

**MINUTES OF MONTHLY MEETING OF ROSCOMMON COUNTY COUNCIL  
IN COUNCIL CHAMBER, ÁRAS AN CHONTAE, ROSCOMMON  
ON MONDAY, 29TH APRIL, 2019 AT 2.15 PM.**

**PRESENT:** Councillor Ivan Connaughton **PRESIDED**

**MEMBERS:** Cllr O. Leyden, Cllr R. Doherty, Cllr T. Ward, Cllr N. Dineen, Cllr V. Byrne, Cllr D. Connolly, Cllr J. Cummins, Cllr M. Creaton, Cllr L. Fallon, Cllr P. Fitzmaurice, Cllr J. Keogh, Cllr P. Kilduff, Cllr M. Mulligan, Cllr J. Murphy, Cllr J. Naughten, Cllr K. Shanagher and Cllr L. Callaghan.

**OFFICIALS:** Eugene Cummins, Chief Executive  
Majella Hunt, Director of Services  
Martin Lydon, Director of Services  
Shane Tiernan, Director of Services  
Patricia Bohan, Meetings Administrator  
Michelle Carney, Staff Officer  
Patricia Bohan, Meetings Administrator

**Apologies:**

**46.19 ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Ward  
**SECONDED** by Councillor Creaton  
It was **AGREED** to adopt the Minutes of the Plenary Meeting held on 25.03.2019

**47.19 MATTERS ARISING**

- No matters arising.

**48.19 MANAGEMENT REPORT**

- Management Report for Quarter 1 noted.

**49.19 LEASE OF LANDS (CORPORATE)**

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Kilduff  
**SECONDED** by Councillor Ward

It was **AGREED** that the Council consent to the lease of property pursuant to the provisions of Article 206 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, Section 211 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) and Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001 of particulars of property which it is proposed to lease at the location in County Roscommon and to the persons set out in the schedule hereunder. Particulars of the property which the County Council proposes to lease:

**The Property:** Unit 1, Monksland Civic Centre, Monksland, Athlone, Co. Roscommon

**The person(s) to whom the property is to be leased to:** Grovelands Childcare Ltd.

**Consideration:** €660 per month (€7,920 per annum) plus VAT as applicable, plus service charges

**Term of Lease:** Four years and nine months

## **50.19 DISPOSAL OF LANDS (ASSETS AND ENERGY MANAGEMENT)**

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Cummins

**SECONDED** by Councillor Beirne

It was **AGREED** that the Council consent to the disposal of property pursuant to the provisions of Article 206 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, Section 211 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) and Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001 of particulars of property which it is proposed to dispose of at the location in County Roscommon and to the persons set out in the schedule hereunder. Particulars of the property which the County Council proposes to dispose:

**The Property:** Site comprising 0.004 hA (0.01 acres) at Aghrafinigan Td., Knockvicar, Boyle, Co. Roscommon

**The person(s) from whom the land was acquired:** Eugene Monaghan

**The person(s) to whom the land is to be disposed of:** John Monaghan

**The consideration proposed in respect of the disposal:** €10

## **51.19 ISSUE OF POLLING CARDS FOR LOCAL ELECTION 2019**

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Shanagher

**SECONDED** by Councillor Fallon

It was **AGREED** to approve the issuing of polling information cards in accordance with the County Management Acts 1940-1944 and Section 55(3) Part 10 of the Local Elections Regulations 1995.

## **52.19 SECTION 106 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT, 2001 - HOUSE PURCHASE AND IMPROVEMENT LOANS**

Mr. Martin Lydon appraised the members on the need to seek to raise a loan to facilitate applications for funding under the House purchase and Improvement loans schemes as at present there are applications to the value of €1.2m with the Council. The proposal was welcomed by the members.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Connolly

**SECONDED** by Cllr. Keogh

It was **AGREED** pursuant to the provisions of Section 106 of the Local Government Act, 2001 to approve to raise a loan of €1,500,000 to facilitate applications for House Purchase and Improvement Loans.

