



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

Ordinary Meeting

4th April 2022 @ 1.30p.m.

Solstice Theatre, Navan (and online via zoom)

Presiding

Councillor Sean Drew, Cathaoirleach

Councillors Present:

Councillors Yemi Adenuga; Mike Bray; Francis Deane; Brian Fitzgerald; Pdraig Fitzsimons; Joe Fox; Noel French; Michael Gallagher; David Gilroy; Trevor Golden; Wayne Harding; Nick Killian; Paul McCabe; Elaine McGinty; Paddy Meade; Maria Murphy; Amanda Smith and Gillian Toole.

Councillors Present via Zoom:

Councillors Tom Behan; Joseph Bonner; Eugene Cassidy; Aisling Dempsey; Eddie Fennessy; Deirdre Geraghty-Smith; Suzanne Jamal; Geraldine Keogan; Alan Lawes; Stephen McKee; Ronan Moore; Gerry O'Connor; Aisling O'Neill; Damien O'Reilly; Sarah Reilly; Tommy Reilly; Niamh Souhan; Alan Tobin; Emer Tóibín; Sharon Tolan and Conor Tormey

Apologies:

There were no apologies

Officials in attendance:

Chief Executive: Jackie Maguire

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

Meetings Administrator: Elaine Daly

Senior Executive Officer: Fiona Fallon

1 Confirmation of Minutes

1.1 Confirmation of minutes of Ordinary meeting held on 7th March 2022.

The minutes of the Ordinary meeting held on 7th March 2022 were confirmed on the proposal of **Councillor Paul McCabe** and seconded by **Councillor Maria Murphy**.



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2 Matters arising from the Minutes

Councillor Nick Killian and **Councillor Gillian O'Toole** referred to the Flexibus service and linkages between Ratoath/Dunshaughlin and the M3 Parkway.

Councillor Nick Killian and **Councillor Noel French** raised concerns regarding the number of water outages in Ratoath, Trim and Enfield.

3 Expressions of Sympathy and Congratulations

Sympathy was extended to:

- Sandra McAuley, Transportation on the death of her mother, Carmel Wogan
- Cllr Conor Tormey on the death of his mother, Teresa (Terry) Tormey
- The family of the late Oliver Brooks, former Councillor
- The family of the late Brendan Boyle, Navan

In accordance with Standing Order 11.5 Congratulations were extended to:

- Nina Carberry, Ratoath native & former Champion jockey, who with her dance partner Pasquale la Rocca, won the final of "Dancing with the Stars" last weekend. Their Sunday night dancing gave the entire country a great "lift" during otherwise sedate times!
- Young Erik Gilsean, age 9, from Ratoath competing & placed 3rd in National Motorsport Ireland Cadet & Cadet Novice Final March 27, 2022.

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 0.0286 Ha of land at Castletown, Navan, 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 23rd March 2022, under Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001, was approved on the proposal of **Councillor Michael Gallagher** and seconded by **Councillor Paddy Meade**.

5 Statutory Business

5.1 Corporate Affairs and Governance

5.1.1 To consider the Audit Committee Annual Report 2021 as presented by Mr. Tom McGuinness, Chair of the Audit Committee.

Mr. Tom McGuinness, on behalf of the Audit Committee, presented the Annual Report 2021. He highlighted a number of aspects for members' attention with particular focus on the governance aspects and the work of the internal audit unit. The report was noted.



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5.1.2 To consider the Audit Committee Report in relation to the AFS and LG Auditor's Report 2020.

Mr. Tom McGuinness, on behalf of the Audit Committee, presented the Audit Committee AFS Report 2020. He thanked the LGAS Auditor, Ms. Anne Halion, for the thoroughness of her audit report.

There were questions from **Councillors Gillian Toole** and **Paddy Meade** which were addressed by Ms. Fiona Lawless, Mr. Des. Foley and the Chief Executive.

The report was noted.

5.1.3 To adopt the Audit Committee Charter 2022.

The Audit Committee Charter 2022 was adopted on a proposal of **Councillor Gerry O'Connor** and seconded by **Councillor Francis Deane**.

5.1.4 To adopt the Audit Committee Annual Work Programme 2022.

An Cathaoirleach thanked Mr. McGuinness and the members of the Audit Committee for their continued commitment.

The Audit Committee Annual Work Programme 2022 was adopted on a proposal of **Councillor David Gilroy** and seconded by **Councillor Paul McCabe**.

5.2 Community

5.2.1 To receive and note the Local Community Development Committee Annual Report 2021.

There were questions from **Councillors Gillian Toole** and **Mike Bray**. The questions were responded to by Ms. Fiona Fallon.

The report was noted.

5.2.2 To approve a replacement member of the Meath LCDC & LAG, Shola Yahya from Cultúr, representing the Social Inclusion pillar of the PPN.

