

MINUTES OF ROSCOMMON MUNICIPAL DISTRICT MEETING HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, THE COURTHOUSE, ROSCOMMON ON MONDAY THE 9TH NOVEMBER, 2015 AT 11.30A.M. TO DISCUSS THE GENERAL MUNICIPAL ALLOCATION AND DRAFT BUDGETARY PLANS FOR 2016.

PRESENT: Councillor Kathleen Shanagher, Cathaoirleach **PRESIDED**

MEMBERS: M. Creaton, D. Connolly, N. Dineen, O. Leyden, P. Fitzmaurice

OFFICIALS: John O'Rourke, A/Director of Services
Fiona ní Chuinn, Meetings Administrator
Michael Conlon, Senior Executive Engineer
Martin Lydon, Head of Finance & Planning

Mr. Martin Lydon, Head of Finance and Planning informed the members as follows:

The Local Government Act 2001 Section 102, as amended by the Local Government Reform Act 2014, provides the legislative basis for the revised budget process. It states that "In the case of a county or city council, the Chief Executive shall consult the Municipal District Members for each Municipal District in the Local Authority's functional area in the preparation of a Draft Local Authority Budget and, for that purpose, a Draft Budgetary Plan for the Municipal District shall be prepared under the direction of the Chief Executive and submitted for consideration by the Municipal District Members for each Municipal District in the manner and in the format that may be prescribed by regulations made by the Minister."

The Draft Budgetary Plan refers to discretionary funding only. In producing the Draft Budgetary Plan the following was considered:

1. The needs of, and the resources available or likely to be made available to the Local Authority
2. Resource needs of each Municipal District, including where appropriate km of roads, population, location of facilities and the number of houses

The purpose of a Draft Budgetary Plan is to provide each Municipal District an opportunity to allocate its proportion of the General Municipal Allocation according to its priorities.

The Local Government (Financial and Audit Procedures)(Amendment) Regulations 2015 state that Members of the Municipal District must receive a copy of the Draft Budgetary Plan and notice of the meeting of Municipal District Members 7 days prior to that meeting. The meeting of Municipal District Members to consider the Draft Budgetary Plan must conclude no later than 10 days prior to the Local Authority Budget Meeting. **There is no provision for the adjournment of this meeting.**

Schedule of Municipal District Works and Service Delivery Plans

Section 103(A) (1) provides that, following the adoption of the Local Authority Budget, a schedule of proposed works of maintenance and repairs to be carried out during 2016 in each Municipal District shall be prepared under the direction of the Chief Executive, having regard to the availability of resources.

The Schedule of Municipal District Works shall be considered by the Municipal District Members concerned and be adopted by resolution, with or without amendment. In making an amendment, the Municipal District Members shall have due regard to the Local Authority Budget adopted in accordance with section 103(9).

General Municipal Allocation and Municipal District Draft Budgetary Plans

The General Municipal Allocation (the total for the three Municipal Districts) totals €2,946,800. This amount contains new funding of €254,000 in relation to Economic and Community development as well the €100,000 allocated from the Business Innovation Fund. This funding

was distributed on a straight line basis with a total of €118,000 made available to each Municipal District.

The local roads contribution is €1,276,900 and has been distributed using a formula of 75% km of road and 25% population, as per discussions with the Corporate Policy Group. This figure takes account of the additional €15,000 made available for verge trimming as discussed at the September Plenary council meeting, when making a decision in relation to the Local Property Tax adjustment factor.

The General Municipal Allocation has been distributed among the Municipal Districts as follows:

- Athlone € 701,969
- Boyle €1,120,393
- Roscommon €1,124,438

Mr. Martin Lydon, Head of Finance and Planning informed the members that the information was supplied to the Corporate Policy Group on 23rd October 2015 which outlined the budget models to them and they in turn were responsible for discussion with all the members on the matter.

The members raised the following issues:

- What is the change in the figure from parks, pitches and open spaces?
- Can community and development fund be used for feasibility/match funding for community groups?
- Would like to see a strategic approach to the community, economic and development fund.
- Would like community centres to be encouraged to be wi-fi enabled.
- Need to encourage people into the municipality to set up businesses.
- Difficult to follow the model as presented as roads funding is not included.
- Very much in favour of the community and economic fund.
- Very important that hot-desking would be further developed within the county.
- People in local authority houses have had rent increases in the last few weeks. It appears to be based on a ruling by Alan Kelly and would like further clarification on the matter.
- Need for footpath to be completed at Hannon's Hotel on the Golf Links Road.
- Will the economic and community funding be ongoing?
- When will the rates rebate on vacant premises kick in?
- Query the 15% rule on rent reviews.
- Request clarification on whether Roscommon County Council are using the 15% or 10-20% rule.
- Query on the maintenance of a house at Henry Street.
- Query on Harristown Bridge.

Mr. Martin Lydon, Head of Finance and Planning responded to the issues raised:

- Parks and pitches are down by €7,000 from 2015. This is based on a forensic examination of money spent throughout the year.
- €33,000 is part of the business innovation fund.
- Roads and regional local roads falls under the TII which have a specific say on where the money goes based on conditional surveys that they carry out.
- Schedule of works is where you will see funds being spent by Roscommon County Council.
- The rates incentive scheme was before the SPC last week which will help small businesses in County Roscommon and will be before the plenary meeting in November.
- If allocation was based on population calculation Roscommon would have received more funding.

- It is anticipated that the funding under the community and economic fund will be on an ongoing annual basis.

Mr. John O'Rourke, A/Director of Services responded to issues raised with regard to the rent review. He confirmed that there has been no change to the way rents have been calculated by Roscommon County Council. However, he advised that rent review is currently being carried out based on the differential rent scheme which is tailor made to take account of a person's income as supplied by the tenant to the local authority. He confirmed that he and the staff of Roscommon County Council's Housing Department are happy to deal with any queries people may have with regard to the rent review. He outlined that Roscommon County Council are looking to acquire a house in Henry Street attached to one already owned by Roscommon County Council. Work is ongoing on the matter.

It was **PROPOSED** by Councillor Leyden

SECONDED by Councillor Shanagher

That Roscommon County Council will go ahead to acquire this property under the Derelict Site Act.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Leyden

SECONDED by Councillor Dineen

It was **AGREED** to adopt the Municipal District Plans as presented.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

The foregoing Minutes are
Confirmed and Signed:

Meetings Administrator

Cathaoirleach

Countersigned