



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

Ordinary Meeting

14th November 2022 @ 1.30p.m.

Solstice Theatre, Navan (and online via zoom)

Presiding

Councillor Nick Killian, An Cathaoirleach

Councillors Present:

Councillors Yemi Adenuga, Joseph Bonner, Mike Bray, Francis Deane, Edward Fennessy, Brian Fitzgerald, Pdraig Fitzsimons; Joe Fox, Noel French, Michael Gallagher, David Gilroy, Trevor Golden, Wayne Harding, Alan Lawes, Elaine McGinty, Paddy Meade, Maria Murphy, Gerry O'Connor, Damien O'Reilly, Tommy Reilly, Amanda Smith, Emer Tóibín, Gillian Toole.

Councillors Present via Zoom:

Councillors Tom Behan, Eugene Cassidy, Aisling Dempsey, Sean Drew, Deirdre Geraghty-Smith, Suzanne Jamal, Geraldine Keogan, Paul McCabe, Stephen McKee, Ronan Moore, Aisling O'Neill, Sarah Reilly, Niamh Souhan, Alan Tobin, Sharon Tolan, Conor Tormey.

Apologies:

None

Officials in attendance:

Chief Executive: Jackie Maguire

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

Meetings Administrator: Elaine Daly

1 Confirmation of Minutes

Confirmation of minutes of Ordinary meeting held on 3rd October 2022.

The minutes of the Ordinary meeting held on 3rd October 2022 were confirmed on the proposal of **Councillor Francis Deane** and seconded by **Councillor Trevor Golden**.

2 Matters arising from the Minutes

Councillor Gillian Toole queried whether any response had been received in relation her request for a tripartite meeting to discuss transport issues. As no response had been received it was agreed that the matter would be followed up by further correspondence. **Councillor Elaine McGinty** supported the request.

3 Expressions of Sympathy and Congratulations



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

3.1 Expressions of Sympathy were extended to the following:

The family and friends of the late Vicky Phelan. **An Cathaoirleach, Councillor Nick Killian** paid tribute to Ms. Phelan's contribution to public life in Ireland and to her role as an advocate for women across the country.

The family and friends of the deceased and all those injured and affected by the tragic incident in Cresslough.

The family and friends of the late Ioana Mihaela Pacala, Ratoath, Co. Meath.

The family and friends of the late Ethna Cantwell, member of Navan Historical Society

The family and friends of the late Rory Mason, Dunboyne.

Claudine Shortall, Housing Department on the death of her mother, Pauline Duffy.

Celine Looby, Housing Department on the death of her father, Kevin J. McDermott.

The family and friends of the late Paddy Sheils, former employee.

The family and friends of the late George Mulvey, former employee.

The Monaghan family on the passing of James Monaghan in Cresslough, Co Donegal.

3.2 Congratulations were extended to the following:

Trim Tidy Towns on winning the SuperValu Tidy Towns Competition. An Cathaoirleach, Councillor Nick Killian acknowledged the achievement not only for Trim Tidy Towns but for the wider Trim Community. He further acknowledged the efforts of all Tidy Towns Groups in particular Moynalty on retaining the gold medal, Athboy on winning a silver medal for the first time and Dunboyne for the Climate Action Award.

Fáilte Ireland, Meath County Council and all involved in the Púca Festival. The event was a huge success with up to 35,000 visitors to Athboy and Trim over the weekend.

Jack Lynch, Summerhill, on winning the senior sean-nós dancing at Oireachtas na Samhna.

Brighton and Hove Albion striker, Evan Ferguson from Bettystown for his first call-up to the senior Ireland squad when they take on Norway on Thursday, and Malta on the 20th of this month.

Cllr Alan Tobin and his wife Michelle, on the birth of their baby daughter.



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

Ratoath on winning the Senior Football Final.

Trim on winning the Senior Hurling Final.

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 0.011 acres of land at St. Mary's Villas, Donore, 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 September 20, 2022, under Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001, was approved on the proposal of **Councillor Paddy Meade** and seconded by **Councillor Amanda Smith**.

4.2 Disposal of 0.0012 Ha of land at Townparks North, Trim, 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 September 23, 2022, under Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001, was approved on the proposal of **Councillor Noel French** and seconded by **Councillor Trevor Golden**.

