

**MINUTES OF MONTHLY MEETING OF ROSCOMMON COUNTY COUNCIL  
COUNCIL CHAMBER, ÁRAS AN CHONTAE, ROSCOMMON  
MONDAY, 27TH FEBRUARY, 2017 AT 2.15 PM.**

**PRESENT:** Councillor Tony Ward, Cathaoirleach Roscommon County Council  
**PRESIDED**

**MEMBERS:** Cllr V. Byrne, Cllr I. Connaughton, Cllr M. Creaton, Cllr J. Cummins, Cllr R. Doherty, Cllr L. Fallon, Cllr P. Fitzmaurice, Cllr J. Keogh, Cllr P. Kilduff, Cllr O. Leyden, Cllr M. Mulligan, Cllr J. Murphy, Cllr J. Naughten, Cllr K. Shanagher and Cllr L. Callaghan.

**OFFICIALS:** Eugene Cummins, Chief Executive  
Derek Caldbeck, A/Director of Services  
Majella Hunt, Director of Services  
Martin Lydon, Director of Services  
Patricia Bohan, Meetings Administrator  
Cait Kenny, Assistant Staff Officer

**Apologies:** Cllr D. Connolly.

**14.17 ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Dineen  
**SECONDED** by Councillor Creaton  
It was **AGREED** to adopt the minutes of the Plenary Meeting held 23.01.2017.

**15.17 MATTERS ARISING**

Cllr. Connaughton queried why a proposal he had made at the January meeting requesting a meeting between the Local Authority and Minister Denis Naughten on the Athlone boundary issue had not been reflected in the minutes. Cllr Keogh confirmed that he had seconded the proposal. A lengthy discussion took place on the matter. The Cathaoirleach informed the meeting that Athlone M.D. members met with Minister Naughten at a meeting arranged by the Save Roscommon Campaign. He asked Cllr. Connaughton to outline any further new information he may have in relation to boundary issues. Cllr. Fallon felt there was no merit in another meeting at this time. Cllrs. Connaughton and Keogh stated that all of the members have an interest in the Boundary issue and the scoping exercise currently underway. The Chief Executive said that he did not recall the motion as being agreed but indicated that while he had no problem meeting the Minister, he added that he did not believe there was any significant developments that would warrant another meeting but that was a matter for the elected members.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Connaughton  
**SECONDED** by Councillor Keogh  
It was **AGREED** that a meeting be arranged between the Members, the Executive of Roscommon County Council and Minister Denis Naughten to reconfirm his promise on the Athlone boundary issue.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Mulligan

**SECONDED** by Councillor Byrne

It was **AGREED** that during the meeting with Minister Naughten, the issues of any border changes for Ballaghaderreen to Mayo or Cortober to Leitrim be discussed.

Ms. Majella Hunt, Director of Services advised members that when a proposal is put to the floor, it has to be proposed, seconded and agreed and this should be clearly confirmed by the Cathaoirleach.

#### **16.17 MANAGEMENT REPORT**

Members noted the Management Report for January 2017

#### **17.17 DISPOSAL OF LANDS**

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Keogh

**SECONDED** by Councillor Naughten

It was **AGREED** that the Council consent to the disposal of lands pursuant to the provision of Section 211 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 and Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001. Particulars of the land which the County Council proposes to dispose of:-

**The land:** 2.998 ha at Toberiheeh Td., and Liberty Td., Ballydangan, Co Roscommon

**The persons from whom the land was acquired:** Gerard M Murphy and John Flynn

**The person to whom the land is to be disposed:** Manwhy Ventures Limited

**Consideration:** €5,150

**Conditions:** Part 3 – burdens and Notices of Burdens in Folios 39200F & 39199F outlined.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Naughten

**SECONDED** by Councillor Connaughton

It was **AGREED** that the Council consent to the disposal of lands pursuant to the provision of Section 211 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 and Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001. Particulars of the land which the County Council proposes to dispose of:-

**The land:** 1.9 ha at Liberty Td., Ballydangan, Co. Roscommon

**The persons from whom the land was acquired:** Peter Glennon

**The person to whom the land is to be disposed:** Patrick O'Rourke

**Consideration:** €5,681

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Keogh

**SECONDED** by Councillor Naughten

It was **AGREED** that the Council consent to the disposal of lands pursuant to the provision of Section 211 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 and Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001. Particulars of the land which the County Council proposes to dispose of:-

