



## ***Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes***

### ***Ordinary Meeting***

***13<sup>th</sup> June 2022 @ 1.30p.m.***

***Solstice Theatre, Navan (and online via zoom)***

#### **Presiding**

Councillor Nick Killian, Cathaoirleach

#### **Councillors Present:**

Councillors Yemi Adenuga, Joseph Bonner, Mike Bray, Francis Deane, Sean Drew, Brian Fitzgerald, Joe Fox, Michael Gallagher, David Gilroy, Trevor Golden, Wayne Harding, Alan Lawes, Paul McCabe, Stephen McKee, Paddy Meade, Maria Murphy, Damien O'Reilly, Tommy Reilly, Amanda Smith, Niamh Souhan, Alan Tobin, Gillian Toole.

#### **Councillors Present via Zoom:**

Councillors Tom Behan, Noel French, Suzanne Jamal, Geraldine Keogan, Elaine McGinty, Ronan Moore, Gerry O'Connor, Sarah Reilly, Sharon Tolan, Conor Tormey.

#### **Apologies:**

Councillors Eugene Cassidy, Aisling Dempsey, Eddie Fennessy, Pdraig Fitzsimons, Deirdre Geraghty-Smith, Aisling O'Neill, Emer Tóibín.

#### **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:** Larry Whelan

### **1 Confirmation of Minutes**

1.1 Confirmation of minutes of Ordinary meeting held on 9th May 2022.

The minutes of the Ordinary meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> May 2022 were confirmed on the proposal of **Councillor Joe Bonner** and seconded by **Councillor Trevor Golden**.

1.2 Confirmation of minutes of Special Meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2022.

The minutes of the Special meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2022 were confirmed on the proposal of **Councillor Gillian Toole** and seconded by **Councillor Trevor Golden**.



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### **2 Matters arising from the Minutes**

Councillor Lawes acknowledged the presentation from Cultúr and reaffirmed his motion that all refugees should be treated equally.

### **3 Expressions of Sympathy and Congratulations**

#### 3.1 Sympathy was extended to:

- The family of the late John Fanning, former Councillor.
- The family of the late Oliver Perkins, former County Engineer.
- The family of the late Patsy O'Neill, former Councillor.
- Cllr. Niamh Souhan and family on the death of Garry Souhan.
- The family of the late Tony Kinsella, employee Transportation Department.
- The family of the late Anne Halion, Local Government Auditor.
- The family of the late Theresa Connor, participative in Conversation in Portraits initiative.
- Annette Morris, Navan Library on the death of her father, Terence (Terry) Morris.
- The family of the late Raymond Coyle.
- Alan Walsh, Motor Tax on the death of his father, William (Willie) Walsh.
- The family of the late John Maguire, former employee.
- Belinda Quirke, Director of Solstice Arts Centre on the death of her father-in-law, Peter Austin.

#### 3.2 In accordance with Standing Order 11.5 Congratulations were extended to;

- Theo Staunton and Matthew Kelay from St. Patrick's Classical School, Navan, winners of the Senior Category at this year's Student Enterprise Awards.

### **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 0.017 Ha of land at Lismullin, 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.



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The disposal, in accordance with the statutory notice issued on April 12, 2022, under Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001, was approved on the proposal of **Councillor Alan Tobin** and seconded by **Councillor Emer Tóibín**.

### **5 Statutory Business**

#### **5.1 Corporate Affairs and Governance**

5.1.1 To adopt Meath County Council's Annual Report 2021.

The Annual Report 2021 was adopted on a proposal of **Councillor Gillian Toole** and seconded by **Councillor Joe Fox**.

#### **5.2 Environment**

5.2.1 To receive a presentation in respect of a draft Litter Management Plan 2022-2024 and to agree as statutorily required under the Litter Pollution Act 1997 to put same on public display as part of the consultation process – recommended by the Climate Action, Environment & Emergency Services Strategic Policy Committee at its meeting held on Friday May 13<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Larry Whelan gave a presentation on the draft Litter Management Plan 2022-2024. He noted that the draft plan was due to go out on public consultation, following which the plan would be further reviewed and brought back before the members for adoption, in accordance with Section 10 of the Litter Pollution Act 1997. He outlined the responsibility of the council in relation to the prevention of the creation of litter and the collection of litter. He further highlighted some of the successful initiatives that had taken place over the past number of years including Spring Clean events, Pride of Place Awards, Green Schools initiatives and Free Drop Off Days.

There were interventions and queries from **Councillors Paul McCabe; Sharon Tolan; Alan Tobin; Joe Fox; Gerry O'Connor; Maria Murphy; Ronan Moore; Elaine McGinty; Alan Lawes; Damien O'Reilly; Yemi Adenuga; Joe Bonner; Trevor Golden; Gillian Toole** and **An Cathaoirleach**. The members of the environment team were commended for their work to date. Responses to queries raised were responded to by Mr. Larry Whelan.

