

**MINUTES OF MONTHLY MEETING OF ROSCOMMON COUNTY COUNCIL  
IN COUNCIL CHAMBER, ÁRAS AN CHONTAE, ROSCOMMON  
ON MONDAY, 20TH DECEMBER, 2021 AT 2.15 pm.**

<b>PRESENT:</b>	Councillor Joe Murphy, Cathaoirleach 2021/2022	<b>PRESIDED</b>
<b>MEMBERS:</b>	Cllr L. Fallon, Cllr E. Kelly, Cllr P. Fitzmaurice, Cllr D. Kilduff, Cllr T. Crosby, Cllr M. McDermott, Cllr A. Waldron, Cllr O. Leyden, Cllr T. Ward, Cllr V. Byrne, Cllr J. Cummins, Cllr J. Keogh, Cllr M. Mulligan, Cllr J. Naughten, Cllr K. Shanagher and Cllr L. Callaghan.	
<b>OFFICIALS:</b>	Eugene Cummins, Chief Executive Majella Hunt, Director of Services Shane Tieman, Director of Services Caitlín Conneely, A/Director of Services Sean Mullarkey, Acting Head of Finance Patricia Bohan, Meetings Administrator Claudette Collins, Asst. Staff Officer Damian Ward, A/Head of ICT Una Ni Chuinn, Digital Transformation Officer Fiona Ni Chuinn, Senior Executive Officer	
<b>Apologies:</b>	Cllr N. Dineen	

**144.21 DISCLOSURE OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST (SECTION 177 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001 AS AMENDED)**

No disclosures noted.

**145.21 ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Fallon

**SECONDED** by Cllr. McDermott

It was **AGREED** to adopt the minutes of the Special Meeting of 16.11.2021

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Ward

**SECONDED** by Cllr. Shanagher

It was **AGREED** to adopt the minutes of the Plenary Meeting of 22.11.2021

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Crosby

**SECONDED** by Cllr. McDermott

It was **AGREED** to adopt the minutes of the Budget Meeting of 25.11.2021

**146.21 MATTERS ARISING**

There were no matters arising.

**147.21 MANAGEMENT REPORT**

- Management Report for November 2021 noted.

**148.21 PRESENTATION ON DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION**

Mr. Damian Ward, A/Head of ICT gave an update to the members on the Digital Transformation (DX) process:

- Optimising processes and making workflows faster, easier and more efficient by creating digital workflows.
- DX projects include
  - Meetings Management Software,
  - Webcasting of Council Meetings,
  - Mobile Apps and Customer app,
  - Case Management System for Municipal Districts,
  - Online grants, applications, payments, reporting, consultations
  - Mapping and Reporting
- Progress to date includes:
  - 53 online services developed across 11 departments – 37 public facing, 16 internal use
  - 3,298 people registered as self-service users
  - 8,716 on customer index as users of online services
  - €14.3m+ processed through online grant
  - LA Customer App – 650 users – future potential for other services
- New Projects continuously submitted for consideration to DX team – the next projects to be rolled out
  - Ethics Register, Grants, LIS, Planning Enforcement Complaints, Grants Heat Map
- My Online Services:
  - 7,891 cases logged: 37% Roscommon 32% Boyle and Athlone
  - Top issue – Pothole and surface defects - 28%
- Case Study –both staff and customers welcome new processes. Easy to use, save time, allows info to be interrogated and creates clear audit trail is feedback received.

The Members welcomed the presentation and discussed as follows:

- We must take account of older generation who may not have access to online services and availability of broadband can also be an issue.
- Suggest that google earth be used to allow pinpoints for locations of issues be included in the 'Report It' facility. There is also a need to improve the information on resolving issues that are reported.
- Recommend that a 1km grid system for the county be included in the 'Report It' facility. This will allow councillors to know the location of the issue.
- There are incidences of applicants employing professionals to complete some grant applications online and the process should be simplified
- Councillors require upskilling on the system and completing applications.
- The 'Report It' system is of great benefit on the whole but does require some modifications to make it easier.
- All technological advancements are to be welcomed if it is more efficient for everyone.
- There are some difficulties with LIS applications - a councillor should be allowed to assist applicants with their applications.

Una Ni Chuinn, Digital Transformation Officer welcomed the feedback and confirmed that the LIS scheme is now easier to navigate and includes uploading documents. The ICT section will continue to support and help all applicants with the process and largely speaking people are able to use it.

Director of Services Mr. Shane Tiernan also welcomed the feedback and confirmed that enhanced replies to Report It will be addressed. The Council received the greatest amount of LIS funding in 2021 and all applications submitted and approved had everything in order – only one person in the group needs an email address. The Government is rolling out a 5-year programme to support 200k people in the older age category to assist with digital transformation and online facilities.

