

**MINUTES OF MONTHLY MEETING OF ROSCOMMON COUNTY COUNCIL  
IN COUNCIL CHAMBER, ÁRAS AN CHONTAE, ROSCOMMON  
ON MONDAY, 25th May, 2020 AT 2.15 pm.**

|                   |   |                 |
|-------------------|---|-----------------|
| <b>PRESENT:</b>   | Councillor Paschal Fitzmaurice  | <b>PRESIDED</b> |
| <b>MEMBERS:</b>   | Cllr D. Kilduff, Cllr T. Crosby, Cllr M. McDermott, Cllr A. Waldron, Cllr O. Leyden, Cllr T. Ward, Cllr N. Dineen, Cllr V. Byrne, Cllr I. Connaughton, Cllr J. Cummins, Cllr L. Fallon, Cllr J. Keogh, Cllr M. Mulligan, Cllr J. Murphy, Cllr J. Naughten, Cllr K. Shanagher and Cllr L. Callaghan. |                 |
| <b>OFFICIALS:</b> | Eugene Cummins, Chief Executive<br>Majella Hunt, Director of Services<br>Martin Lydon, Director of Services<br>Shane Tieman, Chief Executive<br>Liam Bergin, Director of Services<br>Patricia Bohan, Meetings Administrator<br>Michelle Carney, Staff Officer                                       |                 |

**Apologies:**

**40.20 ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

The Cathaoirleach and Chief Executive led tributes to the late Gerry Corcoran RIP, retired supervisor from the Castlerea Area who passed away recently and who was an exemplary employee of Roscommon County Council whose honesty, integrity and commitment left a legacy for all who came after him. A minute's silence was held in his memory and condolences expressed to his wife Ann and family.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Crosby

**SECONDED** by Cllr. Shanagher

It was **AGREED** to adopt the minutes of the "In Camera" Plenary Meeting of 27<sup>th</sup> April 2020

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Shanagher

**SECONDED** by Cllr. McDermott

It was **AGREED** to adopt the minutes of the Plenary Meeting of 27<sup>th</sup> April 2020

**41.20 MATTERS ARISING**

There were no matters arising.

**42.20 MANAGEMENT REPORT**

- Management Report for April 2020 noted.

**43.20 UNAUDITED ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENT 2019**

Mr. Martin Lydon, Director of Services presented the Unaudited Financial Statement for 2019 for approval.

- A surplus of €12k was delivered on the Revenue Account, which now means the cumulative general reserve at the end of 2019 stood at €202k.
- A combined total of €101.4m (including transfers) was spent in the Revenue and Capital Account during 2019, delivering services to the citizens of Roscommon.

- The cash of the County Council was managed prudently, with no recourse to overdraft during the year, whilst at the same time ensuring 97% of invoices were paid within 30 days.
- The Rates Collection rate for 2019 increased to 89% (from 86% in 2018), with an increase of €95k in cash collected. The Rents collection rate reduced by 1%, but was still an impressive 91% and the collection rate for loans increased by 21% to 76% from 55% in 2018.
- NPPR income in 2019 was €208k above budget at €548k. This compared to €1,060k in 2018.
- There was additional rental income of €628k generated, based on the removal of the maximum threshold and the maintaining of a fair and equitable system based on affordability. This income stream will reduce in 2020 due to the emergency in the country.
- The budgeted figure of €1.2m was received from Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government (DHPLG) in relation to compensation as part of the Lansdowne Road Agreement.
- Income of €286k was generated from a vacant site levy. However, this is a difficult levy to collect and a substantial bad debt provision has been provided.

The additional income and budget savings, allowed the Council to incur additional expenditure and create further provisions as follows:

Velocity Patcher Units €906,000, Arts Centre €441,000, Rates Incentive Scheme €128,000  
Housing Voids Programme €419,000, Rates €500,000.

The Statement of Comprehensive Income for 2019 which records revenue income & expenditure activity reported a surplus of €12K.

The Local Property Tax allocation is of continuing concern for Roscommon County Council given the fact that an amount of €7.039M has been received from the equalisation fund in order to sustain the required level of services

### **Capital Account Activity**

Capital Expenditure is also identified within the Fixed Assets and Work in Progress headings in the Balance Sheet and includes monies owed to the County Council as at 31st December 2019. Capital Account Expenditure is funded by various sources such as Grants, Loans and Development Contributions (cash received for development contributions was €708k for 2019 as against €810k for 2018). The transactions summarised in the report give an overview of the level of activity on the Capital Account during 2019. The closing balance at year end is mainly due to timing differences between the incurring of expenditure and the raising of income.

### **Balance Sheet**

The Balance Sheet shows Fixed Assets at a value of €1,865M as at the year end with Work in Progress and Preliminary Works in respect of fixed assets being €7.4M.

There was no requirement for overdraft facilities during 2019.

