



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

Ordinary Meeting

14th June 2021, (via Zoom only) @ 1.30p.m.

Presiding

Councillor Seán Drew, Cathaoirleach

Councillors Present:

Councillors Yemi Adenuga, Tom Behan, Joe Bonner, Mike Bray, Eugene Cassidy, Francis Deane, Aisling Dempsey, Edward Fennessy, Brian Fitzgerald, Padraig Fitzsimons, Joe Fox, Noel French, Michael Gallagher, Deirdre Geraghty-Smith, David Gilroy, 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: Sean Clarke, Larry Whelan

Senior Planner: Padraig Maguire

1 Confirmation of Minutes

Confirmation of minutes of Ordinary meeting held on 10th May 2021.

The minutes of the Ordinary meeting held on 10th May 2021 were confirmed on the proposal of

Councillor Paul McCabe and seconded by **Councillor Gillian Toole**.

2 Matters arising from the Minutes

3 Expressions of Sympathy and Congratulations

Sympathy was extended to:

- The Lynch family on the death of Brendan Lynch;
- The Lambe family on the death of James Lambe;
- The family of Charlie Tyndall on his recent passing.

Congratulations were extended to:

- All Leaving Certificate students and Junior Certificate students
- New Directors of Services, Mr Dara McGowan and Mr Martin Murray;



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- All businesses re-opening across the county
- All sports clubs that have returned to training and competitive sport again;
- Ms. Mia Frawley and Ms Rachel Conway – winners of the Young Entrepreneur Senior category and the other Meath students that took part in the Student Enterprise Programme;
- MCC outdoor personnel for their work over the June bank holiday weekend.

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

4.1 Disposal of 0.0009 Ha of Land at Kenlis Crescent, Townspark, Kells

The disposal, in accordance with the statutory notice issued on May 20th, 2021, under Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001, was approved on the proposal of **Councillor Sarah Reilly** and seconded by **Councillor Paul McCabe**.

4.2 Disposal of 0.0412 Ha of Land at Cribena, Laytown, Co Meath

The disposal, in accordance with the statutory notice issued on May 19th, 2021, under Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001, was approved on the proposal of **Councillor Tom Behan** and seconded by **Councillor Sharon Tolan**. **Councillor Paddy Meade** was not in agreement with this disposal.

4.3 Disposal of 0.102 Ha of Land at Derver, Carnaross, Co Meath

The disposal, in accordance with the statutory notice issued on May 20th, 2021, under Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001, was approved on the proposal of **Councillor Sarah Reilly** and seconded by **Councillor Paul McCabe**.

4.4 Disposal of 0.0030 Ha of Land at St Patricks Park, Trim, Co Meath

The disposal, in accordance with the statutory notice issued on May 24th, 2021, under Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001, was approved on the proposal of **Councillor Noel French** and seconded by **Councillor Edward Fennessy**.

4.5 Disposal of 0.5623 Ha of Land at Enfield, Co Meath

The disposal, in accordance with the statutory notice issued on May 24th, 2021, under Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001, was approved on the proposal of **Councillor Noel French** and seconded by **Councillor Joe Fox**.

4.6 Disposal of 0.0101 Ha of Land at Cherryhill Green, Kells, Co. Meath

The disposal, in accordance with the statutory notice issued on May 26th, 2021, under Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001, was approved on the proposal of **Councillor Paul McCabe** and seconded by **Councillor Edward Fennessy**.



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5 Statutory Business

Transportation

5.1.1 To receive an update on the Navan Railway Line Assessment Study

A presentation on progress on the Navan Railway Line Assessment Study was made by Mr. Martin Murray, Director of Services, which outlined the options under consideration, the non-monetised benefits identified, the information submitted as part of the assessment and the next steps that the NTA will undertake in the development of the draft Transport Strategy. The work to date has seen a strong collaborative approach between the Council, the NTA and others.

Both **Councillors David Gilroy and Trevor Golden**, as members of the regional working group, gave an overview of the discussions at regional level. There were interventions and questions from the following **Councillors: Gillian Toole; Pdraig Fitzsimons; Paddy Meade; Alan Lawes; Emer Tóibín; Nick Killian; Maria Murphy and Damien O'Reilly**. Clarifications were provided by Mr Martin Murray and Mr Des Foley, Directors of Service.

