

**MINUTES OF MONTHLY MEETING OF ROSCOMMON COUNTY COUNCIL
IN COUNCIL CHAMBER, ÁRAS AN CHONTAE, ROSCOMMON
ON MONDAY, 25th September, 2023 AT 2.15 pm.**

PRESENT: Councillor John Keogh **PRESIDED**

MEMBERS: 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 N. Dineen, Cllr V. Byrne, Cllr J. Cummins, Cllr M. Mulligan, Cllr J. Murphy, Cllr J. Naughten, Cllr K. Shanagher and Cllr L. Callaghan.

OFFICIALS: Shane Tiernan, Chief Executive
Caitlín Conneely, Director of Services
Sean Mullarkey, Acting Head of Finance
Fiona Ni Chuinn, A/Director of Services
Greg O'Donnell, A/Director of Services
Patricia Bohan, Meetings Administrator
Claudette Collins, Staff Officer
Darragh Kelly, Communications Officer

Apologies:

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

There were no Disclosures of Conflict of Interest declared by Members.

109.23 ADOPTION OF MINUTES

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

It was **AGREED** to adopt the minutes of the Plenary Meeting of 24.07.2023

110.23 MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

111.23 MANAGEMENT REPORT

- Management Reports for July and August 2023 noted.

112.23 DISPOSAL OF LANDS - ASSETS

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor McDermott
SECONDED by Councillor Callaghan

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: Lands comprising 0.058 hA (0.143 acres) at Convent Road, Ballaghaderreen Co. Roscommon
The person(s) from whom the land was acquired: Unknown (First Registration Roscommon County

Council)

The person(s) to whom the land is to be disposed of: John Crean, Fairfield, Creggs, Co. Galway

The consideration proposed in respect of the disposal: €10,000 ex VAT

113.23 DISPOSAL OF LANDS - ASSETS

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Cummins

SECONDED by Councillor Mulligan

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: Lands comprising 0.0333 hA (0.082acres) at Gleann Ard, Ballaghaderreen Co. Roscommon

The person(s) from whom the land was acquired: Unknown (First Registration Roscommon County Council in 1940)

The person(s) to whom the land is to be disposed of: Uisce Eireann, Colville House, 24-26 Talbot Street, Dublin 1

The consideration proposed in respect of the disposal: €10,000 ex VAT

114.23 LEASE OF LANDS - ASSETS

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Leyden

SECONDED by Councillor McDermott

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: Lands comprising 2.29 hA (5.66 acre) at Lisnamult, Roscommon, Co Roscommon.

The person(s) from whom the land was acquired: Folio RN3556F – Unknown (First Registration Roscommon County Council, January 1979). Folio RN7544 – Unknown (First Registration to Roscommon County Council as Rural District of Roscommon in 1910)

The person(s) to whom the land is to be Leased: Lisnamult Community Enterprise Company Limited by Guarantee

The consideration proposed in respect of the lease: €10 per annum

Term of Lease: 90 years

The Director of Services informed the members that there was a 99-year lease approved by the Members a number of years ago in respect of this site for the provision of playing fields for the consideration of €29,600 plus a €10 pa charge in respect of the lease.

The Association has a new registered name, Lisnamult Community Enterprise Company Limited by Guarantee, and original lease has been surrendered.

The boundaries of the lease are being amended to exclude the playground and surrounding area and this will remain in direct control of Roscommon County Council. The boundary is also being amended to facilitate the site for the proposed athletics facility on the adjacent site. The terms of the lease reflects the term remaining on the original lease.

115.23 LEASE OF LANDS - ASSETS

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

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: Lands comprising 2.34 ha (5.78 acre) at Lisnamult, Roscommon, Co Roscommon.

The person(s) from whom the land was acquired: Folio RN7544 – Unknown (First Registration to Roscommon County Council as Rural District of Roscommon in 1910)

Folio RN30921 – Edward Harte, Ardnanagh, Roscommon, Co. Roscommon

The person(s) to whom the land is to be Leased: Lisnamult Community Enterprise Company Limited by Guarantee

The consideration proposed in respect of the Lease: €100 per annum

Term of Lease: 25 years

The Director of Services informed the members that this lease is required to facilitate the proposed construction of an athletics facility on the site. Members were also informed that this site extends marginally onto Council owned housing lands which are immediately adjacent to the site and the purpose of this is to facilitate an access road that can facilitate both the community development and the housing development should both progress during the period of the lease. The 25-year lease is the minimum period required to facilitate a sports capital funding application.

