



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

Ordinary Meeting

5th September 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; Eugene Cassidy, Francis Deane, Sean Drew, Edward Fennessy, Brian Fitzgerald, Pdraig Fitzsimons, Joe Fox, Michael Gallagher, David Gilroy, Trevor Golden, Wayne Harding, Alan Lawes, Paul McCabe, Elaine McGinty, Paddy Meade, Maria Murphy, Gerry O'Connor, Aisling O'Neill, Damien O'Reilly, Sarah Reilly, Tommy Reilly, Amanda Smith, Niamh Souhan, Emer Tóibín, Sharon Tolan, Gillian Toole.

Councillors Present via Zoom:

Councillors Tom Behan, Aisling Dempsey, Noel French, Deirdre Geraghty-Smith, Suzanne Jamal, Geraldine Keogan, Stephen McKee, Ronan Moore, Conor Tormey.

Apologies:

Councillor Alan Tobin

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: Brian Hora, Simon McCabe, Kitty Foyle

An Cathaoirleach opened the meeting. He introduced and welcomed two new senior members of staff that had commenced employment recently with Meath County Council - Simon McCabe, Head of Information Systems and Kitty Foyle, Senior Executive Officer, Transportation.

1 Confirmation of Minutes

1.1 Confirmation of minutes of Ordinary meeting held on 4th July 2022.

The minutes of the Ordinary meeting held on 4th July 2022 were confirmed on the proposal of **Councillor Francis Deane** and seconded by **Councillor Joe Fox**.

2 Matters arising from the Minutes



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Councillor Gillian Toole noted that she was still awaiting a response regarding the transfer of Part 5 units from one settlement to another.

Councillor Sharon Tolan queried whether the correspondence had issued to Minister Ryan and whether a response had been received. The Chief Executive advised that the correspondence had issued but no response had been received to date.

3 Expressions of Sympathy and Congratulations

3.1 Sympathy was extended to the following:

Robert O'Reilly, Finance Department, on the death of his mother, Annie Rose O'Reilly.

Paddy Woods, Kells Municipal District, on the death of his daughter, Nikki Magee.

Kathryn Hosey, Planning Department, on the death of her father, Michael Hosey.

Richard McCartney, IT Department, on the death of his mother, Hilda McCartney.

Peter Higgins, former Councillor, on the death of his mother, Nancy Higgins.

The family of the late Seamus Farnan, Fordstown, Navan.

The family of the late Peter Doonan, former employee.

The family of the late Michael McNerney, Beechmount, Navan.

The family of the late Rose Nelson, Parnell Park, Navan.

The family of the late Martin Carpenter, Woodview, Navan.

The family of the late Louise McKenna, Dean Cogan Place, Navan.

Councillor Aisling Dempsey, on the death of her grandmother and Mr. Noel Dempsey on the death of his mother, Maureen Dempsey.

Mr. and Mrs. Henry and Heather de Bromhead, on the death of their son, Jack de Bromhead.

The families of the late Lisa Cash and Christy and Chelsea Cawley, Tallaght.

3.2 Congratulations were extended to the following:

Mr. Eamon Murray, former manager Meath GAA Ladies team.

Meath Ladies Football Team on winning the All-Ireland - 2 in a row.

Irish Senior Ladies Soccer Team on their qualification to the World Cup Play Offs.

All Leaving Certificate students on their achievements.

To Ashbourne and Moynalty on both reaching the top 5 of Ireland's friendliest place with retail excellence.

And to FAH Accountants from Ashbourne on winning the "Best Practice" in the 2022 Irish Accountancy Awards

4 Disposal of Land in accordance with Statutory Notices circulated pursuant to the provisions of

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Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001

4.1 Disposal of 0.0986 Ha of land at Garlow Cross, 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 June 29, 2022, under Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001, was approved on the proposal of **Councillor Pádraig Fitzsimons** and seconded by **Councillor Edward Fennessy**.

4.2 Disposal of 0.4233 Ha of land at Bracetown, Dunboyne, 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.

In advance of this item being considered, **Councillor Conor Tormey** declared a conflict of interest because of his company's role as estate agent in the transaction. In accordance with the Ethical Framework of the Local Government Act, **Councillor Conor Tormey** then absented himself from the meeting.