Corporate Services

5.1.2 To adopt Meath County Council's Annual Report 2020.

The Annual Report 2020 was adopted on a proposal by **Councillor Gerry O'Connor** and seconded by **Councillor Gillian Toole**.

6 Reports

6.1 Chief Executive's Report

There were comments and clarifications sought by **Councillors Nick Killian; Tom Behan; Gillian Toole; Damien O'Reilly; Edward Fennessy; Aisling O'Neill; Paddy Meade; Elaine McGinty; and An Cathaoirleach**. The main issues focused on:

Housing Housing in Ratoath MD; purchase of lands for social housing; vacant properties; additions to the Housing List in 2021; Alverno Court refurbishment; acquisitions – breakdown of €11m; Womens' Refuge site; refusals for social housing; the Kenny Report on land prices; serviced sites in Donore; the Land Bill; affordable housing.

Transportation Parklet schemes and Re-start Grants.

Planning Planning enforcement, cases per MD; fines and correlation with permissions.

Community Tobacco campaigns.

Environment Increased bin collections.

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

6.2 Report from the Corporate Policy Group

The Meetings Administrator informed the meeting that the CPG had agreed the arrangements for the AGM and reviewed the agenda for the June Council meeting. It also noted a report from



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Planning, Economic Development and European Affairs SPC. Noted by the Elected Members.

6.3 Report from the Protocol Committee

The Meetings Administrator informed the meeting that the Protocol Committee had discussed correspondence from the Data Protection Commission to Deputy James Lawless TD regarding Section 40 of the Data Protection Act regarding members' representations. The Committee received an up-date on the Council's policy and procedures and would review these in light of any further clarification, which was expected from the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

The Protocol Committee also noted the successful application to the Department for funding to establish a Womens' Caucus for elected members.

As a member of the Protocol Committee, **Councillor Gerry O'Connor** addressed the recent coverage in the media on a matter that had previously been agreed by the elected members and which was now being brought into question by some members and causing reputational damage to the Council, as he considered that the media coverage was portraying a conflict and legal stand-off between the elected members and the Council executive. He underlined that the recording of the Special Planning Meeting was a decision of the members and that the executive is implementing this decision. This point was supported by **Councillor Paul McCabe**, who contended that some people were exhibiting a form of dementia of the events. **Councillor Nick Killian** asked that Councillor McCabe withdraw his reference to dementia, which Councillor McCabe duly did and instead used the term selective memory of events.

Councillor Killian agreed that the decision on the recordings was taken by the elected members in October 2020 but now considered it to be the incorrect decision. He informed the meeting that the Technical Group had engaged a solicitor to submit a Freedom of Information (Fol) request and suggested that the matter rest until that request is responded to. **Councillor Michael Gallagher** supported this view and said that the recordings should be available to the councillors.

An Cathaoirleach clarified that councillors have access to the audio recordings, as previously advised.

Councillor Paddy Meade wished to clarify that the decision in October was not supported by him, but that 39 members did agree to the decision taken then. While **Councillor Noel French** indicated that he reluctantly agreed in October to the recording of the Special Planning Meeting and to hold the recordings until the period of a judicial review had passed, on the advice of the Council's Law Agent. He said that had he known that the recordings were going to be made publicly available, he would not have participated in the meetings.

Councillor David Gilroy highlighted that the Council has nothing to hide, nor was there any lack of transparency or scrutiny in the Special Planning Meeting process. He reiterated that the recording was a decision of the chamber (the elected members) and felt that any change had to be made by



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the chamber. He wished to clarify that the letter from the solicitor is simply an FOI request and any attempt to portray it as anything else is inaccurate and that the media coverage is introducing doubt and confusion, where there is none. **Councillor Brian Fitzgerald** stated that what was printed in the media came from what he said at a meeting. He asserted that councillors have the right to request the recordings and that nobody has the right to destroy them. He underlined that councillors should have the right to access the recordings and said he made no apologies for the FOI request, as his previous requests for copies of the recordings were rejected.

Councillor Joe Fox indicated that the good name of Meath County Council and the County Development Plan was at stake. The latest media coverage has an inference that 'something funny is going on', which he underlined is not the case. He further indicated that this could have negative implications for the county in terms of FDI, as it undermines the reputation of the county as a place in which to invest. He affirmed that the decision making process was totally transparent and the Special Planning Meetings were undertaken correctly. These comments were supported by **Councillor Wayne Harding**, while **Councillor Damien O'Reilly** underlined that the minutes of the Special Planning Meeting, as the official record of the meeting, have been adopted and asked how many councillors had sought access to the recordings.