**The land:** 0.172 ha and 0.652 ha at Mihanboy Td., Thomastown, Co. Roscommon

**The persons from whom the land was acquired:** George Moore, The Dept of Agriculture & Food and Gerald Lennon.

**The person to whom the land is to be disposed:** Joseph & Ann Igoe

**Consideration:** €3,500

**Conditions:** Right-of Way registered on Folio RN39221F

Cllr. Kilduff stated that in regard to Disposal of Lands, that members should be fully informed as to the background of the companies buying the lands with specific reference to the respective Company Directors.

#### **18.17 LOCAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2016**

Members noted the Local Community Development Committee 2016 Annual Report that was previously circulated.

#### **19.17 LOCAL GOVERNMENT (FINANCIAL PROCEDURES AND AUDIT) NO 2 REGULATIONS 2014 - S26 (1)**

Members noted the Schedule of Uncollected Rates at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2016 that was previously circulated.

#### **20.17 REVIEW OF HOUSING ADAPTATION GRANTS FOR OLDER PEOPLE AND PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES SCHEME**

Councillor Keogh, Chair of Housing and Corporate SPC outlined to members that as a result of issues highlighted at the Housing and Corporate SPC, measures have been taken to change some discretionary aspects of the Housing Aid for Older People (HOP) and Housing Adaptation for People with a Disability (HGD) Grant Schemes. It is also a departmental requirement that windows and doors be brought back into the scheme.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Keogh  
**SECONDED** by Councillor Cummins

It was **AGREED** to approve the following:

- Ring fence 35% of the Overall Annual Grant Allocation to Housing Aid for Older People Scheme including the replacement of windows and doors as a qualifying work.
- Ring fence 65% of the Overall Annual Grant Allocation to Housing Adaptation for People with a Disability.
- Underspend in the Housing Aid for Older People Scheme will be transferred to Housing Adaptation for People with a Disability Scheme and vice-versa.

The members made the following comments in relation to the Schemes.

- Welcome the replacement of windows and doors as qualifying works in the HOP scheme.
- In certain circumstances, there is SEAI funding grants for windows/doors but the criteria is that one must be claiming fuel allowance.
- When can people avail of the new schemes?
- No grant is payable to households with gross income in excess of €60k – can this be increased?
- Suggest that Housing SPC meet with Paul Kilmartin of Warmer Homes to discuss funding.
- No extra funding announced today – disappointing given the high number of applicants on waiting list.
- Important to keep people in the comfort of own homes.

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

It was **AGREED** to write to Department seeking an increase in funding for Housing Grants Schemes.

A/Head of Finance and Housing, Mr. Derek Caldbeck responded as follows:

- Roscommon County Council has always taken the opportunity to claim as much funding as possible from the Department. The Council spent €189k from our own budget in 2016 in addition to the funding provided by the Department.
- Scheme is always oversubscribed with large portion of budget already committed in 2017.
- Some Local Authorities have closing dates for schemes but Roscommon accept application at all times.
- The Housing and Corporate SPC will be kept updated on any developments.
- The timeline for introduction of proposed changes is immediate.
- Income Thresholds and Grant Thresholds of the scheme are non-discretionary.

#### **21.17 REPORT ON PROPOSED FUNDING FROM MUNICIPAL DISTRICT FUNDS FOR COUNTY INITIATIVES**

Mr. Martin Lydon, A/Director of Services outlined to members his proposals for countywide projects benefiting all Municipal Districts. The key elements of the report includes the following:

1. Develop a Roscommon brand image and promote the county as a location of choice.
2. Develop village plans to avail of Town & Village funding and CLAR funding
3. Only county with no innovation space, all plans identify the need for Innovation space and entrepreneurship.
4. Promotion and staging of large events of county importance such as All Ireland and All Nations Sheep Shearing and Wool Handling Championships in Kiltoom, Shannonside Music festival and Wrap Project which is to support the Film Industry in Galway and the West Region and explore the potential for a Regional Film Fund (action plan for jobs).
5. Coder Do Jo / Tech Space – funding required for development officer and equipment to expand the Coder Do Jo programme countywide.
6. Rhode Island Trade Centre to promote trade and tourism in the region. An Taoiseach, Enda Kenny will officially open the Centre on 14<sup>th</sup> March 2017.

