

**MINUTES OF MONTHLY MEETING OF ROSCOMMON COUNTY COUNCIL HELD IN COUNCIL CHAMBER, ÁRAS AN CHONTAE, ROSCOMMON, ON MONDAY THE 25<sup>th</sup> APRIL, 2016 AT 2.15 P.M.**

**PRESENT** Councillor Paddy Kilduff, Cathaoirleach **PRESIDED**

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

**OFFICIALS:** Mr. Eugene Cummins, Chief Executive  
Mr. Martin Lydon, A/Director of Services  
Ms. Majella Hunt, Director of Services  
Mr. Derek Caldbeck, A/Head of Finance  
Mr. Eugene Dwyer, Senior Engineer  
Ms. Patricia Bohan, Meetings Administrator

Apologies were received from Councillor M. Mulligan

**32.16. ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

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

It was **AGREED** to adopt the minutes of the monthly plenary meeting held 22.02.2016

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Fallon  
**SECONDED** by Councillor Keogh

It was **AGREED** to adopt the minutes of the special plenary meeting held 22.02.2016

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Byrne  
**SECONDED** by Councillor Cummins

It was **AGREED** to adopt the minutes of the special plenary meeting held 14.03.2016

**33.16. PRESENTATION FROM SUSTAINABLE ENERGY AUTHORITY OF IRELAND (SEAI) ON PUBLIC SECTOR PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMME FOLLOWED BY SIGNING OF PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT BETWEEN SUSTAINABLE ENERGY AUTHORITY OF IRELAND AND ROSCOMMON COUNTY COUNCIL**

Ms. Majella Kelleher, Head of Energy Demand Management and Alan Ryan, Programme Manager outlined to the members the objective of the Partnership Agreement.

- Public Bodies have significant obligations to achieve energy efficiency
- SEAI will tailor supports to assist Roscommon County Council in achieving a target of 33% efficiency improvement by 2020.
- RCC will develop and implement a structured energy management programme including an annual action plan, and identify long term strategic initiatives.
- SEAI are engaged with Local Authorities and it has ring fenced funding for Public Lighting in 2016

All councillors welcomed the partnership and raised the following queries:

- New design of LED lights is not lighting up the areas to the same extent as the old lights leaving dark areas on roads

- While there is grant aid available for home owners, the aid has decreased in recent years. Eligibility for the Warmer Homes Scheme is too limited and the application process should be made easier.
- Need to look at alternatives to wind energy such as solar farms – this could be a possibility for Roscommon.

Ms Kelleher and Mr Ryan responded as follows:

- Grant payments increased last year and a third grant introduced while demand has fallen for some grants.
- LED lights use less energy and in theory should only light up footpaths and roads.
- The raison D'être of the SEAI is to encourage more people to spend less on energy by using less.
- SEAI is carrying out pilot study with Department of Social Protection in 2016.

It was noted that there is a dedicated Energy Unit now established in Roscommon County Council.

The partnership agreement between Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland and Roscommon County Council was then signed.

### **34.16. LOUGH FUNSHINAGH**

#### **Notice of Motion from Councillor Connaughton, Fallon, Ward, Kilduff, Keogh & Naughten – 04/16**

“That Roscommon County Council undertake to carry out hydro geological, hydraulic and geological assessments of the immediate area and the broader zone at Lough Funshinagh, particularly in townlands of Ballagh, Lisfelim, Ardmullan, Carrick, Rahara, Srahauns, to understand/solve flooding issues that have caused distress and damage to households, roads and land and interrupted community activities. This will help Roscommon County Council to identify and evaluate practical measures to address flooding in the future where 11 houses were either flooded, were at risk of flooding or cut off, 5 Regional and Local roads and approximately 100 hectares of lands flooded”.

A verbal response was given by Chief Executive as follows:

I would like to acknowledge all representations received in relation to hardship endured and acknowledge the excellent work of Councillors to date in this regard. Lough Funshinagh is still flooded and we need to have a clear understanding of why that it happening. We need to be informed and it is important that the study proposed in your motion is undertaken. I want to highlight that all stakeholders need to be approached to seek their assistance including the Office of Public Works and Department Of Environment. Funding is a matter for Councillors and you will have the opportunity to do that at municipal district level in the coming weeks.