The Meetings Administrator confirmed that two councillors had sought and been granted access to the recordings. In concluding the discussion, **An Cathaoirleach** suggested that the FOI process take its course. He restated that the process regarding the County Development Plan and the Special Planning Meeting has been fully transparent and that any changes to the decision taken on the recordings should be discussed in the chamber by way of Notice of Motion.

7. Correspondence

7.1 Correspondence from Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage in response to Notice of Motion 9.1 and 9.2 adopted at the April 2021 meeting of the full Council re. Land Development Agency Bill.

The correspondence was noted by the Elected Members.

7.2 Correspondence from the Minister for Justice in response to Notice of Motion 9.7 adopted at the November 2020 meeting of the full Council re. anti-social behaviour.

The correspondence was noted by the Elected Members.

7.3 Correspondence from Minister for Environment, Climate & Communications in response to Notice of Motion 9.12 adopted at the April 2021 meeting of the full Council re. illegal dumping and litter fines.

The correspondence was noted by the Elected Members.

7.4 Correspondence from Minister for Planning and Local Government in response to Notice of Motion 9.10 adopted at the April 2021 meeting of the full Council re. land zoning for educational needs.

The correspondence was noted by the Elected Members.



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7.5 Correspondence from Fermanagh & Omagh District Council re. Motion – Protection of Native Honeybees.

On a proposal of **Councillor Alan Tobin** and seconded by **Councillor Nick Killian**, it was agreed to refer this correspondence to the Climate Action and Environment SPC.

7.6 Circular Letter LU 02.21 – Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment re. €5m Anti-Littering Infrastructure / Capital Supports - Outdoor Spaces and Covid 19.

The correspondence was noted by the Elected Members.

7.7 Circular NRUP 02/2021 – Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage re. Residential Densities in Towns and Villages, as set out in Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (2009).

A presentation on the guidelines was made by Senior Planner, Mr Pdraig Maguire, setting out the purpose of the Circular, how it would apply and how the draft County Development Plan, under review, currently provides for residential densities. There were follow-up questions by **Councillors Brian Fitzgerald** and **Nick Killian**, which were addressed by Mr Maguire.

The correspondence was noted by the Elected Members.

7.8 Circular NRUP 03/2021 – Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage re. Ministerial Planning Guidelines under Section 28 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), Regulation of Commercial Institutional Investment in Housing.

The correspondence was noted by the Elected Members.

7.9 Circular Fin 10/2021 – Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage re. Allocation for facilitating an Outdoor Summer.

The correspondence was noted by the Elected Members.

8 Notice of Question

8.1 Submitted by Councillor Emer Tóibín

“To ask the Council to update councillors on the progress of the Navan to Dublin Rail line review.”

This was addressed under Item 5.1.1 above and noted.

9 Notice of Motion

9.1 Submitted by the Technical Group (Deferred from May Meeting)

“This council calls upon the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage to make provision in law for elected members of local government to have access to independent legal advice in the discharge of their duties either through the office of the chief state solicitor or otherwise; and in addition to have provision made in law for elected members of local government to have funded



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access to independent planning consultants to support them in the delivery of better local government."

The motion was proposed by **Councillor Nick Killian** and seconded by **Councillor Brian Fitzgerald**. In presenting the motion, Councillor Killian referred to Section 132 of the Local Government Act and the provision that the Council could seek a second legal opinion, if required. He indicated that he was informed previously that this was not possible and asked the Chief Executive to confirm that this provision is available. The motion was supported by **Councillor Gerry O'Connor**.

An Cathaoirleach asked Councillor Killian to clarify why the motion is calling for something that is already in place and to consider withdrawing the motion on that basis. Councillor Killian proposed to withdraw the motion, which was agreed by the meeting. The Chief Executive confirmed that Section 132 is available to the Council, that there is a process by which it operates and that it would have budget implications if it was exercised.

9.2 Submitted by Councillor Gerry O'Connor (Deferred from May Meeting)

"That Meath County Council calls on the Minister for Finance and the Government to explore with our European partners, the potential to finance the exceptional Covid 19 expenditure by setting up a reparation fund, similar to those previously set up after major wars, with a fixed interest rate for the duration of the scheme, and which does not affect current National Capital expenditure by excluding the fund from European Fiscal Rules regarding limits on National spend."

