

MINUTES OF MONTHLY Meeting OF ROSCOMMON COUNTY COUNCIL
COUNCIL Chamber, Áras an Chontae, Roscommon
MONDAY, 23RD FEBRUARY, 2026 AT 2.15 pm.

PRESENT: Councillor Liam Callaghan **PRESIDED**

MEMBERS: Cllr L. Brennan, Cllr V. Byrne, Cllr R. Conboy, Cllr T. Crosby, Cllr L. Cull, Cllr N. Dineen, Cllr V. Duffy, Cllr L. Fallon, Cllr P. Fitzmaurice, Cllr M. Holland, Cllr E. Kelly, Cllr J. Keogh, Cllr S. Moylan, Cllr M. McDermott and Cllr T. Ward.

OFFICIALS: Shane Tiernan, Chief Executive
Caitlín Conneely, Director of Services
Chris Flynn, Director of Services
Mark Keaveney, Director of Services
Sean Mullarkey, Director of Finance
Karen Hanley, Meetings Administrator
Claudette Collins, Staff Officer
Michaela Finneran, Assistant Staff Officer

Apologies: Cllr M. Frain.

16.26 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.

17.26 ADOPTION OF MINUTES

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Kelly

SECONDED by Cllr. Holland

It was **AGREED** to adopt the minutes of the Plenary Meeting of 26.01.2026.

18.26 MATTERS ARISING

Enquires were made from Members regarding responses to correspondence issued from previous Notices of Motion.

Cathaoirleach Cllr. Callaghan advised that in relation to a specific query relation to relating to the cost of building materials an acknowledgement from the Minister for Housing was included in the correspondence pack. He added that a follow up letter can be issued to the ESB in relation to a query regarding Storm Éowyn.

19.26 MANAGEMENT REPORT

- Management Report for January 2026 noted.

20.26 DISPOSAL OF LANDS

20.26a DISPOSAL OF LANDS - ASSETS

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr Fitzmaurice
SECONDED by Cllr Moylan

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 in Demense, Castlerea, Co. Roscommon

The person(s) to whom the Property was acquired: Unknown – First Registration to Roscommon County Council

The person(s) to whom the land is to be disposed to: Pat Murphy, Connacht Contractors Ltd.

The consideration proposed in respect of the disposal: €90,000.00

Area of the Property: 0.8Ha (2.0 Acre)

Cllr. Fitzmaurice withdrew from the meeting prior to the next item, noting a conflict of interest.

20.26b DISPOSAL OF LANDS - ASSETS

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr McDermott
SECONDED by Cllr Conboy

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 in Demesne, Castlerea, Co. Roscommon

The person(s) to whom the Property was acquired: Unknown – First Registration to Roscommon County Council

The person(s) to whom the land is to be disposed to: Paul Collaran, Colleran Building & Civil Engineering

The consideration proposed in respect of the disposal: €25,000.00

Area of the Property: 0.23Ha (0.5 Acre)

Cllr. Fitzmaurice returned to the meeting.

20.26c DISPOSAL OF LANDS - ASSETS

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr Fitzmaurice
SECONDED by Cllr Conboy

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 in Demense, Castlerea, Co. Roscommon

The person(s) to whom the Property was acquired: Unknown – First Registration to Roscommon County Council

The person(s) to whom the land is to be disposed to: John Bergin, All Star Shredding Ltd

The consideration proposed in respect of the disposal: €60,000.00

Area of the Property: 0.66Ha (1.63 Acre)

Members noted the positive impact of having three industrial contracts progressing at the same time in Castlerea. They acknowledged the economic and employment benefits this would bring to the area and extended best wishes to the relevant companies in their future developments.

20.26d DISPOSAL OF LANDS - ASSETS

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr Fallon

SECONDED by Cllr Duffy

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 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 dispose:

The Property: Lands at Monksland Townland, Co. Roscommon

The person(s) to whom the land is to be leased to: Greener Ideas Ltd., 1 Warrington Place, Dublin 2, Dublin, Ireland

The consideration proposed in respect of the Lease: €23,200.00

Term of Lease: 12 months

Members queried the company's intended use for the land. Director of Finance, Sean Mullarkey, advised that, to his knowledge, the land will be used as a site compound while the company undertakes a construction project in the area.

20.26e DISPOSAL OF LANDS - ASSETS

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Byrne

SECONDED by Cllr. Moylan

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 0.25 hA (0.60 acres) at Bella, Frenchpark, Co. Roscommon.