The disposal, in accordance with the statutory notice issued on August 16, 2022, under Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001, was approved on the proposal of **Councillor Gillian Toole** and seconded by **Councillor Brian Fitzgerald**.

5 Statutory Business

5.1 Finance

5.1.1 To consider the report of the Chief Executive prepared in accordance with the provisions of the Local Property Tax (Local Adjustment Factor) Regulations 2022

For the purpose of resolving as follows:

- a) Vary the basic rate and set a local adjustment factor that will apply for a period as specified by the resolution, or**
- b) Not vary the basic rate**

The Chief Executive introduced the report and outlined the key changes in terms of the Local Property Tax (LPT). She also set out the content within which the preparation of Budget 2023 will take place in terms of the uncertainty caused by rising fuel and energy costs, as well as the proposed new staff pay increases. She outlined her commitment to retain, in so far as possible, the level of services across all of the sections within the Council.

The Head of Finance made a presentation on the LPT and its contribution to the Council's overall budget. She outlined the statutory process involved in agreeing the Local Adjustment Factor, including a public consultation process which was undertaken in July. The elected members were informed of their reserved function in terms of varying or otherwise the local adjustment factor, by increasing up to 15% or decreasing by as much as 15%. The provisions of the Local Property Tax (Local Adjustment Factor) Regulations 2022 were outlined to the elected members. It was noted that although the

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Council would retain 100% of its LPT funding, the baseline figure of €10,535,969 remained unchanged, however, it is anticipated that the Council will receive a slight increase in LPT funding in the sum of €637k.

A number of elected members spoke in response to the presentation. These included **Councillors: Damien O'Reilly; Brian Fitzgerald; Edward Fennessy; Gerry O'Connor; Sean Drew; Elaine McGinty; Michael Gallagher; Ronan Moore; Gillian Toole and Trevor Golden.** Some members sought clarification on potential energy saving measures and energy generating projects that the council could undertake. Other members called for a Baseline Review to be implemented. Most members that spoke suggested that the basic rate should not be varied in order to protect services, while not increasing further hardship on struggling households. **Councillors Edward Fennessy and Michael Gallagher** called for a 15% decrease to alleviate some financial burdens on households. Responses to queries raised were responded to by the Chief Executive, the Head of Finance and Mr. Dara McGowan.

On a proposal of **Councillor Damien O'Reilly** and seconded by **Councillor Brian Fitzgerald, An Cathaoirleach** put the resolution before the members to not vary the basic rate of the Local Property Tax and a roll call vote was taken as follows:

	For	Against	Abstain	Absent
ADENUGA, Yemi	✓			
BEHAN, Tom	✓			
BONNER, Joseph	✓			
BRAY, Mike	✓			
CASSIDY, Eugene	✓			
DEANE, Francis	✓			
DEMPSEY, Aisling	✓			
DREW, Sean	✓			
FENNESSY, Edward		✓		
FITZGERALD, Brian	✓			
FITZSIMONS, Pdraig	✓			
FOX, Joe	✓			
FRENCH, Noel	✓			
GALLAGHER, Michael		✓		
GERAGHTY-SMITH, Deirdre				✓
GILROY, David	✓			
GOLDEN, Trevor	✓			
HARDING, Wayne	✓			
JAMAL, Suzanne	✓			
KEOGAN, Geraldine	✓			
KILLIAN, Nick	✓			
LAWES, Alan				✓
MC CABE, Paul	✓			
MC GINTY, Elaine	✓			

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MC KEE, Stephen				✓
MEADE, Paddy	✓			
MOORE, Ronan	✓			
MURPHY, Maria				✓
O'CONNOR, Gerry	✓			
O'NEILL, Aisling		✓		
O'REILLY, Damien	✓			
REILLY, Sarah	✓			
REILLY, Tommy	✓			
SMITH, Amanda	✓			
SOUHAN, Niamh	✓			
TOBIN, Alan				✓
TÓIBÍN, Emer	✓			
TOLAN, Sharon	✓			
TOOLE, Gillian	✓			
TORMEY, Conor	✓			

Result: For = 32 vote; Against = 3 votes; Abstain = 0; Not Present = 5

The Elected Members therefore resolved to not vary the basic rate, for a period of one year from the next Local Property Tax liability date.