Councillor Gerry O'Connor introduced his motion and the reasoning for tabling it, eluding to the budgetary situation that the county will face as it emerges from the Covid crisis. Both **Councillors Elaine McGinty** and **Alan Lawes** spoke in favour of the motion. The motion was proposed by **Councillor Gerry O'Connor**, seconded by **Councillor Noel French** and agreed.

9.3 Submitted by Councillor Gerry O'Connor (Deferred from May Meeting)

"That Meath County Council call on the Government to explore the German Sparkasse Community Banking model, to provide balance for the Irish Banking system and to avoid potential banking monopolies which could damage availability at reasonable cost, to necessary finance for our citizens."

Councillor Gerry O'Connor introduced his motion and the current situation with only two pillar banks remaining in the state and the pressure on the Credit Union structure. The following spoke in favour of the motion: **Councillors Elaine McGinty; Aisling O'Neill; Alan Lawes; Alan Tobin** and **Emer Tóibín**. The motion was proposed by **Councillor Gerry O'Connor**, seconded by **Councillor Joe Fox** and agreed. It was also agreed to circulate the motion to other local authorities for information.

9.4 Submitted by Councillor Alan Lawes (Deferred from May Meeting)



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“Meath County Council calls on the Government to fully comply with the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (UNCRPD), ratified by Ireland in March 2018, and specifically to support, through legislation if necessary, the right to Personal Assistance Service (PAS) for disabled people to have freedom, choice and control over all aspects of their lives to enable them to fully participate in an inclusive society as equals”.

Councillor Alan Lawes introduced his motion and the reasoning for tabling it. Both **Councillors Aisling O’Neill** and **Nick Killian** contributed to the discussion in supporting the motion. The motion was proposed by **Councillor Alan Lawes**, seconded by **Councillor Alan Tobin** and agreed.

9.5 Submitted by Councillor Stephen McKee (Deferred from May Meeting)

“That Meath County Council calls on the Minister for Education to reinstate the Modern Languages in Primary Schools Initiative, which ended in 2012, to promote foreign language skills for young children and furthermore, to fully implement the Languages Connect Strategy, launched in 2017, which sets out that Ireland should be among the top ten countries in Europe for the teaching and learning of modern foreign languages.”

Councillor Stephen McKee introduced his motion and the reasoning for tabling it in terms of the opportunities that languages provide in terms of economic development, but also in helping to understand other cultures and in connecting peoples. **Councillor Paddy Meade** spoke in favour of the motion. The motion was proposed by **Councillor Stephen McKee**, seconded by **Councillor Paddy Meade** and agreed.

9.6 Submitted by Councillor Noel French (Deferred from May Meeting)

“That Meath County Council writes to the Chinese Ambassador asking him to request his government to carry out an enquiry into the treatment of Uighur citizens of their country.”

The motion was proposed by **Councillor Noel French** and seconded by **Councillor Gerry O’Connor**. Councillor French introduced his motion, setting out the plight of minorities in China and expressing the view that Ireland needs to be unambiguous in its dealings with Chinese Government. Councillor O’Connor proposed an amendment, which was seconded by **Councillor Aisling O’Neill** and supported by **Councillor Brian Fitzgerald**, as follows:

“That Meath County Council requests that the Minister for Foreign Affairs formally writes to the Chinese Ambassador asking him to request his government to carry out an enquiry into the treatment of Uighur citizens in their country.”

The motion, as amended, was agreed.

9.7 Submitted by Councillor Maria Murphy



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“To call on Meath County Council to enforce the legislation which obliges businesses to keep the immediate area, and up to 100m, of their premises litter free.”

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

The Litter Pollution Act, 1997 places legal responsibilities on businesses to control litter.

The Council’s Litter Management Plan 2019 – 2021 outlines such responsibilities and includes:

- To keep the immediate area and up to 100m of the premises litter free.
- To keep any private land visible from public place free from litter.
- Persons owning, operating or in charge of mobile outlets and those who organise major events have additional responsibilities.
- To ensure there is no placement of unauthorised advertisements or public notices in public places.
- Not to place advertising flyers on cars.
- To ensure that transporting material does not cause litter and that the material is sufficiently secured and does not cause litter.

The policy of Meath County Council is to issue fines and/or to prosecute persons for littering offences and this also extends to business premises and including for non-compliance with the 100 metre requirement.