#### **149.21 UPDATE ON NEW LOCAL ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY PLAN GUIDELINES 2021**

Fiona Ni Chuinn, Senior Executive Officer gave a presentation to the Elected Members of the new LECP Guidelines recently published:

- LECP sets out, over a six-year cycle, the objectives and actions needed to promote and support the economic development and the local and community development of the local authority in partnership with relevant stakeholders. It is complementary to the RSES, Country Development Plan and Regional and National Strategies.
- The current plans come to an end in December 2021 and the new guidelines will build on lessons learned and is part of the overall transformation set up in Project Ireland 2040.
- The new guidelines are statutory and support a more flexible approach to LECP
- 2 prong approach – Overall integrated framework and implementation plans
- 6 stages for framework:
  - Preparation, public consultation, development of high level goals and objectives, finalisation of LECP, Implementation plans, maintaining evaluation and review.
- Responsibilities:
  - The overall Plan is a Reserved function of the Elected members
  - Economic Element – SPC
  - Community Element- LCDC
  - Consultations
  - Advisory Steering Group to assist in the preparation, drafting, adoption and implementation include
    - 2 Members of LCDC
    - 2 Members of SPC
    - Chief Officer of LCDC
    - Director of Services
- Training and Resources are available
- Next Steps – Establishment of the advisory group and complete the review of the current LECP to inform the development of the new LECP.

The Members welcomed the presentation and commented on the large amount of work involved in the process.

In response to queries raised, Ms. Ni Chuinn confirmed that there will be an accommodation for both online and in person consultation. The elected members have a huge role to play especially in the early stages of consultation. Cllr. Murphy was confirmed as a member of the advisory group.

#### **150.21 DRAFT ANNUAL SERVICE DELIVERY PLAN 2022**

The Draft Plan was noted by the Members.

#### **151.21 AMENDMENTS TO HOUSING ALLOCATIONS SCHEME**

The chairperson of the Housing, ICT and Rural Water SPC, Cllr. Cummins outlined changes proposed to the Housing Allocations Scheme. The amendments were presented and approved on 7<sup>th</sup> October 2021 for consideration by the Council at a Plenary Meeting for approval

The amendments refer to

- Housing priority for homeless persons entrenched in homeless with complex needs and
- Succession Tenancy provisions

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Cummins

**SECONDED** by Cllr. Ward

It was **AGREED** under Section 22 of the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2009 to amend the Housing Allocations Scheme as recommended by the Housing, ICT and Rural Water SPC with regard to housing priority for homeless and succession tenancy.

#### **152.21 AUDIT COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2022**

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Cummins

**SECONDED** by Cllr. Callaghan

It was **AGREED** to adopt the Audit Committee Work Programme for 2022.

#### **153.21 AUDIT COMMITTEE REPORT ON THE AUDITED AFS 2020**

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Cummins

**SECONDED** by Cllr. Crosby

It was **AGREED** to adopt the Audit Committee Report on the Audited AFS 2020.

#### **154.21 INTERNAL AUDIT ANNUAL AUDIT PLAN 2022**

The Internal Audit Annual Audit Plan 2022 was noted.

#### **155.21 CHIEF EXECUTIVE BUSINESS**

The Chief Executive informed the members that the Friends of the Irish Environment have issued fresh proceedings challenging the Chief Executives decision on and a High Court hearing will take place in the morning. This is very regrettable and sad news for the residents of Lough Funshinagh.

The members stated that this was very disappointing news and the fight continues to get a solution for the residents affected.

#### **156.21 NOTICE OF MOTION**

#### **157.21 25.21 WINTER MAINTENANCE PROGRAMME - CLLR. WALDRON**

"That this Council carry out a full review of its gritting and salting programme network. Public consultation should form part of the review"

The Meetings Administrator read the following reply:

The Winter Service Plan is Roscommon County Council's commitment to maintain a certain level of service on specified roads throughout the County. The Management of the Roads Department carry out a review of the Winter Service Plan every year in advance of the Winter months. It is necessary to prioritise vital and strategic routes in order to use available resources to the greatest benefit. The plan, which, as far as reasonably possible, allows the safe movement of vehicular traffic on the more important defined routes of the road network, whilst also minimising delays & accidents directly attributed to adverse weather conditions on the identified routes. The plan is optimised to ensure the most effective deployment of resources in line with funding and relevant legislation and as an executive function does not go for public consultation or adoption by the members.

The Council again reminds road users that the primary responsibility for road safety remains with the driver of the vehicle. Road users cannot assume that roads are free of ice at any stage and must be themselves responsible for ensuring that they drive or use the road with proper care and attention to their own driving behaviour.

Cllr. Waldron welcomed the reply. He referred to the Ballinlough to Lowberry road that is not included but the gritting lorry passes this route. He also referred to the L1622, L1631 and L1820 that exit the N60 and need to be looked at as cars can slide coming to the main road and requested that a road safety audit be carried out.

Cllr. Crosby added that the Rooskey to Tarmonbarry and other such roads be added to the programme.

Cllr. Fitzmaurice supported Cllr. Waldron and stated there are a number of roads in Granlahan, Cloonfad and Fairymount that are never gritted and as more people have to come to towns because rural services are depleted. As there is availability of salt, more routes should be included.