4.3 Disposal of 0.0032 Ha of land at the Spire of Lloyd, Kells, 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 October 27, 2022, under Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001, was approved on the proposal of **Councillor Michael Gallagher** and seconded by **Councillor Mike Bray**.

4.4 Disposal of 0.0096 Ha of land at Alexander Reid, 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 September 21, 2022, under Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001, was approved on the proposal of **Councillor Francis Deane** and seconded by **Councillor Padraig Fitzsimons**.

4.5 Disposal of 0.0139 Ha of land at Alexander Reid, 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.



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

The disposal, in accordance with the statutory notice issued on September 21, 2022, under Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001, was approved on the proposal of **Councillor Padraig Fitzsimons** and seconded by **Councillor Edward Fennessy**.

4.6 Disposal of 0.0333 Ha of land at Site 1, Lagore Road, Dunshaughlin, 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 October 27, 2022, under Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001, was approved on the proposal of **Councillor Gerry O'Connor** and seconded by **Councillor Brian Fitzgerald**.

4.7 Disposal of 0.0345 Ha of land at Site 2, Lagore Road, Dunshaughlin, 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 October 27, 2022, under Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001, was approved on the proposal of **Councillor Gerry O'Connor** and seconded by **Councillor Brian Fitzgerald**.

4.8 Disposal of 0.0344 Ha of land at Site 3, Lagore Road, Dunshaughlin, 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 October 27, 2022, under Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001, was approved on the proposal of **Councillor Gerry O'Connor** and seconded by **Councillor Brian Fitzgerald**.

4.9 Disposal of 0.0340 Ha of land at Site 6, Lagore Road, Dunshaughlin, 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 October 27, 2022, under Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001, was approved on the proposal of **Councillor Gerry O'Connor** and seconded by **Councillor Brian Fitzgerald**.

4.10 Disposal of 0.0339 Ha of land at Site 7, Lagore Road, Dunshaughlin, 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 October 27, 2022, under Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001, was approved on the proposal of **Councillor Gerry O'Connor** and seconded by **Councillor Brian Fitzgerald**.

4.11 Disposal of 0.0334 Ha of land at Site 9, Lagore Road, Dunshaughlin, Co Meath, in accordance with Section 211 of Planning & Development Act 2000 and subject to the



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

provisions of Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001.

The disposal, in accordance with the statutory notice issued on October 27, 2022, under Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001, was approved on the proposal of **Councillor Gerry O'Connor** and seconded by **Councillor Brian Fitzgerald**.

4.12 Disposal of 0.0329 Ha of land at Site 10, Lagore Road, Dunshaughlin, 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 October 27, 2022, under Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001, was approved on the proposal of **Councillor Gerry O'Connor** and seconded by **Councillor Brian Fitzgerald**.

5 Statutory Business

5.1 Planning

5.1.1 To receive a presentation on the implementation of the Residential Zoned Land Tax (RZLT). Briefing paper circulated previously as part of the October Chief Executive Report.

Mr. Des Foley introduced Mr. Conor Cochrane, Executive Planner and Mr. Alan Russell, Senior Executive Planner. Mr. Cochrane provided details of the provisions of the Residential Zoned Land Tax. He noted that the objective of the legislation was to activate land that is serviced and zoned for residential use or a mix of uses that may permit residential development in order to increase housing supply and to ensure regeneration of vacant and idle lands in urban locations. He further noted that the tax would place an annual burden on the lands of 3% of the market value of the land. He further noted that there was a deadline of January 1, 2023 for landowners and others to make a submission to the local authority regarding inclusion/exclusion of their lands from the draft maps and for landowners to request a change of the zoning of land. There were interventions and questions from **Councillors Noel French; Brian Fitzgerald; Ronan Moore; Michael Gallagher; Joe Fox; Sharon Tolan; Mike Bray; Elaine McGinty; Alan Tobin; Gillian Toole; Damien O'Reilly and Emer Tóibín**. Queries raised included the staffing resources to manage the process, retention of levies paid, valuations of the lands, replacement of the Vacant Sites Levy and applications for re-zoning. It was further noted that the maps were difficult to read as zoned land which had already been developed was included in the maps. Responses to queries raised were provided by Mr. Conor Cochrane, Mr. Alan Russell and Mr. Des Foley.