In addition to the use of enforcement powers, the Council actively encourage participation from the public and businesses of the county in preventing and overcoming litter pollution.

Councillor Maria Murphy introduced her motion by highlighting the increased levels of littering in recent months, despite the extra bin collections. The situation is likely to develop with the focus on outdoor dining and the use of outdoor spaces by businesses. She called on the Environment Department to issue a statement reminding businesses of their responsibility under the Litter Pollution Act. A number of members spoke to the motion, many in favour, with others wishing clarify specific aspects and related matters. The included **Councillors: Alan Tobin; Aisling O’Neill; Nick Killian; Elaine McGinty; Tom Behan; Wayne Harding and Gillian Toole.**

Mr Larry Whelan, Senior Executive Officer, Environment, also outlined the approach that the Council adopts in working with the business community to address the issue of littering. He also responded to a number of the questions raised. **Councillor David Gilroy** proposed an amendment, seconded by Councillor Murphy, as follows:

“To call on Meath County Council to remind the business community of the legislation which obliges businesses to keep the immediate area, and up to 100m, of their premises litter free.”

The motion, as amended, was proposed by **Councillor Maria Murphy** and seconded by **Councillor Alan Tobin** was agreed.



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9.8 Submitted by Councillor Ronan Moore

“To call on the Council to identify alternative ways of increasing awareness of prospective election candidates so as to help eliminate the need for election posters in the 2024 local and European elections.”

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

In 2018, the Council agreed a motion calling on the Minister to tighten the legislation on the use of posters. No substantive response was received. Further, in 2019, the Trim Municipal District agreed to a poster free area in Trim, which led to a voluntary protocol agreed by candidates and the political parties. This was seen as generally effective and is something that could be rolled-out in other MDs. However, a change in legislation would be required to introduce any new measures on election poster on a statutory basis.

There are a number of statutory provisions, set out under the Electoral Acts and the Litter Protection Acts, which seek to balance the environmental nuisance and intrusiveness posters may cause with their democratic purpose of informing the electorate. Research by Dr Theresa Reidy (UCC) shows that election posters increase turnout during elections and assist voters in their decision-making. The research also shows that posters help the public recognise who they're voting for, which is especially important for first-time candidates.

Where and when election posters may be erected touches on questions of civic participation, freedom of expression, free and fair elections, littering, environmental protection and the aesthetic of the public space. Restrictions currently apply to posters placed in certain publicly visible places. They do not apply to commercial advertisements, for example, where a candidate can advertise on a bus shelter. The public meeting exception, in the legislation, is also being increasingly used to circumvent the strict limitation on when election posters may be displayed.

There are experiences from other European countries which could be considered, such as erecting temporary public notice boards in various locations for the sole purpose of displaying election posters. These notice boards negate the need to display posters in other publicly visible places, such as poles and street lights.

In terms of alternatives to posters, there is growing experience with online advertising and the use of social media to target voters. While this has environmental benefits, it is an activity that is unregulated and open to abuse. These are alternatives that are available to candidates and political parties but not activities that the Council could engage in.

Councillor Ronan Moore introduced his motion as a proactive attempt to reduce the number of posters used during elections by identifying other means to promote candidates and increase turnout at elections, such as the use of public notice boards. The motion prompted a considerable debate, with the following members making interventions: **Councillors Paddy Meade; Damien O'Reilly; Alan Tobin; David Gilroy; Alan Lawes; Gerry O'Connor; Emer Tóibín; Maria Murphy; Tom**



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Behan; Joe Bonner; Wayne Harding; Eugene Cassidy; Nick Killian; Trevor Golden and Aisling O'Neill. Members presented arguments for and against the motion.

Councillor Gerry O'Connor proposed an amendment, which was seconded by **Councillor Alan Tobin**, as follows:

“To call on the Council to identify alternative ways of increasing awareness of prospective election candidates so as to help reduce the need for multiple election posters in our built-up towns and villages”.

The motion, as amended, was voted on by a show of hands vote with 14 members in agreement and 18 members not in agreement. On the basis of this vote, the motion was rejected.

9.9 Submitted by Councillor Alan Tobin

“In order to maximise the number of utility services and to provide as much fair competition that will benefit households and businesses, to call on Meath County Council to implement a planning policy to ensure that shared services are accommodated in a shared facility at a dedicated, designated location within new planned development over 9 units. The intention of this motion is to reduce the number and sometimes dangerous or unsightly locations of utility boxes.”

