comhairle chontae na mí
meath county council

Teach Buvinda, Bóthar Átha Cliath, An Uaimh, Contae na Mí. C15 Y291
Buvinda House, Dublin Rd., Navan, Co.Meath, C15 Y291

Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

Ordinary Meeting
Ashbourne Municipal District
10.00am, 8th September 2026, Ashbourne Civic Offices

Cathaoirleach, Councillor Suzanne Jamal presided.

Councillors Present: Joe Bonner, Helen Meyer, Conor Tormey & Alan Tobin.

Apologies/ Absent: Councillor Amanda Smith, Barry Lynch, Director of Services.

Councillors Present via Zoom: None

Director of Services: Elaine Daly, SEO.

Senior Executive Engineer: Shane Nugent

Meetings Administrator: Alison Condra

Staff Officer: Kate Lomza

1.0 Confirmation of Minutes from the Ordinary Meeting of 7th July 2026

The Minutes of the meeting held on the 7th July 2026 were confirmed on the proposal of **Councillor Conor Tormey** and seconded by **Councillor Alan Tobin.**

2.0 Matters arising from the Minutes

Councillor Helen Meyer asked if there was any update on the meeting with the NTA and was advised that the Council has issued an invitation to the NTA Management Team and is awaiting confirmation of the date.

Regarding Uisce Éireann, a meeting with the Elected Members is scheduled for the 5 October (am).

Area Engineer Shane Nugent confirmed work on the manhole covers would start in mid-September.

Councillor Alan Tobin queried if there was any update to his Motion 8.1 from the Ju meeting; Elaine Daly advised she has reached out to Economic Development Section on the matter. Alison Condra advised Councillor Tobin that Planning files requested by him were ordered from the archive and he will be notified when available.

3.0 Expressions of Sympathy and Congratulations

The Members wished to extend a note of congratulations to:

The organizing committee and volunteers at Wellfest on the very successful festival held in August.

The Executive of Meath County Council on the signing of contracts for the burial ground and playground at Stamullen.

Expressions of sympathy were extended to the family of Theresa (Terry) Reid , Sister of Peter O'Toole.

4.0 Statutory Business

4.1 Transportation

4.1.1 To receive an update on Urban Special Speed Limits after completion of Public Consultation.

Stephen Shortall presented an update on the special speed limits and outlined the new limits in operation. The matter will come before the plenary Council meeting in October and will be implemented by 31/3/2027. Councillors Tobin, Bonner and Tormey welcomed the measures at the education campus and raised issues re signage on the Thomas Ashe roundabout and hedge trimming on the Milltown Road and Greenouge Road.

The members requested the Road Safety Officer to attend a Municipal District meeting to discuss the use and operation of pedestrian and courtesy crossings. Proposed by **Councillor Alan Tobin** and seconded by **Councillor Conor Tormey.**

4.1.2 To receive an update on proposed Traffic Calming at Racehill Road, in the Ashbourne Municipal District.

Gillian Mangan, Executive Engineer presented the plans for the insertion of speed cushions at this location. Proposed by **Councillor Alan Tobin** and seconded by **Councillor Suzanne Jamal.**

4.1.3 To receive an update on proposed Traffic Calming at The Hawthorns, Milltown, in the Ashbourne Municipal District.

Gillian Mangan, Executive Engineer presented the plans for traffic calming at this location. Proposed by **Councillor Conor Tormey** and seconded by **Councillor Alan Tobin,**

4.1.4 To receive a Progress Report on works undertaken/planned for Ashbourne Municipal District.

Shane Nugent, Area Engineer, circulated the report in advance. Elected Members noted the contents and raised the following:
Ballybin Road is experiencing delays and congestion- issues of concern include buses stopping at the industrial estate causing congestion, traffic light sequencing, no left filter/ lane and request a traffic study to be carried out on traffic movement in the town.
Arborist Report, Road Opening Licenses at Coach Estate, Line Marking at Hickey's Lane, street cleaning at Frederick Street, litter collection on the Milltown Road.