Councillors made the following comments:

- Houses, roads and farmland affected by the flood and if turlough levels do not fall, more flooding will occur when the rain returns and land under water not available for farming this year is causing hardship.
- As water levels are four foot higher than ever recorded previously, it is fitting that we carry out study to see what is wrong and what solution can be implemented.
- The reason the turlough remains flooded is unknown and it may be too big of a job for Roscommon Co. Co to assess – may need OPW or other experts in the field.
- Cannot afford to wait another year before something is done.
- If we are going to use Consultants to carry out the report then all areas of County should be included as there are somewhat similar issues in other parts of the county.
- Can the funding allocated by the Department to assist in the flooding be used for this study?
- Is there a report available on the proposals for the expenditure of the €4.5m allocation received?
- Need to put every pressure on the OPW to fund the cost of the work.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Fallon

**SECONDED** by Councillor Leyden

It was **AGREED** that Roscommon County Council undertake to carry out a study to determine the cause of flooding at Lough Funshinagh.

Eugene Dwyer, Senior Engineer briefed the meeting regarding the application for €10.6m sent to the Department in respect of the flooding issue. An allocation of €4.5m was granted to Roscommon County Council leaving a shortfall of €5.1m. He outlined progress as follows:

- There are 138 schemes identified by Roscommon County Council and 23 of these will cost €1.35m to complete.
- RCC could apply to the Department for a further allocation in respect of 13 specific schemes.
- It will take some time to assess all of the schemes.

Councillors commented as follows:

- Confidence in the Senior Engineer to do his best with the money provided.
- Will the allocated funding have to be spent in 2016?
- Need OPW on board and would Roscommon County Council be required to match any funding received from OPW.

Eugene Dwyer replied as follows:

- RCC will endeavour to expedite procurement when they have approval to carry out works
- The money received to date has to be spent by the end of November
- A couple of small schemes could cost most of the money allocated

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Connaughton

**SECONDED** by Councillor Ward

It was **AGREED** that Roscommon County Council write to the Department looking for additional funding of €5.1m to address all schemes that are outstanding.

### **35.16. CONSIDERATION OF MONTHLY MANAGEMENT REPORT SUBJECT TO SECTION 51, SUB-SECTIONS (3) & (4) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM ACT, 2014:**

- **February 2016 & March 2016**

Members noted the Monthly Management Report for the months of February and March 2016.

### **36.16. PRESENTATION ON 2016 TENANT PURCHASE SCHEME**

Mr. Derek Caldbeck, A/Director of Services, Finance, Housing & ICT gave a detailed presentation on the 2016 Tenant Purchase Scheme. The CPG recommended that a presentation be made to Plenary Council prior to any communication with Tenants in relation to the Scheme. The SPC has recommended that a competition be held to appoint an appropriately qualified valuer for each Municipal District. The scheme is a National Scheme to enable LA tenants purchase the home in which they currently reside (subject to terms and conditions).

The members welcomed the Scheme but made the following comments:

- If income is greater than €15k and less than €20k it will be difficult to get a loan
- Scheme is linked to income and not to length of residency
- Social welfare recipients excluded because of incomes
- If one partner is employed, do they meet the criteria?
- Can applicants, if refused a loan by banks, seek a loan from Authority?

- Improvement works carried out by the tenant that enhanced price of property would be at a disadvantage
- Is there a review date built into the Scheme if further amendments required

Mr Caldbeck stated that he had no knowledge of a review date for the scheme but the Department was open to continuous feedback on the operation of the scheme. He also confirmed that applicants can seek Local Authority mortgages, if eligible.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Naughton

**SECONDED** by Councillor Leyden

It was **AGREED** that Roscommon write to Department outlining that the length of residency be taken into account in the new Tenant Purchase Scheme.

### **37.16. SCHEDULE OF UNCOLLECTED RATES AT 31<sup>ST</sup> DECEMBER 2015**

Mr. Derek Caldbeck, A/Director of Services advised the members that he was required by the Local Government (Financial Procedures and Audit) Regulations to give an update to Members outlining the level of Rate arrears at the end of each financial year.

The members noted the following:

- 93% collection rate is excellent and to be commended
- No casual trading bye-laws in Roscommon, frustrating for business owners that they don't have to pay rates and others do
- Are Rates written off that have not been collected
- Need to look at rate charges for public houses with function rooms
- What is the uptake on the Rates incentive Scheme?