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

The installation of utility services is not the responsibility of Meath County Council and is generally carried out by third parties such as the ESB and telecom operators. The Council already has a number of policies and objectives in the Draft Meath County Development Plan, as follows:

INF POL 55: To seek to have appropriate modern ICT, including open access fibre connections in all new developments and a multiplicity of carrier neutral ducting installed during significant public infrastructure works such as roads, rail, water and sewerage, where feasible and in consultation with all relevant licensed telecommunications operators.

DM OBJ 87: To encourage the development of open access networks in all developments.

Furthermore, a planning condition is applied on all applications for multiple residential developments as follows:

Prior to the commencement of development on this site, the applicant shall agree in writing with the Planning Authority the following details.

(a) Evidence that the development has consulted with the Telecommunications Companies as requested by the Planning Authority

(b) Plans for the Telecommunications deployments.



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(c) Details showing proposals for the provision of an appropriate level of broadband service infrastructure on an open access basis to each unit within the development for approval of the Planning Authority. Realizable options showing the feasibility for connection of the units within the development to an exterior broadband service provider(s) and backhaul network shall be included concurrent with the initial construction and infrastructure installation with the development. Any land and way-leaves required for above and/or below ground infrastructure within the development shall be made available for such apparatus. All of the above proposals shall be in accordance with the requirements of the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment.

(d) The developer shall lay 2 No. 110mm Diameter uPVC pipes from the entrance of the development along the main reservation of the access roads. These ducts are to be chambered at the start point, finish point, at every road crossing and at every change in direction and at intervals no greater than 250m. The chamber size is to be 1,200mm x 600mm. Where possible, the duct network should be designed as resilient which may require the laying of ducts at either side of the road.

(e) To service individual units within the development, a single duct branch connection is to be extended off the spine duct network described above. A 600 x 600mm chamber shall be installed along this duct at each group of four houses/two commercial units. From this chamber 1 No. 50mm sub-duct shall extend into each dwelling to a point near the consumer unit. The length of sub-duct is not to exceed 100 metres (draw ropes to be included).

The design of the network described above is to be presented to the Planning Authority for approval prior to commencement of works onsite. The network design will also be made available to all telecommunications companies seeking to install broadband service infrastructure in the development.

Reason: To facilitate other Licensed Operators in providing broadband services to each dwelling within the Estate without the need to re-open the road, footpaths or verges.

Therefore, it is not considered necessary or appropriate to include any further conditions.

The motion was introduced by **Councillor Alan Tobin**. Both Directors of Services, Des Foley and Martin Murray spoke on this motion and suggested that it be referred to the Transportation SPC for further consideration. The following also spoke in favour of the motion: **Councillors Trevor Golden; Aisling O'Neill; Joe Bonner; and Emer Tóibín**, who also wished to address the issue of painting utility boxes to address the negative visual impact on the streetscape.

It was agreed that the supporting information and motion, proposed by **Councillor Alan Tobin** and seconded by **Councillor Aisling O'Neill**, be referred to the Transportation SPC for further consideration.

9.10 Submitted by Councillor Michael Gallagher



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“That Meath County Council insists that telecommunications companies share sites and co-locate masts with other telecommunication companies, where possible to do so.”

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

This is already the practice as part of assessing the planning application. Applicants are required to use existing mast infrastructure where appropriate and feasible to do so. New infrastructure is only permitted in the case where this cannot be achieved.

Councillor Michael Gallagher in introducing his motion, who was advised by An Cathaoirleach not to refer to any specific cases which may be the subject of a live planning application, asked if the Council had the necessary expertise to process applications from telecommunications companies. **Councillor Eugene Cassidy** also spoke on the motion. Mr Des Foley, Director of Services advised that each application is dealt with on its merits and that the Council had the expertise available.

The supporting information and motion proposed by **Councillor Michael Gallagher** and seconded by **Councillor Edward Fennessy** was noted.

On a proposal from Councillor Tom Behan and seconded by Councillor Aisling O'Neill , it was agreed to take a 15 minute extension to 6.15pm.