5.2 Corporate Affairs and Governance

5.2.1 To appoint a replacement Councillor to the Regional Health Forum following the resignation of Cllr. Aisling O'Neill.



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

On the proposal of **Councillor Edward Fennessy** and seconded by **Councillor Alan Lawes**, **Councillor Michael Gallagher** was appointed to the Regional Health Forum following the vacancy arisen due to the resignation of **Councillor Aisling O'Neill**.

- 5.2.2 **To appoint a replacement Councillor to the Joint Policing Committee following the resignation of Cllr. Aisling O'Neill.**

This matter was withdrawn.

5.3 Community

- 5.3.1 **To approve a replacement member of the Meath LCDC & LAG, Lorraine Flynn representing the Health Service Executive (HSE)**

On the proposal of **Councillor Maria Murphy** and seconded by **Councillor Edward Fennessy**, Lorraine Flynn, representing the Health Service Executive, was appointed to the Meath LCDC and LAG.

5.4 Transportation

- 5.4.1 **To enter into an agreement with Louth County Council pursuant to Section 85 of the Local Government Act, 2001, whereby Louth County Council will exercise the statutory powers, functions and duties of Meath County Council in relation to rehabilitation works to Lambert's Bridge which is displayed in the Schedule to the Agreement.**

On the proposal of **Councillor Paddy Meade** and seconded by **Councillor Trevor Golden** the Section 85 Agreement was approved.

5.5 Finance

- 5.5.1 **To approve the raising of loan of €10,000,000 from the Housing Finance Agency (HFA) to provide finance for approved house purchase applications under the Local Authority Home Loan (LAHL) Scheme, Rebuilding Ireland Home Loan (RIHL) Scheme, loan restructuring and other housing loan related activities, as authorised by the Housing Acts 1966 – 1992 as amended.**

Ms. Fiona Lawless outlined that the purpose of the loan was to fund approved housing loan applications. There were queries from **Councillors Edward Fennessy; Elaine McGinty** and **Sean Drew**. Queries raised included the current performance of home loans issued by the Council and the risk in case of default. Responses to queries raised were provided by Ms. Fiona Lawless.



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

On the proposal of **Councillor Alan Tobin**, and seconded by **Councillor Francis Deane**, the raising of the loan in the sum of €10,000,000 from the Housing Finance Agency was approved.

5.6 Environment

5.6.1 To adopt the Meath County Council Litter Management Plan 2022- 2024, as recommended by the Climate Action, Emergency Services and Environment SPC.

Mr. Dara McGowan introduced Mr. Larry Whelan, Senior Executive Officer and Ms. Bernadine Carry Environmental Education Officer. Ms. Carry noted that the Draft Litter Management Plan had been presented to the Council in June 2022 and was out on public consultation for 6 weeks. A total of 4 submissions were received and the revised draft plan was presented and approved by the Environment SPC at its meeting of October 7, 2022. There were queries and interventions from **Councillors Alan Tobin; Noel French; Maria Murphy; Joe Bonner; Gillian Toole; Alan Lawes; Damien O'Reilly; Trevor Golden; Gerry O'Connor and An Cathaoirleach**. Queries raised included the use of CCTV cameras, clothes collection bins and bulky waste drop offs. Responses to queries raised were provided by Ms. Bernardine Carry, Mr. Larry Whelan and Mr. Dara McGowan.

On the proposal of **Councillor Alan Tobin**, and seconded by **Councillor Noel French**, the Meath County Council Litter Management Plan 2022- 2024 was adopted.

The members agreed that Councillor Tolan's motion, as set out in 10.4 of the Agenda, would be considered following the consideration of all deferred motions from previous meetings.

6 Reports

6.1 Chief Executive's Report

There were interventions from **Councillors Yemi Adenuga; Maria Murphy; Sharon Tolan; Pdraig Fitzsimons; Edward Fennessy; Sean Drew; Gillian Toole; Alan Tobin; Trevor Golden and An Cathaoirleach**. The issues raised included:

Tourism: The Púca Festival.

Transportation: Boyne Greenway; cycling facilities and footpaths; Safe Routes to School; Works at Kennedy Road, Navan; EV connections.

Housing: St. Francis Park refurbishment works; housing pipeline of delivery; Housing Adaptation Grants; Affordable Housing.



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

Finance: Refusal of loans by Credit Committee; home loans approvals.

