



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Agenda

Ordinary Meeting

7th February 2022 (via zoom only) @ 1.30p.m.

Presiding

Councillor Sean 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, Dara McGowan

Meetings Administrator: Robert Collins

Senior Executive Officers: Larry Whelan.

1 Confirmation of Minutes

1.1 Confirmation of minutes of Ordinary meeting held on 6th December 2021.

The minutes of the Ordinary meeting held on 6th December 2021 were confirmed on the proposal of **Councillor Joe Fox** and seconded by **Councillor Nick Killian**.

2 Matters arising from the Minutes

Councillor Aisling O'Neill wished to correct a spelling in the minutes.

3 Expressions of Sympathy and Congratulations

An Cathaoirleach spoke on behalf of the six Municipal Districts, all elected members and staff in extending sympathies to the family and friends of the late Ms Aisling Murphy who was attacked and tragically killed in January.

Sympathy was extended to:

- Amanda Quigley, Trim Library on the death of her father, Thomas (Laddie) Friel
- The family of the late Frank Corcoran, former employee.
- The family of the late Gerry Callaghan, former employee.
- Paul O'Sullivan, Housing Department on the death of his father, Maurice O'Sullivan.



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- Sarah Mulvany, Planning Department on the death of her mother, Geraldine Mulvany.
- The family of the late Joe McEntaggart, former employee.
- The family of the late Ashling Murphy.
- Kathleen Nevin, Finance on the death of her mother, Ann Cheevers.
- Claire Fitzgerald, Customer Service Laytown/Bettystown MD on the death of her father, William Christopher (Noel) Fitzgerald.
- Caroline McLoughlin, Navan Library and Mark McLoughlin, Ashbourne Library on the death of their mother/grandmother, Angela (Sue) McLoughlin.
- Gabrielle Kelly, Planning on the death of her father, George Kelly.
- The victims of Bloody Sunday and their families on the 50th anniversary of the tragedy.

In accordance with Standing Order 11.5 Congratulations were extended to:

- Trim GAA on winning the Leinster Intermediate Final in January.
- Trim GAA on reaching the All-Ireland final yesterday and giving it such a heroic effort.
- Meath County Council on the award of €500,000 for the Boyne Valley Greenway.

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

Disposal of 0.000708 Ha of land at Seaview Terrace, Bettystown, Co Meath, in accordance with Section 211 of Planning & Development Act 2000 and subject to the provisions of Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001.

The disposal, in accordance with the statutory notice issued on January 13, 2022, under Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001, was approved on the proposal of **Councillor Sharon Tolan** and seconded by **Councillor Tom Behan**.

5 Statutory Business

5.1 Housing & Community

5.1.1 To receive a presentation from National Broadband Ireland (NBI)

An Cathaoirleach welcomed the representatives from NBI – Mr TJ Malone, Mr Donal Hanrahan; Mr Adam Ledwith; and Mr Damien Fitzgibbon. Mr Malone provided an overview of the plan and outline of the works thus far at national level. He outlined the scale of the investment required and the collaboration that NBI relies on from local authorities. He also provided an overview of progress in Meath and the associated timelines for connections to premises. Finally, he highlighted the information tool available to citizens on the NBI website.

There were comments and questions from the following **Councillors: Paul McCabe; Noel French; Paddy Meade; Michael Gallagher; Damien O'Reilly; Maria Murphy; Tom Behan; Mike Bray; David Gilroy; Joe Bonner; Emer Tóibín; Stephen McKee; and Elaine McGinty**. In general terms, the elected members expressed their disappointment with the progress on implementation; the timelines for surveys and the completion of connections; the quality and health and safety concerns with the works



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undertaken; the information being provided to citizens; the definition of terms used by NBI: connections in new housing estates; as well as addressing comments made about cooperation and engagement with the local authority. Director of Services, Mr Martin Murray also commented on the good working relation now established on road opening licences. Responses to the various questions were provided by Mr. Malone.

