

**MINUTES OF THE A.G.M. OF THE ROSCOMMON MUNICIPAL DISTRICT
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, COURTHOUSE, ROSCOMMON ON
MONDAY 16th JUNE, 2014.**

PRESENT: Cllr. Domnick Connolly, Cllr. Michael Creaton,
Cllr. Nigel Dineen, Cllr. Paschal Fitzmaurice,
Cllr. Orla Leyden, Cllr. Kathleen Shanagher

OFFICIALS: Tommy Ryan, T/Chief Executive.
Martin Lydon, Head of Finance and Planning.
Pat Murtagh, A/Director of Services.
John O'Rourke, A/Director of Services.
Kieran Madden, Senior Engineer.
Antoinette Robinson, Administrative Officer.

Tommy Ryan, T/Chief Executive sympathised with Councillor Connolly on his recent bereavement. Councillor Connolly thanked the members for facilitating the postponement of the A.G.M. from Friday.

Tommy Ryan, T/Chief Executive addressed the members and stated that the members have a role to play in the development of the Municipal Districts, how it will be serviced and the functions delegated to them. He outlined the decision-making role of the Municipal Districts and confirmed that the Reserved Functions of the Municipal Districts do not need to go to the full Council for further approval. The meetings will operate within Departmental guidelines. The T/Chief Executive referred to the Public Participation Network, a structure that has to be established to ensure communication between the Municipal District and the public. There is also a role in relation to budgets and to the Local Community and Development Committee. A workshop for all members will take place on July 24th and this will cover issues including drafting Standing Orders and developing the role of the Members in the Municipal Districts.

01.14 ELECTION OF CATHAOIRLEACH

In accordance with Section 22(c) and Part V of the Local Government Reform Act, 2014 to elect the Cathaoirleach of the Roscommon Municipal District to hold office until his/her successor shall have been appointed in accordance with law. The T/Chief Executive invited proposals for the election of Cathaoirleach.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Leyden
SECONDED by Councillor Dineen

It was **AGREED** that Councillor Paschal Fitzmaurice be elected Cathaoirleach of Roscommon Municipal District to hold office until his successor shall have been appointed in accordance with law.

The T/Chief Executive declared Councillor Paschal Fitzmaurice to be elected Cathaoirleach of Roscommon Municipal District and Councillor Fitzmaurice assumed the position of Cathaoirleach.

Councillor Fitzmaurice addressed the meeting and thanked his Proposer and Seconder for the nomination and stated his intention to work for the community to the best of his ability in his capacity as Cathaoirleach.

Councillor Fitzmaurice acknowledged the challenges in relation to the management of the Roscommon district in areas such as housing, planning and roads, rates and vacant properties and administration of the Local Government Fund. A big issue at the moment is the amalgamation of the Engineering Areas. He felt that the previous Engineering Areas had worked well and that it is essential to ensure that all areas are treated equally.

02.14 ELECTION OF LEAS-CATHAOIRLEACH:

In accordance with Section 22(c) and Part V of the Local Government Reform Act, 2014 to elect the Leas-Cathaoirleach of the Roscommon Municipal District to hold office until his/her successor shall have been appointed in accordance with law. The Cathaoirleach invited proposals for the election of Leas-Cathaoirleach.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Dineen

SECONDED by Councillor Shanagher

It was **AGREED** that Councillor Orla Leyden be elected Leas-Cathaoirleach of Roscommon Municipal District.