Community: Comhairle na nÓg;

Environment: Smart Ring Buoys Project; Coastal Erosion.

Responses to queries raised were provided by Mr. Barry Lynch, Mr. Martin Murray, Ms. Fiona Lawless, Mr. Dara McGowan, Mr. Des Foley and the Chief Executive.

6.2 Report from the Corporate Policy Group

The Meetings Administrator reported that the CPG met on Friday November 11, 2022 and reviewed the agenda for the November Council meeting. Notices of Motion not included on the Agenda were noted by the members of the CPG.

The arrangements for the December Council meeting at the EU Facility in Kiltale, as well as the arrangements for the Budget Meeting were noted.

The minutes of the Climate Action, Environment and Emergency Services SPC meeting of October 7, 2022 as well as the minutes of the Transportation SPC meeting of September 29, 2022 were noted.

6.3 Report from the Protocol Committee

The Meetings Administrator reported that the Protocol Committee met on Monday morning November 14, 2022.

The meetings of the December Council meeting and the Budget meeting were noted. She further advised that the members had received a presentation on the provisions of the Electoral Reform Act 2022 and the agreement to provide the elected members with a copy of the rolling register at March 1, 2023 and March 1, 2024.

The Meetings Administrator advised the members that it had been agreed that due to time constraints between the February and March Council meetings that the February meeting would take place on Monday January 30, 2023 in the Solstice Arts Centre.

The Local Representation Allowance remains a standing item on the agenda and the Meetings Administrator urged the Elected Members to submit the required documentation as soon as possible.

The conference and training schedules were approved and circulated to the elected members.

7 Correspondence

7.1 Correspondence from Helen McEntee TD, Minister for Justice in response to Notice of Motion 10.8 adopted at the September 2022 meeting of the full Council re. the Duty of Care legislation.



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

Noted by the Elected Members.

7.2 Correspondence from Department of Transport re. Introduction of new Fixed Charge Penalties.

Noted by the Elected Members.

7.3 Correspondence from Peter Burke T.D., Minister for Local Government and Planning in response to Notice of Motion 9.1 adopted at the September 2022 meeting of the full Council re. request to extend the period of extension of time / duration, for previously granted, one off rural planning permissions for an additional 5 year extension of duration.

Noted by the Elected Members. **Councillor Tommy Reilly** expressed his disappointment in the response received.

7.4 Correspondence from Anne Rabbitte T.D., Minister for Disabilities in response to Notice of Motion 10.4 adopted at the September 2022 meeting of the full Council re. provision of adequate personnel for the early assessment of children with disabilities.

Noted by the Elected Members. **Councillors Michael Gallagher** and **Gillian Toole** expressed their disappointment in the response received. On the proposal of **Councillor Gillian Toole** and seconded by **Councillor Alan Lawes** it was agreed to revert to Minister Rabbitte to expand the National Treatment Purchase Fund to provide for private practice assessments.

7.5 Circular F.07/22 – Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage re. Electoral Reform Act 2022 – Commencement of certain provisions with effect from 13 October 2022.

Noted by the Elected Members

8 Notice of Question

8.1 Submitted by Councillor Noel French

“How many sites is Meath County Council planning to deliver in 2022, 2023 and 2024 under the Ready to Build Scheme (Serviced Sites for New Homes)?”

Response

The Croí Cónaithe Ready to Build scheme was launched on 21st September 2022 and some elements of its operation are still to be clarified in conjunction with the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

The Council is reviewing its own landbank to establish what sites might be viable for the purpose of the scheme. In assessing a site, a number of considerations come into play including:

1. Location of the site within a settlement of appropriate size (>400 people)
2. Planning history of the site
3. Land cost already borne by the Council
4. Location of services relative to the site
5. Cost of servicing the individual sites
6. Level of grant available from the DHLGH under the scheme
7. Market Value of the sites before applying any discount for servicing
8. Residual price to be charged to an applicant after applying the appropriate discount

Any site whether local authority or privately owned, will need to undergo a viability assessment as outlined above before a project can succeed at that location. For this reason, it is not possible to say at this point what number of viable sites can be delivered under the Ready to Build Scheme. However, the Council is actively looking at opportunities to deliver serviced sites and the potential numbers will become clearer as this work progresses.