Mr. Derek Caldbeck, A/Director of Services responded as follows:

- Of the €2.6m adjustment figure, €1.8m contains significant doubtful arrears
- Regulation prevents any change to rate charges for public houses with function rooms
- Rates Incentive Scheme – information will be available in 2015 AFS
- Businesses encouraged to avail of 5% discount if payment of full rates by 30<sup>th</sup> June 2016

### **38.16. LCDC ANNUAL REPORT**

Martin Lydon A/Director of Services, Planning & Enterprise informed the members that the LCDC is required to prepare, adopt and submit an annual report to the Local Authority as per guidelines. The key areas of activity for 2015 included the Local Economic & Community Plan, Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme and Local Development Strategy (LEADER), which is approved and at SLA stage.

### **39.16. ADOPTION OF LOCAL ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY PLAN 2016-2021 (LECP)**

Martin Lydon A/Director of Services outlined that the LECP is the overarching framework for economic, social and community development in the County. The main elements of the LECP are the seven high level goals which sets out, for the next six years, the agreed objectives and actions for Roscommon County Council. The members were asked for their consideration and approval of the LECP.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Cummins

**SECONDED** by Councillor Creaton

It was **AGREED** to adopt the Local Economic and Community Plan

It was **PROPOSED** by Councillor Naughton

**SECONDED** by Councillor Fallon

That a request be sent to Waterways Ireland to give a presentation on how to develop the Shannon Blue Way to Athlone / Clonmacnoise.

#### **40.16. CONSIDERATION OF ALLOCATION UNDER THE 2016 TIDY TOWNS & AMENITY GRANTS SCHEME**

Martin Lydon, A/Director of Services sought approval for the allocation of €59,800 under the 2016 Tidy Towns & Amenity Grants Scheme. Grants for Tidy Towns Associations, Local Development Associations in addition to County Roscommon Community Games and the three Sub-Aqua Clubs was recommended.

It was **PROPOSED** by Councillor Cummins

**SECONDED** by Councillor Creaton

It was **AGREED** to adopt the Allocation under the 2016 Tidy Towns & Amenity Grants Scheme

#### **41.16 APPOINTMENT OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION NETWORK MEMBERS TO THE FOLLOWING COMMITTEES**

##### **Joint Policing Committee – Public Participation Network Representatives**

Name	Organisation	Municipal District
Caroline Haran	Frenchpark Development Committee	Boyle
Jim Ganly	Roscommon Historical and Archaeological Society	Roscommon
John Macklin	Knockcroghery Community Alert	Athlone

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Cummins

**SECONDED** by Councillor Fallon

It was **AGREED** to approve the appointment of the above members to the Joint Policing Committee

##### **Economic Development and Enterprise Support Strategic Policy Committee - Public Participation Network Representative**

Name	College
Mary Clifford	Community/Voluntary

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Doherty

**SECONDED** by Councillor Connaughton

It was **AGREED** to approve the appointment of the member to the Economic Development and Enterprise Support SPC

##### **Heritage Forum - Public Participation Network Representative**

Name	Organisation
Claire Carty	Lisacul Tidy Towns

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Creaton

**SECONDED** by Councillor Fitzmaurice

It was **AGREED** to approve the appointment of the member to the Heritage Forum

#### **42.16 NOMINATION OF AN ELECTED MEMBER TO THE FOLLOWING COMMITTEES FOLLOWING THE ELECTION OF DEPUTY EUGENE MURPHY TO DÁIL ÉIREANN**

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Cummins

**SECONDED** by Councillor Fallon

It was **AGREED** to approve the appointment of Cllr Joe Murphy to the Joint Policing Committee.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Cummins  
**SECONDED** by Councillor Doherty

It was **AGREED** to approve the appointment of Cllr Joe Murphy to the BMW Assembly

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Keogh  
**SECONDED** by Councillor Connaughton

It was **AGREED** to approve the appointment of Cllr Joe Murphy to the Heritage Forum

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

It was **AGREED** to approve the appointment of Cllr Kathleen Shanagher to Local Community Development Committee (LCDC)

#### **43.16. ANNUAL SERVICE DELIVERY PLAN 2016**

Majella Hunt, Director of Services presented the 2016 Annual Service Delivery Plan to the members for consideration as required by Local Government Reform Act of 2014. The Plan sets out in greater detail the activities to be undertaken across all key function areas to deliver on the objectives of the Corporate Plan.