5.1.2 To receive a presentation from Meath Comhairle na nÓg

An Cathaoirleach and Councillor Ronan Moore welcomed the representatives from Comhairle na nÓg – Mr Peter Mulligan, Ms Michele Byrne and Ms Alana Heuseff. The representatives made a presentation outlining where Meath Comhairle na nÓg has achieved its goals such as: reducing the use of the term “Antisocial behavior” when referring to young people congregating together - 30% reduction; to make young people more aware of what is available and reduce the narrative that there is nothing for young people to do in County Meath – use of App technology; collaboration with the HSE regarding the Covid vaccine uptake and the “Not around us campaign” and working with Meath Sports Partnership on a Colour Run in 2022.

There were interventions from **Councillors Sarah Reilly; Nick Killian; Maria Murphy; Mike Bray; Yemi Adenuga; Tom Behan; Stephen McKee and An Cathaoirleach**, who welcomed the presentation and supported the on-going work of the Comhairle.

5.1.3 To appoint a replacement member on the Local Community Development Committee following the resignation of Councillor Yemi Adenuga

On a proposal by **Councillor Gerry O'Connor** and seconded by **Councillor Yemi Adenuga**, the appointment of **Councillor Noel French** was agreed.

5.1.4 To approve the appointment of Ms Sharon Curran as a replacement member of the Meath LCDC & LAG representing the Department of Social Protection.

On a proposal by **Councillor Nick Killian** and seconded by **Councillor Paddy Meade**, the appointment of Ms Sharon Curran was agreed

5.1.5 To approve the Draft Estate Management Policy as approved by the Housing, Community & Cultural Development SPC at its meeting held on 26th November 2021.

Mr Barry Lynch gave a short presentation on the new policy, the legislative context, the policy's six pillars, the various procedures and the focus on performance and monitoring of progress. He also made reference to the procedure for dealing with tenants that engage in anti-social behaviour, which was the subject of Item 9.2, the motion proposed by **Councillor Damien O'Reilly** and seconded by **Councillor Alan Tobin** and also discussed during consideration of Item 5.1.5.

There were a number of contributions from elected members both on the new policy document and the motion. These included from **Councillors; Damien O'Reilly; Gillian Toole; Aisling Dempsey; Aisling O'Neill; Paddy Meade; Joe Fox; Ronan Moore; Michael Gallagher; Eddie Fennessy; Alan Tobin; Elaine McGinty; Sarah Reilly; Nick Killian; Alan Lawes; and An Cathaoirleach**. Specifically in relation to the



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new policy the following issues were raised: regular Tenancy Training; role of Resident Associations; the need for quarterly monitoring; the excellent work of the Tenant Liaison Officers; rightsizing as an option; the use of video to communicate tenant's responsibilities; the need for a dedicated property management unit; management fees on private estates, the limitations of the primary legislation.

The Estate Management Policy was approved on a proposal by **Councillor Paddy Meade** and seconded by **Councillor Elaine McGinty**.

5.2 Corporate Affairs and Governance

5.2.1 To appoint Ms. Kim Reilly as a member of the Climate Action, Environment and Emergency Services SPC following the resignation of Ms. Karen Mahon.

On a proposal by **Councillor Tom Behan** and seconded by **Councillor Nick Killian**, the appointment of Ms. Kim Reilly was agreed.

5.2.2 To adopt the 2022 Annual Service Delivery Plan.

There were some questions on the ASDP from **Councillors Gillian Toole, Aisling O'Neill and Michael Gallagher** regarding spend per capita, the availability of the ASDP to Oireachtas members; risk management, community facilities in Ashbourne and grant funding rates to Meath County Council. Responses were provided by Mr Dara McGowan and Ms Fiona Lawless, Directors of Services and the Chief Executive.

The Annual Service Delivery Plan was proposed by **Councillor Alan Tobin** and seconded by **Councillor David Gilroy** and adopted.

5.2.3 To note the 2021 MD Allocation Scheme Annual Report.

The report was noted by the Elected members.

6 Reports

6.1 Chief Executive's Report

There were interventions from the following **Councillors: Nick Killian; Alan Tobin; Ronan Moore; Gillian Toole; Sharon Tolan; Paul McCabe; Aisling Dempsey; Eddie Fennessy; Emer Tóibín; Maria Murphy; Elaine McGinty; and Aisling O'Neill.**

The issues raised included:

- Housing: Choice-Based-Letting (CBL) – promotion of and data available; CBL workshop; traveller accommodation budget; Navan affordable housing scheme; rightsizing; social housing for people with special needs; availability of land to Council in Ratoath.
- Transport: Bus shelters; Navan bus service; M2 motorway – exclusion zone.
- Community: ORIS funding – decision making process; MCC Disability Officer.
- Planning: Planning permissions and commencement notices; Town Centre First and role of the councillor.
- Environment: Drop-off Days; waste disposal by burning; disposal of mattresses; energy retrofit



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programmes; recycling centres' contract.