4.2 Planning

4.2.1 To agree time for the Consultation Workshop regarding the Variation No 7of the County Development Plan 2021-2027.

Members noted the in-committee consultation will take place after the October monthly meeting.

4.3 Corporate Services

4.3.1 To approve the Arts, Festivals, Festive Lighting Allocation 2026 for Ashbourne MD.

On the proposal of Alan Tobin and seconded by Conor Tormey the members agreed the following allocations:

Kentstown and Stamullen Christmas Lights - €2,000

Ashbourne Chamber of Commerce, St Patrick's Day Festival - €1,000

Ashbourne and District Business Association - Frederick Street Christmas lighting - €4,500

4.3.2 To note the Municipal District Allocations submitted by Councillors on behalf of Ashbourne Municipal District

Noted by the Members.

5.0 Notice of Question

5.1 Submitted by Councillor Conor Tormey

"What is the update for the pedestrian crossing at St. Declan's School, Garden City, Ashbourne?"

Response:

The pedestrian crossing at St Declan's School is part of the larger scheme we are looking at for Active Travel on Castle Street and how the cycle network for Garden City will tie into the wider network. The overall scheme is currently at Options Development stage, and we are ready to submit documents to the NTA for Gateway 2 approval before proceeding to Preliminary Design.

5.2 Submitted by Councillor Helen Meyer

"Can Meath County Council explain why the closing date for the Knockharley Environmental and Community Projects Grant Scheme was changed this year, and what was the reason for

moving the funding/application timeline? Can the Council also confirm whether the change was agreed by the Knockharley Community Liaison Committee and whether community groups were consulted or notified in advance of the change?"

Response:

The Knockharley Environmental Scheme has provided funding support for a range of community initiatives, including the development of the Kentstown Village Project, which has benefited from significant investment in recent years.

This Grant Scheme is not an annual scheme and does not operate to a fixed yearly timetable. The 2025 scheme was the first funding call advertised since 2017 and was timed to coincide with the 20th anniversary of the fund.

The arrangements for the 2025 scheme, including the application process and funding timelines, were agreed by the Knockharley Community Liaison Committee, which includes local community representatives. The Committee is responsible for determining the scheme arrangements, assessing applications and making funding recommendations.

While decisions relating to the scheme are a matter for the Liaison Committee, the scheduling and administration of any future funding calls will also be influenced by operational considerations within the Community Department, including available resources and the management of other grant programmes and commitments. Any future schemes will be considered and determined on that basis.

Councillor Suzanne Jamal advised that she was the Chairperson of the Liaison Group, who in 2017 decided that funding from the facility would be directed to the village park. Last year the Liaison Group decided to direct small funds to various village community projects. Minutes from the meeting are available from Brian Hora, Secretary of the Liaison Group.

6.0 Notice of Motion

6.1 Submitted by Councillor Helen Meyer

"That Meath County Council increase the frequency of inspections of the Ashbourne playground and introduce a more urgent and proactive system for identifying, repairing, and replacing damaged or unsafe playground equipment. Given that the Ashbourne playground is the only public playground serving the town and its rapidly growing population, the current inspection and equipment replacement policy is not sufficient to ensure that the facility remains safe and fully operational for children throughout the year."

Response

Meath County Council are fully compliant with I.S. EN 1176-7, which sets out the recommended inspection and maintenance regime for playground operators. Inspections are carried out on the Ashbourne playground on a weekly basis. Any defects identified during these inspections are either repaired by Council staff, if possible, or are made safe immediately by temporarily removing the equipment from service. The defects are logged for repair by a specialist contractor, and a system is in place for the procurement of these works, subject to available funding. Annual inspections are also carried out, as required by I.S. EN 1176-7. The annual inspections must be undertaken by a competent independent playground inspector, for which a countywide tender is run every year. All issues identified during this inspection, as well as any issues arising after it, are systematically repaired via an annual playground repairs contract.