The CE and staff of the council involved were acknowledged for their work in securing the lease which was acknowledged as an important piece of sporting infrastructure for the town, with the provision of a new running track.

116.23 CHIEF EXECUTIVE BUSINESS

The Head of Finance, Mr. Sean Mullarkey informed the Members of the dates of the forthcoming Draft Budget meetings as follows:

Athlone Municipal District - Thursday 19th October at 10.00am in Áras an Chontae

Boyle Municipal District - Wednesday 18th October at 2.30pm in the Boyle MD Office

Roscommon Municipal District – Thursday 19th October at 2.30pm in Áras an Chontae

The Budget Meeting will take place in the Council Chamber on Thursday 30th November at 10.30am

117.23 NOTICES OF MOTION

118.23 09.23 - CLLR. KEOGH - RETENTION OF VAT AT 9% FOR FOOD RELATED BUSINESSES

“That Roscommon Council support the retention of VAT at 9% for the food related businesses and we are calling on the Minister for Finance to extend the 9% vat rate to the end of 2024.”

The Meetings Administrator read the following reply:

This motion requires a resolution of the Council.

Clr. Keogh said he received representations from the Restaurants Association of Ireland on the matter and

said the VAT increase, which was introduced in September this year, may lead to difficulties within the sector.

The Cathaoirleach proposed the retention of the current rate until the end of 2024 would support the hospitality sector in very challenging times.

The motion was seconded by Cllr. Crosby who cited the high employment offered by the hospitality sector, noting previous reductions in the VAT rate supported the sector in difficult times.

The Members welcomed the motion:

- They referenced the high incidence of restaurant closures in support of the motion.
- A reduction in the VAT rate would reduce cost being passed onto consumers.
- The valuable employment provided by the sector was also referred to as a reason to retain VAT levels.
- A claim was made that the Association needed to curb some of their members to reduce costs being carried onto consumers.
- The rising costs of fuel and staff were also having a burden upon the hospitality sector, which justified maintaining VAT levels.
- It was argued the viability of rural Ireland was at stake if VAT rates were increased due to the large employment provided by the sector.
- Increases in the cost of food and labour were being passed onto consumers which in turn was having a huge impact upon local businesses.
- The value of the sector providing seasonal and part-time employment to young people, particularly students was given as grounds for the retention of the 9% rate.

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

It was **AGREED** that Roscommon Council support the retention of VAT at 9% for the food related businesses and call on the Minister for Finance to extend the 9% vat rate to the end of 2024.

119.23 10.23 - CLLR. CUMMINS - BUDGET 2024 - PROVISION OF MECHANICAL FOOTPATH SWEEPERS

“That Roscommon Co Council in compiling Budget 2024 would set aside the required sum of money for the purchase of mechanical footpath sweepers for each of the 6 Engineering Areas to facilitate the outdoor staff in the maintenance and cleaning of our towns and villages in the County”

The Meetings Administrator read the following reply:

In light of the significant investment in public realm projects throughout the county in recent years, it is proposed that a specialised team with the necessary equipment will be set up to maintain this infrastructure. It is intended that this will be of benefit to towns and villages throughout the county. This is being examined as part of the 2024 Budget process.

Cllr. Cummins said a lot of projects had been delivered to the county but it was regrettable that a percentage of the funding provided is not allowed to be ring-fenced for the ongoing maintenance of the projects such as the Lough Key cycleway and all of these projects must be maintained to a certain standard. The outdoor workers in the Areas are stretched to provide ongoing maintenance. His motion will provide some assistance in this matter in the towns and villages throughout the county.

The Members also supported and spoke in favour of the motion:

- Sweepers with universal applications to grit paths and remove chewing gum were suggested by

- members and the best equipment must be bought.
- The introduction of sweepers would significantly improve the maintenance of footpaths and streets and would provide a significant boost to the work of the Tidy Towns groups.
- A number of towns and villages are fortunate to have the assistance of Tús and CE scheme workers but it is becoming more difficult to get people for these schemes due to the eligibility criteria.
- An appeal was made for advance notice to be given to communities within towns in advance of road sweeping to minimise inconvenience caused by parked vehicles.
- Thanks to the ongoing work of the Regeneration Team, many projects have been delivered and national funding should be made available to maintain the infrastructure.
- The purchase of the velocity patchers was a game changer – this could have the same impact.
- Will the Council be using this equipment or will it be available to Tidy Towns committees or the Tus and or rural social scheme?
- Compulsory retirement from TUS or CE scheme eligibility at 66 should be extended to 70. The restriction on minimum 12-month period on the live register should also be reduced.
- This is a good motion and good for businesses and tourism to have clean towns and villages.
- Would grants be available to purchase such equipment?
- Gritting of streets and paths in wintertime need also to be considered.