5.1.2 To note the Half Year Financial Statement as at 30th June 2022.

The report was noted by the elected members.

5.2 Community

5.2.1 To consider Arts Grants, Bursaries and Awards Summer 2022 recommendations.

The Arts Grants, Bursaries and Awards were unanimously agreed on the proposal of **Councillor Paddy Meade** and seconded by **Councillor Sharon Tolan**.

5.2.2 To appoint a replacement Councillor to the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) following the resignation of Cllr. Noel French.

On the proposal of **Councillor Gerry O'Connor** and seconded by **Councillor Joe Fox**, **Councillor Yemi Adenuga** was appointed to the Local Community Development Committee following the vacancy arisen due to the resignation of **Councillor Noel French**.

5.3 Transportation

5.3.1 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 the FASTER Project which is displayed in the Schedule to the Agreement.

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Mr. Martin Murray outlined to the elected members the details of the Scheme which is being funded by the East Border Region. **Councillors Sean Drew** and **Gerry O'Connor** outlined their dissatisfaction at the level of funding that has been provided to Meath County Council from the East Border Region. **Councillor Sean Drew** requested a report on all of the funding that has been allocated to Meath County Council for the East Border Region since 2014.

On the proposal of **Councillor Sean Drew** and seconded by **Councillor Sharon Tolan** the Section 85 Agreement was approved.

5.4 Housing

5.4.1 To approve Scheme of Priority for Affordable Purchase Arrangements pursuant to S11 (4) of the Affordable Housing Act 2021.

Mr. Brian Hora, Senior Executive Officer, Housing Department, made a presentation on the Scheme of Priority for Affordable Purchase Arrangements. He noted that the Scheme had been approved by the Housing SPC and the Minister of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. He further noted that it was a reserved function of the Elected Members to approve the scheme. The scheme will be used in cases where the number of eligible applicants exceeds the number of dwellings available for purchase and shall be used to determine the order of priority for all applicants.

There were queries from **Councillors Aisling O'Neill; Edward Fennessy; Sean Drew** and **An Cathaoirleach** regarding the income limits and the current availability of affordable housing. Responses were provided by Mr. Barry Lynch and the Chief Executive.

The of Priority for Affordable Purchase Arrangements pursuant to S11 (4) of the Affordable Housing Act 2021 was adopted on the proposal of **Councillor Sarah Reilly** and seconded by **Councillor Paddy Meade**.

6 Reports

6.1 Chief Executive's Report

There were interventions from the following: **Councillors Sharon Tolan; Gerry O'Connor; Mike Bray; Gillian Toole; Ronan Moore; David Gilroy; Sarah Reilly** and **An Cathaoirleach**. The issues raised included:

Environment: Water refill stations; Inclusion of SDGs in the CE Report; Use of CCTV litter/dumping offences

Transport: Julianstown Traffic Relief Scheme; Risk Mitigation Footpath Scheme; Housing estate re-surfacing works;

Housing: Housing completion dates; Choice Based Letting; Turn-key developments; Age profile in Emergency Accommodation

Planning: Update of Judicial Reviews.

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Responses to queries raised were provided by the Chief Executive; Mr. Barry Lynch; Mr. Martin Murray and Mr. Dara McGowan.

6.2 Report from the Corporate Policy Group

The Meetings Administrator reported that the CPG met on Friday September 2, 2022 and reviewed the draft agenda for the September Council Meeting. Notices of Motion not included on the Agenda were noted by the members of the CPG.

The arrangements for CPG meetings were discussed and it was agreed that the meetings would proceed in a hybrid format. There was a request for the council meeting to return to the Chamber however, the CE outlined that the council chamber cannot accommodate remote meetings and that arrangements were being made to facilitate meetings in Buvinda House.