The person(s) from whom the land was acquired: Unknown (First registration to Roscommon County Council)

The person(s) to whom the land is to be disposed of: Jacob Wilton, Bella, Frenchpark, Co. Roscommon.

The consideration proposed in respect of the disposal: €3,000

Members queried what income generated from the disposal of lands is used to fund.

Director of Finance Sean Mullarkey advised that such income is carefully managed and is allocated towards initiatives including match funding, regeneration projects, and the development of new industrial sites.

21.26 CORRESPONDENCE

Noted as circulated in advance of the meeting.

22.26 LOCAL LINK

Cathaoirleach Cllr. Callaghan welcomed representatives from Local Link: Damien O’Neill, Manager, TFI Local Link Longford Westmeath Roscommon; Joe Greally, Manager, TFI Local Link Galway; and John Carr, Transport Co-ordinator, TFI Local Link Donegal Sligo Leitrim. He noted his role as Roscommon County Council’s representative on the Local Link Board and acknowledged the success of the service and the strong demand for expanded provision.

Damien O’Neill thanked Members for the invitation and delivered a presentation outlining the operation of TFI Local Link services. He highlighted the following:

- TFI Local Link provides rural public transport funded under the Public Service Obligation and managed by the National Transport Authority.
- Services are delivered locally through 15 Transport Co-ordination Units.
- Key benefits include improved access to health, education and employment, enhanced social inclusion, economic support through rural connectivity, and reduced reliance on private cars.
- Service types include Regular Rural Services (RRS), Door-to-Door (DRT), and Community Car Schemes.
- RRS operate on fixed routes with scheduled timetables and accept cash, Leap Card, Free Travel and the TFI Go app.
- DRT services are pre-booked, demand-responsive, offer home pick-ups where possible, and use accessible vehicles.
- Passenger usage nationally exceeded 100,000 weekly journeys in late 2024 and now exceeds 130,000 weekly, with 6.97 million journeys recorded in 2025.
- Roscommon is well served with four RRS routes (426, 570, 571, 1794) and 39 DRT routes.
- 2025 Roscommon passenger numbers: RRS 74,099; DRT 37,832.
- Local Link Galway and Local Link Donegal–Sligo–Leitrim also operate services into Roscommon, including RRS 546, 567, 572 and 977.
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Members thanked Mr. O’Neill for the detailed presentation, commended the work being carried out, and raised the following matters:

- The need for expanded services in South Roscommon, given population growth and proximity to the university.
- Whether a link from Athlone Train Station to the university could be considered.
- The need for additional and improved bus shelters countywide.
- Clarification on any catchment radius for DRT services.
- Concerns regarding the withdrawal of a community car scheme in South Roscommon and whether

it could be reinstated.

- Increased reliance on Local Link as village services diminish.
- Queries regarding previous correspondence from communities seeking meetings.
- A request for an additional service at Killina NS.
- Calls for increased funding to support service expansion.
- Appreciation for Local Link's social media communication.
- Queries regarding the relocation of Boyle Post Office and potential service adjustments.
- Suggestions to use idle school buses during holiday periods.
- The importance of Local Link for local economy, tourism and social life, and concerns about difficulties accessing taxis.
- Queries on evening service times and punctuality at Carrick-on-Shannon Train Station.
- Support for expanding the community car scheme.
- Clarification on responsibility for bus shelter design, installation and costs, and requests for increased signage.
- Calls for more evening/night-time services.
- The importance of designing housing estates to facilitate bus access.
- Compliments on the level of service delivered despite limited funding.
- Observations on environmental benefits and affordability.
- Reference to the success of the late-night service from Lanesboro to Roscommon.
- A suggestion to trial services for major events such as the Night & Day Festival.
- Requests to include Ballintubber and Ballymoe on the Castlerea–Ballinasloe route.
- A proposal for a localised town service for Roscommon Town.

The representatives from TFI Local Link responded as follows:

- No provision exists for new or additional services this year due to current funding restrictions.
- Members were encouraged to advocate for increased funding.
- The Connecting Ireland Rural Mobility Plan outlines the service framework and is largely being implemented.
- DRT services have no eligibility criteria and can be booked directly with the office.
- Engagement continues with neighbouring areas to enhance service links.
- Additional services cannot duplicate existing provision, limiting potential links from Athlone Train Station to the university.
- Bus shelters remain a priority but are dependent on funding; safety of bus stops is the first requirement.
- Continuation of community car scheme funding remains uncertain.
- Expansion in South Roscommon would require additional resources.
- Community requests can be submitted by email but proposals should be realistic.
- Killina NS is under consideration but not guaranteed.
- Variability in train punctuality may affect connection timing.
- RRS services cannot enter car parks, although DRT services can.
- The Boyle Post Office relocation is being reviewed.
- The National annual budget is approximately €20–25 million, funded by the NTA.
- School buses cannot be used due to accessibility and operational requirements.
- There is a national shortage of bus drivers; ETBs are delivering training, Local Link does not directly employ drivers.
- Operational constraints require mandatory breaks and downtime for buses and drivers.
- The National Journey Planner can assist customers in planning integrated journeys.