Corporate: Joint meeting of Drogheda and Laytown-Bettystown members.

Finance: Local Authority Home Loan scheme.

Libraries: Bequests from families of Fr Gerry Rice and Professor George Eogan; donation from the Meath Chronicle.

Responses were provided by Directors of Services Fiona Lawless; Barry Lynch; Des Foley; Dara McGowan and Martin Murray.

On a proposal from **Councillor Sharon Tolan** and seconded by **Councillor Noel French**, it was agreed to take two 15 minute extensions to 6.30pm.

6.2 Report from the Corporate Policy Group

The Meetings Administrator reported that the CPG agreed the following future meeting arrangements: the March, April and May monthly Council meetings will be held in the Solstice Theatre and be hybrid in nature. That the AGM, scheduled for Monday, June 13th will also be held in the Solstice but this will be an in-person only meeting. In terms of the MD meetings, members of each MD would have the opportunity to discuss and decide how they wished to hold their future meetings, during their February Meetings. The options available to each MD vary, given the nature and facilities available in the MD chambers but the intention is to invest in facilities in all the MD Chambers, where this is required.

The CPG also received reports on the establishment of a Womens' Caucus, the reports from the SPCs and also noted the Training and Development Programme for Elected Members, which had been agreed by the Protocol Committee.

6.3 Report from the Protocol Committee

The Meetings Administrator reported that the Protocol Committee had received a report from Councillors Aisling Dempsey and Sarah Reilly on the work undertaken thus far in the establishment of a local Women's Caucus. The Committee also discussed the Council's change in policy for the processing of Members Representations in line with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). The policy change is a simplification and should see the requirement for elected members seeking written consent from constituents reduce.

The Committee also agreed to accept expected invitations from the Meath Associations in New York and London to participate in St Patrick's Day celebrations. Members noted that the Oireachtas Briefing for TDs and Senators will take place on February 21st and the re-scheduled Civic Reception for the Ladies Football Team is being organised for March 31st. The Committee also agreed two ALLG training events for elected members in February.



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7 Correspondence

7.1 Correspondence from ComReg in response to Notice of Motion 9.5 adopted at the December 2021 meeting of the full Council re. request to introduce legislation and measures to address the serious issue of spam calls and texts.

Noted by the Elected Members.

7.2 Correspondence from Iarnród Éireann in response to Notice of Motion 9.4 adopted at the December 2021 meeting of the full Council re. M3 Parkway & Dunboyne train stations.

7.3 Correspondence from the NTA in response to Notice of Motion 9.4 adopted at the December 2021 meeting of the full Council re. M3 Parkway & Dunboyne train stations.

The following expressed their disappointment and frustration with the responses issued by Iarnród Éireann and the NTA, **Councillors Damien O'Reilly; Nick Killian; Joe Fox and Maria Murphy.**

The correspondence was noted by the Elected Members.

7.4 Correspondence from Thomas Byrne T.D., Minister for European Affairs re. European Network of EU Councillors.

Noted by the Elected Members.

7.5 Correspondence from the EPA re. National Inspection Plan for Domestic Waste Water Treatment Systems 2022-2026.

Noted by the Elected Members.

7.6 Circular PL 13/2021 – Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage re. Large-scale Residential Development Act and Regulations 2021.

Noted by the Elected Members.

7.7 Circular Letter: NRUP 06/2021 - Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage re. Active Land Management Measures.

Noted by the Elected Members.

7.8 Circular: Housing 1/2022 – Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage re. Re. Changes to the Tenant (Incremental) Purchase Scheme 2016.

Noted by the Elected Members.

7.9 LG 01/2022 – Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage re. Ethical Framework for Local Government - Annual Declaration Forms.

Noted by the Elected Members.