The minutes of the following SPCs were noted by the members of the CPG:

- Transportation SPC dated June 30, 2022;
- Planning, Economic Development, Enterprise and European Affairs SPC dated July 13, 2022;
- Housing Community and Cultural Development SPC dated August 23, 2022.

A number of elected members sought clarity on the arrangements for future council meetings including **Councillors Damien O'Reilly; Joe Bonner; Paddy Meade; Padraig Fitzsimons; Sean Drew; Michael Gallagher; Tommy Reilly** and **An Cathaoirleach**. **Councillor Sean Drew** requested that the members be surveyed again to ascertain the views of the full council. Clarifications and responses were provided by the Chief Executive, Mr. Martin Murray and Mr. Dara McGowan. It was noted that a presentation on the plans for the new council chamber would be given to the members at the October Council Meeting in advance of a planning application being lodged to An Bord Pleanála.

6.3 Report from the Protocol Committee

The Meetings Administrator reported that the Protocol Committee met on Monday morning September 5, 2022. It was noted that An Cathaoirleach had received correspondence in relation to the naming of the road Bóthar Hodgett/Hodgett Road and this has been referred back to the MD for their consideration.

The meetings administrator outlined, to the Protocol Committee, the role of the Commemorative Committee. It was further noted that any recommendations from the Commemorative Committee are brought to the Protocol Committee and then, if appropriate, the recommendations are referred to the full council. There are 3 matters currently being reviewed by the Commemorative Committee which will be brought to the Protocol Committee at the October Meeting.

There was a long discussion regarding members expenses. The meetings administrator noted that the regulations are very prescriptive in relation to the documentation that is required to be submitted. An Cathaoirleach suggested that Tommy Moylan from the AILG would meet with the members of the Protocol Committee to outline details of AILG representations to Minister Burke in relation to the implementation of the Local Representational Allowance Scheme.



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

7 Correspondence

- 7.1 Correspondence from Ms. Heather Humphreys T.D., Minister for Social Protection in response to Notice of Motion 10.1 adopted at the May 2022 meeting of the full Council re. Artists with Disabilities and the Basic Income for the Arts pilot scheme.**

Noted by the Elected Members.

- 7.2 Correspondence from Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage in response to Notice of Motion 9.1 adopted at the June 2022 meeting of the full Council re. wastewater discharge licensing.**

Councillor Elaine McGinty noted that the response related to wastewater treatment licences, and it was agreed to revert to the Minister for Environment, Climate and Communications to seek further clarification regarding water discharge licence requirements.

- 7.3 Correspondence from Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage in response to Notice of Motion 10.1 adopted at the June 2022 meeting of the full Council re. social housing income limits.**

Noted by the Elected Members.

- 7.4 Correspondence from the Irish Dental Association in response to Notice of Motion 10.4 adopted at the June 2022 meeting of the full Council re. dental services to patients with Medical Cards.**

Councillor Michael Gallagher acknowledged the comments in the correspondence.

Noted by the Elected Members.

- 7.5 Correspondence from Irish Rail in response to Notice of Motion 10.1 adopted at the July 2022 meeting of the full Council re. reinstatement of free parking at Dunboyne train station.**

Councillors Damien O'Reilly, Gillian Toole and An Cathaoirleach expressed their dissatisfaction with the correspondence received. On the proposal of **Councillor Gillian Toole** and seconded by **Councillor Paul McCabe** it was agreed to request a meeting to discuss the underutilisation of the car park at Dunboyne train station.

- 7.6 Correspondence from the National Transport Authority (NTA) in response to Notice of Motion 10.1 adopted at the July 2022 meeting of the full Council re. reinstatement of free parking at Dunboyne train station.**

Noted by the Elected Members.

- 7.7 Correspondence from Mr. Simon Coveney TD, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister for Defence in response to Notice of Motion 10.5 adopted at the June 2022 meeting of the full Council re. the killing of Journalist Shireen Abu Akleh.**

Noted by the Elected Members.



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7.8 Circular Fin 09/2022 – Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage re. 2023 Budget meeting and other budgetary matters.

Noted by the Elected Members.