## **53.19 APPROVAL OF OVER EXPENDITURE AND TRANSFERS FROM/TO RESERVES 2018**

Mr. Lydon outlined the over and under expenditure for the year in the expenditure divisions and highlighted the following:

*Housing:* Increase in costs for the RAS and Leasing Programme, creation of a €300k provision for housing

voids programme and an increase in expenditure in housing grants

*Roads Transportation and Safety:* Increase in expenditure in public lighting and increased spend in regional and local roads resulting in net overspend of €355k

*Development Management:* Net overspend due to increased planning costs, increase in expenditure on the SICAP Programme, and increased expenditure in Community and Enterprise

*Environmental Service:* There was a surplus of €33.9k recorded due to additional income from landfill aftercare costs and civil defence operational costs. This additional income was offset against the purchase of new fire engine

*Recreation and Amenity:* the net position was a deficit of €590k due to running of leisure centre, expenditure on the Creative Ireland Programme and the €500k towards construction of the Arts Centre.

*Miscellaneous Services:* the overall net position was a surplus of €1.45m due to additional income from NPPR and the Lansdowne Road Agreement. Provision was also made for election costs and future rates adjudication by the Valuation Tribunal.

Overall a surplus of €6,465 was delivered for the financial year.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Ward

**SECONDED** by Councillor Kilduff

It was **AGREED** to approve the transfers between capital and revenue accounts in the sum of €3,112,252 for 2018.

Members thanked the Director for the prudent management of resources and the ability to stretch resources to help fund improvement works in the county.

#### **54.19 ADOPTION OF UNAUDITED ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2018**

Mr. Martin Lydon, Director of Services, presented the Annual Financial Statement (AFS) for 2018 to the Members for consideration. The statement is prepared in accordance with Statutory requirements governing the production of the AFS for Local Authorities prescribed by the Minister.

- A total of €90m was expended in Revenue and Capital Expenditure in 2018
- There was no recourse to an overdraft during the year
- 93% of invoices were paid on time
- The rates collection rate increased from 83% to 86%. The value of €2.5m of rates accounts are yet to be decided by the Valuation Tribunal.
- Planning Legal costs of €200k have to be provided for in respect of the High Court Appeal for the Anarobic Digestor hearing
- There has been substantial work completed on unfunded balances
- 37% of our income is derived from state grants and subsidies (€7m from the equalisation fund)

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Doherty

**SECONDED** by Cllr. Ward

It was **AGREED** to adopt the Unaudited Annual Financial Statement for year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2018

#### **55.19 ROSCOMMON COUNTY COUNCIL AUDIT COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2018**

Mr. Lydon informed the members that their Annual Report for 2018 was agreed last week by the Audit committee. The role of the committee is to support the elected council by providing an independent assessment of the activities of the management in controlling the local authority and the quality of the risk management, financial reporting, financial management and internal audit.

The Audit Committee charter is reviewed annually and was adopted by the members on 17<sup>th</sup> December 2019. The Head of Finance briefed the committee on a number of items during the year and other briefings by staff included a Review of IT Systems Audit, progress Report on VFM and overview of Corporate Risk Register. In conclusion the audit committee was satisfied it had carried out all of its functions and obligations as required in 2018.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Cummins

**SECONDED** by Cllr. Ward

It was **AGREED** to adopt the Audit Committee Annual Report for 2018

#### **56.19 DRAFT VARIATION NO 2 OF THE ROSCOMMON COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2014 - 2020**

Mr. Martin Lydon, Director of Services briefed the Members that the proposed variation of the County Development Plan is in relation to the joint Retail Strategy only between Roscommon and Westmeath County Councils. The Variation went on Public Display from 1<sup>st</sup> February to 4<sup>th</sup> March 2019. Seven submissions received and each has to be considered by the elected members:

1. Submission from Health and Safety Authority – risk use to land use planning. No change is recommended.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Keogh

**SECONDED** by Cllr. Naughten

It was **AGREED** no change recommended to Draft Variation Plan

2. Submission from Environmental Protection Agency – Comments on SEA Screening Report and guidance to be followed and the interaction required with environmental agencies.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Fallon