Noted by the Elected Members. **Councillor Noel French** sought clarification in relation to the criteria of the scheme. Clarification was provided by Mr. Barry Lynch.

8.2 Submitted by Councillor Alan Tobin

"In light of a recent refusal by An Bord Pleanála to grant a new ring road in Co. Galway, has Meath County Council considered the provisions of the Climate Action Plan as part of the road improvement works at Ashbourne to Kilmoon Cross (M2/N2)."

Response

The N2 Rath Roundabout to Kilmoon Cross project design team has considered the Climate Action Plan 2021 in the published Option Selection Report. During the next phase of the planning and development process, the project team will continue to keep all new policy updates, including the Climate Action Plan, under review on how they may be relevant to the N2 Rath Roundabout to Kilmoon Cross scheme.

Noted by the Elected Members.

8.3 Submitted by Councillor Aisling O'Neill

"Following on from the Notice of motion number 9.9 passed at the March meeting of the Council, I am enquiring how many properties providing emergency accommodation have

Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

been reviewed by the settlement officer, how many are providing cooking and laundry facilities and is there ongoing engagement re same."

Response

Emergency accommodation is provided on a temporary basis to those most at risk of homelessness and who are often vulnerable individuals with a myriad of complex needs. Through the Settlement Office, Meath County Council provides emergency accommodation in different settings. As emergency accommodation is provided on a night-by-night basis the number of facilities utilised can vary, however, the Council's Settlement Team as part of its ongoing operations regularly visits all properties which are used for emergency accommodation and can provide advice to the owner where shortcomings are identified. If complaints are received from a client regarding the accommodation this will be referred to the Settlement Team for appropriate follow up action.

While ideally all Emergency Accommodation providers should have such facilities, this is simply not feasible given the crisis and levels of homelessness which the country is currently experiencing and the consequent reliance on Bed and Breakfast type properties. However, provision in the context of Family Hubs, Own Front Door Emergency Accommodation, Housing First, and Shared Accommodation, recognises the priority around appropriate facilities for families with children, homeless single people and couples and the provision of same in recent years as a strategic priority. Other service providers have such facilities available for use and Service Level Agreements are in place with NGOs providing emergency accommodation including Peter McVerry Trust, Dublin Simon and Drogheda Homeless Aid. The Settlement Team is focused on securing accommodation for those families and individuals in long term emergency accommodation and creating spaces in the family hub or similar facilities to reduce the reliance on B&B type accommodation.

Meath County Council will continue to endeavour to attain the highest quality of emergency accommodation and through the Mid-East Region Homeless Action Plan there is a renewed focus on implementation of National Quality Standards for Homeless Services. The Settlement Office will continue to review all current emergency accommodation providers on an ongoing basis to confirm the level of facilities which are available to all users and encourage the provision of necessary facilities.

Noted by the Elected Members. **Councillor Aisling O'Neill** noted that details of numbers inspected, and outcomes had not been provided.



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

9.1 Submitted by Councillor Paul McCabe (Deferred from October Meeting)

‘That Meath County Council calls on the Minister for the Environment Eamon Ryan TD to immediately increase the penalties laid out in the Litter Pollution Act 1997 (as amended in 2017) for persons found to be carrying out illegal dumping to: €1500 for first offence; €3000 for second offence & €5000 for any subsequent offence.’

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

The definition of litter is contained within the Litter Pollution Act 1997 (as amended) and refers to the deposition of a substance or object in a public place which is or is likely to become unsightly, deleterious, nauseous or unsanitary.

Litter has many forms and sources from a street wrapper thrown on the street, cigarette ends, empty bottles, dog fouling etc and generally is of a casual nature and rarely premeditated unlike the illegal dumping of waste which may often be planned and may involve participation or connivance of landowners. The 1997 Acts provides for an on the spot fine of €150 or a maximum fine of €4000 if convicted in the District Court.

Most illegal dumping cases and involving larger volumes of waste material are dealt with and prosecuted under the Waste Management legislation and particularly under Section 14, 18 & 55/56 of the Waste Management Act 1996 (as amended) - such prosecutions may be tried summarily in the District Court but In the case of serious environmental crime, these may be at Circuit Court or High Court level to ensure that the sanction is commensurate with the crime.