9.11 Submitted by Councillor Emer Tóibín

“In light of the current biodiversity and climate crisis, to call on Meath County Council to give greater clarity in terms of its duty to enforce planning matters in relation to unauthorised development at Oristown Bog, Drakerath including large scale drainage and excavation works on Coillte owned lands and to explain in detail how the current enforcement delay fails to comply with the judgement of An Bord Pleanála (Case number ABP-305340-19).”

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

The Council does not comment on individual unauthorised development cases. Meath County Council investigates all complaints received with respect to planning enforcement in accordance with its obligations under the Planning and Development Acts 2000-2020 and the Planning and Development Regulations 2001-2020 and takes legal advice where appropriate.

The motion was introduced by **Councillor Emer Tóibín** who referred to excessive development on the bog, the fact that she was not opposed to turbarry rights of families but asked how the Council can enforce the protection of the bog. **Councillor Paddy Meade** also supported the traditional practice of harvesting turf and related products. Clarification was provided by Mr Des Foley, Director of Services, on the enforcement process and the fact that the Council is taking legal advice.



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The supporting information and motion proposed by **Councillor Emer Tóibín** and seconded by **Councillor Elaine McGinty** was noted.

9.12 Submitted by Councillor Noel French

"That Meath County Council supports the campaign of Epilepsy Ireland to address long-standing issues that continue to impact on people with epilepsy and their families in Ireland today, namely: (1) Access to Free Travel; and (2) Provision of Reasonable Accommodations for State Examinations for students with epilepsy."

The Motion, if agreed, to be then sent to the Minister for Health, Stephen Donnelly TD, Minister for Social Protection, Heather Humphreys TD, Minister for Education, Norma Foley TD, Michael Moynihan TD (Chair, Oireachtas Committee on Disability Matters) and to other local authorities for correspondence purposes."

Councillor Noel French introduced his motion and the reasoning for tabling it, citing the 1,800 people in Meath that have epilepsy and the constraints they face. The motion was proposed by **Councillor Noel French**, seconded by **Councillor Maria Murphy** and agreed.

9.13 Submitted by Councillor Damien O'Reilly

"That Meath County Council writes to the Minister for Health, Stephen Donnelly T.D., The Department for Health and the HSE requesting that the Vaccination Programme data, first doses administered and second doses administered are displayed per the 166 Local Electoral Areas (LEA) across Ireland."

Councillor Damien O'Reilly introduced his motion and the reasoning for tabling it, eluding to the situation in south Meath, the wait that many over 60 years of age have to endure to be fully vaccinated and the situation of cohorts 4 and 7. The motion was proposed by **Councillor Damien O'Reilly**, seconded by **Councillor Alan Tobin** and agreed.

9.14 Submitted by Councillor Sarah Reilly

"To call on the Department of Health to prioritise the establishment of the Transport Support Scheme, which will replace the Motorised Transport Grant, and to ensure that access to this grant is widened to include eligibility for parents/guardians of children who need specially adapted vehicles."

Councillor Sarah Reilly introduced her motion and made reference to the experience of the Butler family in explaining the rationale for the motion. The motion was proposed by **Councillor Sarah Reilly**, seconded by **Councillor Alan Tobin** and agreed. It was also agreed to circulate the motion to other local authorities.



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9.15 Submitted by Councillor Joe Fox

"In view of recent actions, that Meath County Council calls on the Minister for Housing, Planning and Local Government to review the role of An Taisce in the planning process."

The motion was proposed by **Councillor Joe Fox**, seconded by **Councillor Eugene Cassidy**. It was agreed to defer this motion until the July meeting.

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

Schedule of Chief Executive's Orders – Transportation

Schedule of Chief Executive's Orders – Environment

Schedule of Chief Executive's Orders – Housing

Schedule of Chief Executive's Orders – Community & Enterprise

Noted by the Elected Members.

11 Any Other Business

Councillor Edward Fennessy highlighted an issue regarding the barriers on the track between the Ramparts and Stackallen bridge, which are impeding access for some users.

Councillor Alan Lawes requested access to powerpoints for councillors' tablets for future meetings at the Solstice Theatre. The meeting was informed that the July monthly meeting would be online.

The Chief Executive informed members that with the proposed changes in the Local Property Tax (LPT), the legislation would be changed and that the public consultation period on the LPT may be reduced and that it may also be necessary for the Council to meet in late August, in order to notify the Revenue Commissioners within the nominated deadline of the LPT rate that would apply in Meath in 2022. The suggested date is August 30th, but this will be confirmed at a later date.