8 Notice of Question

8.1 Submitted by Councillor Noel French



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“What plans has Meath County Council for increased chargers for electric vehicles both slow and quick chargers over the next year, 2 years, 5 years and has a bye-law been considered in relation to policing electric vehicle charging points to prevent blocking of charging units by drivers not using charging units appropriately?”

Response

The Electricity Supply Board maintains an interactive map of all public charging points in Ireland: <https://esb.ie/ecars/charge-point-map> The annual National Climate Action Plan (CAP) published in November 2021 sets out a series of actions and targets including the development of an Electric Vehicle charging network necessary to support the growth of EVs to circa 1 million by 2030 and sets a target for the supply of infrastructure to stay sufficiently ahead of demand. The following are the specific EV charging actions from CAP21:

- Enable greater EV infrastructure roll-out for passenger cars and vans.
- Develop a national infrastructure strategy to address on-street, location and fast charging infrastructure needs to stay ahead of demand, having particular regard to non-urban needs.
- Launch a Destination Charger Scheme to install publicly accessible EV charging infrastructure.
- Amend the Home Charger Grant Scheme to include apartments.
- Support the transition to electric vehicles in Gaeltacht communities through investment in EV infrastructure.

The Climate Action Regional Office (CARO) for the Eastern & Midlands Region and headed by Kildare County Council has examined funding streams to be assigned to the installation of Electric Vehicle (EV) charging points. Meath County Council will work closely with the CARO and other agencies in increasing the number of such facilities throughout the county. The EV Working Group through the Climate Action, Transport and Networks (CATN) committee of the CCMA published the ‘*LA Electrification of Fleet and EV Charging Guidance Document*’ to guide and inform local authorities in the transition away from fossil fuelled fleet and the provision of public EV charging infrastructure. It should be acknowledged there are many factors that could influence the provision of the infrastructure including, and not limited to, emerging technologies, private sector response e.g. petrol stations changing business models, alternative fuels (including hydrogen), connected and accessible public transport, wireless charging, e-bike and e-scooter charging requirements, etc.: <https://www.lgma.ie/en/publications/general-publications/local-authority-electrification-of-fleet-and-ev-charging-guidance.pdf>

Meath County Council’s ‘Climate Action Strategy 2019-2024’ has specific actions to EV charging infrastructure:

- M3.1 – Liaise and collaborate with relevant agencies to retrofit of charging points in towns in and around Meath.
- M3.4 – Examine incentives such as parking permits and reduced charges based on vehicle emissions and increase parking spaces privileges for car club/ EV vehicles.



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- M3.6 – To liaise and collaborate with relevant agencies to encourage the growth of electric vehicles and EBikes and supporting facilities/infrastructure, through a roll-out of additional electric charging points at appropriate locations.
- M3.7 – To examine the need for suitable charging structures for park and ride facilities.

Under the recent Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act, 2021 local authorities will shortly be instructed by Minister Ryan to prepare new 5-year Climate Action Plans which address both mitigation and adaptation. Given that the Meath County Council existing strategy addresses both, this new document will be a revision of the existing document. The Transportation Department is piloting a proposal to provide 2 No. 7KW and 1 No. 22KW chargers in the car park adjacent to the R150 Tara Road, Laytown-Bettystown and will apply for funding from the SEAI towards these works. This is part of a pilot project pending the outcome of the LUTS/LGMA sub committee recommendations for the LA sector. As part of the refurbishment of the car park at Laytown, the Council installed ducting to accommodate future charge points in that car park. Similarly, the Park & Ride which is currently being designed on the N51 in Navan adjacent to St Patrick's Classical School, includes for 10% EV spaces. User experiences from both these locations will be utilised to inform future infrastructure investment while also considering the management and administration of this additional service provision.

In relation to new residential complexes the amended chapter 11 of the Draft County Development Plan, currently on display, states the following:

11.9.2 EV Charging Points

- The Climate Action Plan, 2019 acknowledges that the pricing structure for EV vehicles is a major factor in consumers decision making. However, the Plan also acknowledges the importance of 'ensuring the EV Charging network underpins public confidence'. The Council will encourage the provision of EV charging points in all developments for future proofing.
- DM OBJ 94: All car parks shall include the provision of necessary wiring and ducting to be capable of accommodating future Electric Vehicle charging points, at a rate of 10% of total space numbers.
- DM OBJ 95: In any car park in excess of 20 spaces where public access is available, one fully functional charging point for Electric Vehicles shall be provided in accordance with IEC 61851 Standard for Electric Vehicle Conductive Charging Systems.