- All services are planned centrally to maintain network balance, and even minor route adjustments can affect users elsewhere.

Cathaoirleach Cllr. Callaghan thanked the representatives for their presentation and acknowledged the value of the services provided.

23.26 MUNICIPAL DISTRICT TOWN & VILLAGE MICRO-FUND

On the agreement of Members, Cathaoirleach Cllr. Callaghan suspended standing orders to deal with this item earlier than planned in the schedule, as Cllr. Keogh, Chairperson of the Economic Development & Enterprise Regeneration SPC, was unable to remain for the full meeting.

Cllr. Keogh outlined that as part of Budget 2026, Roscommon County Council decided to include a €75,000 fund, linked to the Municipal District Fund in the General Municipal Allocation, to support small, high-impact town and village initiatives that prioritises deliverability, community benefit, and strategic alignment.

The fund will provide:

- **€25,000 per Municipal District (MD)** for 2026. Fund amount to be determined annually through the adopted Annual Budget.
- Funding may support **(a) project development measures** (e.g., design, feasibility, consents), or **(b) match funding** to strengthen applications to larger programmes.
- Up to three projects per MD per year will be funded. Funding in any one year is no guarantee of future funding or funding application.
- Projects will be located outside of the main towns (Ballaghaderreen, Boyle, Castlerea, Monksland, Strokestown, Roscommon)

The Draft TVR Micro Fund Scheme was brought to the Economic Development, Enterprise & Regeneration SPC on Monday 16th February 2026 for consideration where the Town Regeneration Officer gave a presentation on the Scheme.

The SPC considered the draft scheme, decided on some amendments and agreed to recommend the adoption of the amended TVR Micro Fund Scheme. Cllr. Keogh formally proposed its adoption.

Members raised the following matters:

- Clarification was sought on whether an applicant receiving funding in one year would be excluded from applying the following year, and Members expressed the hope that this would not be the case.
- Clarification was sought regarding the eligibility of multi-phase projects.
- Concerns were raised regarding the use of a fixed closing date, with a suggestion that a floating or flexible deadline could prevent delays or exclusion of groups not yet ready to submit.
- A preference was expressed for rolling applications, with reviews every two months, to allow projects in MDs with no submissions by the deadline to be considered without delay.
- Concerns were expressed that some groups may not be ready to apply.
- Members noted that this is the first year of the fund and that learning and adjustments will be required as the scheme progresses.

Cathaoirleach Cllr. Callaghan proposed that projects not allocated funding in the first year should be eligible to reapply in the second year, even if works have commenced.

Director of Services, Mark Keaveney, advised that a floating closing date could be explored, which would result in applications being assessed on a first-come, first-served basis. He confirmed that multi-phase projects would be eligible provided that funding is not sought for the same phase in multiple years. He further clarified that applications may be made in subsequent years; however, approval is not guaranteed, regardless of previous years' outcomes. He noted that, as this is a new scheme, learning will occur as it is implemented. He stated that decisions would be made on applications submitted and that deadlines could be extended if required.

Further discussion included:

- Agreement that the priority is to launch the scheme, with any operational issues to be reviewed by the SPC as necessary.
- Recognition that deadlines may be extended but that submissions should be avoided once available funding is allocated.
- Clarification sought on whether the maximum of three projects per MD would apply if funding was carried over to the following year.

Mr. Keaveney advised that unallocated funding could be reviewed if no applications are received. Cllr. Keogh confirmed that unspent funding would roll forward and would not be lost. He noted that funding levels are based on the 2026 Budget and may vary in future years. He reiterated that funding is available for up to three projects per MD, though fewer may be approved depending on applications received. He added that a review could be undertaken after the first year should any funding remain unallocated.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Keogh

SECONDED by Cllr. Conboy

It was **AGREED** to adopt the Municipal District Town & Village Micro-Fund subject to the amendment that the application deadline may be extended where no applications had been received by the specific date.

