific target areas including playgrounds, schools and libraries that children shouldn't be subjected to second hand smoke. Promotion of this message will be published through social media and also through erecting 'Not Around Us' signs in the target areas. Businesses who wish to support the campaign can do so by signing up through an expression of interest form which will be available towards the end of May.

Notwithstanding the implementation of the above initiative, it is prohibited under the Meath County Council Park Bye-Laws 2014 to "Smoke tobacco or tobacco related products including cigarettes, cigars or pipes in a playground area, or within close proximity to children's play equipment." This information is included on signage erected at all playgrounds which are under the control of Meath County Council.



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

The supporting information and the motion, proposed by **Councillor Tom Behan** and seconded by **Councillor Sharon Tolan** was agreed.

9.10 Submitted by Councillor Sharon Tolan

"That Meath County Council asks the Minister for Housing, Local Government & Heritage to investigate with the Department of Education, the potential of establishing a separate land use zoning objective specifically for educational needs, and the potential of identifying strategic educational sites in the county, and indeed across the country, to cater for the planned growth and increase in population."

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

Meath County Council liaises continuously with the Department of Education regarding school planning and provision. Formal discussions take place annually with respect to the Department's capital programme and the Council's Local Area and County Development Plan processes. Meath County Council currently zones educational lands as 'G1' in all relevant and necessary settlements through the County Development Plan and Local Area Plan process to ensure that adequate lands are identified and zoned in appropriate locations based on existing and future residential growth.

There is no specific category nationally with respect to educational zoning only and the Department of Education has advised that they do not have a requirement for same. Where a school site is agreed between all parties and committed to financially, the Local Authority zones the site for that specific purpose. It is possible, however, to place a Service Level Objective (SLO) for a school within the relevant Settlement Statement or Local Area Plan.

The motion was agreed on a proposal by **Councillor Sharon Tolan** and seconded by **Councillor Alan Tobin**. **Councillor Wayne Harding** referred to the recent situation in Drogheda and the levels of abuse that public representatives, in particular Councillor Tolan, had received on the issue.

9.11 Submitted by Councillor Deirdre Geraghty-Smith

"That Meath County Council calls on the Minister for Climate Action to introduce a nationwide local authority led reusable nappy scheme; as a measure to inform, support and encourage households in reducing single-use plastic waste in line with the sustainability objectives of the Waste Action Plan for a Circular Economy, 2020."

The motion was deferred.

9.12 Submitted by Councillor Alan Tobin

"That Meath County Council writes to the Minister for the Environment, Climate and Communications requesting that his Department undertake an assessment of illegal dumping enforcement nationally and further to refer the litter fines regime to the Criminal Justice (Fixed Charge Processing System) Working Group for review."



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

The motion was agreed on a proposal by **Councillor Alan Tobin** and seconded by **Councillor Sharon Tolan**.

9.13 Submitted by Councillor Alan Tobin

“That Meath County Council asks the Minister for Transport to consider penalty points for road traffic violations as added deterrent to the fines already in place for the following parking offences:

- *In disability space*
- *On a footpath*
- *On a cycle lane*
- *Taxi rank*
- *Loading bay*
- *Within 5 m of a road junction*
- *Working 15m of a pedestrian crossing”*

The motion was deferred.

9.14 Submitted by Councillor Michael Gallagher

“That Meath County Council calls on the Department of An Taoiseach and the Department of the Environment, who have committed to a review of the North South Interconnector Pylon, to complete the review and that it include the NEPPC group and the County Monaghan Anti Pylon Group, in the consultation process.”

The motion was agreed on a proposal by **Councillor Michael Gallagher** and seconded by **Councillor Paddy Meade**.

9.15 Submitted by Councillor Emer Tóibín

“That Meath County Council calls on the Department of Education to halt the withdrawal of SUSI funding from 77 Meath students at this very difficult time during the Covid-19 pandemic and that they request a timely return of the funding to the students affected.”

The motion was deferred.

9.16 Submitted by Councillor Damien O’Reilly

“To call on Meath County Council to write to the Minister for Health, Stephen Donnelly T.D., the Department for Health and the HSE requesting that Vaccination Programme data, first doses administered, and second doses administered are displayed per the 166 Local Electoral Areas (LEA) across Ireland. This is to assist in restoring confidence in the vaccination programme by providing the citizens of Ireland accurate localised vaccine rollout data.”

The motion was deferred.



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

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

Noted by the Elected Members.

11 Any Other Business

Before the meeting concluded a number of members expressed their views on how the Council Meetings were being conducted and why the business on the agenda was not being concluded within time. There were contributions by **Councillors Nick Killian; Eugene Cassidy; Damien O'Reilly; Noel French; Alan Tobin; Sean Drew; Gillian Toole; Alan Lawes** and **Trevor Golden**. An Cathaoirleach suggested that the party whips come together and propose some options as to how the business can be conducted more efficiently and how the Standing Orders can assist in this regard.

The meeting concluded at 7.20pm.