

MINUTES OF MONTHLY MEETING OF ROSCOMMON COUNTY COUNCIL HELD IN COUNCIL CHAMBER, ÁRAS AN CHONTAE, ROSCOMMON, ON MONDAY THE 25TH JANUARY, 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 M. Mulligan, Cllr E. 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. Martin Curley, Senior Engineer
Mr. Eugene Dwyer, Senior Engineer
Ms. Fíona ní Chuinn, Meetings Administrator

The Cathaoirleach, Cllr Paddy Kilduff welcomed members to the first plenary meeting to be held in Áras an Chontae. He thanked Ms. Fíona ní Chuinn for her many years as Meetings Administrator and wished her well in her new post.

01.16. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

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

It was **AGREED** to adopt the minutes of the monthly plenary meeting held 23.11.2015

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

It was **AGREED** to adopt the minutes of the budget meeting held 26.11.2015

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

It was **AGREED** to adopt the minutes of the special meeting held 06.01.2016

02.16 REVISED TAKING-IN-CHARGE POLICY

Councillor Paschal Fitzmaurice outlined the revised Taking-in-charge Policy for Residential Estates. The Policy includes a Memorandum of Understanding between Irish Water and Roscommon County Council.

The members raised the following issues:

- Cost of map prohibitive for residents
- Timeframe for drawing down of bonds
- Estates in poor should take priority
- Impact of unfinished work in estates on residents

Mr. Martin Lydon, A/Director of Services responded to the issues as follows:

- Mapping is available online or in the Planning Offices
- Bond draw down is a complicated procedure
- Upgrade of estates will be within available resources

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Fitzmaurice
SECONDED by Councillor Ward
It was **AGREED** to adopt the Taking in Charge Policy as presented.

It was **PROPOSED** by Councillor Keogh
SECONDED by Councillor Leyden
It was **AGREED** that the requirement for the provision of a map be removed to streamline the process

03.16. ROSCOMMON COUNTY COUNCIL AUDIT COMMITTEE REPORT ON THE AUDITED ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENT (AFS) AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT AUDITOR'S REPORT (pursuant to Section 121 of the Local Government Act)

Mr. Derek Caldbeck, A/Head of Finance presented the Audit Committee Report 2014

Members raised the following issues:

- A surplus illustrates prudent management of finances
- Query the amount of money spent on flood defence
- Funding by Government for Local Authorities
- Request Minister for the Environment to dispense with boundary issue in light of possible loss of revenue to county from Monksland

04.16. PRESENTATION BY JOHN HIGGINS ON TOWN TEAMS PROGRAMME

Mr. John Higgins thanked the members for allowing him the privilege of being involved in Town Teams process and presented the progress to date.

The members thanked John for his presentation and raised the following :

- Job creation required throughout the county
- Commitment required from Elected Members and to be invited to attend meetings
- Input for Volunteers to develop the process further
- Town teams require financial assistance to expand and develop
- Role of major retailers in the local community
- Recognition of the work of Town Teams and committees
- Opportunity to leverage funding through LEADER and REDZ

Mr. Eugene Cummins, Chief Executive confirmed the following:

- Town teams have to reach out to give an energy and enthusiasm across the hinterland
- Councillors have an important role to play
- Co-ordinated approach required through PPN, LECP, etc.
- Municipal Districts have a greater role in developing initiatives
- Establishment of a new unit in Planning Section in 2016 to look at town dereliction and will be a positive development to grow and enhance town centres

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

- **November 2015**

Members noted the Monthly Management Report for the month of November 2015.

06.16. 2016 NATIONAL ROADS ALLOCATION

Mr. Martin Curley, Senior Engineer outlined to the members the funding allocation to Roscommon County Council for national roads totalling €10,893,507 as follows:

| Improvement | | |
|--------------------|--|-----------|
| National Primary | | |
| N5 | Ballaghaderreen By-pass | 355,000 |
| N5 | N5 Ballaghaderreen Bypass to Longford | 1,550,000 |
| National Secondary | | |
| N60 | N60 Oran | 600,000 |
| N61 | N61 Coolteige | 1,060,000 |
| N61 | Rathallen/Treanagry Realignment Scheme | 4,700,000 |
| Both NP & NS | | |
| | Local Authority Support (Improvement) 2016 RN | 200,000 |
| | NRO Support (Improvement) 2016 RN | 1,507,332 |
| Maintenance | | |
| National Primary | | |
| | NP Ordinary Maintenance 2016 RN | 223,347 |
| | NP Route Lighting 2016 RN | 26,737 |
| | NP Winter Maintenance 2016 RN | 130,000 |
| National Secondary | | |
| | NS Ordinary Maintenance 2016 RN | 262,303 |
| | NS Route Lighting 2016 RN | 87,788 |
| | MS Winter Maintenance 2016 RN | 140,000 |
| Both NP & NS | | |
| | Local Authority Support (Maintenance) 2016 RN | 41,000 |
| | Local Authority Support (Winter Maintenance) 2016 RN | 10,000 |