8 Notice of Question

8.1 Submitted by Councillor Alan Tobin

*“Has Meath County Council any advice or be able to provide assistance to residents, resident associations or landowners on what to do with Ash trees that have signs of Ash dieback disease caused by the fungal pathogen *Hymenoscyphus fraxineus*?”*

Response

Ash Dieback Disease (caused by the fungal pathogen *Hymenoscyphus fraxineus*) causes wilting of foliage, stem lesions, crown dieback and death of ash trees. The pathogen has now been confirmed to be present in all 26 counties in the Republic of Ireland.

Members of the public and people involved in Forestry activity are asked to be vigilant for the disease and report (with photographs, if possible) any sites where there are concerns about unusual ill health in ash, to the Forest Service, Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine.

The Department in October 2021 published an information booklet titled *“A Guide for Landowners to Managing Roadside Trees”* containing information on the disease and they also have specific schemes under afforestation named *“Terms of the Ash Dieback Scheme 2014-2020”* and *“Reconstitution and Underplanting Scheme (Ash Dieback)”*

It is also understood that Teagasc are also undertaking research and recently held information days events focusing on ash dieback.

Landowners, residents’ groups etc may also wish to engage the services of an Arborist to advise on site specific trees.

Noted by the Elected Members.

8.2 Submitted by Councillor Alan Lawes

“How many homeless beds has Meath County Council available to them and are they all full?”

Response

The number of beds which are currently occupied varies from day to day and is not possible to quantify as emergency accommodation is provided on a needs basis. Figures

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regarding homeless placements are reported monthly in the Chief Executives Report to the Council.

Noted by the Elected Members.

8.3 Submitted by Councillor Maria Murphy

“Can Meath County Council get access to the funding scheme for bicycle racks for schools similar to other Local Authorities such as Fingal?”

Response

The Council received a funding allocation from the NTA for cycle parking this year which will be used to roll out cycle parking at various locations around the County which have been identified along the cycling network, at public spaces and buildings. The Council intends to engage with the wider community, sports clubs and schools in the future to identify locations where cycling parking could benefit the community, schools and sports clubs etc, and will roll out a similar scheme as Fingal County Council for schools, sports clubs and other community organisations subject to NTA approval and funding being made available.

Councillor Maria Murphy sought clarification on the timelines for commencement of works. A response was provided by Mr. Martin Murray.

Noted by the Elected Members.

8.4 Submitted by Councillor Trevor Golden

“Can Meath County Council provide data, redacted as appropriate, in tabular form detailing the top 10 HAP Payments by cost. The data should include units provided, number of applicants housed and total cost for the year. This information is sought for each of the last 4 years (2018, 19, 20 & 21).”

Response

HAP payments are managed on behalf of the sector by the HAP Shared Services Centre in Limerick and City Council. The information below was provided by the HAP Shared Services Centre. The recipient’s information has been redacted due to GDPR. It should be noted that the recipient as set out below may be a letting agent representing several landlords.

Year	Reference	Properties	Amount
2018	Recipient 13	104	€835,162.80
	Recipient 08	68	€644,619.65
	Recipient 14	23	€172,297.60
	Recipient 04	22	€227,624.17

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	Recipient 11	22	€166,991.57
	Recipient 07	18	€159,964.00
	Recipient 03	16	€142,056.22
	Recipient 05	16	€143,701.30
	Recipient 12	16	€171,020.04
	Recipient 10	13	€80,273.42
		318	€2,743,710.77
2019		Properties	Amount
	Recipient 13	126	€1,209,297.09
	Recipient 08	68	€798,589.86
	Recipient 14	28	€274,301.46
	Recipient 11	23	€208,470.46
	Recipient 07	21	€205,100.95
	Recipient 04	19	€179,500.91
	Recipient 12	19	€215,741.68
	Recipient 03	17	€195,256.31
	Recipient 06	17	€151,435.18
	Recipient 10	17	€117,674.18
		355	€3,555,368.08
2020		Properties	Amount
	Recipient 13	134	€1,381,920.82
	Recipient 08	71	€772,113.34
	Recipient 14	31	€331,874.82
	Recipient 07	24	€253,543.07
	Recipient 05	23	€207,693.83
	Recipient 12	23	€239,188.32
	Recipient 11	22	€204,025.99
	Recipient 03	20	€223,291.12
	Recipient 06	18	€179,842.05
	Recipient 09	15	€114,152.85
		381	€3,907,646.21
2021		Properties	Amount
	Recipient 13	138	€1,398,141.47
	Recipient 08	64	€686,502.21
	Recipient 14	31	€328,409.12
	Recipient 03	26	€203,446.18
	Recipient 07	24	€307,418.57
	Recipient 11	23	€229,814.23
	Recipient 05	22	€213,775.49
	Recipient 12	20	€198,683.01