Given the current number of EV vehicles it is too early to consider whether bye-laws are necessary in relation to vacating charging points. Alternative methods to ensure EVs do not over stay beyond their charging length of time could include significantly increasing the charge per unit once the EV is charged or after a specific period of time. This would incentivise EV drivers to vacate the charging parking space as early as possible so as to make it available for other users.

Noted by the Elected Members.



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8.2 Submitted by Councillor Damien O'Reilly

"How much is Meath County Council owed in unpaid council house / unit rent in tabular format, per year for the last 5 years?"

Response

The figures in the table below are taken from Appendix 7 of the Annual Financial Statements for the relevant years. (Please note 2021 is a provisional figure).

During COVID some debt collection procedures were not available to Meath County Council. At the 31/12/2020 the rent arrears were €1,609,582 and the collection % for rent was 88%.

During 2021 the collection % increased to 89% and the rent arrears currently stand at €1,666,052.

31/12/2021 Arrears €1,666,052

31/12/2020 Arrears €1,609,582

31/12/2019 Arrears €1,278,021

31/12/2018 Arrears €1,196,995

31/12/2017 Arrears € 1,143,188

Noted by the Elected Members.

8.3 Submitted by Councillor Aisling O'Neill

To provide the waiting periods for housing in all areas of Meath, including a breakdown in relation to house or apartment size.

Response

The introduction of Choice Based Letting (CBL) in late 2021 has changed the basis on which allocations are made to social housing applicants. While applicants still indicate preferences in terms of area of choice it is open to applicants to bid on properties for which they are qualified in other areas of the county. In this way people who are longest on the list and prepared to move to secure an allocation can have their housing needs met.

The analysis requested is somewhat superseded by the introduction of CBL and is not readily available on the Council's Housing system. It would therefore require considerable manual intervention to produce. However, a high-level analysis indicates that 75% of the applicants on the list applied in 2017 or later. A weighted average taking account of the length of time people are on the list with a comparison as to the type of property they are seeking indicates that people are waiting on average 5 years for a one bed unit and 4 years for the other categories. One and two bed applicants account for 80% of the list.



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Councillor Aisling O'Neill sought clarity on the response, which was provided by Mr Barry Lynch, Director of Services. Noted by the Elected Members.

8.4 Submitted by Councillor Alan Tobin

“With the large increase in dog ownership, does Meath County Council intend increasing resources for the dog warden section and use these resources for additional public educational programmes on proper, responsible dog ownership, on rules around our public parks and on school education programmes?”

Response

While there is no funding allocated for the provision of additional resources to enforce dog controls, the Council in recognising the significant increase in dog ownership is focusing on educational and awareness raising initiatives designed to promote responsible dog ownership.

In this regard, arrangements are at an advanced stage with nine adjoining counties to go live with a new social media campaign, featuring a series of video clips which highlight the health, safety and nuisance aspects associated with dog fouling.

In addition, Council staff are putting in place dog fouling signage as well as spray painting stencil messages in areas where dog fouling had been reported as a particular problem. The spray paints wash away after a few weeks and has minimal impact on the environment.

Noted by the Elected Members.

8.5 Submitted by Councillor Michael Gallagher

“With almost two hundred thousand houses vacant in the Country during a serious housing crisis, how many vacant houses are on the Meath County Council vacant sites register and how much has been collected by the Council from the vacant sites levy in the last 5 years?”

Response

The Vacant Site Register is available to view on the Council's website at <https://www.meath.ie/council/council-services/planning-and-building/vacant-or-derelect-sites-and-dangerous-structures/vacant-sites> The register contains undeveloped residential and regeneration lands identified as being suitable for the provision of housing. The register does not include vacant houses. To date the Council has collected €91,000 under the Vacant Site Levy.

Councillor Michael Gallagher sought clarity on the response, which was provided by Mr Barry Lynch, Director of Services. Noted by the Elected Members.