The members welcomed the funding and raised the following issues:

- Timeframe for completion and funding of Rathallen project
- Thanks recorded to staff of the Council for assisting public during flooding and timeframe for receiving funding for remedial works
- Welcome funding for works at Oran
- Condition of and lack of funding for works on N63, N60, R357 and L2013
- Public lighting at Monksland and exits off the Ballaghaderreen bypass
- N5 not included in the Winter Services Programme
- Dangerous junction at Frenchpark, issues at Boggafin to Rooskey Cross
- Lack of turning lanes on N61 requires funding. Request capital funding for new route and include bypass of Roscommon Town.

Mr. Martin Curley, Senior Engineer responded to the queries raised as follows:

- The expected duration for the Rathallen project is 9 months
- Oran project has completed planning stage and awaiting approval to proceed.
- The provision of public lighting on the Ballaghaderreen bypass is the responsibility of the TII – it is no longer normal practise to light junctions
- Limited funds available for the N60 however Roscommon County Council will continue to raise the issues
- Significant traffic volumes on N61 will investigate short term measures

Mr. Eugene Dwyer, Senior Engineer responded to the queries raised as follows:

- No funding for new public lights
- Impact of Winter Services programme on Municipal District budgets
- Design is complete for revised junction at Frenchpark
- Assess additional turning lane on N61

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

It was **AGREED** to include the old N5 in the Winter Services Programme

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Hopkins
SECONDED by Councillor Dineen

It was **AGREED** that Roscommon County Council would improve the signage on the Frenchpark to Ballinagare road

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

It was **AGREED** CFRAM Athleague & Roscommon Town

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

It was **AGREED** that Roscommon County council seek funding from the OPW for a minor works programme

07.16. EXTENSION OF STANDING ORDERS:

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

It was **AGREED** to extend Standing Orders to the close of business.

08.16. PRESENTATION BY MS. DEIRDRE FROST, POLICY ANALYST FROM WDC – “UPDATE ON NEXT GENERATION BROADBAND”

Ms. Deirdre Frost, Policy Analyst with the Western Development Commission gave a presentation to the members on Next Generation Broadband

The members raised the following issues:

- Rollout of e-fibre – is there proposals to replace the copper wires in rural countryside
- Jobs will be lost on the issue of lack of broadband
- Many businesses struggling with broadband connection
- Roscommon County Council should make provision for future cabling while upgrading the road networks in towns and villages
- Will towns and villages be prioritised ahead of rural areas
- Slow pace of rollout will damage foreign direct investment

Ms. Deirdre Frost responded to the issues raised as follows:

- Funding and National Broadband Plan in place to make the project cost effective
- Reduction of cost of MANs
- Sufficient levels of Government funding required
- Progress benchmarked by activity in large urban centres

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

It was **AGREED** that Roscommon County Council write to the new Government to request that infrastructure remain in state ownership and be kept as cost effective as possible

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

It was **AGREED** that provider of the exchange provider should be given opportunity to extend services

09.16. DISPOSAL OF LAND

| Land | The Person(s) from whom the land was acquired | The person to whom the land is to be disposed of | Area | The consideration proposed in respect of the disposal | Any covenants, conditions or agreements to have effect in connection with the disposal |
|--|---|--|-----------------|---|--|
| Mullaghnashee Townland, Fairymount, Castlerea, Co. Roscommon | John Keaveney | Nathalie Temple | 0.0756 hectares | €1.00 | None |

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

It was **AGREED** that the Council consent to the disposal of the above land at Mullaghnashee Td, Fairymount, Castlerea, Co. Roscommon, pursuant to the provision of Section 211 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 and Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001.

10.16. BOUNDARY REVIEW

Draft letter read by Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Paddy Kilduff to be sent to Minister Alan Kelly of the Department of Environment, Community & Local Government requesting an immediate discontinuation of the current boundary review process.