Mr. Lydon is seeking €60,000 from each Municipal District's allocation in 2017 to fund the proposed projects at a total cost of €180,000. The CPG unanimously endorsed the proposal at its meeting this morning.

The members made the following comments:

- Promoting Roscommon is an evolving process and all are very worthwhile projects.
- The Rhode Island Project is an excellent idea and should be supported and marketed well.
- Innovation is key to creating jobs and we need to be able to compete with other counties.
- Important that the SPC's feed into this if possible and not just the CPG.
- How will this affect the MD budgets?
- Would like to see this feeding into the Tourism Strategy.
- All plans and initiatives should work in parallel.
- Welcome all of these initiatives which have positive economic benefits.
- Will the loss of €60,000 from each MD have any impact on LEADER Projects?
- Welcome Village Plans – communities need help to develop them.
- Important to support major events such as sheep shearing, which is an important event in Roscommon this year.
- Drone footage should be carried out during summer months to capture award winning tidy

towns.

- We need to sell our county which is so centrally located - great place to live, work and bring up a family.
- Focus should be on textile, food and creative industries as unlikely to attract large factories.
- What is the update on the Innovation Centres for Roscommon Town and Monksland?
- Creative Communities in Ballaghaderreen – could this be considered for Roscommon Town?
- Rathcroghan needs to be developed – this could be one big project for the county as it has so much potential.
- Liaise with Leitrim County Council in relation to some projects.
- Municipal Districts should be update updated regularly.

Mr. Lydon responded as follows:

- Expected that the Innovation Centre will be operational in next two years.
- The SPC will have a big part to play in ensuring the plan will work and reports will issue to each MD on how the money is being spent.
- The Council are in discussions with WestBic and Galway County Council to create a link with Enterprise Ireland and a couple of sites have been identified. Request for members of Roscommon Municipal District to come onto the committee. A staff engineer has been assigned to get this project off the ground.
- There are a number of Roscommon businesses already working from the Rhode Island Business centre.
- Some of the proposals will require once off funding and others proposals require ongoing funding.
- The Council is working with Mayo County Council regarding Rathcroghan.
- The MD allocation for 2017 will reduce from €145,000 to €85,000 (same allocation as last year).

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Fallon

**SECONDED** by Councillor Shanagher

It was **AGREED** that €60,000 be transferred from each Municipal District to fund countywide projects as proposed by the executive.

## **22.17 PRESENTATION ON CYSTIC FIBROSIS AND ORKAMBI**

Cllr. Murphy advised members that Ms. McNulty was unable to attend this afternoon. He read a statement from Ms. McNulty and thanked the Executive and CPG for their support.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Murphy

**SECONDED** by Cllr. Byrne

It was agreed that Roscommon County Council write to the Minister of Health, Mr. Simon Harris requesting that the Orkambi Drug be made available to Cystic Fibrosis sufferers in Ireland.

## **23.17 PRESENTATION ON NORTHERN AND WESTERN REGIONAL ASSEMBLY**

Mr. David Minton, Director of Northern and Western Regional Assembly (NWRA) updated members on the role of NWRA. A new National Planning Framework (NPF) is currently being developed to succeed the

National Spatial Strategy. It will provide a framework for Regional Development. He outlined the challenges currently facing the region which are summarised as follows:

- **Infrastructural deficit in the region.**
- Over development in some areas / decline in others - need competitive cities and need to look at entire catchments.
- Continued investment in Knock airport required – over €15bn exports annually from NW region
- The job of the Assembly is to connect together all of the strategies already in place.
- **Electrical Grid Network – distinct lack of division, no connectivity with NW partners**
- Motorway Network – population follows motorway
- Ports and Harbours – one of our biggest resources – Atlantic areas have greatest potential for job expansion.
- Rail infrastructure – poor interconnectivity between regions.
- Tourism – need to increase visitors by 1 million by 2025. 2.4million visit the West annually but 50% stay in Galway and 6 million visitors in East annually.
- Brexit – Agri food sector will be particularly affected and this impacts on Roscommon

The plan (Ire2040) is now open for public consultation and NWRA are co-ordinating a regional response with regional arguments. Closing date at this first stage of the NPF process is 16<sup>th</sup> March 2017. Mr. Minton encouraged all members to make submissions. The NWRA will circulate their draft response by end this week.

