

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

### ***Ordinary Meeting***

#### ***Ashbourne Municipal District***

***10:00am, 9<sup>th</sup> January 2024, Ashbourne Civic Offices***

**Cathaoirleach**, Councillor **Conor Tormey** presided.

**Councillors Present:** Joe Bonner, Suzanne Jamal, Amanda Smith, Helen Meyer, Alan Tobin

**Apologies/ Absent:** n/a

**Councillors Present via Zoom:** none.

**Officials in Attendance:**

**Director of Service:** Barry Lynch

**Executive Engineer:** Mel Cronin

**Meetings Administrator:** Áine Bird

**Staff Officer:** Ann Monaghan

#### **1 Election of Leas Cathaoirleach**

**Councillor Suzanne Jamal** proposed Councillor Alan Tobin, and this was seconded by **Councillor Amanda Smith**.

There being no other proposals, **Councillor Alan Tobin** was declared elected as the **Leas Cathaoirleach**.

#### **2 Confirmation of Minutes**

##### **2.1 Confirmation of minutes of Ordinary meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2023**

The minutes of the ordinary meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2023 were confirmed on the proposal of **Councillor Amanda Smith** and seconded by **Councillor Suzanne Jamal**.

#### **3 Matters arising from the Minutes.**

There was none.

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### **4 Expressions of Sympathy and Congratulations**

Sympathy was extended to Senator Regina Doherty on the passing of her father Patrick Dalton RIP.

### **5 To receive an update from Bus Eireann.**

Adrian O'Loughlin, Senior Operations Manager, East and John Hegarty, Service and Delivery Manager Broadstone Depot were in attendance from Bus Eireann and welcomed the invite to give an update for the Ashbourne area.

The members had submitted a number of queries prior to the meeting and Mr O'Loughlin responded to them accordingly:

- Bus Eireann has a five-year contract with the National Transport Authority (NTA).
- Bus Eireann deliver on the timetables whilst the NTA set the fares and timetables.
- Sub-contractors are used when drivers are short, routes may get cancelled if there are no drivers. A route is selected for cancellation by the frequency of buses on the route.
- Their website is used to update the public and looking at using more user-friendly platforms.
- A panel is in place of private bus operators and drivers to hire in when required.
- Cash is still accepted on Bus Eireann buses.
- A complaints system is in place for the public to use either by telephone and/or email.
- The company is fined if they do not meet targets as per their contract.
- The NTA decide on the level of services to provide including new routes.
- The NTA decide if extending the young Adult Leap card to other age groups.
- Bus Eireann has tendered out for a LEAP app on the phone but may not be in place until 2025 following testing of the app on all transport services.
- The NTA consider any bus services to railway stations.
- The delivery of bus stops is initiated by the council who apply to the NTA for funding and sanction.
- Bus Eireann is at 98.7 % delivery of services, an increase from 93% on previous months.
- Recruitment of drivers has taken place with sufficient numbers available, however recruitment for seasonal drivers during the summer months can be a challenge.
- There is a current shortage of mechanics, and challenging to recruit as their base would be in Dublin City.

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- The upgrading of the public realm around Beresford place is a matter for Dublin City Council.
- Three Hydrogen buses are currently being piloted, are very reliable, but expensive to maintain with only one location to refuel.
- Bus Eireann subcontract in, 9 private bus operators in the mornings and 6 for the afternoon however none have disability access.
- Bus Eireann is due to tender out seeking private bus operators that have disability access available on their coaches.
- Enquired if the Ashbourne Connect bus could be used as part of their fleet.
- There's a 20% increase in the public using buses now than pre-covid with Tuesday to Thursdays the peak user period.
- Referred to the challenge for buses coming from Ratoath through Ashbourne in the morning that are delayed due to more traffic on roads and no bus lane on this route.

### **6 Disposal of Land pursuant to the provisions of Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001**

There was none.

### **7 Statutory Business**

#### **7.1 Transportation**

##### **7.1.1 To receive a Progress Report on works undertaken/planned for Ashbourne Municipal District**

The report circulated in advance was noted and the members thanked the area engineer and outdoor crew on all the work completed.

- The members referred to the salt boxes at various locations and enquired if more boxes could be deployed at housing estates and junctions. - The area engineer advised that the public could buy salt boxes from the council with or without salt and these can be put at specific locations where the locals can grit the roads. He said that the district has a salting crew in place who salt the local roads where necessary.
- Enquired when the bin would be re-installed at Johnswood and that bins are required along Frederick and Castle streets close to the bus stops. - Advised that the bin will be re-installed when the contractor has completed works and a review of bins can be looked at for the other streets.

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### 7.2 Corporate Affairs & Governance

7.2.1 To approve amendments to the Municipal District Standing Orders Regulating the proceedings of the meetings.

The members were advised that the Municipal District Standing Orders were being regularised to include the Item Remote Meetings which is consistent with the Full Council Standing Orders. It was requested that the word “Hybrid” be included in the item.

On the proposal of **Councillor Amanda Smith** and seconded by **Councillor Suzanne Jamal**, the members unanimously agreed to the standing orders.

## 8 Notice of Question

### 8.1 Submitted by Councillor Helen Meyer

How many applications for Tenant in Situ have been received for the Ashbourne MD, how many were approved, how many are in process, how many were rejected, and what are the reasons for those rejections since Tenant in Situ was instituted?

#### RESPONSE

Tenant in Situ Acquisitions Completed	1
Sale Agreed/negotiating with landlord	5
Social allocation	1
Sourced alternative HAP	1
Unable to progress. Reasons include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invalid notice of termination</li> <li>• Property for landlord own use</li> <li>• Landlord not selling property</li> </ul>	6

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The response was noted.

### **9 Notice of Motion**

#### **9.1 Submitted by Councillor Helen Meyer**

That Meath County Council includes footpaths and cycle lanes in its gritting and de-icing programme during cold weather.

**Supporting information subject to the motion being proposed, seconded and considered:**

Ashbourne Municipal District deploy grit-boxes at strategic locations in the District, typically at busy junctions or at hilly sections and they are currently deployed. MD staff and members of the public use these boxes to grit footways and the MD re-fill them as resources allow. If there are prolonged and significant accumulations of snow or ice, we do endeavour to clear footways and pavements on main streets.”

On the proposal of **Councillor Helen Meyer** and seconded by **Councillor Conor Tormey** the motion and response were agreed.

### **10 Strategic Policy Committee & Corporate Policy Group Reports – For Information Purposes**

There was none.

### **11 Correspondence**

There was none.

### **12 Any Other Business**

The following were raised by the members:

- Update on land beside St Declan’s Cemetery, Ashbourne – advised will follow up.
- Requested an Uisce Eireann rep to attend a meeting following the water outages- to contact Uisce Eireann seeking a meeting.



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- Enquired on progress in including affordable housing units in the Ashwood housing development, Ashbourne – advised that a costing plan is being prepared to submit to the department seeking funding.

The meeting concluded at **11.20am**

Signed:

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Cathaoirleach