Mr. Lydon acknowledged the support and assistance of the Elected Members of Roscommon County Council in dealing with the financial issues that arose during 2019 and thanked the management and staff of all business units for their co-operation and assistance in the production of the Annual Financial Statement.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Cummins

**SECONDED** by Cllr. Murphy

It was **AGREED** to adopt the Unaudited Annual Financial Statement for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2019

Mr. Lydon presented the transfers to and from reserves for approval for year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2019:

A total **€3,787,237** of transfers to\from reserves. Some of the more notable transactions within this figure are transfers for the creation of the following provisions:

- Two Velocity Patchers €604,000
- Rates Revaluation €500,000
- Arts Centre Construction €441,000
- Housing Voids Programme €420,000
- Match Funding Government Regeneration €231,000
- RAS Reserve as directed by Central Government €227,000

#### **Housing and Building - net underspend of €667,034**

There was over expenditure of €1,026,564 that was offset by increased income of €1,693,598. The primary reasons for the position reported were:

- An increase in housing rents of €826,000 against budget in 2019
- Creation of a €420,000 provision for Housing Voids Programme
- An increase in expenditure of €85,000 associated with Roscommon Refugee settlement project (fully funded)

#### **Roads, Transportation and Safety – net overspend of €1,052,966**

The over expenditure of €3,986,816 was offset by increased income of €2,933,850. The main reasons for this over expenditure related to the following

- €743,000 increase in public light upgrading
- Increased grant expenditure and reallocation of support service costs

#### **Development Management - net underspend of €809,947**

The expenditure exceeded budget by €909,482, with increased income of €1,719,429. The main elements of the increased expenditure related to

- Creation of a €286,000 bad debt provision for vacant site levy to match expected income
- Expenditure of €505,000 on SICAP Programme 2018 – 2022 (matched by income)

#### **Recreation and Amenity – a net deficit of €198,232.**

There was an increased spend of €452,840 in this Division and this was reduced by increased income of €254,608. The increased expenditure related to the

- €193,000 on Leisure Facilities (running of Roscommon Leisure Centre)
- €61,000 on computer equipment for Library
- €96,000 expenditure on Creative Ireland Initiative that was offset by a similar increase in income

#### **Miscellaneous Services - a deficit of €104,192.**

There was an overspend of €1,676,792, however this was offset by increased income of €1,572,600.

The additional expenditure related to:

- €500,000 rates provision for future rates adjudication by the Valuation Tribunal
- €604,000 for two velocity patchers
- €209,000 for election costs

Overall, a surplus of €11,906 was delivered for the 2019 financial year.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Ward

**SECONDED** by Cllr. Crosby

It was AGREED to approve the transfers between capital and revenue accounts in the sum of €3,787,237 for year ended 31 December 2019.

#### **45.20 PRESENTATION ON COUNCIL FINANCIAL POSITION**

Mr. Martin Lydon, Director of Services gave a presentation to the members on the impact of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic on the finances of Roscommon County Council including the impact on our revenue, the Government response, Local Government Sector response, Roscommon County Council response and the next steps to be taken in this matter:

- Potential annual loss of €5.9m in rates income (€491k per month)
  - Annual invoices of €12.7m (arrears b/fwd. €1.2m)
  - 2020 position; cumulative effect in 2021 (closed businesses)
  - Potential loss of rental income - Full affect will not be known until Covid-19 Pandemic Unemployment Payment ends
- Reduction in Planning applications equating to €50k lost fee income
- The Council need to be cognisant of 2021 finances in all decisions to be made on finances
- The rates account deficit brought forward to 2020 is €1.2m – the lowest for many years.
- It is difficult to calculate the loss of rental income

Government Response:

- Circular Fin 06/2020 introduced “Commercial rates alleviation measures” including a 3-month waiver of Rates for certain businesses:
  - Only for businesses forced to close -€260m available to fund initiative and Roscommon can expect between €1.35 - €1.5m
  - Covers period 27<sup>th</sup> March to 27<sup>th</sup> June 2020
  - Operation of scheme not yet designed
  - The position post 27<sup>th</sup> June to be considered as part of a wider review of options once unwinding of public health restrictions advanced
- ReStart Fund initiated for commercial premises with a rates account launched on 22<sup>nd</sup> May with a closing date of 31<sup>st</sup> August
  - €250m available to fund initiative
  - Businesses must operate in commercially rateable premises
  - Ratepayers not eligible include Multiple Chains, Non-commercial organisations, businesses not operating from commercially rateable premises and premises that were vacant prior to Covid-19 emergency
  - Grant based on 2019 rates demand, subject to a minimum of €2k and maximum of €10k
  - If rates were less than €2k, business will receive minimum amount of grant i.e. €2k
  - Businesses that did not pay 2019 rates are eligible
  - Criteria for qualifying
    - Must have turnover <€5m and 50 or less employees
    - Suffered a projected loss of 25% in revenue (1<sup>st</sup> April -30<sup>th</sup> June)
    - Business must commit to remain open or reopen
    - Retain employees on Temporary Wage Subsidy Scheme (TWSS)
    - One week for approval by RCC
    - SLA signed with DBEI / DHPLG / EI
    - Will allow €200m to be allocated to local authorities
    - Effectiveness of scheme to be reviewed once €200m paid to businesses
- The Department of Finance & Public Expenditure & Reform announced on 2<sup>nd</sup> May a commitment to local authorities to make up the rates shortfall, so that local authorities can continue to provide

full services to the public.