The members raised the following queries:

- Ireland 2040 will be a very important national policy document and important to make submissions on behalf of Roscommon to influence the future here.
- Vital that N4 & N5 national primary roads are upgraded while the upgrade of N61 is a priority for Roscommon. Linking the N6 and N5 should also be considered.
- How can proper development of the Ports be achieved?
- Broadband is key to achieving future development -people need to be able to work from home.
- More investment in tourism projects like Lough Key and Hodson Bay.
- Potential for development around IWAK i.e. tax free zones to encourage economic development.
- When the Tuam to Gort motorway opens, can there be consideration of an extension to Donegal via Sligo. There is huge potential to intersect the Galway/Westport and Sligo rail lines. Countries like China and Taiwan build motorways parallel to railways.
- Solar power as a long term solution to our energy needs. Need to look at different types of green energy.
- Create a hyper loop - Athlone is very central and should be linked to everywhere.
- Important to plan for 1 million plus elderly people.
- Development of industry around Knock airport similar to Shannon could be a saviour of the west.
- How important is wind energy going forward?
- Decisions taken in next couple of years will determine further population.
- Brexit will impact our Agri Sector and how will this sector look in 2040 e.g. Aurivo transport milk products to and from Northern Ireland. How will a border impact this?
- We need small industries such as sea and river fishing – similar to model in North Scotland.
- Are members expected to reach out to community for submissions or will Leader and PPN be better placed to do this?
- Gas Industry off west coast needs to be developed.

Mr. Minton responded to queries as follows:

- We operate in a centralised economy and decisions are made in Dublin. The National Planning Framework is an opportunity to tell our story in the North West and what we need. The role of the NWRA is to build a business case and prioritise works.
- N61 upgrade– need to build a business case for this, an economist employed by NWRA to look at these matters regionally and include in submission.
- Cheap money available in Europe, we need to identify sectors and use this money to invest.
- National policy determines wind farm and we need to understand the future of renewable energy.
- Killybegs port is a key access point along with Galway Harbour - both are critical to the North West Region and there are business plans in operation.
- Rural broadband will be delivered through National Broadband Policy by 2020. Future jobs will be facilitated through digital and LEO's are most effective in this area.
- Currently working with NUIM about costing a sustainable town – what it will look like in the future.
- NWRA have asked Local Authorities and Leader to help get the message out. PPN would also be a great platform.

#### **24.17 EXTENSION OF STANDING ORDERS**

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Keogh

**SECONDED** by Councillor Cummins

It was **AGREED** to extend standing orders to close of business.

#### **25.17 PRESENTATION ON 'IRELAND 2040 - OUR PLAN' - NATIONAL PLANNING FRAMEWORK**

A/Director of Services Martin Lydon gave the members a presentation on the National Planning Framework – Ireland 2040:

- **Key Challenges:**

Housing, Employment, Infrastructure Services, placemaking (creating places for people to live and work).

- **Key Questions:**

What should Ireland look like in 20 years, how can we ensure every place realises its potential, where will jobs be located, what type and where will housing be located, what are key services, planning responses to environmental changes, what infrastructure requirements and how should the framework be implemented.

- **RCC Submission:**

- Athlone as a city which acts as a focal point and zone of influence for the Region (Melbourne model)
- Strengths of submission – Centre of Ireland, high quality of life in surrounding areas, connectivity to road and rail network, good spread of foreign direct investment and has a Third Level Institution.
- Governance & Finance – a local implementation group involving all partners and linked to the National Capital Plan
- Local project group from planning unit working on submission

- Closing date for Submissions is Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> March at 12 noon

The CE added that the vision is about how it might be for someone to live in the area in the future and for Roscommon this should be a connected region with Athlone at its core. Investment will therefore follow the vision if it becomes a reality. Without a framework to guide us we cannot make that vision become a reality. staff in planning have a lot of work done on our submission and Roscommon as a county need to champion and drive this vision. It would be desirable that all four adjacent counties would sign a joint document. He asked the members to send in any submissions they want to add to the document

#### **26.17 APPOINTMENT OF NEW MEMBER TO LOCAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Cummins

**SECONDED** by Councillor Fallon

It was **AGREED** to appoint Mr. Eoin Brown, Principal Officer, as the Department of Social Protection representative on the Roscommon LCDC Committee.