**SECONDED** by Cllr. Kilduff

It was **AGREED** no change recommended to Draft Variation Plan

3. Submission from Irish water re drainage area plan underway in the Monksland area – outside the scope of this proposal.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Connolly

**SECONDED** by Cllr. Keogh

It was **AGREED** no change recommended to Draft Variation Plan

4. Submission from Tony Kenny – highlights the failings of the Athlone Retail Strategy – undersupply of supermarket, district centre zoning and traffic bottlenecks. All issues are outside the variation proposal.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Naughten

**SECONDED** by Cllr. Fallon

It was **AGREED** no change recommended to Draft Variation plan

5. Submission from Transportation Infrastructure Ireland – Coordinated planning for transport in Athlone Area, junctions on M6 near capacity and to undertake a strategic transport assessment that is to be completed.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Keogh

**SECONDED** by Cllr. Naughten

It was **AGREED** no change necessary to Draft Variation Plan

6. Submission from Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government- Plan should be reviewed when RSES is adopted.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Naughten

**SECONDED** by Cllr. Keogh

It was **AGREED** no change necessary to Draft Variation Plan

7. Submission from Forward Planning Unit, Roscommon County Council – looking to change some wording and typos.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Naughten

**SECONDED** by Cllr. Fallon

It was **AGREED** no change necessary to Draft Variation Plan

The members commented as follows:

- welcomed the ongoing cooperation between the local councillors from Roscommon and Westmeath and the input of the executive.
- The outcome of the traffic Assessment will be key to the industrial and commercial lands.
- A lot of work has been undertaken since the “Save Roscommon Campaign”. Thanks to the 28,000 people who signed the petition and sent in submissions. The campaign was a win and it will now take a vote of the two houses of the Oireachtas to change the current arrangement
- Welcome the ongoing cooperation between the two counties

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Fallon

**SECONDED** by Cllr. Keogh

And **AGREED** that on Page 85, Par 4, S7.3.1.2 after “Golden Island Shopping Centre” add and the adjacent mixed use site”

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Fallon

**SECONDED** by Cllr. Ward

And **AGREED** to adopt the Draft Variation No. 2 of the Roscommon County Development Plan 2014-2020

The Chief Executive noted that this was a very important development and finally establishes the commitment of the elected representatives on both sides and he is looking forward to the next steps when the RSES is adopted.

#### **57.19 NOTICE OF MOTION 10.19 - ADOPTEE IDENTITY RIGHTS - CLLR. KEOGH**

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Keogh

**SECONDED** by Cllr. Ward

It was **AGREED** to write to the Ms. Katherine Zappone T.D Minister for Children and Youth Affairs to have enacted and commenced without any further unnecessary delay, legislation which will acknowledge Adoptee Identity Rights and which will immediately allow Adoptees access to critical information relating to their own Health, History and Heritage in line with the equality and personal autonomy rights of other citizens and as voted for in two referenda. The letter should also request that legislation not include the imposition of a 75 year closure of all records pre 1978. This motion is to be circulated to all Local Authorities.

#### **58.19 NOTICE OF MOTION 12.19 TRANSATLANTIC FLIGHTS AT KNOCK AIRPORT -CLLR. WARD**

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr Ward

**SECONDED** by Cllr. Connolly

It was **AGREED** to write to the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport, Mr. Shane Ross T.D. to support and encourage the provision of transatlantic flights from North America to Ireland West Airport at Knock. It was also agreed that the adjacent Local Authorities be written to to seek their support in contacting the Minister.

#### **59.19 CORRESPONDENCE**

- Letter dated 21<sup>st</sup> March, 2019 from Carlow County Council regarding the adoption of the following resolution – “To write to all Local Authorities that are in band 3 appendix 2 for assessing eligibility, based on income, for social housing and requesting support to have band 3 completely removed from the housing regulations that were introduced by former Minister Michael Finneran in 2010. The removal of band 3 would leave just 2 bands and be a much fairer system and give young couples just outside of the social housing income limits in band 3 a chance to get on the housing list”
- Letter dated 26<sup>th</sup> March, 2019 from Tipperary County Council regarding a Notice of Motion that was passed calling on the Minister for Justice to introduce a cap on the number of times that a repeat offender can avail of free legal aid.
- Letter dated 27<sup>th</sup> March, 2019 from Westmeath County Council regarding a Notice of Motion that was passed – “That Westmeath County Council, in view of the damage that spiralling insurance costs are causing to community groups, voluntary organisations, charities and small business, calls on the government to accelerate its insurance reform programme. In particular, Westmeath County Council calls on the Government to immediately establish a distinct Insurance Fraud Unit