8.6 Submitted by Councillor Emer Tóibín



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“To ask Meath County Council, as this is the second year in a row that government-led Covid-19 restrictions has forced the Irish Language Colleges in the Gaeltacht to be cancelled, can it increase the amount and its awarding of Gaeltacht scholarships to all schools in the county, especially to DEIS schools, noting that only 12 scholarships in total were awarded across all schools in Meath in 2019?”

Response

The Irish Language Officer is currently preparing proposals for an enhanced Gaeltacht scholarship scheme. Details of the new scheme will be advertised in April. The scholarship scheme was originally introduced in Meath with support from Creative Ireland and the local culture team of Meath County Council.

Noted by the Elected Members.

8.7 Submitted by Councillor Maria Murphy

“Where a planning application is submitted for a private development on private land which also includes work to public roadways and space under the control of Meath County Council at what point or who declares that the planning application for the public space is insufficient and a Part 8 is required.”

Response

Article 80(1) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001-2020 sets out the classes of development which must be assessed under the Part 8 procedure. Works which fall outside of these types of development are not dealt with under the provisions of Part 8. The list of works which require a Part 8 is:

- a) The construction or erection of a house.
- b) The construction of a new road or the widening or realignment of an existing road, where the length of the new road or of the widened or realigned portion of the existing road, as the case may be, would be –
 - (i) in the case of a road in an urban area, 100metres or more, or
 - (ii) in the case of a road in any other area, 1 kilometre or more.
- c) The construction of a bridge or tunnel.
- d) The construction or erection of pumping stations, treatment works, holding tanks or outfall facilities for waste water or storm water.
- e) The construction or erection of water intake or treatment works, overground aqueducts, or dams or other installations designed to hold water or to store it on a long-term basis.
- f) Drilling for water supplies.
- g) The construction of a swimming pool.
- h) The use of land, or the construction or erection of any installation or facility, for the disposal of waste not being –



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- (i) development which comprises or is for the purposes of an activity in relation to which a waste licence is required or
- (ii) development consisting of the provision of a bring facility which comprises not more than 5 receptacles.
- i) The use of land as a burial ground.
- j) The construction or erection of a fire station, a library or a public toilet.
- k) Any development other than those specified in paragraphs (a) to (j), the estimated cost of which exceeds €126,000, not being development consisting of the laying underground of sewers, mains, pipes or other apparatus.

Councillor Maria Murphy made reference to the role of elected members in the Part 8 process. Noted by the Elected Members.

9 Notice of Motion

9.1 Submitted by Councillor Sarah Reilly

“That Meath County Council, similar to other large organizations like the NTA, AIB and Lidl, becomes JAM friendly through a structured process akin to that taken by South Dublin County Council.”

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

The JAM Card was created in 2011 to provide people with learning difficulties and communication barriers (including dementia, brain injury, speech impediment, etc) with a discreet way of asking for a minute of patience (Just A Minute) when carrying out every day activities that others take for granted. JAM card holders can present their card when conducting business with an organisation so that they can be dealt with in a caring and appropriate manner. A number of companies and public bodies have become JAM friendly organisations through specific training and awareness raising amongst their employees.

A number of Meath County Council’s public facing services, including Customer Services, Motor Tax, Housing and MD Office staff have already undertaken the JAM training and testing, through an e-learning process in 2021. Staff members have been issued with their certificates and the Council is an approved JAM friendly organisation, as referenced in the Council’s Customer Service Action Plan. However, the promotion and take-up of the initiative has been impacted by the COVID pandemic and the restricted use of public counters, but it is intended that the Council will promote the initiative more proactively in 2022 to coincide with the expected increase in customers presenting at public counters.

This motion was introduced by Councillor Reilly who welcomed that the Council had embraced the JAM Card and considered that it could be rolled-out across the libraries and other facilities of the Council, such as the swimming pools. She looked forward it is being promoted more widely. The



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motion, and supporting information, proposed by **Councillor Sarah Reilly** and seconded by **Councillor Maria Murphy** was agreed.

9.2 Submitted by Councillor Damien O'Reilly

“That Meath County Council embraces “Housing for All” by accelerating the eviction of anti-social tenants in the county’s housing stock and reallocate these units to the thousands of good people waiting on housing units in Meath.”