Responding, Acting Director of Services Greg O'Donnell said he agreed with the need for kerbside sweepers but said it would have significant budget implications including how many villages and how often they could be serviced and need to be realistic about what can be done within the resources available. The crew would be doing only a defined work programme. He said it was a possibility 'salting teams' could be used for maintenance in off-season but said research was required in securing the equipment that was most efficient and cost effective.

The Chief Executive said the Council had to maintain its resources, but said it wasn't simply about resourcing extra equipment. He acknowledged the work of community employment scheme workers, claiming they were a vital support to the outdoor work of the Council.

Cllr. Cummins thanked the CE and A/DOS for their replies to his motion and asked if designated maintenance teams, on foot of the reply to his notice of motion would be deployed for the whole county or as a team in each Engineering Area.

The Acting Director of Services said it was envisaged a team would be deployed to each Municipal District.

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

It was **AGREED** that Roscommon County Council propose that national funding be made available for the maintenance of new projects for the first few years of their construction at least.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Kelly
SECONDED by Cllr. Callaghan

It was **AGREED** that Roscommon Council write to the Department of Social Protection make the TÚS and Rural Employment schemes more accessible for people to qualify. The community groups in the county benefit greatly from the workers on these schemes but is becoming increasingly more difficult to get people to avail of the scheme as many are financially worse off if they avail of the scheme.

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

It was further **AGREED** that the a letter be sent to the Department requesting an extension to the retirement age for Rural Employment Scheme and TUS scheme , from the current 66 years of age cut-off to 70 years of age.

120.23 11.23 - CLLR. WARD - EXEMPTION OF CARERS ALLOWANCE FROM MEANS ASSESSMENT

“I am calling on the Government, the Minister for Finance Mr. Michael McGrath T.D. and the Minister for Social Protection and Rural and Community Development, Ms. Heather Humphreys T.D. to bring forward legislation in the Dáil which will exempt Carers Allowance from a means assessment if the person who is being cared for has a full detailed medical report in support of their condition”

The Meetings Administrator read the following reply:

This motion requires a resolution of the Council.

Cllr. Ward said he has raised the issue 6/7 years ago and at many HSE West Regional Forum meetings. He said home help hours were difficult to secure as the assessment is based on the previous year's income. This an issue for many workers who are looking after family who are ill and require home help.

Members welcomed the motion and said it was becoming a challenge to provide care for people at home claiming there was a need to incentive more people to become carers, reducing pressure on the health service.

It was claimed the current allowance would not allow patients to be kept adequately in nursing homes and appealed for the allowance not to be means tested. It was also argued that many nursing homes were currently overcrowded and savings could be made.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Ward

SECONDED by Cllr. Naughten

It was **AGREED** to call on the Government, the Minister for Finance Mr. Michael McGrath T.D. and the Minister for Social Protection and Rural and Community Development, Ms. Heather Humphreys T.D. to bring forward legislation in the Dáil which will exempt Carers Allowance from a means assessment if the person who is being cared for has a full detailed medical report in support of their condition.

It was further agreed the letter would be circulated to all local authorities.

121.23 12.23 - CLLR. WALDRON - JAPANESE KNOTWEED MANAGEMENT AND TREATMENT PLAN

“That Roscommon County Council urgently develop a formal Japanese knotweed management and treatment plan given that Roscommon County Council currently does not have such a plan.”

The Meetings Administrator read the following reply:

Roscommon County Council are actively involved in the ongoing identification and treatment of sites where invasive plant species have been identified. Measures are taken to alert people to the existence of the plant and treatment options are planned and executed. This relates only where Roscommon County Council is in control of the contaminated sites. For all other cases it is the responsibility of the landowner to action control measures once they are aware of the infestation.

A management and treatment plan can be actioned subject to adequate resources becoming available.

Cllr. Waldron said invasive species of the plant were causing the economy as much as €200m a year, claiming there was a lack of awareness of how cutting the plant encourages its further growth.