The following queries were raised:

- Will there be a review of progress on an ongoing basis?
- As the County Librarian has retired, and this is a very important role, there is urgency with regard to his replacement and when will this happen?

In reply, Majella Hunt confirmed that delivery of the plan will be done through monthly and quarterly management reports, internal and external audit processes and the NOAC Performance indicator process. The Chief Executive noted the comments in relation to County Librarian.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Cummins  
**SECONDED** by Councillor Murphy

It was **AGREED** to adopt the Annual Service Delivery Plan 2016

#### **44.16. GRANTS PAYABLE UNDER THE DOMESTIC LEAD REMEDIATION (FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE) REGULATIONS 2016**

Majella Hunt, Director of Services informed members of the Grants Scheme now available for households to assist with the replacement of lead pipes or fittings within the boundary of their property. All grants are assessed and paid by the Local Authority and recouped from the Department. The maximum grant available is €4,000 or 80% of the approved costs for income up to €50,000 and €2,500 or 50% of the costs for incomes up to € 75,000.

Members raised the following queries in relation to the scheme

- Is there an audit on how many houses are affected, can the water or pipes be tested?
- Are rural areas affected?
- As the grant is for house owners only, there is no incentive for landlords to upgrade the pipe work for their tenants
- Local Authority would have responsibility for local authority houses
- There is a significant cost to upgrade pipe work in a house and maximum grant is capped

- Issue with some houses that the stopcock and meter are outside the property boundary - need a commitment from Irish Water that the pipe from the stopcock to the boundary wall would be replaced at the same time
- What are the implications for houses on group schemes or with private wells?

Majella Hunt responded to queries as follows:

- No guarantee that it is just houses in towns, it is advisable that people check services in own properties if in any doubt. This includes private wells or group schemes.
- This is a National Strategy for Private owned properties only
- Local Authority houses that were purchased would be covered under the scheme as they are now privately owned
- In the case of stopcocks, these would have to be taken on a case by case basis with Local Authority and Water

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

That a commitment be made to replace lead pipes in all Local Authority Houses.

#### **45.16. DRAFT ROSCOMMON COUNTY COUNCIL POLICY ON CONTROL OF DOGS AND DOG BREEDING ESTABLISHMENTS**

Cllr. Keogh Chairperson of the Housing and Corporate Strategic Policy Committee presented and recommended approval of the draft Roscommon County Council Policy on Control of Dogs and Dog Breeding for adoption. He thanked all who had contributed to the Draft Policy.

The following items were highlighted

- No reference to dog fouling in the draft policy
- Dog warden powers in relation to dog litter
- Can the Policy reference the Litter Act
- Promote micro-chipping of dogs in safety of animals / humans
- Who checks if dog licences are paid

Responses were made as follows:

- This policy is more to do with the control of dogs and dog breeding establishments
- From 1<sup>st</sup> April all dogs must be micro chipped
- Dog fouling is dealt with in the Litter Act and is under the remit of the Environmental and Emergency Services SPC

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

It was **AGREED** to adopt Roscommon County Council Policy on Control of Dogs and Dog Breeding subject to amendment to include a reference to the Litter Act

#### **46.16. DATES OF PLENARY AND MUNICIPAL MEETINGS**

Cllr. Kilduff informed the meeting that the matter of frequency of meetings had been discussed by the CPG. Following consultation with members he was recommending that a Plenary Meeting be held monthly on the fourth Monday of each month and a Municipal District meeting be held bi-monthly with the dates to be agreed by the Districts.

The following was highlighted by members:

- Consideration be given to some evening meetings

- A reduction in the number of presentations at Plenary meetings
- Municipal District meetings to be held in the Municipal District areas

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

It was agreed that presentations at the Plenary meetings be agreed in advance at the preceding meeting or by the CPG.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Naughton  
**SECONDED** by Councillor Connaughton

It was **AGREED** to hold a Plenary meeting every month, on the fourth Monday of each month and dates of Municipal District meetings to be set at the next meeting.

On the **PROPOSAL OF** Councillor Fallon  
**SECONDED** by Councillor Leyden

that there is strict adherence to Standing Orders with regard to Notice of Motions

#### **47.16. APPROVAL OF CIVIC RECEPTION RECIPIENTS**

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Cummins  
**SECONDED** by Councillor Connaughton

It was **AGREED** that Sonas Cloverhill, Glanduff National School and St Mary's National School, Strokestown receive a civic honour at the next Civic Reception.