24.26 CEMETERY IMPROVEMENT AND MAINTENANCE GRANT SCHEME 2026

Cathaoirleach Cllr. Callaghan noted that the allocation represented a substantial sum and reflected an increase on last year's provision. He stated that this was an endorsement of the excellent work being carried out by the various committees.

Director of Services Mark Keaveney outlined that the allocation had increased by €20,000 to a total of €90,000. He advised that 95 applications had been assessed and that the proposed schedule of allocations had been circulated to Members.

Members welcomed the additional funding and raised the following points:

- Appreciation was expressed to volunteers and community committees for their ongoing work.
- Particular acknowledgment was given to efforts made following Storm Éowyn and the damage caused.
- Recognition was expressed for those involved in the RSS and CE schemes.
- Appreciation was noted for the work undertaken by Roscommon County Council in responding to storm damage.

- A query was raised regarding extensive damage to headstones in Castlerea.
- An update was sought on damage to the Crypt in Ballintubber.

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

It was **AGREED** to approve the Cemetery Maintenance Grant Scheme 2026, as circulated.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Fitzmaurice
SECONDED by Cllr. Dineen

It was **AGREED** to ask Roscommon County Council to write to IPB to follow up on reports of damage to headstones following Storm Éowyn.

25.26 STATEMENT OF RATES COLLECTION

The Statement of Rates Collection for 2025 was noted.

26.26 QUESTION

26.26a CLLR. FITZMAURICE - Q1:26 - PLAYGROUND COMMUNICATION BOARDS

Question from Cllr. Fitzmaurice

Can Roscommon County Council provide an update on the plans for the installation of augmentative and alternative communication boards at every community and council playground in County Roscommon?

Reply:

Roscommon County Council decided to provide Communication Boards in all playgrounds in County Roscommon – Local Authority owned and Community owned – at their meeting in July 2024.

An application was submitted under Measure 1 of the Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme in February 2025 for the provision of Communication Boards and approx. €40,000 was sought. The results of the application process were published in August 2025. Unfortunately, the project was not successful on this occasion.

The Council will include Communications Boards in all future playground projects and has included them in recently completed playground such as Monksland Park.

The Council is now moving forward with the design of the Communication Boards for all remaining playgrounds and will contact the relevant community groups to seek consent to erect them shortly. We are also actively seeking funding to purchase the Boards and we hope to be in a position to provide them during 2026.

27.26 CHIEF EXECUTIVE BUSINESS

Chief Executive, Shane Tiernan, outlined that a 7km stretch of the new N5 will be opened shortly. He advised that safety adjudications are ongoing and that a formal opening will be announced in due course. He added that he will revert with a confirmed date when confirmed.

Director of Services, Mark Keaveney, noted that Roscommon County Council continues to work closely with TII and the NRDO, and it is anticipated that this section of the road will open in the next few weeks.

Cathaoirleach Cllr. Callaghan welcomed the progress. He noted the recent announcement of a further €90 million for the continuation of the project. He also highlighted the signing of two regeneration contracts on Monday 23rd February:

- Spokes in the Wheel Public Realm project in Roscommon, awarded to Coffeys for €2 million, and
- Community Park project in Ballaghaderreen, awarded to O'Malleys for €500,000.

28.26 COUNCILLORS CONFERENCES - PAYMENT/ATTENDANCE

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. McDermott

SECONDED by Cllr. Brennan

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

29.26 VOTES OF CONGRATULATIONS AND SYMPATHY

Tribute was paid to Fergal Guihen, who recently completed a cycle from Arigna to Sydney, which began in March 2024. He has raised over €200,000 to date for Mayo Roscommon Hospice and NorthWest STOP.

Best wishes were conveyed to Castlerea Community School ahead of their upcoming All Ireland Basketball Final.

Congratulations were extended to Cllr. Fallon on becoming a grandfather following the recent birth of his first grandchild, Lily.

Congratulations were also expressed to Daragh Finn (Padraig Pearses) on being named on the gaa.ie Hurling Team of the Week.

Sympathies were expressed to the families of Maureen Kenny (Kiltoom) Thomas Naughton (Ardnaglug) and Brendan Leech (Ballintubber) on their recent passings.

30.26 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Bord Bia and IFA

Members discussed the situation involving the CEO of Bord Bia, Larry Murrin, and reports of his connection to a company that imported Brazilian beef. Members expressed concern that this conflicted with the high standards required of Irish farmers and Bord Bia's role in promoting Irish produce.