Persons who are found to be responsible for, or involved in, the unauthorised disposal of waste are liable to a maximum fine of €5,000 on summary conviction and/or imprisonment for up to 12 months, and to a maximum fine of €15 million on conviction on indictment and/or imprisonment for up to 10 years.

Councillor Paul McCabe introduced the motion, noting that the current fine was insufficient.

The motion, proposed by **Councillor Paul McCabe**, and seconded by **Councillor Alan Lawes**, was agreed.

9.2 Submitted by Councillor Brian Fitzgerald

“Due to the ever increasing housing crisis, compounded by the huge increase in population as outlined in the preliminary census report, this meeting of Meath County Council calls for all residential lands (regarded as post 2019 lands), that were dezoned or their period extended in the current County Development Plan, be reinstated by means of a variation, subject to approval by Minister Darragh O’Brien who is continuously stating that no such lands should be dezoned.”



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

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

Any variation to the Meath County Development Plan must comply with national and regional policy. Until such a time as the NPF and RSES are varied and additional numbers are given under the Core Strategy, this proposed variation would be unsuccessful for non-compliance with national and regional policy. Recent comments by the Minister relate to development plans that are currently in the review process. As the Meath County Development Plan has been adopted there is no mechanism to action the Minister's comments.

There is approximately 1100 hectares of residential land currently zoned under the Meath County Development Plan across A2, B1 and C1 zoning categories. It is believed that this zoning will adequately cater for the projected population growth even in light of the draft census figures.

Councillor Brian Fitzgerald outlined the details of the motion. He noted that the County Development Plan was adopted on the census 2016 figures which are now out of date. There were motions of support from **Councillors Francis Deane; Joe Fox; Gerry O'Connor; Michael Gallagher; Alan Lawes; Noel French; Maria Murphy; Sharon Tolan; Trevor Golden; Damien O'Reilly; Paul McCabe** and **An Cathaoirleach**. Mr. Pádraig Maguire, Senior Planner noted the comments of the Elected Members, he suggested that the matter be deferred until the full census data is published in April / May 2023 before amending the future policy direction in Planning as evidence base is key to good decision making.

On the proposal of **Councillor Brian Fitzgerald** and seconded by **Councillor Francis Deane**, was agreed. **Councillor Gillian Toole** dissented from the motion due to the broad nature of the rezoning proposal.

9.3 Submitted by Councillor Michael Gallagher

"That Meath County Council extends the motor tax office opening hours to 3:00pm, as was the case before the Covid pandemic."

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

The Motor Taxation office is currently operating a public counter service 5 days per week from 9.00 a.m. to 1.00 p.m. A dedicated customer team provides a customer telephone and e-mail service, which operates daily from 9.00 a.m. to 1.00 p.m. and from 2.00 p.m. to 5.00 p.m. A dedicated PC is located at the Motor Taxation public desk and staff are available to assist customers with the online motor taxation facility– www.motortax.ie. Customers can also choose to submit their application for postal processing. Meath



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

County Council has consistently ranked in the top 3 counties for use of the motor tax online facility, currently accounting for 93% of online transactions.

The motor taxation service is working very well at present and providing a range of customer service options that facilitate customers to interact with the office from 9.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. daily.

Councillor Michael Gallagher noted that the Motor Tax Office opening hours were insufficient for members of the public who were required to travel to Buvinda to tax their car due to poor internet connectivity. **Councillors Edward Fennessy, Paddy Meade, Aisling O'Neill, Paul McCabe, Alan Lawes** and **Padraig Fitzsimons** supported the motion. Ms. Fiona Lawless noted that staff are on hand until 5.00pm to assist customers.

The motion, proposed by **Councillor Michael Gallagher**, and seconded by **Councillor Edward Fennessy**, was agreed. The Chief Executive noted that it was a staffing matter which reverts to the Executive of the Council.

9.4 Submitted by Councillor Mike Bray

"Following on from the recent "Issues Impacting Dog Welfare in Ireland" report published by the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Agriculture, Food and the Marine, that Meath County Council engage with other local authorities in the region to establish a standard approach and central database for the register of Dog Breeding Establishments as recommended in the report to assist with tackling dog welfare in the region."

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

The findings of the report produced by the Joint Committee on Agriculture, Food and the Marine published in October 2022 are noted and particularly the recommendations therein in respect of the operation of Dog Breeding Establishments (DBE) which are legislated for in the Dog Breeding Establishment Act 2010 and Regulations and Guidelines made thereafter.