On the proposal of **Councillor Paddy Meade** and seconded by **Councillor Mike Bray** it was agreed to approve Shola Yahya from Cultúr as replacement member of the Meath LCDC & LAG representing the Social Inclusion pillar of the PPN.

5.2.3 To approve a replacement member of the Meath LCDC & LAG, representing the Health Service Executive (HSE)

On the proposal of **Councillor Nick Killian** and seconded by **Councillor Mike Bray** it was agreed to approve Johann McKeever as replacement member of the Meath LCDC & LAG representing the Health Service Executive.

5.2.4 To approve a replacement member of the Meath LCDC & LAG, representing Údarás na Gaeltachta.

On the proposal of **Councillor Paul McCabe** and seconded by **Councillor David Gilroy** it was agreed to approve Gráinne Ní Choisdealbha as replacement member of the Meath LCDC & LAG representing Údarás na Gaeltachta.

5.3 Tourism

5.3.1 To receive a Presentation and Update on Boyne Valley Tourism Activities.



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Mr. Des Foley and Ms. Michele Whelan, Tourism Development Officer, provided an overview and update on Boyne Valley Tourism activities. Mr. Des Foley advised that in accordance with figures provided by Fáilte Ireland, the value of tourist spend in Co. Meath pre-Covid was €88m. He also provided an update on current tourism projects including the Mornington to Drogheda Greenway, Royal Canal Greenway, Trim Porchfields and the Boyne Blueway in Trim. He further outlined several projects as part of Public Realm and Town Centre First schemes. Ms. Michele Whelan outlined the details of the 'where the adventure begins' campaign as well as details of online platforms and promotional shows.

There were interventions from the following: **Councillors Aisling Dempsey; Wayne Harding; Noel French; Ronan Moore; David Gilroy; Eugene Cassidy; Brian Fitzgerald; Nick Killian; Sarah Reilly; Gillian Toole; Tom Behan; Sharon Tolan; Emer Tóibín; Elaine McGinty; Alan Tobin; Sharon Dolan and An Cathaoirleach.** In general terms the elected members complemented Boyne Valley Tourism on the extensive work that was being done. It was noted that there was potential for improved facilities at Tara Hill.

5.4 Transportation

5.4.1 To enter into an agreement with Cavan County Council pursuant to Section 85 of the Local Government Act, 2001, whereby Meath County Council will exercise the statutory powers, functions and duties of Cavan County Council in relation to a cycle and walking scheme namely the Boyne Valley to Lakelands County Greenway linking Navan through to Kingscourt which is displayed in the Schedule to the Agreement.

This was approved on the proposal of **Councillor Eugene Cassidy** and seconded by **Councillor Paul McCabe.**

6 Reports

6.1 Chief Executive's Report

There were interventions from the following: **Councillors Nick Killian; Damien O'Reilly; Aisling O'Neill; Yemi Adenuga; Gillian Toole; Elaine McGinty; Paul McCabe; Michael Gallagher; Maria Murphy and An Cathaoirleach.** The issues raised included:

Housing: Rolling Call for developers for social housing; Ukrainian Refugees; Part V; increased construction costs;

Transport: Rath Roundabout to Kilmoon Cross;

Planning: Planning enforcement;

Environment: Identification of litter blackspots;

Corporate: Hybrid meetings;

Responses were provided by the Chief Executive; Mr. Barry Lynch; Mr. Martin Murray; Mr. Dara McGowan and Mr. Des Foley.



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6.2 Report from the Corporate Policy Group

The Meetings Administrator reported that the CPG met on Friday April 1, 2022. She noted that the CPG were provided with an update on the Council's support to IPAS for Ukrainian refugees and the re-establishment of the Community Call Forum.

The Meetings Administrator further advised that the CPG had been given a brief overview of the status of the AFS 2021.

Councillor Gillian Toole queried the reason that her Emergency Motion in relation to water outages in Ratoath and Ashbourne areas was not included on the agenda. There were interventions from **Councillors Nick Killian** and **Noel French**. These were responded to by the Chief Executive and Ms. Fiona Lawless. The Chief Executive agreed to invite representatives from Irish Water to attend the next Council meeting.

6.3 Report from the Protocol Committee

The Meetings Administrator reported that the Protocol Committee met on April 4, 2022. She noted that the Protocol Committee were provided with an update on the Decade of Centenaries Programme.

The Committee was advised that Irish language classes had been sourced for elected members and details of which would circulate to the members.

The Meetings Administrator further reported that the training schedule had been approved and detail of which would circulate to the members.

7 Correspondence

7.1 Correspondence from Mr. Stephen Donnelly T.D., Minister of State for Health in response to Notice of Motion 10.1 adopted at the February 2022 meeting of the full Council re. antigen testing for healthcare workers.

Noted by the Elected Members.