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	Recipient 01	19	€169,732.00
	Recipient 02	18	€166,820.58
		385	€3,902,742.86

Councillor Trevor Golden sought clarification on the role of the HAP Shared Services Centre at Limerick City and County Council. Mr. Barry Lynch responded to queries raised.

Noted by the Elected Members.

9 Notice of Motion

9.1 Submitted by Councillor Tommy Reilly (Deferred from July Meeting)

"I call on Meath County Council to write to the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, requesting that the Department extends the period of extension of time / duration, for previously granted, one off rural planning permissions for an additional 5 year extension of duration."

Councillor Tommy Reilly introduced the motion and outlined the difficulties that families face in building one-off housing in the current market. A number of elected members spoke in favour of the motion including **Councillors Joe Fox; Trevor Golden** and **Sean Drew**. Clarifications were provided by Mr. Des Foley.

The motion, proposed by **Councillor Tommy Reilly** and seconded by **Councillor Trevor Golden** was agreed.

9.2 Submitted by Councillor Alan Lawes

"With homeless numbers approaching record levels standing at 10,492 in June, Meath County Council are calling on the Minister for Housing Darragh O'Brien to introduce emergency new initiatives similar to those for students and Ukrainian refugees".

As **Councillor Alan Lawes** was not present to propose his motion and no other member had received written authorisation to propose the motion, the Notice of Motion was dropped in accordance with Section 18.3 of Meath County Council Standing Orders Regulating the Proceedings of the Council.

9.3 Submitted by Councillor Gillian Toole

"Before Meath County Council accepts any further planning applications for the development of Solar Farms, an audit of all agricultural land within County Meath is carried out, in conjunction with the Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine & Teagasc [The Agriculture & Food Development Authority]. This is necessary to establish a balance between Sustainable Development Goals 2 [Zero hunger], 3 [Good Health & well-being] & 7 [Affordable & clean energy]."

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

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There is no provision within the legislation which permits a planning authority to refuse to accept a planning application. All applications must be accepted and assessed in accordance with national and local planning policy and regulations. It is not open to a planning authority to create its own regulation unless they accord with national policy.

Councillor Gillian Toole introduced the motion, outlining her concerns regarding the use of arable land for solar farms and the importance of achieving a balance in delivering the Sustainable Development Goals around zero hunger and affordable and clean energy. There were interventions from several of the elected members including **Councillors Ronan Moore; Michael Gallagher; David Gilroy; Gerry O'Connor; Joe Fox; Brian Fitzgerald; Elaine McGinty; Emer Tóbin; Trevor Golden and An Cathaoirleach**. Concerns were raised regarding the legality of implementing such a measure, as well as the impact on foreign direct investment and the current energy crisis. Clarifications to queries raised were provided by Mr. Des Foley. He further agreed that a presentation on solar farms would be given to the elected members which would include the use of agricultural land. On this basis, **Councillor Gillian Toole** proposed to withdraw her motion, which was agreed by the Elected Members.

10 General Interest Motions

10.1 Submitted by Councillor Ronan Moore (Deferred from July Meeting)

"That Meath County Council writes to the Taoiseach, the Minister of State for Local Government, and the Minister of State for Electoral Reform requesting that legislated candidate gender quotas of 40% be introduced to apply to the local elections in 2024".