within an Garda Síochána, establish an interim Judicial Council which will address excessive awards made in our courts and insist on greater transparency in relation to claims and premiums from Irish insurers”.

- Letter dated 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2019 from Donegal County Council regarding the adoption of the following resolution – “The All – Ireland Pollinator Plan is about everyone working together and contributing to making the landscape more pollinator friendly” that Donegal County Council A) Adopt, implement and actively promote the All Ireland Pollinator Plan on council open spaces and parks. B) Provide information, training and distribute pollinator guidelines to rural community groups, tidy towns and community development organisations. C) Devise and deliver a biodiversity action plan for Donegal County Council.
- Letter dated 12<sup>th</sup> April, 2019 from Waterford City and County Council regarding the following Notice of Motion – “That Waterford City and County Council recognises the selfless commitment of the Irish Defence Forces (Navy, Army and Air Corps) to the people of Ireland in defence of the nation and in the protection of the internal security of the State. In particular, it acknowledges the role played by the Defence Forces in multinational peacekeeping, humanitarian relief, maritime security and fishery protection. This Council in its support for the campaign for Respect and Loyalty calls on the Government to immediately take action to resolve the issues relating to the pay and conditions of service of Defence Forces Members as they are seriously impacting retention and recruitment”.

#### **60.19 COUNCILLORS CONFERENCES - PAYMENT/ATTENDANCE**

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Ward

**SECONDED** by Cllr. Kilduff

It was **AGREED** to adopt the list of payments for training and conferences as circulated.

#### **61.19 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The Cathaoirleach indicated some Members had items they wished to discuss.

##### **61.19a IRISH WATER CONNECTION CHARGES POLICY**

**Irish Water Connection Charges Policy:** Cllrs. Ward raised the matter of the increase in Water and Sewerage connection charges by Irish water effective from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 as approved by the CRU. The charges have increased substantially on what was previously payable.

Members expressed concern that some connection fees had doubled from the previous charging system and if the removal of water charges was in hindsight the right policy as the vulnerable are now being ripped off. There is no funding system for Irish water and young people trying to build houses are bearing these increased charges.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Ward

**SECONDED** by Cllr. Connaughton

It was **AGREED** to write to the Minister of Housing, Planning and Local Government to intervene to reverse the decision of Irish Water to increase connection charges to the water and wastewater infrastructure and revert to the pre 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 charges and to outline the concerns of the people of Roscommon in relation to the charges.

#### **61.19b ROSCOMMON INNOVATION CENTRE**

Cllr. Leyden outlined an urgent need for the progression of the Innovation Centre in Roscommon town. The members gave their allocated party rooms in Áras an Chontae on an interim basis to facilitate 'The Cube' to provide hot-desk spaces to be managed by Westbic. Cllr. Leyden read a letter addressed to the Chief Executive and signed by all of the elected Members stating that when The Cube moves to the new purpose Innovation Centre when built, the Cathaoirleach's room and designated party rooms will revert to the members for their use in the facilitation of local democracy. She added that any proposed change to this arrangement should be in consultation with the members.

In reply, the Chief Executive stated that there have been a number of new staff employed work in particular on the Rural and Urban Regeneration schemes as substantial funding has been made available to the Local Authority. We are committed to provide Pop-In spaces for those starting businesses and while we have capacity this will happen but this is not to be misunderstood as a permanent long term space for those currently using the facility. He will be in contact with Westbic regarding the facility and its usage as he had intended to do so. The management of the space in the headquarters is not a reserved function and the Executive will manage the space in the building in an efficient manner to facilitate carrying out the functions to deliver for the people of Roscommon. With regard Enterprise Ireland grant funding for the provision of an Innovation Centre in Roscommon town, an application has been made twice and has been unsuccessful to date therefore a Part 8 report has not yet been sent to the members.