7.2 Correspondence from Mr. Stephen Donnelly T.D., Minister of State for Health in response to Notice of Motion 10.2 adopted at the February 2022 meeting of the full Council re. Orthopaedic care for children with Spina Bifida and/or Hydrocephalus.

Noted by the Elected Members.

7.3 Correspondence from Mr. Sean Fleming T.D., Minister of State for Financial Services, Credit Unions and Insurance in response to Notice of Motion 10.5 adopted at the February 2022 meeting of the full Council re. insurance costs for community groups.

Noted by the Elected Members.

7.4 Correspondence from Ballinamore Municipal District of Leitrim County Council re. resolution passed at their February meeting.

Noted by the Elected Members.

7.5 Correspondence from Thomas M. Wilson PhD, Professor of Anthropology, Binghamton



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University, State University of New York.

An Cathaoirleach outlined the details of Mr. Wilson's correspondence and it was agreed to forward the Elected Members' contact details to Mr. Wilson. There were queries from **Councillors Nick Killian** and **David Gilroy**. The questions were responded to by Mr. Des Foley.

8 Notice of Question

8.1 Submitted by Councillor Damien O'Reilly

"I request Meath County Council to provide an updated Vacant Sites Register, in tabular format by Municipal District, including site valuation."

Response

The Vacant Site Register is available to view on the council's website at <https://www.meath.ie/council-services/planning-and-building/vacant-or-derelict-sites-and-dangerous-structures/vacant-sites>

This register is updated regularly to reflect new sites which are being placed on the register. Column A shows the VS Register Number, Column F contain the Site Valuation and Column I identifies the Municipal District the site is located.

The Council continues to assess sites appropriate for the register.

Noted by the Elected Members

8.2 Submitted by Councillor Elaine McGinty

"Will the Community Call Service be retained by Meath County Council and expanded to help support Ukrainian people fleeing the war?"

Response

A meeting of the Community Response Forum has been arranged for Wednesday 30th March at which the relevant agencies will provide up to date information on what services are in place in Meath to assist the Ukrainian refugees and to address any gaps that maybe identified.

Noted by the Elected Members

8.3 Submitted by Councillor Alan Tobin

"In light of increasing energy costs, would it be possible to light every 2nd public light where feasible. This could be undertaken on a temporary or pilot basis, while taking account of Health and Safety matters."

Response

Meath County Council operates and maintains circa. 18,900 public lighting lanterns across the county, these include a combination of the older SOX lanterns and the more efficient LED lanterns.



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While initiatives to reduce energy are welcomed, changes to the lighting arrangement could result in non-compliance with Irish Standard for public lighting **CEN/TR 13201-2:2015 Road Lighting - Part 1: Guidelines on Selection of Lighting Classes** which specifies certain lighting classes for traffic, pedestrians, low speed areas and areas of conflicts (where vehicular traffic intersects with pedestrians, cyclists and other road users).

To reduce the lighting to every second lantern would require accessing each affected lantern to remove the photocell or change the timer, additionally while dimming lights may offer some reduction in energy costs these savings, for both options, would be outweighed by the cost to undertake the changes across the network.

Meath are part of the Eastern Public Lighting Energy Efficient Project (PLEEP), which will see the retrofit to LED lanterns, this project when complete will see a reduction in energy costs and increased energy efficiency. In advance of the commencement of the project the public lighting maintenance work will continue to replace expired SOX lanterns with LED lanterns.

Noted by the Elected Members

8.4 Submitted by Councillor Alan Lawes

“How many men, women and children have been refused emergency accommodation because of no local connection by Meath County Council in the years covering the world’s worst pandemic. That is 2019 2020 2021 and so far in 2022?”

Response

The information for 2020 is from the Pathway Accommodation and Support System (PASS) reports only. The information for 2021 and 2022 is extracted both from PASS and Meath County Council Housing Office weekly presentation report.

Year	Total non-eligible presentations	Families (children)	Couples	Single Female	Single Male
2020	2	n/a	0	1	1
2021	12	3 (9 children)	0	3	6
2022 ytd	10	2 (3 children)	1	1	6

The reason for non-eligibility is categorised as follows:

Ordinarily resident in another local authority area	10
Linked with/availing of services of another local authority	7
On another local authority housing list	6
Accommodation available in another local authority	1

Noted by the Elected Members



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9 Notice of Motion

9.1 Submitted by Councillor Damien O'Reilly

"I call on Meath County Council to write to the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, requesting the department to provide infrastructural funding for the development of the 50 rural nodes in Meath."