As the motion had previously been referred to the Women's Caucus, **An Cathaoirleach** sought their views in relation to the Motion. **Councillor Maria Murphy** advised that the Women's Caucus had discussed the matter and that while increasing women's participation in local politics was a positive move, there are other matters to consider besides the implementation of quotas. **Councillor Ronan Moore** outlined that his proposal sought to seek full and effective participation, by women, in local elections. There were interventions by **Councillors Gerry O'Connor; David Gilroy; Sarah Reilly; Gillian Toole; Elaine McGinty; Ashling O'Neill; Brian Fitzgerald and An Cathaoirleach**. While there was support for the premise of the motion it was considered that that the quota approach was a blunt instrument as other issues should be considered in terms of achieving greater female participation in politics.

On a proposal of **Councillor Ronan Moore** and seconded by **Councillor Edward Fennessy, An Cathaoirleach** put the Notice of Motion before the members and a roll call vote was taken as follows:

	For	Against	Abstain	Absent
ADENUGA, Yemi				✓
BEHAN, Tom		✓		
BONNER, Joseph				✓
BRAY, Mike				✓
CASSIDY, Eugene				✓
DEANE, Francis				✓

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DEMPSEY, Aisling		✓		
DREW, Sean				✓
FENNESSY, Edward	✓			
FITZGERALD, Brian		✓		
FITZSIMONS, Padraig		✓		
FOX, Joe		✓		
FRENCH, Noel				✓
GALLAGHER, Michael	✓			
GERAGHTY-SMITH, Deirdre		✓		
GILROY, David		✓		
GOLDEN, Trevor			✓	
HARDING, Wayne		✓		
JAMAL, Suzanne		✓		
KEOGAN, Geraldine		✓		
KILLIAN, Nick			✓	
LAWES, Alan				✓
MC CABE, Paul		✓		
MC GINTY, Elaine			✓	
MC KEE, Stephen				✓
MEADE, Paddy			✓	
MOORE, Ronan	✓			
MURPHY, Maria		✓		
O'CONNOR, Gerry		✓		
O'NEILL, Aisling	✓			
O'REILLY, Damien		✓		
REILLY, Sarah		✓		
REILLY, Tommy				✓
SMITH, Amanda		✓		
SOUHAN, Niamh		✓		
TOBIN, Alan				✓
TÓIBÍN, Emer		✓		
TOLAN, Sharon		✓		
TOOLE, Gillian			✓	
TORMEY, Conor				✓

Result: For = 4 vote; Against = 19 votes; Abstain = 5; Not Present = 12

On the basis of the result above the motion was rejected.

10.2 Submitted by Councillor Tom Behan

"That Meath County Council writes to the Minister for Justice Helen McEntee TD with responsibility for alcohol sales and request a change to the existing legislation to ban the sale of low alcohol drinks and 00 alcoholic drinks to all persons under the legal drinking age".

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Councillor Tom Behan introduced the motion, and he noted that it was at the discretion of the publican whether or not to serve 0% alcoholic drinks to persons under the legal drinking age. A number of elected members spoke in favour of the motion including **Councillors Padraig Fitzsimons; Gillian Toole; Emer Tóibín** and **An Cathaoirleach**.

The motion proposed by **Councillor Tom Behan** and seconded by Councillor **Padraig Fitzsimons** was agreed.

10.3 Submitted by Councillor Sharon Tolan

"To call on the Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, Simon Harris, to support the inclusion of all full-time participants of Apprenticeship Programmes in all Student Card Schemes."

Councillor Sharon Tolan introduced the motion and acknowledged Minister Harris' interest in the growth in apprenticeship programmes. **Councillor Michael Gallagher** spoke in support of the motion.

The motion on the proposal of **Councillor Sharon Tolan** and seconded by **Councillor Maria Murphy** was agreed.

10.4 Submitted by Councillor Michael Gallagher

"That Meath County Council call on the Minister of Education to provide the adequate personnel for the early assessment of children with disabilities and to assist children with disabilities in our schools."

Councillor Michael Gallagher introduced the motion noting the long waiting list for assessment of children with disabilities. A number of elected members spoke in favour of the motion including **Councillors Gillian Toole; Paddy Meade; Maria Murphy; Ronan Moore** and **An Cathaoirleach**. It was agreed that the motion would be submitted to the Minister for Health and the Minister of State at the Dept. of Education, as well as the Minister for Education.