The motion, together with supporting information, was proposed by **Councillor Helen Meyer and** seconded by **Councillor Alan Tobin.**

6.2 Submitted by Councillor Helen Meyer

"That Meath County Council ensure that a fair and proportionate share of the additional commercial rates income generated within the Ashbourne Municipal District is reinvested in the area, having regard to its significant population growth and infrastructure needs, and provide a report to the Ashbourne Municipal District outlining the additional income generated from the 2026 increase in commercial rates, the amount allocated to or spent on projects and services within the District during 2026, and a breakdown of expenditure on local road maintenance and improvements, traffic calming and road safety measures, town centre regeneration, public realm improvements, and community and amenity infrastructure."

Response:

The Budget adopted by the Members seeks to ensure that investment is directed towards identified priorities and infrastructure needs across the county, including those arising from population growth and development pressures within individual Municipal Districts, while supporting the sustainable development of towns, villages and rural communities. In the budget process the rates figure to be levied, is calculated after the expenditure estimate for each service division has been agreed. The members adopt the expenditure estimate for each service division first and then adopt the annual rate to be levied. The rates figure is a countywide charge that is levied on all rateable properties within the county. There is no provision under rates legislation to sub divide rates income by Municipal district. It is the

expenditure needs of the district rather than the income generated in the district that is the determining factor in framing the budget.

The expenditure for Ashbourne Municipal District is determined each year as part of the statutory budget process. Members input into the budget at various points during the process including the General Municipal Allocation Meetings and at the statutory budget meeting itself. The overall figure available for works in each district is included as part of the statutory budget subject to confirmation of road grant allocations. The members then decide how this is spent when they adopt the schedule of Municipal District Works in February/March of each year.

Regarding the current year the increase in commercial rates is expected to generate an additional net revenue of €4.6 million in 2026. This additional income will enable targeted investment in priority areas that directly benefit both communities and businesses across County Meath. In particular, €1.5 million has been provided for the improvement and maintenance of local roads, €0.6 million (€100,000 for each Municipal District) has been allocated for traffic safety improvements, and €2.5 million has been allocated to support a transformative €10 million regeneration programme over four years aimed at enhancing town centres and rural communities throughout Meath.

The motion, together with supporting information, was proposed by **Councillor Helen Meyer and** seconded by **Councillor Alan Tobin.**

Elaine Daly outlined that Members will be advised where increased revenue generated was spent across the services during the upcoming budgetary process.

7.0 Correspondence

Correspondence from the Minister of Justice was noted and Councillor Meyer requested that a letter be sent to the Minister seeking clarification how many houses were within the Meath County Council functional area.

8.0 Any Other Business

Members raised the issue of Ned's Cottage which was donated to the town of Ashbourne by the Nulty family. Members expressed their concerns regarding the model and process chosen by the Council as they wished the building to be used by a range of groups and committees for meeting and community purposes. Elaine Daly said that the Council had carried out a full and transparent process, seeking expressions of interest and had agreed to award the licence to Ashbourne Gaeltacht. The group will receive a licence for one year, with an option to extend for a further year and will be reviewed on that basis.

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Members sought clarification if Stamullen Graveyard is a multi-faith cemetery. Elaine Daly will liaise with the Environment Section and will revert to the members.

Councillor Alan Tobin requested attendance from the local Gardai Community Officer Fergal Harkin at the next meeting. Seconded by Conor Tormey.

Councillor Helen Meyer raised the issue of a new disabled parking space planned at the Kebab shop on Bridge Street. Other Members advised that as several parklets were removed on this street there were other parking options alternatives for other motorists to park while using the takeaway. The blue box works will be carried out on the 14th September.

The meeting concluded at 12.15 pm

Signed:

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Cathaoirleach