#### **5.3 Finance**

5.3.1 To note the Quarterly Financial Statement as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022.

Ms. Fiona Lawless gave a brief overview of the report. Responses to queries raised by **Councillors Sean Drew** and **Gillian Toole** were responded to by Ms. Lawless. The report was noted by the members.

### **6 Reports**



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### 6.1 Chief Executive's Report

There were comments and clarifications sought by **Councillors Alan Tobin; Wayne Harding; Gillian Toole; Trevor Golden; Damien O'Reilly; Sharon Tolan; Joe Bonner; Paul McCabe** and **An Cathaoirleach** on a number of matters in the report. The main issues focused on:

Housing            Housing delivery pipeline, land purchase

Transportation    Public lighting energy efficiency programme, resurfacing works, provision of bus shelters, transport capital works, road opening licences, footpath works and Active Travel scheme.

Irish Water        Water outages, Do Not Consume notice, capital works.

Planning            Enforcement, unfinished housing estates

Environment      Hedge cutting.

Responses and clarifications were provided by Mr. Martin Murray, Mr. Barry Lynch, Mr. Des Foley, Mr. Dara McGowan and Ms. Fiona Lawless.

The Chief Executive left the meeting. Mr. Barry Lynch deputised for the Chief Executive in her absence.

### 6.2 Report from the Corporate Policy Group

The Meetings Administrator informed the meeting that the CPG met on Friday June 10, 2022. The agenda and the practical arrangements for the AGM and the June Council meeting were reviewed. The members of the CPG were advised that as the Solstice Theatre had fully reopened it was not feasible to continue to use the venue for council meetings and that it was proposed that the council meetings would take place in the Training Room in Buvinda House early in quarter 4 this year.

The members of the CPG were updated on the council supports to IPAS in relation to Ukrainian refugees and it was noted that the Community Response Forum was available to answer any queries from elected members, Ukrainian Refugees or the general public.

The members of the CPG were updated on the Judicial Review proceedings to the Meath County Development Plan.



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The verbal report was noted by the Elected Members.

### **6.3 Report from the Protocol Committee**

The Meetings Administrator informed the meeting that the Protocol Committee met on Friday June 10, 2022. A Notice of Question from **Councillor Francis Deane** had been referred to the Protocol Committee and was responded to at the meeting.

It was agreed that elected members' expenses would remain as a standing item on the agenda and the Meetings Administrator reiterated her availability by phone or email to answer any queries from the elected members. The Protocol Committee were advised of the proposal to conduct council meetings in the Training Room in Buvinda House.

The members of the Protocol Committee were advised that a request had been received from **Councillor Alan Tobin** to include a statement of apology on the Council agenda, however this request could not be facilitated. It was agreed that it could be dealt with at this point in the meeting.

The verbal report was noted by the Elected Members.

**Councillor Alan Tobin** made the following statement:

*On the 24th of November 2020, I spoke at a special meeting of Meath County Council. During the course of my contribution, I referred to Councillor Bonner as a liar and stated that he told lies. This is untrue and I apologise for the words spoken by me about Councillor Bonner. I should not have said this about Councillor Bonner, and I regret any upset this may have caused him and his family. I wish to formally withdraw the comments made by me concerning Councillor Bonner in this Chamber on the 24th of November 2020.*

## **7 Correspondence**

## **8 Notice of Question**

### **8.1 Submitted by Councillor Alan Tobin**

*“Can I ask when a review of protected structures and buildings will take place in Meath and in order to help inform the public and representatives on such a review, can the preservation team present an update at full council on how to initiate a preservation or section 57?”*



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### Response

Work has commenced on a two-phase review of the Record of Protected Structures. Firstly, an inhouse desktop review of the Record has commenced. This work will be completed in 2022 and is intended to identify those records which require a more detailed examination. Phase two of the project will examine those records in more detail and recommend actions. Any addition/deletion/amendment to the Record is a reserved function.

Noted by the Elected Members.

### 8.2 Submitted by Councillor Noel French

*“How many houses have been offered from the Choice Based Letting system from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2022 to 30<sup>th</sup> April 2022? Could the answer be broken down by unit type per Municipal District. Please also set out the rate of refusal during the period outlined?”*

### Response

Choice Based lettings Jan to April 2022

<b>Municipal District</b>	2 bedroom	3 Bedroom	4 Bedroom	<b>TOTAL</b>
Ashbourne	4	9	0	<b>13</b>
Kells	3	7	2	<b>12</b>
Laytown Bettystown	5	12	0	<b>17</b>
Navan	12	9	0	<b>21</b>
Ratoath	3	3	0	<b>6</b>
Trim	11	12	0	<b>23</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>92</b>

The rate of refusals for Choice Based Lettings is 12%.