The motion on the proposal of **Councillor Michael Gallagher** and seconded by **Councillor Paddy Meade** was agreed.

10.5 Submitted by Councillor Emer Tóibín

"That Meath County Council calls on the HSE to broaden the Terms of Reference of the Review into the Future of Navan A&E to include the costs and benefits of retaining a safer and stronger A&E at Navan Hospital."

Councillor Tóibín introduced the motion noting that there were some omissions in the Terms of Reference of the Review into the future of Navan Emergency Dept. including the costs and benefits to retaining existing services at the hospital and the inadequate number of GPs in the county. She further noted that there were no community representatives on the review committee.

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An Cathaoirleach advised that Minister Donnelly had very recently responded to the Cathaoirleach's invitation to attend a meeting of a delegation of the members of Meath County Council, the details of which were read out by the Meetings Administrator. There were interventions of support from **Councillors Gillian Toole; Padraig Fitzsimons; Trevor Golden; Paddy Meade; Edward Fennessy and An Cathaoirleach.**

The motion on the proposal of **Councillor Emer Tóibín** and seconded by **Councillor Gillian Toole** was agreed.

10.6 Submitted by Councillor Edward Fennessy

"That Meath County Council, notes that workers from the Community and Voluntary Sectors are not entitled to pay awards equal to the public sector and have not received a pay increase since 2008, agree to write to An Taoiseach, the Minister for Health and the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform confirming the council's support for the 'Valuing Care – Recognising Work Campaign' and the need for the government to implement the campaign proposals without delay."

Councillor Edward Fennessy introduced the motion, submitted on behalf of the trade union sector. He acknowledged the members of SIPTU in attendance at the meeting. He further noted that the unions were seeking a meaningful pay recognition process to support workers from the Community and Voluntary Sector. There were interventions of support from **Councillors Brian Fitzgerald; Gillian Toole; Gerry O'Connor and David Gilroy.**

The motion on the proposal of **Councillor Edward Fennessy** and seconded by **Councillor Aisling O'Neill** was agreed.

On a proposal from Councillor Emer Tóibín and seconded by Councillor David Gilroy it was agreed to take a 15-minute extension to 6.15pm.

10.7 Submitted by Councillor Gillian Toole

"Meath County Council write to the Minister for Health, Stephen Donnelly to request that all Emergency SARS Cov 2 measures be paused until a full review and risk/benefit analysis of the health services, older persons' experiences and SME sector is carried out and reported upon."

Councillor Gillian Toole introduced the motion noting that now was an opportune time to review the impact of the Emergency SARS Cov2 health measures, including the impact on older persons due to loss of social interaction, involvement and interaction. There were interventions and clarifications sought from **Councillors Emer Tóibín; Gerry O'Connor; Paul McCabe; Maria Murphy and Aisling O'Neill.**

Councillor Aisling O'Neill proposed and seconded by **Councillor Paddy Meade** an amended wording as follows:



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"Meath County Council write to the Minister for Health, Stephen Donnelly to request that all Emergency SARS Cov 2 measures that were implemented, be fully reviewed and a risk/benefit analysis of the health services, older persons' experiences and SME sector be carried out and reported upon."

The motion, proposed by **Councillor Gillian Toole** and seconded by **Councillor Emer Tóibín**, as amended, was agreed. **Councillor Paul McCabe** dissented from the motion.

10.8 Submitted by Councillor Michael Gallagher

"Meath County Council calls on the Minister for Justice to fast track the Duty of Care Bill, at present in the Dáil, to make it law as soon as possible. This legislation will help to reduce the cost of claims and the cost of insurance on community groups."

Councillor Michael Gallagher introduced the motion noting that many community groups were being refused insurance and as a result community facilities were closed. **Councillor Paddy Meade** supported the motion.

The motion on the proposal of **Councillor Michael Gallagher** and seconded by **Councillor Paddy Meade** was 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

There was no other business

The meeting concluded at 6.15pm