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

Meath County Council’s Housing Section continues to explore all options when dealing with anti-social or nuisance behaviour whereby all complaints are investigated in a constructive, fair and impartial manner. In order to follow due process, all reports of Anti-Social Behaviour are investigated and dealt with in accordance with the Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy and particularly in accordance with the relevant legislation i.e. Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2014.

In instances of Anti-Social Behaviour complaints, actions that may be taken are as follows:

- Advice given;
- Referral to other agencies such as Gardai, HSE, Tusla etc.;
- Mediation;
- Verbal Warning;
- First Written Notice;
- Second Written Notice;
- Statutory Warning in accordance with Section 7 and/or Section 9 of the Housing Act 2014
 - Indicating that if the breach continues during, or is repeated within 12 months of the tenancy warning coming into effect, then the authority may either:
 - (a) apply under Section 12 to recover possession of the dwelling or;
 - (b) where appropriate, apply to the District Court (under section 3 of the Act of 1997) for an excluding order against the household member who caused that breach. A statutory warning may be reviewed within 10 working days. For 3 years following a tenancy warning a local authority can refuse a transfer, refuse to sell a house to a tenant and refuse an allocation to household members engaged in anti – social behaviour.
- Legal Action:
 - An application for possession may be sought in District Court in accordance with Section 12 of the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2014.

The decision to terminate the tenancy (and carry out subsequent repossession) will be taken in the interest of good estate management and for serious and/or persistent breaches of tenancy. The legal procedure for terminating a tenancy is in Part 2 of the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2014.



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This motion was introduced by Councillor O'Reilly during the discussion on Item 5.1.5 above. There were a number of interventions by elected members, both support and against the motion. In concluding the discussion on the motion, a number of elected members intervened to take issue with some of the language used and examples cited by Councillor O'Reilly, including **Councillors Ronan Moore; Sharon Tolan; Elaine McGinty and Eddie Fennesy**. Mr Barry Lynch, Director of Services, underlined that the number of tenants falling under the scope of the motion is very small and that any action that the Council takes has to be evidence-based and done in accordance with the legislation in place. The motion, and supporting information, proposed by **Councillor Damien O'Reilly** and seconded by **Councillor Alan Tobin** was agreed on a show of hands vote with 20 votes in favour, 10 votes against and no abstentions.

9.3 Submitted by Councillor Alan Tobin

"That Meath County Council conducts a review of road safety in County Meath following the unacceptably high numbers of fatalities in 2021 (10.3% of the national total), and in doing so to request the input of the Department of Transport, the Road Safety Authority, An Garda Síochána, as well as the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, to ensure that sufficient funding is made available to put additional road safety measures in place and to mount a 'Meath specific' road safety campaign."

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

Meath County Council's Road Safety Plan sets out its strategy for continually improving safety on the county's roads. The implementation of the plan relies on a co-ordinated approach between a range of stakeholders including the Department of Transport, the Road Safety Authority, Transport Infrastructure Ireland, and in particular between the Council and An Garda Síochána. The strategy provides for a review of road accident trends as well as ambitious but attainable targets to help reduce accidents on our road network.

The strategy is based on 'the four Es' namely Engineering, Education, Enforcement and Evaluation. The Council collaborates closely with the Gardai, and regular meetings are held between the Council and the Garda Collision Prevention Unit. This forum allows both parties to raise issues within our administrative area and places a focus on collision prone locations and the actions, including educational campaigns and specific safety works, which may be taken to improve road safety.

There are many factors that contribute to road safety issues, one of which being driver behaviour/awareness. The Council, via road safety awareness campaigns and investment in road safety improvement measures funded by the Department of Transport, will continue to ensure that road safety measures are put in place where necessary.

While every fatality on our roads is a tragedy, the number of recorded road fatalities in recent years is 6 in 2017, 7 in 2018, 5 in 2019, 8 in 2020. We are awaiting verification of 2021 figures.



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Following the recent publication of the Government's Road Safety Strategy and its overarching mission to save lives and prevent injuries by reducing the number and severity of collisions on our roads, Meath County Council is currently working to develop the next Road Safety Plan for County Meath for the period 2021 to 2030.