Local Government Response:

- CCMA and Head of Finance Group have been in regular contact with DHPLG
- Three Acute Financial Matter (AFM) Reports produced
- Reports were basis for rates waiver fund of €260m
- Local Government Sector is dependent on Central Government meeting shortfall across all sources of income
- Pressure being maintained to investigate all income sources

Roscommon County Council Response:

- Rates Team in place to help businesses with ReStart Fund
  - Dedicated email and telephone line
  - Form available and FAQ available on website
  - Digital Transformation Team have developed “back office” functionality to administer process efficiently
- 140 ratepayers completed “Covid-19 (Rates Form)” stating closure or part closure. Forms totalled €508k
- Payments to contractors maintained throughout emergency; (region of €1.25m per week)
- Analysis undertaken of all budgets to produce savings of €3.1m:
  - Amenity and graveyard grants maintained
  - Staff savings of €858k identified. Vacancies will be monitored and managed
  - Reduced housing voids programme; €515k
  - NPPR continues to perform well; an additional €200k expected
  - Municipal District Fund of €255k suspended
  - Town Team funding reduced by 52%; €8k per team (linked to Rates)
  - Savings on loan repayments €370k
  - Rates Incentive Scheme abolished €100k

Next Steps to be Undertaken include:

- Moratorium on certain expenditure to be introduced
- Need to protect reserves and provisions to guard against uncertain future
- Budgets will be kept under review
- Detail and clarity required regarding Central Government funding
- 2021 Budget process to start in June
  - Maintain income levels in areas such as LPT
  - Regular reports to CPG and Elected Members

The members welcomed the presentation and discussed as follows:

- If a business is partially closed, will the rates demand be adjusted to reflect this situation?
- Is the Restart fund available for businesses that reopened on 18<sup>th</sup> May?
- This is a broad insight as to what the Council is facing in the coming year(s). Our rate base is low but we traditionally have a very high collection rate.
- Government funding is welcome but must be immediately paid to allow us to continue our service provision as best we can otherwise there will be a deficit in the day to day running of the Council.
- A deficit of 50% of rates income is a staggering figure and Council needs to be prudent in its management of finances going forward.
- Welcome decision to pay amenity and cemetery grants.
- Town Teams need to be supported as it is vital to keep these structures in place
- How is the level of restart grant calculated for businesses that apply?
- A number of businesses that have opened have a decreased turnover due to decreased footfall and can these businesses be supported?

- Every sector must be supported equally.
- Welcome the restart fund – all jobs even one or two in a business are all important jobs.
- What savings in staff are envisaged as regard the €858k reported?
- Pressure must be exerted by Government to seek and avail of substantial EU Funding
- The Local Enterprise office in Roscommon is providing a great service to small businesses.
- Many people will continue to work from home when restrictions ease and the importance of good broadband cannot be understated and as a county we need to be prepared for this.
- The benefit of being part of the EU will be of critical importance coming out of this situation.
- The Restart grant is welcome but will fall short of what is required
- Encourage all ratepayers to apply for the restart grant.
- Welcome online trading vouchers which is 90% funded.
- If Government do not provide funding the outlook is stark and we do not yet know the impact this will have on next year.
- Need assurances from Central Government to provide shortfall in funding or services cannot be maintained
- Need time to remember those who have passed away from Covid19 and lockdown has been difficult for many people.
- It is vital that community funding is maintained.
- More people are now shopping online and there must be consideration by central government to tax this and get money back locally
- The IDA need to have a more positive approach to County Roscommon
- It is important to keep money in circulation locally and welcome the fact that all suppliers are being paid within 30 days.
- Reducing social distancing from 2m to 1m has to be an important measure for consideration by the Government to assist many businesses.
- Important that our Oireachtas members bring the message that funding will be needed by all counties. All members of Roscommon County Council will work together for the benefit of the citizens of the county.
- An update will be required for the members on a monthly basis as there is there is so much we as do not yet know and the situation is ever changing. As a country we have worked so well together and there is a fear of a second surge.

Mr. Lydon replied to queries as follows:

- The Council can process payments but not pay until money received.
- For the Restart Grant businesses must be a rateable property.
- Partial rebates can be facilitated and any business can apply that has a loss of more than 25% of revenue in a 3-year period.
- The application for the restart grant must be made online only in order to process applications immediately and bank details to be included. The grant is based on 2019 demand.
- Staff savings identified in 2020 are across all divisions and where recruitment has not taken place, workforce planning and the timings of people leaving and recruiting staff. This is a once off in 2020 and more concerning is the situation in 2021.

The Chief Executive informed the members of continuous engagement with the CCMA (City and County Managers Association), Heads of Finance and Government Departments throughout this emergency to date. This presentation by the Head of Finance today is the first attempt to find a solution regarding the loss of income. Ratepayers are the life of economic development in the county. Regular updates will be provided to members together and any new information received. Everything will be assessed and everyone treated fairly but next year will be more critical and any decisions taken have to have regard to the next two years.

On the **PROPOSAL** Cummins

**SECONDED** by Cllr. Ward

It was **AGREED** to write to the relevant Government Departments to request that all Government monies including any subsidy be paid immediately to Local Authorities.

#### **46.20 COVID 19 EMERGENCY MEASURES AND ASSOCIATED INTRODUCTION OF SECTION 251A OF THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT ACT 2020 (AS AMENDED)**

Mr. Martin Lydon advised the members that while the clock was stopped on planning deadlines during the pandemic through legislation, it has restarted and site visits have recommenced.

The period from 29<sup>th</sup> March to 23<sup>rd</sup> May (both dates inclusive), referred to as the 'emergency period', was excluded for the purposes of calculating appropriate periods and timelines for the processing of planning applications under the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and the Planning and Development Regulations 2001.

Pre planning meetings are facilitated through Microsoft Teams and all planning files are now online within 5 working days of receipt and this will continue. Investment in new software has produced much better quality online files.

