

MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING OF ROSCOMMON COUNTY COUNCIL HELD IN COUNCIL CHAMBER, THE COURTHOUSE, ROSCOMMON, ON FRIDAY THE 21ST AUGUST, 2015 AT 4.30 P.M.

PRESENT Councillor Paddy Kilduff, Cathaoirleach **PRESIDED**

MEMBERS: V. Byrne I. Connaughton D. Connolly N. Dineen
R. Doherty L. Fallon P. Fitzmaurice M. Hopkins
J. Cummins J. Keogh M. Mulligan E. Murphy
J. Naughten K. Shanagher T. Ward

APOLOGIES: M. Creaton & O. Leyden

OFFICIALS: Majella Hunt, A/Chief Executive
John O'Rourke, A/ Director of Services

Cathaoirleach Paddy Kilduff welcomed elected members, staff of the Sacred Heart Hospital, relatives and friends of patients of the Sacred Heart Hospital to the meeting. He acknowledged the absence of two Councillors and conveyed their apologies to the meeting. He confirmed that the services at the Sacred Heart Hospital were essential to County Roscommon.

He thanked Councillor Valerie Byrne for requesting this special meeting and arranging the signatures to support the meeting. He acknowledged that this was the first special meeting during his term as Cathaoirleach.

The members raised the following issues:

- Welcomed the public to the meeting – the high attendance is testament to how important the issue is to the public
- Sad occasion for the County of Roscommon to have to call a special meeting regarding the health services in the county yet again.
- It is imperative that the Sacred Heart Hospital is included in the next programme for building works
- The level of patient care and comfort provided at the Sacred Heart Hospital is second to none
- Following the HIQA report, the Sacred Heart Hospital is in Category 7 for works
- Minister Varadkar is pushing towards the privatisation of nursing homes.
- The Government should not be allowed to hide behind HIQA Reports
- A clear statement is required from Minister Varadkar to secure the future of the Sacred Heart Hospital
- It is a shameful situation for patients, families and staff
- HIQA issues are not in relation to patient care – staff received a commendation from HIQA following on from the inspection
- The HIQA issues are regarding capital expenditure required on infrastructure
- There is a serious issue where staff received a very high recommendation by HIQA and the infrastructure was not rated at all
- Unthinkable to downgrade two hospitals in one town during one political term
- The three members of the HSE Forum should be included in the deputation to meet with Minister Varadkar
- Did HIQA speak with patients during their inspection?

- A country is judged on how they look after their young and old – at present County Roscommon is doing a bad job at both
- Disappointed the Fine Gael elected members do not have any communication from Minister Varadkar to present to the meeting today
- The county of Roscommon has an ageing population and it is important that these people are looked after
- Private nursing homes will be unable to cope with the overflow from the absence of public beds
- Members of the public needs to write to the Minister individually requesting that he sanctions funding for the Sacred Heart Hospital
- No timescale outlined in HIQA Report
- €11 million required for construction of a new unit – sufficient land available
- Private nursing homes full to capacity
- Not viable to maintain the current level of services without adequate funding
- The Sacred Heart Hospital must be included in the five year plan in the next few weeks in order to insure its viability
- Residents and family members very happy with the level of care provided in the Sacred Heart Hospital
- Difficult to achieve HIQA standards in an old building
- Compliment the work of the elected members on the HSE Forum over the last few years
- All elected members and members of the public need to stand together to keep the Sacred Heart Hospital open and secure the funding required
- Meeting with the Minister needs to be sought as a matter of urgency
- John Kelly TD should be notified to contact Kathleen Lynch

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Naughten

SECONDED by Councillor Connolly

It was **AGREED** that a delegation from Roscommon County Council seek a meeting with Minister Leo Varadkar to discuss the issues of the HIQA report and the Sacred Heart Hospital.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Connaughton

SECONDED by Councillor Ward

It was **AGREED** that Roscommon County Council write to all party leaders requesting them to include the Sacred Heart Hospital, Roscommon in their five year plan for Health Services and Economic Development for the County of Roscommon.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Fallon

SECONDED by Councillor Connolly

It was **AGREED** to write to the Health Service Executive to convey the anger with the lack of progress in recommending a plan for the Sacred Heart Hospital despite the fact it was deemed to be on the development list since 2009.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Fallon

SECONDED by Councillor Ward

It was **AGREED** to write to HIQA to delay the implementation of their directive on the Sacred Heart Hospital until the delegation from Roscommon County Council meet with the Minister.

Councillor Valerie Byrne thanked everyone for their contributions at today's meeting. She stated that HIQA do not make the rules, they simply do their job. She stressed to the meeting that there is no threat to existing patients and residents of the Sacred Heart Hospital. A 50 bed 2 storey building is what is required in Roscommon and it is essential that the Sacred Heart Hospital is listed on the capital programme as a matter of urgency.

Cathaoirleach Paddy Kilduff thanked the members for their contributions. He also thanked the public for not interrupting the meeting. He requested that Councillor Maura Hopkins will speak to Frank Feighan TD and arrange a meeting with Minister Varadkar as a matter of urgency. Councillor Hopkins agreed.

Majella Hunt, A/Chief Executive commended the Cathaoirleach and members for their united approach to such an important issue. She stressed that it is vital that this united approach continues in dealing with this issue and the Executive of Roscommon County Council give their full support.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

The foregoing Minutes are
Confirmed and Signed:

Meetings Administrator

Cathaoirleach

Countersigned