The motion was introduced by Councillor Tobin who highlighted that 2021 had been a bad year for road fatalities in Meath, especially in comparison to neighbouring counties. He stated that the purpose of the motion was to seek further resources to address the issue, to support greater visibility of An Garda Síochana and to implement more specific measures in the county. There was a number of interventions supporting the motion, from **Councillors Paddy Meade; Stephen McKee; Alan Lawes;** and **Gillian Toole**. The motion, and supporting information, proposed by **Councillor Alan Tobin** and seconded by **Councillor Paddy Meade** was agreed.

9.4 Submitted by Councillor Emer Tóibín

"That Meath County Council phases out the lease back of housing from vulture funds and seeks the necessary funding to buy or build new housing directly."

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

Under section 2.2 of Housing for All the Government committed to the phasing-out of long-term leasing as a means to the provision of social housing. The targets set for Meath County Council indicate that there will be no new delivery of leased units after 2023. A leasing delivery target of 153 units has been set for 2022/2023 out of a total delivery of 1,525 over the first five years of the action plan.

This item was deferred until the next meeting.

10 General Interest Motions

10.1 Submitted by Councillor Alan Lawes

"That Meath County Council calls on the Minister for Health to introduce antigen testing for all health care staff entering our hospitals and nursing homes".

The motion was proposed by **Councillor Alan Lawes**, seconded by **Councillor Michael Gallagher** and agreed.

10.2 Submitted by Councillor Elaine McGinty

"Meath County Council highlights that there are 82 children with Spina Bifida and/or Hydrocephalus currently requiring urgent orthopaedic intervention and calls on the Minister for Health, Stephen Donnelly TD to fast track these children for surgical review as a matter of urgency and to ensure that



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provision of services to disabled children is made within elective hospital settings, as well as, acute hospital settings to minimise the future need for such complex surgeries”.

The motion was proposed by **Councillor Elaine McGinty** seconded by **Councillor Sharon Tolan** and agreed.

10.3 Submitted by Councillor Conor Tormey

“That Meath County Council writes to Mr Joe O’Brien TD, Minister of State with responsibility for Community Development and Charities asking that his Department acknowledge the difference in the various types of community organisations and exempt the small community-based groups from registering with the Charities Regulator under the Charities Governance Code.”

The motion was proposed by **Councillor Conor Tormey**, seconded by **Councillor Paddy Meade** and agreed.

10.4 Submitted by Councillor Maria Murphy

“That Meath County Council writes to Mr Joe O’Brien TD, Minister of State with responsibility for Community Development and Charities requesting a greater input from and consultation with voluntary community-based organisations when preparing strategies such as the National Volunteering Strategy, given the reliance on the community sector to implement such strategies.”

The motion was proposed by **Councillor Maria Murphy**, seconded by **Councillor Gerry O’Connor** and agreed.

10.5 Submitted by Councillor Nick Killian

“That Meath County Council writes to Mr Sean Fleming TD, Minister of State with responsibility for Financial Services, Credit Unions and Insurance and to Mr Joe O’Brien TD, Minister of State with responsibility for Community Development and Charities to take action to reduce insurance costs for community groups.”

The motion was proposed by **Councillor Nick Killian**, seconded by **Councillor Paddy Meade** and agreed.

Councillor Maria Murphy explained that Items 10.3-10.5 were motions that were developed by Mr Gerald Weldon, who is a member of the Housing, Community and Culture SPC and **Councillor Paddy Meade** paid tribute to Mr. Weldon for his community work.

10.6 Submitted by Councillor Alan Tobin



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“That Meath County Council supports the “Women of Honour” campaign for a statutory Commission of Investigation into alleged issues within our Defence Forces surrounding dignity in the workplace, bullying, harassment, discrimination, assault, sexual harassment and sexual assault.”

The motion was proposed by **Councillor Alan Tobin**, seconded by **Councillor Aisling O’Neill** and agreed.

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

- 11.1 Schedule of Chief Executive’s Orders – Transportation
- 11.2 Schedule of Chief Executive’s Orders – Environment
- 11.3 Schedule of Chief Executive’s Orders – Housing
- 11.4 Schedule of Chief Executive’s Orders – Community & Enterprise

Noted by the Elected Members.

12 Any Other Business