#### **48.16. NATIONAL CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL**

##### **Notice of Motion from Councillor Murphy – 05/16**

“That Roscommon County Council call on the Minister for Health to reverse the decision to locate the National Children's Hospital at St. James's Hospital and locate the new Children's Hospital for all the children of Ireland at Connolly Hospital, Blanchardstown. The Connolly site offers 145 acres, vast space for expansion, easier access for the children of Roscommon and extensive parking. The co-location with Connolly Hospital and the new Rotunda maternity hospital will result in better clinical outcomes. It will be cheaper and faster to build than on the St. James's site”.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Murphy  
**SECONDED** by Councillor Keogh

It was **AGREED** that Roscommon County Council write to the Minister of Health to reverse the decision to locate the National Children's Hospital at St. James's Hospital and locate the new Children's Hospital for all the children of Ireland at Connolly Hospital, Blanchardstown.

#### **49.16. CORRESPONDENCE**

1. Email from Kerry County Council with attachment “Charter of Independent Living” compiled by Cumann Iosaef, Tralee
2. Letter from Sligo County Council RE: Resolution Adopted on Sugar awareness day
3. Email of Acknowledgement from Head Strong RE: Mental Health Services for the Youth
4. Letter from Limerick City & County Council RE: Resolution Adopted on Early Retirement and Farm Installation Schemes
5. Letter of acknowledgment from Department of Health re: Western Alzheimers Services in Roscommon



## **50.16. COUNCILLORS CONFERENCES**

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Leyden

**SECONDED** by Councillor Murphy

It was **AGREED** to adopt the list of Conferences as circulated to the members.

## **51.16. A.O.B.**

### ***Roscommon Mental Health Services***

In light of the ongoing crisis in mental health services in County Roscommon and with the confirmed cuts to the National Mental Health budget, the 22 bed closure in Ballinasloe and the threatened closure of Roscommon Town services

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Doherty

**SECONDED** by Councillor Leyden

It was **AGREED** that Roscommon County Council write to Acting Health Minister Leo Varadkar to reverse the retrograde step of the recent €12m cut to the HSE's mental health budget.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Doherty

**SECONDED** by Councillor Leyden

It was also **AGREED** that Roscommon County Council write to Mr John Meehan of the HSE requesting a copy of the External Review Report investigating the quality, safety, and governance of Mental Health Services in County Roscommon and if the report is not yet completed, to give a date for completion of the report.

### ***Roscommon Lamb Festival***

Councillor Shanagher reminded all present that Roscommon Lamb Festival will be held on the weekend of 29<sup>th</sup> April to 2<sup>nd</sup> May and asked to all members to support it.

### ***Roscommon Leisure Centre***

Councillor Connaughton raised the issue of changes to the opening hours of the Leisure Centre Swimming Pool during April that includes a 4pm finish on Friday evenings as a result of staff shortages. He was concerned that changes would affect membership. Councillor Leyden stated that changes of classes have caused annoyance for members and it is a great facility and should be supported. Councillor Fallon requested that the facility revert to its previous hours to facilitate members. Councillor Fallon asked that the Swimming Club be supported.

The Comments were noted by the Chief Executive.

### ***Roscommon Racecourse***

Cllr. Connaughton asked for support of local racetrack and suggested a day out for staff that would also benefit staff morale. It was agreed to include this item on the next CPG meeting agenda.

### ***Census Forms***

Councillor Kilduff outlined to members that a number of residents in Co. Roscommon received census Forms with an incorrect address.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Cummins

**SECONDED** by Councillor Creaton

It was **AGREED** that Roscommon people who received Census Forms should correct the county name and or zip code.

***Next Meeting***

Councillor Kilduff informed the members that the function for the OK Kids Anti Bullying Pilot Programme, funded by Roscommon County Council, would take place on 3<sup>rd</sup> May in Aras an Chontae. He also notified members that that the next meeting will be in the village of Lecarrow.

**This concluded the business of the meeting.**

The foregoing Minutes are  
Confirmed and Signed:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Meetings Administrator

\_\_\_\_\_  
Cathaoirleach

\_\_\_\_\_  
Countersigned