The Development Plan is at the Pre Draft Public Consultation Phase and the dosing date is extended to 31<sup>st</sup> July.

#### **47.20 UPDATE ON BROADBAND**

Director of Services, Mr. Shane Tiernan presented the members an update on Broadband rollout in the county:

National Broadband Ireland (NBI) were planning on presenting an overview of the National Broadband Plan (NBP) rollout in Roscommon to council members on March 30<sup>th</sup> last. Unfortunately, due to the measures put in place to alleviate the spread of Covid19, this was not possible. NBI plan to make a presentation to elected members at the earliest available opportunity. Close to half of the population of Roscommon have no access to high speed broadband. This translates to over 19,000 premises across the county.

Under the National Broadband Plan (NBP) Roscommon will see an investment of €76M in the new high speed fibre-to-the-home network. This will enable e-learning, remote monitoring of livestock or equipment, e-health initiatives, better energy efficiency in the home, and more remote working.

The first phase of the NBP involves on the ground surveying, to assess current infrastructure - such as poles and ducts - which may be used in constructing the roll-out of the new high speed fibre network. These inform the design for the network 'build' that is required in each area. On April 27<sup>th</sup> last NBI surveyors began this work in Roscommon in the areas of Ballymurray, Athleague, Castlecoote, Dunamon, Ballymacurly, Lackan, Kilroosky, and Four Mile House.

NBI also carried out surveys in south Roscommon as part of the Ballinasloe area works. Some areas covered were Taughmaconnell, Ballydangan, Cornafulla and Old Town. They will spend several weeks surveying, so that network designs can be completed for these areas for the build phase.

Operating at scale across the country, NBI will be building in 11 of 227 separate deployment areas by end 2020 and in every county nationwide next year. Some premises in Roscommon can expect to be able to connect to the network next year.

NBI are also responsible for installation of the Broadband Connection Points (BCPs) which are an important element of early delivery of access to high speed internet in the Intervention Area (IA) set out in the NBP. These will enable free public connectivity in various locations across the county and country. In Roscommon, up to eight BCPs will be available to the public in the next 12 months and these include

community centres in Tawnytaskin, Gortaganny and Cam, Dangan, Ballybay (Tobohan pulled out), Drumboylan, Creeve, Tulsk, with enhanced broadband at schools in Tarmon and Ballagh. Site inspections took place at each site in Roscommon during February and March. Cam will be the first site to receive the infrastructure on 26<sup>th</sup> May.

Further information including National Broadband Ireland contact information is included in the members correspondence pack.

- **Boyle** - Eir have commenced their rollout of fibre broadband to Boyle town. Fibre will be placed through existing ducting from the fibre enabled cabinets to each premises. Eir has service available to 35% of Boyle at this point, over 600 premises. The majority of these premises are to the north and east of the Boyle town - Rockingham Road, The Warren, Abbeytown Road and estates, Deerpark Estates, Part of the Main Street, Around Marian Road
- **Roscommon** - Eir have submitted their Road Opening Licence T1 application in order to commence fibre rollout in Roscommon Town.

The Broadband Officer continues to work on a number of other initiatives including WIFI4EU and the Digital Strategy which will be before the members later in the year.

The members welcomed the presentation and discussed as follows:

- Welcome the NBI teams to Roscommon to commence work. Surveying is done but need to move quickly to design and installation.
- Covid-19 brought it home the urgent need for high speed broadband service in the county with so many people working from home.
- Issues with extension of broadband connections from Eir outside the stated distance from the exchange
- 50% of the residents have no access to good broadband. If a vaccination for Covid is not found quickly, more people and businesses will be working from home and need this facility.
- What is the level of connections Eir have achieved in the county?
- Need for more uploading than downloading speeds.
- What are the arrangements availing of the mobile units at community centres.
- Some villages such as Tarmonbarry have good broadband and it is a huge asset to the area. It facilitates people working from home a couple of days a week where their normal working base is in Dublin. Castlerea has good broadband and it is also a very positive benefit to the town as it is now almost fully enabled.

In reply to queries raised, Mr. Tieman confirmed that NBI will be back working as soon as conditions will allow. He outlined the extension of the area where broadband is and will be available and the details are available on the broadband website.

The Open WIFI hubs are all funded by the Department and a managed service with 24/7 access.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Leyden  
**SECONDED** by Cllr. BYRNE

It was **AGREED** that a letter be sent to the Government to seek the progression to design and build stage next year of the implementation of broadband contract in Roscommon, now that surveying is complete.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Keogh  
**SECONDED** by Cllr. Ward

It was **AGREED** to send a letter to the Chief Executive Office Eir to review their policy on the rollout of broadband at exchanges. It is not acceptable that some houses are not facilitated within a short distance of exchanges.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Crosby



**SECONDED** by Cllr. Naughten

It was **AGREED** to send a letter to all service providers to ensure that there is a policy in place to ensure the installation of broadband is carried out correctly and not have a negative visual impact.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Connaughton

**SECONDED** by Cllr. Waldron

It was **AGREED** to write to the Minister for Finance and Public Expenditure to assess the effect of online shopping and to consider taxation of same.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Kilduff

**SECONDED** by Cllr. Naughten

It was **AGREED** to write to the head of Eir Infrastructure to carry out a condition survey of all infrastructure including poles to ensure they are in good condition to facilitate broadband.