Members discussed the motion as follows:

- The plant was causing huge damage to infrastructure.
- It was suggested efforts be made to determine how other local authorities are dealing with the issue.
- Councillors claimed a management and treatment plan was required to stop the further growth of the plant.
- Members cited the growth of other invasive species such as himalayan knotweed, rhododendron, mares tail and ivy.
- The growth of invasive species was causing issues in delivering road projects with calls for greater ‘joined up thinking’ between local authorities and private landowners to address the issue of invasive species growth.
- Members feared a scenario will arise where planning would be prohibited due to the presence of invasive species.
- Calls were also made for a public awareness campaign to highlight the issues of invasive species growth.
- The Cathaoirleach said EU legislation was in place to manage the spread of invasive species. He said burning or cutting the plant did not eliminate its spread.

Responding to the issues raised, Acting Director of Services Greg O’Donnell said Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) took the spread of invasive species seriously, and marked and treated areas affected. He said said a programme of work lasting up to five years can be required to eradicate species and conceded capital projects had been affected by its spread. The most appropriate way to stop the spread of invasive species was to inject its stems, but this was dependent on the time of year and could be costly and time consuming.

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

It was **PROPOSED** by a letter be sent to the Minister for the Environment, Eamon Ryan T.D. appealing for a national scheme to be set up to combat the spread of Japanese Knotweed.

122.23 CORRESPONDENCE

Acknowledgments to Resolutions from Roscommon County Council:

- **26th July, 2023** - Acknowledgement of correspondence from Taoiseach, Mr. Leo Varadkar TD, regarding compensation for farmers in Lough Funshinagh area.
- **21st August, 2023** Acknowledgement of correspondence from Mr. Charlie McConalogue T.D., Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine regarding Fund the purchase of feed by farmers affected by flooding.
- **26th July, 2023-** Acknowledgement of correspondence from Mr. Charlie McConalogue T.D., Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine regarding Farming Rathcroghan European Innovation Project (EIP).
- **24th August, 2023** - Acknowledgement of correspondence from Taoiseach, Mr. Leo Varadkar TD, regarding OPW to set up a single River Shannon Authority to manage the Shannon water levels.

Replies to Resolutions from Roscommon County Council:

- **31st July, 2023** – Reply from Minister Roderic O’Gorman TD in response to Notice of Motion regarding Roscommon County Childcare Committee
- **17th August, 2023** – Reply from Ms Mandy Doyle, Head of Service, Primary Care, HSE in response to Notice of Motion regarding Now Doc out of hours in Carrick On Shannon
- **23rd August, 2023** – Reply from Mr. Charlie McConalogue T.D., Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine regarding a Fodder Aid Scheme with Teagasc to fund purchases of feed by farmers in the Callows, River suck and other areas impacted by flooding.

- **31st August, 2023** – Reply from Mr. Charlie McConalogue T.D., Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine in response to Notice of Motion regarding the Funding for the Farming Rathcroghan European Innovation Partnership (EIP-agri) Project
- **1st September, 2023** - Reply from Taoiseach, Mr. Leo Varadkar TD, regarding compensation for farmers in Lough Funshinagh area.

Resolutions from other Local Authorities:

- **28th July, 2023 – Resolution, Cork County Council**
 “**Cork County Council** requests that the RSA and Department of Transport use every means possible to reduce the totally unacceptable waiting times for driving tests.”
- **4th August, 2023 – Motion, Waterford City and County Council**
 “**Waterford City and County Council** recognise and appreciate the positive benefits that have been brought about through Active Travel Funding and would welcome more. However, we also acknowledge that limitations on the Active Travel scheme mean that it is increasingly focussed on larger urban areas and cannot be used for the badly needed maintenance and repair of deteriorating footpaths. In the interest of pedestrians, particularly people with disabilities, we therefore hereby resolve to write to Minister Eamon Ryan to formally notify him that we upon the Department of Transport to provide ring-fenced funding (separate from roads funds and also distinct from Active Travel funding) to Local Authorities to assist significantly and substantially with the costs of maintaining and repairing existing footpaths and to assist significantly and substantially with the costs of providing new footpaths that are not eligible for Active Travel funding. And we further call upon Minister Ryan and the Department of Transport to ensure that Local Authorities would have discretion and autonomy to use such dedicated footpaths funding without having to receive approval from the Department, the NTA, or any other agency, on a per project basis; and to ensure that there would be no other bureaucratic obstacles to the expeditious spending of such urgently needed footpath funding.”
- **5th September, 2023 – Resolution, Mayo County Council**
 “**Mayo County Council** would like to call on the Department of Housing to increase the Build time Croi Conaithe Scheme from 13 to 24 months. Currently the scheme requires a derelict property to be brought back into use within 13 months which is, for the most part, unattainable given the works required on these properties.”
- **13th September, 2023 – Resolution, Clare County Council**
 “**Clare County Council** are calling on the Minister of Transport Eamon Ryan to address the chaos being caused to members of the public by the incompetent service currently in operation by the National Car Test Company. This arrangement with a company operating on the monopoly basis is not fit for purpose and should be discontinued with a view to opening up a tendering process for accredited garages in Ireland similar to the DOE process that currently provide a quality service to the public for testing commercial vehicles. The carrying out of a car test on private vehicles over 4 years is mandatory and the government have a duty of care to the public to make adequate provision in the delivery of this service. This proposal would also have the potential to provide employment at local level for many people and provide enhanced opportunities for apprenticeships.”
- **18th September, 2023 – Resolution, Leitrim County Council**
 “**Leitrim County Council** engage in supporting the “Ash Tree Conservation” project initiated recently in County Leitrim. This is an opportunity by all to take action and achieve a very positive outcome. The support needs to be led by Dept. of Environment here in Leitrim and motion circulated so that it is noted by all local authorities.”
- **19th September, 2023 – Resolution, Sligo County Council**
 “**Sligo County Council** call on the Irish Government to provide free school transport