#### **27.17 APPOINTMENT OF NEW MEMBER TO HOUSING AND CORPORATE SPC**

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Callaghan

**SECONDED** by Councillor Keogh

It was **AGREED** to appoint Mr. Sean Flanagan as the Construction Industry Federation representative on the Housing and Corporate SPC to replace Mr. Kieran Compton.

#### **28.17 APPOINTMENT OF ELECTED MEMBER TO GALWAY ROSCOMMON EDUCATION AND TRAINING BOARD**

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Shanagher

**SECONDED** by Councillor Connaughton

It was **AGREED** to nominate Councillor Kilduff to the Galway/Roscommon Education & Training Board to replace Cllr. Ivan Connaughton.

#### **29.17 CORRESPONDENCE**

- Letter from Department of Health in response to resolution relating to the decision to close the A&E Dept at Roscommon University Hospital.
- Letter from Clare County Council RE: Resolution adopted in relation to farm safety.
- Letter from Clare County Council RE: Resolution adopted in relation to funding of drug Orkambi to Cystic Fibrosis sufferers.
- Letter from Donegal County Council RE: motion adopted in relation to Irish Coast Guard.
- Letter from Minister Naughten RE: "Free to Air broadcasting" of Gaelic Games.
- Letter from Sligo County Council RE: Resolution adopted in relation to a work programme for Credit Unions.
- Letter from Minister Coveney in response to a resolution adopted regarding the report of the Athlone Boundary committee.
- Letter from South Dublin County Council RE: Motion agreed in relation to Asylum seekers/refugees.
- Letter from South Dublin County Council RE: Motion agreed in relation to use of Bus lanes for vehicles



displaying "Disability Parking Permit".

- Letter from Tipperary County Council RE: Motion passed in relation to amend/increase planning exemptions for Solar Photovoltaic energy production.

### **30.17 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001 - PART 15**

Members were reminded by the Meetings Administrator to return Annual Declaration Forms no later than 28<sup>th</sup> February.

### **31.17 NOTICE OF MOTION**

#### **UPGRADE N61 (ATHLONE TO BOYLE)**

##### **Notice of Motion from Councillor Leyden – 01/17**

"That Roscommon County Council call on the Minister for Transport, Tourism & Sport, Shane Ross T.D. and the Government to reclassify the N61 Athlone to Boyle via Roscommon, to National Primary Route status in the interest of the economic development of County Roscommon.

##### ***The Meetings Administrator read the following reply:-***

This Notice of Motion requires a Resolution of the Council.

In light of previous presentations here today, Councillor Leyden underlined the importance of investing in critical infrastructure for economic development in County Roscommon. Cllr Leyden said increasing our competitiveness, improving our connectivity, creating jobs and driving economic growth in County Roscommon can be prioritised if we have the supporting infrastructure. The county needs the N61 to be designated as a National Primary Route from the M6 in Athlone to the N4 at Boyle via Roscommon Town.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Leyden

**SECONDED** by Councillor Byrne

It was **AGREED** to call on the Minister for Transport, Tourism & Sport, Shane Ross T.D. and the Government to reclassify the N61 Athlone to Boyle via Roscommon, to National Primary Route status in the interest of the economic development of County Roscommon.

### **32.17 COUNCILLORS CONFERENCES**

It was **AGREED** to adopt the list of payments for attendance at conferences as circulated to the members.

#### ***NEXT MEETING***

**The next meeting will be on Monday, 27th March, 2017.**

This concluded the business of the meeting.

The foregoing Minutes are  
Confirmed and Signed:

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Meetings Administrator

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Cathaoirleach

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Countersigned