#### **48.20 UPDATE ON ROSCOMMON/GALWAY GREENWAY**

Director of Services Mr. Shane Tiernan presented an update on the current status of the Galway to Athlone Greenway Project as follows:

This project is being jointly managed by Westmeath, Galway and Roscommon County Councils in conjunction with TII. After a five-year pause, the 140km Galway to Athlone section of the Greenway is being developed with a fresh new start. New consultants, RPS from Galway, were appointed earlier this year to develop a route for the Galway to Athlone Greenway. Currently there are more than 100km of the Galway to Dublin Greenway between Maynooth and Athlone open to the public. A new cycle bridge is to be constructed across the Shannon next year connecting this section to Athlone Castle. The proposed Galway to Athlone greenway will extend from Athlone Castle to a location in Galway City, likely to be at Ballyloughane, where Galway City Council and the NTA will together undertake the planning and development of the Greenway across the City to link with the proposed Connemara Greenway.

Only connection points at Athlone and Galway have been identified to date. The project team will be approaching the selection and location of a new route with an open mind. The first stage is a Constraints Study which is now underway, and the study area is being considered as a blank canvas. The Project Team are initially assessing and determining the lands within the study area that are already in state ownership, including those owned by Government Agencies, Government Departments and Local Authorities. It is hoped to hold the first public consultation later this summer and it is assured that the project will only progress to the second stage after public consultation has informed the Constraints Study.

A project office has been established above the Library in Ballinasloe and will be staffed by personnel from the Councils and the recently appointed consultants RPS. It is planned to open the Project Office later this summer in line with Government health and safety guidance, as it will enable local progress and engagement with the public and landowners. In the meantime, website is being updated <https://www.galwaytodublincycleway.ie/> and the team is working on preparing for public consultation activities in the coming months.

Separately a working group involving the various stakeholders including landowner representatives, namely the IFA, ICMSA and ICSA, with the assistance of an independent Facilitator, are making progress towards developing a *Code of Best Practice* and *Guide to Process* document outlining the arrangements and procedures for the delivery of National and Regional Greenways and to deal fairly with the implementation of the related land acquisition. This group have listened and collaborated with each other since June 2019 and are hopeful that the Code of Best Practice will be concluded soon.

The members welcomed the update on the greenway and debated as follows:

- This is a welcome tourism initiative and welcome the plans to complete of the project
- Roscommon should look for a spur to Hodson Bay and entrepreneurs would welcome such a development.

- This project has had difficulties in the past and where possible the use of public land is the best option.
- This will be an opportunity to open up areas of County Roscommon to more tourism
- Welcome the project in two phases and commercial opportunities should be explored.
- The Greenway should be brought up the River Shannon throughout Roscommon and utilise the Bord na Mona rail network
- In current circumstances, the greenway is an excellent facility to encourage people to holiday at home.

#### **49.20 EXTENSION OF STANDING ORDERS**

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Kepogh

**SECONDED** by Cllr. Cummins

It was **AGREED** to suspend Standing Orders until after 5.30pm

#### **50.20 TIDY TOWNS AND AMENITY GRANTS 2020**

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Byrne

**SECONDED** by Cllr. Shanagher

It was **AGREED** to adopt the Tidy Town and Amenity Grant Applications 2020

## Tidy Town & Amenity Grant Applications 2020

| Reference   | Group Name  | Recommended Allocation |
|-------------|---|------------------------|
| AG177984375 | Acres Hill Residents Association                      | €450.00                |
| AG185960563 | Antogher Court Residents Association                  | €450.00                |
| AG179978812 | Arigna Foroige Club                                   | €450.00                |
| AG187153429 | Athleague Tidy Towns                                  | €1000.00               |
| AG179521945 | Athlone Sub Aqua Club                                 | €1200.00               |
| AG180991758 | Aughrim Kilmore Development Association CLG           | €400.00                |
| AG185616745 | Ballaghaderreen Tidy Town                             | €1500.00               |
| AG186817470 | Ballinaheglish Developement Association               | €500.00                |
| AG186598085 | Ballintubber Tidy Towns                               | €1000.00               |
| AG184068883 | Ballyfarnon Tidy Towns                                | €750.00                |
| AG185065268 | Ballyforan Tidy Towns                                 | €750.00                |
| AG182617773 | BALLYLEAGUE MENS SHED                                 | €580.00                |
| AG180173843 | Ballyleague Tidy Towns/Village renewal                | €750.00                |
| AG187237521 | Boyle tidy towns                                      | €1500.00               |
| AG187122123 | Brideswell Tidy Villages                              | €700.00                |
| AG187172697 | Carrownabrickna Residents Association                 | €450.00                |
| AG177888569 | Castlecoote Tidy Towns                                | €1000.00               |
| AG181927936 | Castlerea Men's Shed                                  | €550.00                |
| AG187122949 | Castlerea Tidy Town                                   | €1500.00               |
| AG187008655 | CATHEDRAL VIEW COMMITTEE                              | €450.00                |
| AG183145292 | Cavetown Residents Development Company Limited        | €500.00                |
| AG186805881 | Clonown Community Centre Committee                    | €550.00                |
| AG184643690 | Cloonfad Tidy Towns                                   | €750.00                |
| AG184516912 | Cloonsellan Abbey Conservation Group                  | €450.00                |
| AG185962875 | Cloontuskert Development & Tidy Towns Association CLG | €500.00                |
| AG186250613 | Cluain Dara Residents Association                     | €450.00                |
| AG183481510 | Cnoc na hAbhann Residents                             | €450.00                |
| AG186674886 | Cootehall Community Development Group CLG             | €500.00                |
| AG186823981 | Cortober Residents Association                        | €800.00                |
| AG186789717 | Creeve Community Centre Committee                     | €450.00                |
| AG197972619 | Croghan Enterprise Company                            | €550.00                |
| AG182535091 | Croghan tidy towns                                    | €750.00                |
| AG186747853 | Curlew View Residents Association                     | €450.00                |
| AG187181525 | Curraghboy Tidy Towns                                 | €750.00                |
| AG186970198 | Dangan Community Group                                | €500.00                |
| AG185437794 | Drinane Lake Development Association                  | €550.00                |
| AG186707880 | Drum Heritage Group                                   | €500.00                |
| AG186516476 | Dysart Tidy Towns                                     | €750.00                |
| AG183429429 | Elphin Area Community Enterprise Lrd                  | €600.00                |
| AG182442515 | Elphin Community Centre CLG                           | €700.00                |