to all students, Primary, Secondary and University students and all citizens up to the age of 25.

(A) This will take thousands of cars off the road at peak times and massively reduce carbon emissions to help Ireland to meet its emission targets.

(B) This will incentivize and educate young people to use public transport and people will become accustomed to using buses and trains and into their adult lives.

(C) Given that Government acknowledges 35% of families go into debt to send children to school.”

Cllr. Naughten expressed his dissatisfaction with the reply from Minister McConalogue on 24th August to his Notice of Motion at the July meeting regarding a Fodder Aid Scheme with Teagasc to fund purchases of feed by farmers in the Callows, River suck and other areas impacted by flooding.

Due to the specific nature of the Callows and lands that are flooded in winter and become meadows in the summer, a specific scheme should be introduced for this particular area. He also noted that the situation did not improve since July and the lands in question did not become available to farmers to harvest as fodder.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Naughten

SECONDED by Cllr. Fallon

It was **AGREED** to reply to the Minister for Agriculture requesting a specific fodder scheme for the farmers of the Callows region.

In supporting the proposal, Cllr. Fallon also commented that the water levels of Lough Funshinagh are 600mm higher than this time last year.

123.23 PRESENTATION FROM COMHAIRLE NA NÓG - LISTEN LINK PILOT PROJECT

Three members of Roscommon Comhairle na nÓg, Ryan Dolan, Sam Brookes and Ruth Connaughton addressed Members, outlining their ‘Listen Link’ initiative, a pilot project for second-level students to support their mental health and well-being.

Cathaoirleach Cllr J. Keogh welcomed the deputation, saying he had attended the launch of their initiative some weeks previously and was impressed by the group’s project and their passion for it.

Mr. Brookes said Roscommon County Council was one of the first local authorities in the country to invite a Comhairle na nÓg organisation to address Councillors. In the course of his presentation, he stressed the importance of increased awareness young people being supported.

The roll-out and delivery of the project were presented by both Mr. Dolan and Ms. Connaughton who outlined both the benefits of such a service as well as a cost based analysis of their initiative. The estimated cost of providing the service to all 4567 students in the nine second level schools of the county is €37.95 per student or €173k.

Members warmly welcomed the presentation with a number claiming the issues of young person’s mental health often being seen as a taboo subject.

- It was agreed an appeal for funding would also be made at the HSE West Regional Health Forum.
- Members said many of the issues were addressed in a previous Planet Youth Survey, which like the presentation, offered clear and viable solutions at a small cost for each student, which would deliver a big difference.
- Other members accused the Government of insufficient investment in mental health services, claiming increased investment could save young person’s lives.
- Reference was also made to the production of a magazine by Roscommon Lions Club which featured phone numbers of various mental health helplines.

- Councillors said an encouraging feature of the initiative was its design as ‘a service for students by students’ and cited an SOS support service, previously set up in Elphin as being a success in reducing local suicides.
- Members also highlighted the value of early intervention to alleviate potential mental health issues.
- Members also highlighted the growth trend of cannabis use, which, it was argued, had an adverse impact on young persons’ mental health.

Acknowledging the support and goodwill of Councillors, Ryan Dolan, on behalf of the deputation said the service was a pre-primary care intervention.