Noted by the Elected Members.



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### **8.3 Submitted by Councillor Emer Tóibín**

*“To ask Meath County Council what hope (or otherwise) can we offer council tenants that they will be offered a timely transfer in the event of living next door to dangerous and persistent anti-social and criminal behaviour, as current demands on housing stock means there are little or no alternatives available?”*

#### **Response**

Meath County Council has adopted a policy on anti-social behaviour which aims to investigate all complaints of anti-social behaviour fairly, impartially, and objectively, to provide a professional service for our tenants, who are victims of anti-social behaviour and to work towards the elimination of anti-social behaviour through prevention, enforcement and support. A new Tenant Handbook was launched during 2021 which is provided to each new Tenant at Pre-Tenancy outlining our responsibility to the tenant and what is expected of each tenant. Furthermore, in January 2022 a new Housing Estate Management Strategy was adopted which sets out how Meath County Council’s Housing Department will take the lead in ensuring high quality management of its tenancies and estates.

Meath County Council takes reports of anti-social behaviour very seriously and has put robust policies in place to respond to and manage complains received. It is recognised that anti - social behaviour can have an adverse effect on the quality of life of tenants of the Council and can threaten the sustainability of communities and often leads to further disadvantages for vulnerable households. Meath County Council is committed to the prevention and elimination of anti-social behaviour in its estates and ensuring that all our tenants enjoy living in their homes in a peaceful manner without undue interference or difficulties emanating from anti - social behaviour.

Complaints relating to anti-social behaviour and nuisance are referred to a Housing Tenant Liaison Officer (TLO) for investigation and every effort is made to resolve the matter without resorting to legal action. It is recognised that the investigation and resolution of complaints can sometimes be a lengthy process, but it is important that due process is followed, particularly where the issuance of tenancy warnings are required.

Transfer applications on the grounds of anti-social behaviour are not considered, save in very exceptional circumstances and only on a case-by-case basis.

If a tenant of Meath County Council wishes to report an incident, they are advised to complete a 'Housing Investigation Report Form available on the council website and return by email to [tenantliaison@meathcoco.ie](mailto:tenantliaison@meathcoco.ie) or post to Meath County Council,



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Housing Department, Buvinda House, Dublin Road, Navan, Co. Meath C15 Y291. Forms are also available at local Council Civic Offices.

In circumstances where tenants feel unable to make a complaint themselves, elected representatives may make the complaint on their behalf and with their consent. In all cases, complaints of criminal behaviour should be reported to An Garda Síochána.

Noted by the Elected Members.

### **8.4 Submitted by Councillor Alan Lawes**

*“How many Ukrainian refugees have been accommodated in Co Meath to date?”*

#### **Response**

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. Meath County Council does not have access to the requested information.

Noted by the Elected Members.

## **9 Notice of Motion**

### **9.1 Submitted by Councillor Elaine McGinty**

*“To ask that the Council write to the Minister for the Environment, Climate and Communications seeking clarification on what legislation should be applied or given priority by either the Council or EPA when assessing applications for waste water treatment licences; the Environmental Protection Agency Act 1993 or the EU Water Framework Directive - European Communities (Water Policy) Regulation 2003 (S.I. No 722 of 2003).”*

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

The two pieces of legislation referred to in this Notice of Motion are complimentary of each other in that:

- Schedule 1 of the Environmental Protection Agency Act 1993 facilitates the identification of the relevant public authority for the purpose of assessing and granting of licences.





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- The relevant public authority will consider the contents of the EU Water Framework Directive - European Communities (Water Policy) Regulation 2003 (S.I. No 722 of 2003) when assessing a licence application.

**Councillor Elaine McGinty** proposed the motion and noted the importance of protecting the River Boyne as a primary source of water for thousands of people. **Councillor Gillian Toole** confirmed her support of the motion.

The motion proposed by **Councillor Elaine McGinty** and seconded by **Councillor Gillian Toole** was adopted.

### **9.2 Submitted by Councillor Mike Bray**

*“That Meath County Council establishes a programme to assist and advise community groups and residents associations with the creation and maintenance of wildflower meadows.”*

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

The Heritage Section, through an action of the County Meath Heritage Plan supported by the Heritage Council and Meath County Council, will be running a Free Biodiversity Workshop on **Pollinators and Sustainable Gardening: How you can make a difference.** (See flyer below)

The purpose of these workshops is to give attendees the tools to put the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan into practice to effectively improve their area for wildlife, increase pride in their area and reduce pollution.