Cllr. Keogh accepted the Directors response but added that there should be some discretion with the Area Engineers with regard to gritting when there is a particular need.

Cllr. Ward stated that footpaths in all villages should be gritted and the L2018 also needs to be included.

Cllr. Mulligan stated the old N5 is no longer included in the schedule while the new N5 is.

Cllr. McDermott referred to the exit to the N60 at Oran and Gallowstown that need to be looked at.

In reply the Director stated there is an obligation on the Council to grit the National Primary and Secondary roads and have to be done at set rates. Roads cannot be done on an ad-hoc basis as the public would not know when some roads were gritted. Our funding does not allow for more roads to be gritted and we will inherit 33km of road to grit when the new N5 road is completed. Every house in the county is within 5-6km of a gritted road.

Cllr. Ward asked that the problem areas highlighted at the meeting today will be considered for gritting in addition to some dangerous hills.

Cllr. Waldron proposed to write to the TII to do a road safety audit on L1622, L1631 and L1802. The Director replied that this was not a matter for TII but the Area office and at the request of Cllr. Waldron, he agreed to refer to the Area Engineer.

Cllr Kilduff proposed that an audit be carried out of "Black spots" and to ascertain the cost of gritting these areas annually. This was seconded by Cllr. Keogh.

#### **158.21 26.21 REQUEST FOR MEETING WITH TII - CLLRS. FALLON, KEOGH, KELLY, KILDUFF, NAUGHTEN AND WARD**

"At the Athlone Municipal meeting held on the 2nd December we were informed of a letter from the TII dated 26th October 2021 stating that they would not meet with the elected members of the Athlone Municipal Area to discuss a range of safety issues pertaining to the N 61 because it is not their policy to meet delegations from Municipal Areas. We now request that Roscommon County Council seek an urgent meeting with the TII to discuss this matter."

The Meetings Administrator read the following reply:

This motion requires a resolution of the Council.

The Cathaoirleach of the Athlone Municipal District spoke of the frustration of the MD members in securing a meeting with TII to discuss the increasing level of traffic on the N61, the number of junctions off the road, busier schools and a church. Because of the refusal to meet, the Members are seeking the support of the Plenary Meeting to request a meeting with the TII.

The Athlone members spoke on the issue and highlighted that:

- 13k cars are using the road per day

- When a request for a meeting comes from the MD, it should be facilitated. This issue is raised time and time again and members are furious that the TII will not meet an MD.
- The MD members are elected to represent the people

The Athlone MD members were supported by the other members in the Chamber and raised the following:

- There are similar issues in other areas such as Meelickaduff and the TII should meet all of the members.
- The TII should engage with all councillors
- The TII are spending taxpayers money and these are real concerns of all Roscommon people.
- €2.5m was approved for pavement works at Hodson bay – feedback signs should be included in this project.
- All councillors acknowledge the funding provided by the TII on an ongoing basis, but there are still matters to be addressed.
- The TII should be invited to Roscommon to the meeting and all MDs should be represented.
- There is no investment proposed for the N60 and West Roscommon in general– this must be addressed.

In reply, the Director of Services highlighted the funding in recent years for Roscommon and the construction of the N5 as well as other improvement works on national primary and secondary roads. The TII do sent inspectors out and meet with Roscommon Co Co engineers.

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

It was **AGREED** to write to the TII to request an urgent meeting with the members of Roscommon County Council to discuss a number of roads issues including the N61 upgrade.

#### **159.21 CORRESPONDENCE**

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

##### ***6<sup>th</sup> December, 2021 - Resolution from Galway County Council***

That Galway County Council agrees to write to the Department of the Taoiseach, other local authorities and Retail Ireland calling on Irish and international supermarkets operating here to join the boycott on goods from occupied territories.

##### ***6<sup>th</sup> December, 2021 - Resolution from Sligo County Council***

That Sligo County Council calls upon Minister Eamon Ryan to refuse to grant a prospecting license to Flintridge Resources (Galantas) for almost 50 town/ands in North Leitrim and to listen to the thousands of people who have made objections to this proposal.

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

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

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

**161.21 VOTES OF CONGRATULATIONS AND SYMPATHY**

The Cathaoirleach and Members expressed their sympathy to Cllr. Nigel Dineen on the recent passing of his mother Breege and wished him a speedy recovery from his illness.

The Chief Executive on behalf of the Management Team and staff also expressed his sympathy.

**162.21 AOB**

The Cathaoirleach wished the Members, Management and staff of Roscommon County Council and their families a very happy and peaceful Christmas. He thanked the media, town teams and community groups for their work in 2021.

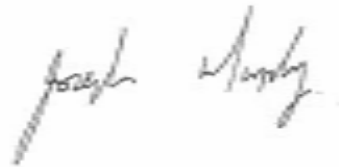
***NEXT MEETING***

**The next meeting will be on Monday, 24th January, 2022.**

This concluded the business of the meeting.

The foregoing Minutes are  
Confirmed and Signed:

*Petrizio Bohon*  
Meetings Administrator



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Cathaoirleach

*Petrizio Bohon*  
Countersigned