- He said one in three young people are adversely affected by some form of mental health issues. The service would be mandatory, with an appointment given to every second-level student in Co. Roscommon. Confidentiality would be a cornerstone of the project and the Government’s budget for mental health delivery, at €2m, was quite low.
- There was ‘a vaping crisis’ in the county which was perceived as a mental health release.

Mr. Brookes added that there was a crisis in the delivery of mental health services in the county. He said the ‘Listen Link’ project aimed to ‘nip in the bud’ potential mental health issues from becoming bigger problems, leading to better futures for young people.

The Chief Executive praised this “exemplary group” of young people for their work, whom he had met at the recent Garda Youth Awards, and for bringing these matters to the fore that need to be dealt with.

The group asked the Members for their support in bringing this project to the highest level of Government.

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

It was **AGREED** to write to the Ministers for Education, Children and Health and the HSE to unanimously support the of the ‘Listen Link’ project and to provide funding for a pilot scheme in the schools in county Roscommon.

124.23 COUNCILLORS CONFERENCES - PAYMENT/ATTENDANCE

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Shanagher
SECONDED by Cllr. McDermott

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

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

It was **AGREED** to adopt the conference and training events as circulated for attendance.

125.23 VOTES OF CONGRATULATIONS AND SYMPATHY

126.23 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

A proposal was made that a workshop, facilitated by members of the Ardcarne Cemetery Committee be rolled out for interested graveyard committees in the county.

Cllr T. Crosby said the Ardcarne Cemetery Committee had transformed the appearance of their own graveyard. He said the Committee requested the Council to set up a workshop to other committees.

Cllr Crosby said the Ardcarne Committee had a wealth of experience and would be able to assist the many Cemetery groups within the county. He said the local committee were willing to provide their services in the delivery of the workshop.

Members said an input towards facilitating the workshops would be required by the local authority. An appeal was also made that Cemetery grants would be paid at the start of the year, rather than in March, in enable Cemetery groups' plant better and comence improvement works in a planned fashion.

126.23a APPOINTMENT OF PPN REPRESENTATIVE TO LCDC

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Shanagher

SECONDED by Cllr. Kelly

It was **AGREED** to appoint Ms. Rita Kearney to the LCDC Committee as the PPN social inclusion representative nominee following the resignation of Ms. Faye Hayden.

126.23b REQUEST FOR REPORT TO COUNCIL ON THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECENT RETAINED FIREFIGHTERS PAY AND CONDITIONS AGREEMENT.

Cllr. Fitzmaurice requested that in light of the recent agreement for pay and conditions of the retained fire service, a report be prepared for the members for the next meeting on the future of the fire services in the county including the new conditions agreed and the implication of the agreement.

Responding, Chief Executive Shane Tiernan said the executive was working on a budget presentation. He said pressures were coming on the Council's budget and one of the biggest is the implications of the fire service pay agreement and he will bring details to the October Plenary meeting. He also stated that there has been no indication of financial support in this matter from central government. He further stated that Roscommon continuing to meeting its national standards with regard to the delivery of fire services.

Cllr. Waldron stated that Castlerea deserves a fire service and he is looking forward to when the station will be reopened there. He was supported by Cllr. Dineen who demanded that the station in Castlerea be reopened and that money can be got to do so.

The Chief Executive said it was not true to suggest there was no fire service in Castlerea. He said the town had adequate fire cover and was being adequately served by existing fire services with response times in accordance with national averages. He added that if members wish a fire station to be restored, it would mean finding resources to be reallocated in their budget to make this happen.

The Cathaoirleach echoed the Chief Executive's comments, stating that there was no fire station serving the immediate South Roscommon area, however this did not mean there was no fire service for the area.

126.23c ARDCARNE CEMETERY AND PAYMENT OF CEMETERY GRANTS

Cllr. Crosby highlighted the work of the Ardcarne Graveyard committee who have transformed the cemetery with many significant recent improvements. He said that they would like to help other committees and provide workshops on the works they carried out.

Cllr. Cummins commented that the Council also provide assistance to cemeteries where they can and the

Cathaoirleach requested that all cemetery grants be paid annually in March if possible.

126.23d SUPPORT FOR BI-LINGUAL COUNCIL MEETINGS

The Cahaoirleach asked members to support a bi-lingual approach to Council meeting and use some words and phrases as Gaeilge to support Seachtain na Gaeilge and other such initiatives.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be on Monday, 23rd October, 2023.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

The foregoing Minutes are
Confirmed and Signed:

Patrick Bohan
Meetings Administrator

John D Keogh

Cathaoirleach

Patrick Bohan
Countersigned