The call by the Committee for an overhaul of legislation relating to dog ownership, welfare and breeding is also noted, however pending any decisions in this regard the Councils Veterinary Officer and Dog Wardens will continue to inspect the 3 registered DBEs in the County on an annual basis to ensure compliance with the legislation including the registration requirements details of which are maintained by the Council in the DBE register.

Where complaints or concerns about DBEs are received these are also investigated by the Council and occasionally involving the ISPCA, and sanctions imposed as necessary as allowed for in the legislation.



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

All inspections are carried out using a standard and statutory inspection routine in line with the DBE Regulations and Guidelines and there is regular liaison with other County Council jurisdictions on a regular basis to ensure a common and systematic approach to DBE inspections/regulations.

There is currently no central database for the register of dog breeding establishments, but it is suggested this may be provided for as part of the legislation overhaul as it is one of the aforementioned report recommendations - the format of the current Register is also prescribed in the Regulations.

Councillor Mike Bray introduced the motion noting that it was an emotive issue, but it was important that animals are carded for and raised in proper circumstances. **Councillor Wayne Harding** supported the motion.

The motion, proposed by **Councillor Mike Bray**, and seconded by **Councillor Wayne Harding**, was agreed.

10 General Interest Motions

10.1 Submitted by Councillor Emer Tóibín (Deferred from October Meeting)

“That Meath County Council supports the redrafting of the Work Life Balance Bill to include the words woman, female and mother, in the clauses that relate to maternity protections.”

Councillor Emer Tóibín noted that the Bill has completed Dáil Eireann, Third Stage and it was agreed that an amended motion could be re-submitted to the December meeting.

10.2 Submitted by Councillor Trevor Golden and Councillor Alan Tobin (Deferred from October Meeting)

“Meath County Council calls on the Government to amend the Electricity Regulation Act and associated legislation to allow for the consideration and possible implementation of nuclear power generation in Ireland.”

Councillors Trevor Golden and **Alan Tobin** agreed to defer this motion to the December Meeting.

10.3 Submitted by Councillor Elaine McGinty

“To ask the Minister for the Environment, Climate and Communications to consider establishing a statutory River Boyne Taskforce charged with preserving for future generations the distinctive character of The River Boyne, its ecology and biodiversity.”

Councillor Elaine McGinty introduced the motion noting that anglers and water recreational groups had raised concerns regarding changes in the water quality of the Boyne and she felt it was important



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

that all the stakeholders were brought together and tasked with protecting the water quality of the Boyne. There were interventions of support of the premise of the motion from **Councillors Paddy Meade; Wayne Harding; Stephen McKee; Emer Toibín; Trevor Golden; Maria Murphy; Joe Fox; Joe Bonner** and **Gillian Toole**. Some councillors felt that the matter should be referred to the Climate Action, Environment and Emergency Services SPC.

The motion, as proposed by **Councillor Elaine McGinty** and seconded by **Councillor Paddy Meade**, was agreed.

10.4 Submitted by Councillor Sharon Tolan

"Given the very high volume of 'Fairer Fares' submissions during the public consultation period 12 months ago, to call on the Minister for Transport, Eamon Ryan and the NTA to finally publish the Transport Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area, and to ensure that a Fairer Fare structure is included as a matter of priority for all rail users in the GDA."

Councillor Sharon Tolan introduced the motion and noting the large number of submissions to the public consultation on the Draft Transport Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area. There were interventions of support from **Councillors Alan Tobin; Joe Fox; Noel French** and **Gillian Toole**.

The motion, as proposed by **Councillor Sharon Tolan** and seconded by **Councillor Alan Tobin**, was agreed.

10.5 Submitted by Councillor Padraig Fitzsimons

"I propose the motion to write to the Minister of Transport to introduce new legislation regarding the use of scooters, electric bicycles and bicycles on our roads. I refer in particular to speed control, licensing, lights, use of high viz attire and helmets and penalties for speeding on footpaths."

The notice of motion was deferred until the December Council meeting.

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



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

11.4 Schedule of Chief Executive's Orders – Community & Enterprise
Noted by the Elected Members.

12 Any Other Business

There was no other business. The meeting concluded at 5.40pm