|             |  |          |
|-------------|--|----------|
| AG178104650 | Elphin Day Care Centre Ltd                             | €500.00  |
| AG182081374 | Elphin Tidy Towns Committee                            | €1000.00 |
| AG185369919 | fortland residents committee                           | €450.00  |
| AG186488246 | Frenchpark Area Renewal Committee                      | €850.00  |
| AG187177612 | Fuerty development association                         | €750.00  |
| AG179887116 | Gorthaganny Community Development Co. Ltd              | €500.00  |
| AG185589131 | hawthorn drive association                             | €450.00  |
| AG177985314 | Karol Ave upkeep Committee                             | €450.00  |
| AG185269529 | KEADUE DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION/TIDY TOWNS              | €1000.00 |
| AG186349227 | Keadue Sportsfield                                     | €450.00  |
| AG184330925 | Kilbegnet Development Association                      | €550.00  |
| AG187100876 | Kilbride Community Centre Company Limited.             | €500.00  |
| AG185302539 | Kildalogue Heights Strokestown Co Roscommon            | €450.00  |
| AG186990290 | Kilmore Village Committee                              | €500.00  |
| AG186703512 | Kilmurry Community Centre                              | €450.00  |
| AG186570653 | Kilteevan Tidy Towns                                   | €450.00  |
| AG182429406 | Knockcroghery Tidy Towns                               | €750.00  |
| AG186658045 | Lecarrow Development and Tidy Towns Committe           | €750.00  |
| AG185591163 | Lisacul Tidy Towns                                     | €750.00  |
| AG186655647 | Lisnamult Residents Association                        | €1000.00 |
| AG186918365 | Lisnaree Residents Committee                           | €450.00  |
| AG185646733 | Lough Gara Development Association                     | €700.00  |
| AG194218995 | Lough Ree Park / Shannon Heights Residents Assoc       | €450.00  |
| AG186826500 | Lough Ree Sub Aqua Club                                | €1200.00 |
| AG181092111 | LoughglynnTidy Towns Committee                         | €750.00  |
| AG187052818 | Monksland Tidy Towns                                   | €1500.00 |
| AG182726460 | Moore Community Council                                | €550.00  |
| AG185384960 | Mount Talbot Village Enhancement Group                 | €450.00  |
| AG187094812 | Plunkett Avenue residents association                  | €200.00  |
| AG185178149 | Portrun Development Assocaiton CLG                     | €750.00  |
| AG185304600 | Rooskey Development & Social Inclusion Group Ltd       | €500.00  |
| AG177974235 | Roscommon Community Games                              | €1000.00 |
| AG185643667 | Roscommon Tidy Towns Association                       | €1500.00 |
| AG187288296 | Shannonbridge Tidy Towns                               | €750.00  |
| AG186786030 | Sli na Sruthan   | €450.00  |
| AG183834426 | St Aidans Recreational Community Development Committee | €550.00  |
| AG182248999 | Strokestown Co-Op Community & Sports Center            | €450.00  |
| AG180437651 | Strokestown TidyTowns                                  | €1500.00 |
| AG186630788 | Summerhill Residents Association                       | €450.00  |
| AG187264253 | Tarmonbarry Development & Tidy Towns Association       | €1000.00 |
| AG186485563 | Taughmaconnell Community Council                       | €500.00  |
| AG177979441 | The Walk and Blackstick Road Residents Association     | €450.00  |
| AG186543857 | Tower View Residents Association                       | €450.00  |

|                            |   |         |
|----------------------------|---|---------|
| AG186513446                | Trien Historical Group                    | €550.00 |
| AG185057713                | TULSK MACRA HALL                          | €700.00 |
| AG182760291                | Vesnoy Community Development Association  | €450.00 |
| AG186653170                | Vita House Family Centre                  | €450.00 |
| AG177490951                | Westview Residents Association            | €450.00 |
| AG186805463                | WINDMILL ROAD & CHANTERLAND RESIDENTS ASS | €450.00 |
| <b>Total applications:</b> | 89  |         |

## 51.20 APPOINTMENT TO OUTSIDE BODIES - GALWAY ROSCOMMON EDUCATION AND TRAINING BOARD

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Leyden  
**SECONDED** by Cllr. Crosby

It was **AGREED** to appoint Cllr. John Cummins to the Board of the Galway Roscommon Education and Training Board following the resignation of Cllr. McDermott

## 52.20 CHIEF EXECUTIVE BUSINESS

The Chief Executive paid tribute to Mr. Eugene Dwyer Senior Engineer in the Roads and Transportation Section who had recently retired after many years of dedicated service to Roscommon County Council. He said that he had brought roads to a very high standard and his absence is a huge loss to Roscommon County Council as he brought sincerity, passion and commitment to the job and wished him well in his retirement. He also paid tribute to the Athlone Municipal District Co-Ordinator Diarmuid Mac Donncha on his retirement next month. He expressed admiration for his work and ability to communicate and wished his and his family well for the future on behalf of the management and staff.