It was noted that the Irish Farmer's Association (IFA) is protesting at Bord Bia Headquarters, seeking his resignation, and has committed to standing down the protest if he steps aside. Members highlighted the pressure this issue is placing on the Irish beef sector and raised concerns regarding lower regulatory standards for some imported Brazilian beef, particularly in relation to traceability and veterinary medicines. Members expressed support for farmers participating in the protest.

Cathaoirleach Cllr. Callaghan supported the concerns raised. He referred to the strong reputation of Irish beef and noted the additional challenges currently facing farmers, including blue tongue, CAP reform and adverse weather. He acknowledged members of the Roscommon IFA branch present in the gallery.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Fallon

SECONDED by Cllr. Conboy

It was **AGREED** to write to Mr Murrin to request that Mr Murrin steps aside as Chairperson of Bord Bia for a period of time, in the interest of progressing negotiations between the IFA and Bord Bia, allowing a review to take place.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Fallon

SECONDED by Cllr. Conboy

It was **AGREED** to write to the Minister of Agriculture to request that Mr Murrin steps aside as Chairperson of Bord Bia for a period of time, in the interest of progressing negotiations between the IFA and Bord Bia, allowing a review to take place. In the event that Mr Murrin does not step aside it is requested the Minister removes Mr Murrin on a permanent basis.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Fallon

SECONDED by Cllr. Conboy

It was **AGREED** to write to the IFA to stop the current protest if Mr Murrin steps aside as Chairperson of Bord Bia for a period of time, to allow a review to take place, and the progression of negotiations between the IFA and Bord Bia.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Dineen

SECONDED by Cllr. Ward

It was **AGREED** to extend standing orders until 6.20pm.

SNA Review

Members discussed the reports that some schools had been notified of reductions to their Special Needs Assistant (SNA) allocations from September 2026 following a national review. Members highlighted the valuable work carried out by SNAs and expressed concern about the potential impact on children, as well as on schools and teaching staff, should supports be reduced.

Cathaoirleach Cllr. Callaghan emphasised the important role SNAs play in supporting children's development and expressed disappointment with the level of communication from the Department, noting the distress it had caused to schools and parents. He proposed that the Department be requested to assess each school on a case-by-case basis to ensure a balanced and fair review.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Crosby

SECONDED by Cllr. Byrne

It was **AGREED** to write to the Minister for Education to conduct a full review to assess the need for SNAs in each school on a case-by-case basis and not take away the essential SNA support for the children that require it.

Unfinished Housing Estates

Cllr. Dineen raised concerns regarding Unfinished Housing Estates across the county, given the increased need for housing. He referred in particular to Coilté Bó, Loughglynn, where issues have remained unresolved since 2015. He queried the distinction between low-density developments in villages and multi-stock density developments. He noted that he has additional planning concerns which he will continue to raise at future meetings.

Director of Services, Mark Keaveney, advised that while good progress has been made on Unfinished Estates overall, progress depends heavily on the co-operation of developers. Where this is lacking, the process becomes significantly prolonged. He confirmed he would revert with clarification on the low-density query.

Chief Executive, Shane Tiernan, stated that significant efforts are ongoing to bring unfinished estates to completion. In cases where developers are uncooperative, the Council is often required to use its own resources through annual budget allocations. He noted that statutory processes apply to taking estates in charge, that Uisce Éireann is involved, and that the associated costs are considerable.

National Planning Framework (NPF)/Section 28 Guidelines

Cllr. Fitzmaurice sought an update on the variation to the County Development Plan following Minister Browne's letter of August 2025 regarding excess zoned land. He requested clarity on the timeline, when the variation will come before Members, and whether Members will have the usual opportunity to vote and propose amendments.

Director of Services, Mark Keaveney, advised that work is ongoing on the Section 28 amendment to zone additional housing land, with further zoning proposed in all main towns. He explained that the Boyle Area Plan, along with the Roscommon Town and Cortober plans, must now be incorporated following the updated guidelines. The Chief Executive's letter is expected to come before Members in late March, after which the plan will undergo environmental assessment (5–6 weeks). He aims for the draft variation to go on public display in April and confirmed that Members will vote on the plan in the normal manner.

Chief Executive, Shane Tiernan, reaffirmed the Council's commitment to progressing the variation. He noted the statutory processes involved and advised that while additional land will be rezoned for housing, development viability must still be ensured. He also noted that significant areas already zoned for housing remain undeveloped.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be on Monday, 23rd March, 2026.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

The foregoing Minutes are
Confirmed and Signed:

Karen Hanley

Meetings Administrator

Karen Hanley

Countersigned

Kiam Callaghan

Cathaoirleach