#### **61.19c PROVISION OF WIFI IN LIBRARIES**

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Fitzmaurice

**SECONDED** by Cllr. Leyden

It was **AGREED** that when the towns are fibre enabled over the summer months, Roscommon County Council will give a commitment to have the libraries fibre enabled as good internet facilities are necessary for students who use the facilities.

The Director of Services Shane Tiernan stated that when next generation access becomes available it is intended that the libraries avail of the service.

#### **61.19d LAMB FESTIVAL**

Cllr. Shanagher thanked Roscommon County Council for their sponsorship towards the Lamb Festival. As the festival is happening at the weekend, she encouraged the public to support this event, a highlight of the year in Roscommon town.

#### **61.19e PRESENTATION TO RETIRING COUNCILLORS CREATON, DOHERTY AND KILDUFF**

The Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Ivan Connaughton thanked the members and executive for their co-operation during his term of office. He paid tribute to Cllr. Paddy Kilduff, Cllr. Rachel Doherty and Cllr. Michael



Creton for all of the work they had done on behalf of the people of their respective Municipal Districts and the County of Roscommon and wished them well in their retirement. It was a huge honour to be elected to the Council and they will be missed by their fellow councillors. He also wished Eoghan Murphy well in his move from Shannonside Radio to Newstalk FM and thanked him for his coverage of politics in county Roscommon over the past number of years on local media.

All of the members thanked the Cathaoirleach for his representation locally, nationally and abroad during his year as the first citizen of the county. He represented the Council with distinction and was a man of the people and he was fair in his dealings with all councillors during his term in office.

The members also paid tribute to the three retiring councillors – all of them joined in 2004 and have served 15 years on the Council and were represented on various committees during their term. They served their constituents and communities with distinction and each brought their own qualities to the job. They were all hard working councillors and will be missed. The members also wished them health and happiness in the future.

The Chief Executive paid tribute to each of the outgoing Councillor's for their work on behalf of their communities. He also spoke of his admiration for those who put their name on the ballot paper to seek election to office and wished all of the members well in the forthcoming election.

Cllr. Creton thanked all of the members and executive for their good wishes. He acknowledged the engineering and office staff who were always helpful and outdoor staff of the Council and for all of their work especially during emergencies. He thanked his fellow councillors and his Municipal District colleagues in particular for their cooperation in working to make the area better for their constituents.

Cllr. Doherty thanked the Chief Executive for his kind words and said that her father, and grandfather had served on the Council and said that politics is in her blood. It was a difficult decision to make to retire and she was so proud to represent the area and serve the people of the Boyle Municipal District. She also thanked all of the staff of the Boyle Area in particular and the executive of the Council. She wished all of the outgoing members the best in the forthcoming election as it is going to be a difficult month for them. She paid tribute to Cllrs. Creton and Kilduff in their retirement. She had a message for the people to respect their local councillor – they are good value and deal with many difficult situations and problems.

Cllr. Kilduff thanked the Cathaoirleach, Chief Executive and Management team and the media. He complimented the outgoing councillors Creton and Doherty on their contribution over the past fifteen years. He mentioned the late Cllr. Gerry Donnelly and his election in 2004 and his finest hour in 2014 when his local area was divided and he lost a considerable portion of his home turf but still got elected. He wished all members the best in the election including Cllr. Keogh as they both shook hands.

The Cathaoirleach brought the meeting to a conclusion as he wished everyone well in the local election on 24th May and urged the public to come out and vote.

A presentation was made to Cllr. Kilduff, Creton and Doherty by the Cathaoirleach.

#### **NEXT MEETING**

**The next meeting will be on Monday, 24th June, 2019.**

This concluded the business of the meeting.

The foregoing Minutes are  
Confirmed and Signed:

Petrizio Bohon  
Meetings Administrator

Paschal Fitzmaurice  
Cathaoirleach

Petrizio Bohon  
Countersigned