The Cathaoirleach and Members and Director of Services Mr. Shane Tiernan also wishes both Eugene and Diarmuid well in their retirements and thanked them for their service for the people of Roscommon.

## 53.20 NOTICES OF MOTION

### 53.20a 3.20 REFORM OF THE FAMILY LAW SYSTEM - PARENTAL ALIENATION - CLLR. NAUGHTEN

**Reply from Meetings Administrator:**

This Motion requires a resolution of the Council

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr Naughten  
**SECONDED** by Cllr. Keogh

It was **AGREED** that Roscommon County Council calls on the Irish Government Departments of Health, Justice and Equality and Children and Youth Affairs to recognise that Parental Alienation is "Substantial and sustained dissatisfaction within a caregiver-child relationship associated with significant disturbance in functioning" as coded by the World Health Organisation in the latest International Classification of Diseases version 11 and to implement recommendation 36 of the Report of the Reform of the Family Law System October 2019.

#### **54.20 4.20 FUNDING OF PIETA HOUSE - CLLR. FALLON**

Pieta House continues to provide a very vital and necessary service to the public in Ireland at this difficult time. A significant proportion of Pieta House funding is raised through the annual Darkness into Light National volunteer annual fund raiser. Because of Covid-19 restrictions this fundraiser cannot happen this year. I am proposing that Roscommon County Council request both the Minister for Finance Mr. Pascal Donohue T.D. and the Minister for Health Mr. Simon Harris T.D. to provide sufficient funding to replace this shortfall which will allow Pieta House to continue its vital work.

#### **Reply from Meetings Administrator:**

This Motion requires a resolution from the Council

Cllr Fallon acknowledged that since the submission of the motion that substantial funding was raised by Pieta House through a fundraiser day and many sports organisations also ran fundraisers. He wished to amend the motion to ask Pieta House to reinstate all of their staff now that they had a successful fundraiser.

Councillors spoke in supported the amendment as mental health services are now further stretched as a result of the pandemic:

- Reconfiguration of services of Pieta House have caused disruption.
- Invite the CEO of Pieta House to speak on the services they provide
- There are other charities that need support at this time
- The notice of motion is worthy in respect of all charities. Many charities depend on fundraising but 80% of funding comes from central government

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Fallon

**SECONDED** by Cllr. Connaughton

It was **AGREED** to write to the Minister for Finance and the Minister for Health to request sufficient funding to replace fundraising shortfalls for Pieta House and other similar charities to continue its vital work. It was further agreed to call on Pieta House to reinstate all staff and to invite the Chief Executive Officer to make a presentation on their services to a Plenary meeting.

#### **55.20 5.20 RURAL EMPLOYMENT SCHEME - CLLR. CROSBY**

Roscommon County Council calls on the Minister for Social Welfare and the Government to amend entry restrictions for rural workers to be eligible for employment on the Rural Social Employment Scheme. Currently the requirements include that applicants must be on social welfare allowance rather than social welfare benefit this and other restrictions make it virtually impossible now for communities to recruit workers to the record number of vacancies which currently exist on the scheme which in turn is a huge loss to community groups like tidy towns, graveyard committees, sports groups etc. affecting all round County Roscommon and other Rural Counties.

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

This motion requires a resolution of the Council.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Crosby

**SECONDED** by Cllr. Keogh

It was **AGREED** to write to the Minister for Social Protection to amend entry restrictions for rural workers to be eligible for employment on the Rural Social Employment Scheme. Currently the

requirements include that applicants must be on social welfare allowance rather than social welfare benefit this and other restrictions make it virtually impossible now for communities to recruit workers to the record number of vacancies which currently exist on the scheme which in turn is a huge loss to community groups like tidy towns, graveyard committees, sports groups etc. affecting all round County Roscommon and other Rural Counties.

#### **56.20 6.20 FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR TIDY TOWNS AND VOLUNTARY GROUPS- CLLR. CONNAUGHTON**

Reply from Meeting Administrator:

This motion requires a resolution of the Council

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Connaughton

**SECONDED** by Cllr Crosby

It was **AGREED** that Roscommon County Council call on the present or incoming Government to financially support all Tidy Towns & Voluntary Groups in Co. Roscommon to ensure maintenance of all public areas not under the remit of the Local Authority. The future of ongoing support from local business and fundraising will be seriously impacted due to Covid 19. In the interest of visual appearance and tourism after this pandemic, we need to attract additional visitors to the county to support our local businesses (ratepayers). The good work of many volunteers both in county Roscommon and nationwide needs to be supported. This motion is to be circulated to all Local Authorities.

#### **57.20 07.20 COMREG AND BROADBAND CHARGES - CLLR CALLAGHAN**

Roscommon County Council request Comreg to regulate telecommunication communication providers to provide and charge consumers accordingly by the internet speeds they provide to a household or business. For example a 50mbs service at 50 euro month then a 10mbs service should be 10 euro a month.