The motion was introduced by Councillor Damien O'Reilly. There were a number of interventions from the following: **Councillors Paddy Meade; Alan Tobin; Eugene Cassidy; Noel French; Gerry O'Connor; Paul McCabe; Brian Fitzgerald; Trevor Golden; Michael Gallagher and Elaine McGinty.** **Councillor Brian Fitzgerald** proposed an amendment which was seconded by **Councillor Trevor Golden** and agreed as follows:

"I call on Meath County Council to write to the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, requesting the department to assist in the development of the 50 rural nodes in Meath."

The motion as amended, was proposed by **Councillor Damien O'Reilly**, seconded by **Councillor Paddy Meade** and agreed.

9.2 Submitted by Councillor Damien O'Reilly

"I call on Meath County Council to write to the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, requesting that his department begins the process of updating the National Planning Framework in preparation for the publication of the upcoming census population figures."

The motion was introduced by **Councillor Damien O'Reilly**. There were a number of interventions supporting the motion from the following: **Councillors Maria Murphy; Sharon Tolan; Nick Killian and Michael Gallagher.**

The motion was proposed by **Councillor Damien O'Reilly**, seconded by **Councillor Maria Murphy** and agreed.

9.3 Submitted by Councillor Mike Bray

"That Meath County Council considers modular homes as part of the solution to assist with accommodating the influx of refugees fleeing the war and atrocities in Ukraine over the coming weeks."

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

The International Protection Accommodation Service (IPAS) of the Dept. of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY) is responsible for providing accommodation to people in the International Protection ('asylum') process, including those fleeing the conflict in Ukraine and is coordinating all efforts in this regard. The local government sector has been asked to provide assistance and support to IPAS.



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Senior management of the Council has held a number of meetings in this regard, and we are liaising with the CCMA at national level and various other Departments and Agencies at national, regional and local level. The Council is putting a number of contingency measures in place as part of the national effort and is in communication with IPAS.

This is an evolving situation and the Council will continue to support IPAS in delivering a national response.

The motion was introduced by **Councillor Mike Bray** with interventions from **Councillors Trevor Golden** and **Elaine McGinty**. The motion was proposed by **Councillor Mike Bray**, seconded by **Councillor Trevor Golden** and agreed.

9.4 Submitted by Councillor Ronan Moore

"That Meath County Council seeks to increase the participation of children and young people in the development of local services and policies in the county by including stakeholders from this cohort at Strategic Policy Committee Meetings."

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

The statutory basis for the establishment of Strategic Policy Committees (SPCs) is set out in Section 48 of the Local Government Act 2001 as amended by Section 41 of the 2014 Act. The role of the SPCs is to assist the Council in the formulation, development and review of policy and to reflect on the major functions or services of a local authority within the broader context.

In accordance with the legislation the procedure for sectoral representation and nomination to SPCs is set out in Meath County Council's Strategic Policy Committee Scheme 2019 – 2024 as adopted by the elected members of the Council in September 2019. Nominations to the SPCs is facilitated by the appropriate national pillar or through the Public Participation Network.

Children and young are included in the development of local services and policies through Comhairle na nÓg which give children and young people the opportunity to be involved in the development of local services and policies. Comhairle na nÓg in Meath are regularly consulted on issues that arise including the preparation of the county development plan and local economy community plan. They are also represented on the Meath Joint Policing Committee. Meath Age Friendly frequently deliver intergenerational projects and seek the involvement and input from young people from Comhairle and also Transitional Year students from schools.

The motion was introduced by **Councillor Ronan Moore** and he noted that although not expressly implied in the motion, the inclusion of young people in SPCs would take long term planning. There were interventions from the following: **Councillors Gerry O'Connor; Paddy Meade and Maria Murphy**. In general terms the contributions were in support of the premise of the motion, although there were some concerns regarding the practicality of the arrangements. The motion was proposed



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by **Councillor Ronan Moore** and seconded by **Councillor Gerry O'Connor** was adopted. **Councillor Paddy Meade** dissented from the motion.

10 General Interest Motions

10.1 Submitted by Councillor Mike Bray

“That Meath County Council supports the call by families for further respite services for adults with intellectual disabilities to be provided for in County Meath and we write to the HSE and Minister for Health outlining our support for these vital services.”

The motion was introduced by **Councillor Mike Bray**. On a point of clarity, he advised that the motion should call on the Minister of State, Anne Rabbitte and not the Minister of Health. There were interventions from **Councillors Elaine McGinty** and **Gillian Toole**. The motion was proposed by **Councillor Mike Bray**, seconded by **Councillor Elaine McGinty** and agreed.

10.2 Submitted by Councillor Elaine McGinty

“That Meath County Council will call on the Ministers for Justice; Education; and Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth to immediately implement an Operation Encompass-style programme between An Garda Síochána and schools.”

The motion was introduced by **Councillor Elaine McGinty**. There was a contribution from **Councillor Gillian Toole**. The motion was proposed by **Councillor Elaine McGinty**, seconded by **Councillor Gillian Toole** 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.

The meeting concluded at 6.00pm