These workshops will be advertised to the public in the coming week.

**Councillor Mike Bray** introduced the motion and noted that he had received several queries in relation to how to establish a biodiversity area and the supports that are available. There were interventions in support of the motion from **Councillors Aisling Dempsey, Alan Lawes, Alan Tobin** and **Ronan Moore**. The motion was proposed by **Councillor Mike Bray**, seconded by **Councillor Aisling Dempsey** and agreed.

## **10 General Interest Motions**

### **10.1 Submitted by Councillor Alan Lawes**



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*“I am calling on Meath County Council to call on the Minister for Housing to introduce an immediate increase in the income thresholds for people to qualify for social housing”.*

**Councillor Alan Lawes** introduced the motion and noted that the increased cost of living had placed huge burdens on families and that as a result, applicants were not eligible for social housing under the current income limits, nor did they qualify for a mortgage. **Councillor Michael Gallagher** and **An Cathaoirleach** spoke in support of the motion. The motion was proposed by **Councillor Alan Lawes**, seconded by **Councillor Michael Gallagher** and agreed.

### **10.2 Submitted by Councillor Edward Fennessy**

*“That this Council opposes any attempt by the Government and the HSE to remove A&E and critical care services from Our Lady's Hospital, Navan and that we write to the Minister for Health Stephen Donnelly, An Taoiseach Micheál Martin and An Tánaiste Leo Varadkar to demand of the government; the full retention of A&E and critical care services at Our Lady's Hospital Navan and the removal of any reference to the closure of A&E services at Our Lady's Hospital Navan from the Small Hospital Framework (2013).”*

It was agreed that items 10.2 and 10.3 would be considered together.

The Motion was proposed by **Councillor Eddie Fennessy** and seconded by **Councillor Michael Gallagher**.

### **10.3 Submitted by Councillor Emer Tóibín**

*“That Meath County completely opposes Government plans to close the A&E in Navan and to reverse their decision and protect and invest in A&E services in Our Lady's Hospital Navan.”*

The motion was proposed by **Councillor Emer Tóibín** and seconded by **Councillor Gillian Toole**.

There were interventions in support of the motions from **Councillors Eddie Fennessy; Emer Tóibín; Paddy Meade; Alan Lawes; Brian Fitzgerald; Michael Gallagher; Aisling Dempsey; Pdraig Fitzsimons; Elaine McGinty; Gillian Toole; Yemi Adenuga; Ronan Moore; Joe Bonner; Gerry O'Connor; Suzanne Jamal; Wayne Harding; Paul McCabe; Damien O'Reilly; Alan Tobin; Sarah Reilly and Mike Bray**. The members expressed concern regarding the capacity of neighbouring hospitals to deal with an increased demand, including the impact on elective procedures. Concern was raised regarding the lack of transparency in the decision-making process, and it was noted that the decision



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pre-dated the current Sláintecare Programme. **An Cathaoirleach** suggested an amendment to the motions as follows:

*“To request an urgent meeting, between a delegation of Councillors, with Minister for Health Stephen Donnelly, Dr. Gerry McEntee and other senior HSE Officials, to discuss plans to close the Emergency Dept. at our Lady’s Hospital, Navan.”*

The motions, as amended, were proposed by **Councillor Alan Tobin**, seconded by **Councillor Eddie Fennessy** and agreed.

### **10.4 Submitted by Councillor Michael Gallagher**

*“That Meath County Council calls on the Minister of Health and the Minister of Public Expenditure and the Irish Dental association to resolve their financial differences to restore dental services to patients with Medical Cards.”*

**Councillor Michael Gallagher** introduced the motion and noted the difficulties that some medical card holders had in accessing dental services. The motion was supported by An Cathaoirleach. The motion was proposed by **Councillor Michael Gallagher**, seconded by **Councillor Eddie Fennessy** and agreed.

### **10.5 Submitted by Councillor Alan Lawes**

*“I am calling on Meath County Council to demand the Irish Government not only condemn the killing of Journalist Shireen Abu Akleh but to also impose the severest sanctions possible on the perpetrators, as we cannot allow any state or person threaten the lives of journalists and the freedom of the press.”*

The motion was introduced by **Councillor Alan Lawes**. The motion was supported by **Councillor Michael Gallagher**. The motion was proposed by **Councillor Alan Lawes**, seconded by **Councillor Eddie Fennessy** 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



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### **12 Any Other Business**

**Councillor Gillian Toole** queried particulars on AO 16880/2022. She further whether the Office of Planning Regulator had contacted Planning Officials regarding an An Bord Pleanála matter. Responses were provided by Mr. Martin Murray and Mr. Des Foley.

The meeting concluded at 5.25pm