The meetings administrator read the following reply:

This Motion requires a resolution of the Council,

Cllr. Callaghan in proposing the motion stated that customers with good service are being subsidised by those with bad service.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Callaghan

**SECONDED** by Cllr. Murphy

It was **AGREED** to write to COMREG to regulate telecommunication providers to provide and charge consumers accordingly by the internet speeds they provide to a household or business.

#### **58.20 QUESTIONS**

##### **58.20a 1.20 LITTER FINES - CLLR. CROSBY**

Can the Director of Services inform the meeting how many fines were issued and how many were paid to the council over the past 12 months for indiscriminate dumping and littering throughout the country and how many cases were determined by the courts and what was the total net income for the council?

***The Meetings Administrator circulated the following reply:-***

Eighty nine on the spot litter fines for offences under the Litter Pollution Act issued over the past 12 months (1<sup>st</sup> May 2019 – 30<sup>th</sup> April 2020) During this period, payment was received for thirty seven on the spot litter fines - €5,550.00

Legal proceedings were instigated in relation to seven on the spot fines, five of which are ongoing. Fines and costs received relating to court cases amounts to €1,753.00, giving a total income to Roscommon County Council under the Litter Pollution Act of €7,303.00.

#### **58.20b 2.20 COST OF CLEANING UP ILLEGAL DUMPING - CLLR. CROSBY**

Can the Director of Services inform the meeting what was the total cost for the council over the last 12 months in collecting and dealing with indiscriminate dumping/littering throughout the county?

*The Meetings Administrator circulated the following reply:-*

The following are the costs associated with the collection and dealing with indiscriminate dumping/littering for the period 1<sup>st</sup> January 2019 – 31<sup>st</sup> December 2019:

|  |             |
|--|-------------|
| • Street/Road Cleaning (staff & associated costs, incl. plant & machinery) | €439,479.10 |
| • Litter Warden Services (Staff & associated costs)                        | €110,170.60 |
| • Legal Fees   | €4,028.49   |
| Total  | €553,678.19 |

#### **59.20 CORRESPONDENCE**

##### **Resolutions from other Local Authorities:**

- Letter dated 15<sup>th</sup> May, 2020 from Sligo County Council-  
“Propose that local authorities be funded by the Government, in order to maintain the services to make good the rates shortfall in a similar manner in which Government have supported SME’s with regard to Covid Payments.”;

#### **60.20 VOTES OF CONGRATULATIONS AND SYMPATHY**

- Vote of Sympathy to family of the late Gerry Corcoran, former Roscommon County Council employee;
- Vote of Sympathy to family of the late Bridie Connaughton, Donamon/Oran;
- Vote of Sympathy to family of the late Colette Hanley, Kilbegnet;
- Vote of Sympathy to family of the late Noel Farrell, Castlecoote;
- Vote of Sympathy to family of the late Tom Buckley, Woodmount.

#### **61.20 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The Cathaoirleach reminded the members that Roscommon Rossie Day takes place on 21<sup>st</sup> June and this



year will be an online collaboration of events.

He also thanked Roscommon Convent of Mercy who made and donated 100 face shields to Roscommon County Council.

#### **61.20a SAFE PASS AND HOUSING CRISIS - CLLR. KILDUFF**

Cllr. Kilduff stated that due to the Pandemic, there are no safe pass courses available for new workers to the construction industry.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Kilduff

**SECONDED** by Cllr. Ward

It was **AGREED** that a letter be sent to the Minister of Education and Skills and the Minister for Housing to implement an Online Safe Pass course as soon as possible.

#### **61.20b COMMEMORATION OF THE DECLARATION OF ALLEGIANCE TO DÁIL EIREANN BY ROSCOMMON COUNTY COUNCIL**

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Leyden

**SECONDED** by Cllr. Fitzmaurice

It was **AGREED** that Roscommon County Council commemorate at its next Plenary meeting the 100 year anniversary of the declaration of an Oath of Allegiance by Roscommon Council to Dáil Eireann at their Annual meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> June 1920.

#### **61.20c CASTLEREA FIRE STATION**

The Cathaoirleach welcomed the use of the Castlerea Fire Station as a Covid Test Centre and asked when it is no longer required as a test centre, what will happen to the station?

The Chief Executive replied that the fire station has been closed for three and a half years and he proposes to bring the report requested by the members to be prepared to the July Plenary meeting.

#### **61.20d CASTLEREA SWIMMING POOL**

In reply to a query the Cathaoirleach raised about the re-opening of Castlerea Swimming Pool, it was confirmed that 29<sup>th</sup> July is the date as per the national roadmap but considerable work and will have to be completed at additional cost, and new protocols developed to provide a safe service so no commitment can be given at the moment about the opening of the swimming pools until everything is assessed.

#### **61.20e UPDATE ON SERVICES FOR ELECTED MEMBERS**

The Director of Services Mr. Liam Bergin confirmed that an update will be circulated to all members during the week as requested by the Cathaoirleach.

***NEXT MEETING***

**The next meeting will be on Monday, 22nd June, 2020.**

This concluded the business of the meeting.

The foregoing Minutes are  
Confirmed and Signed:

*Petrizio Bohon*  
Meetings Administrator

*James Fallon*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Cathaoirleach

*Petrizio Bohon*  
Countersigned