03.14 FIXING OF DATES FOR MUNICIPAL DISTRICT MEETINGS

Tommy Ryan, T/Chief Executive circulated list of dates for meetings. He stated that there is no specific requirement set for the number of meetings and the list will be subject to change with additional meetings necessary including a meeting held before November 2014. The members will have a role in the preparation of the budget during the Summer. In response to Members' queries he stated that it is expected that the amalgamated Engineering Areas will be operational by the end of the calendar year.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Leyden

SECONDED by Councillor Dineen

It was **AGREED** that dates for the Roscommon Municipal District Meetings during the coming year be as follows:

August 2014 – no meeting

24th November 2014

26th January 2015

27th April 2015

29th June 2015 AGM (Provisional)

04.14 ALLOWANCE FOR CATHAOIRLEACH

Tommy Ryan, T/Chief Executive confirmed that the maximum allowance allowable for Cathaoirleach is €6,000 per annum. This allowance has been passed by the Athlone and Boyle Municipal Districts and he suggested in the interest of consistency that the same amount is approved. The members of the Municipal District are required to pass a resolution to that effect.

Member raised the following issues:

- The allowance appears very high for 3 or 4 meetings in a year.
- Reservation regarding the amount of the allowance as all members will have to do the same amount of work.

- The issue of allowances was raised by members of the public during the run up to the Local Elections.
- There will be increased functions and greater opportunities to change local areas in the new Districts. The members will be responsible for a budget for the area in areas such as increasing verge trimming in the interests of road safety. The members will pass binding resolutions and there may be more Municipal meetings than Plenary meetings.
- It is important that the relationship between the Municipal District and the Chamber of Commerce is enhanced.
- It is important that members have power to influence policies and budgets.
- It is important that the Standing Orders Committee have influence in relation to procedure such as Standing Orders, Notices of Motion and questions.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Leyden

SECONDED by Councillor Dineen

It was **AGREED** that the Cathaoirleach allowance is set at €6,000 per annum.

The Cathaoirleach said that there is a lot of work to be done aside from the meetings including additional meetings. The issue of regeneration of town centres must be examined in relation to Rates where businesses have moved out of the town centres. Funding for regeneration and derelict sites should be ring-fenced.

Tommy Ryan, T/Chief Executive responded to the other queries raised.

05.14 FINANCE UPDATE

Martin Lydon, Head of Finance and Planning outlined the role of the members in the budgetary process and some of the pertinent financial issues.

Local Property Tax (LPT)

A public consultation process on the LPT will commence in July and finish in August 2014. At the Plenary meeting on September 22nd a decision will be made on the LPT rate. Members can decide to lower the rate, increase the rate or leave the rate unchanged. This will be a decision for the full Council and not individual Municipal Districts. A working paper is being prepared outlining all income and expenditure for each Municipal District. The full impact of the 80:20 distribution ratio will not be known, before the Income and Expenditure Statement is prepared. A form of equalisation is required to ensure rural counties are not affected by the distribution of the LPT.

Irish Water

Roscommon County Council has a Service Level Agreement, SLA, with *Irish Water*. The national utility has committed to improved efficiencies and the impact on the SLA is not known yet. The Valuation Office has been requested to value assets transferred to *Irish Water* for rating purposes.

Local Government Budget

The Roscommon County Council Budget Meeting will be held in November. The Irish National Budget has to be submitted to the EU by 30th November 2014. More information will be made available about the funding allocation before that date.

Municipal Budgets

Finance will produce budgets for the Municipal District based on the available historical data. The information will be circulated to members and a Budget meeting will be organised in August. In December or January Municipal Districts will need to prepare a schedule of works based on their budget allocation in relation to Housing, Roads, Swimming Pools etc. A balanced budget must be produced.

Setting the Annual Rate Valuation and the Local Property Tax is a reserved function of the full Council.

Member raised the following issues:

- All the areas benefit from the two swimming pools, Library HQ and Arts Centre in the Roscommon Municipal District therefore it would be more equitable if the running costs were apportioned.
- Will the public consultation on the LPT be advertised?
- Has the Council received any notification regarding Rates from Irish Water on assets which were transferred?
- It is very difficult to pass a Budget before income from LPT is known.

Martin Lydon, Head of Finance and Planning and Tommy Ryan, T/Chief Executive responded to the queries raised.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

The foregoing Minutes are Confirmed and Signed:

Administrative Officer

Cathaoirleach

Countersigned