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

It was **AGREED** to issue the letter to Minister Alan Kelly of the Department of Environment, Community & Local Government requesting an immediate discontinuation of the current boundary review process.

The members raised the following issues:

- Most important issue the county has to face
- Commitment required from all General Election candidates that they will not support the Government
- Dissatisfaction of Diaspora in relation to the Boundary Review proposal
- County boundary identifies us as Roscommon people
- Query if Roscommon County Council will be seeking legal advice on the issue
- Encourage people to send in submissions before the deadline of 5pm on 27th January
- Query if response received from An Taoiseach's office
- Against the ethos of "Putting People First"

It was **PROPOSED** by Councillor Ward
SECONDED by Councillor Dineen

That a Referendum be held on the west side of Athlone in relation to the boundary changes

Chief Executive Mr. Eugene Cummins stated that the loss of Monksland would decimate the Municipal District of Athlone and it will not be possible to nominate South Roscommon as a Municipal District in Co. Westmeath as it would be devoid of urban centre. He will advise members in due course in terms of the legal concerns.

Ms. Fíona ní Chuinn, Meetings Administrator read a letter received from the Office of the Taoiseach acknowledging receipt of correspondence from the members of Roscommon County Council and confirming that the correspondence has been forwarded to Minister Alan Kelly for his attention and direct response.

11.16. POBAL DISTRIBUTION OF GOVERNMENT GRANT TO COMMUNITY SERVICES PROGRAMME

Councillor Byrne stated the increase in the minimum wage is not being reflected though the Pobal distribution of Government grants to the Community Services Programme (CSP). Employers are expected to make up the shortfall of 0.50cent per hour for employees that are employed through the CSP Scheme.

It was **PROPOSED** by Councillor Byrne
SECONDED by Councillor Doherty

It was **AGREED** that Roscommon County Council write to Minister Joan Burton requesting the reversal of the decision whereby employers have to pay the difference between the minimum wage and the Pobal grant.

12.16. DRAFT LITTER PLAN

Councillor Fallon, Chair of the Environmental & Emergency SPC proposed that the Draft Litter Plan be held until the next plenary meeting for discussion. It was unanimously agreed.

13.16. CORRESPONDENCE

1. Letter of acknowledgement from Office of the Taoiseach
2. Letter from Minister for Housing, Planning and Co-ordination of Construction 2020 re: Unfinished Housing Estates
3. Letter of acknowledgement from Minister for Housing, Planning and Co-ordination of Construction 2020 re: taking in charge
4. Letter from Department of Social Protection re: telephone allowance
5. Letter from Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport re: development of greenway
6. Letter of Acknowledgement from Department of Communications, Energy & Natural Resources
7. Letter of acknowledgment from Department of Health re: Western Alzheimers Services in Roscommon
8. Letter of acknowledgement from Department of Justice & Equality
9. Email from Department of Communications, Energy & Natural Resources re: fracking
10. Letter from HSE re: Terms of Reference for Review Team on Mental Health Services in Roscommon

14.16. QUESTION IN ACCORDANCE WITH STANDING ORDER NO. 135.

Replies to the Question submitted by members were circulated (see schedule).

15.16. NOTICES OF MOTION

01.16 COMMUNITY TOURIST OFFICES

Notice of Motion from Councillor Naughten – 01/16

“That Roscommon County Council outlines how the Community Tourist Offices identified for County Roscommon are expected to develop over the next number of years and what supports have been put in place to ensure these offices are in a position to facilitate tourists with necessary information when visiting the county.”

The Meetings Administrator read the following reply:-

The six Community Tourism Centres were established by Roscommon LEADER Partnership as part of an initiative to strengthen the role of local communities in tourism. They were not established to replace the Fáilte Ireland tourism offices originally in Roscommon and Boyle towns but to give a stronger role to communities in their local tourism offerings. The centres are members of the Community Tourism Network and get ongoing support from LEADER, TUS and Pobal. It is anticipated that the Community Tourism Centres will continue to play a role in community tourism in County Roscommon but no direct financial support has been provided by Roscommon County Council towards their operation.

Councillor Naughten stated that there is very little financial support for Tourist Offices. He said some funding needs to be put in place to maintain the Tourist Offices as part of the new economic and community role of the local authority.

Mr. Eugene Cummins, Chief Executive confirmed that support for Tourist Offices will be considered.

02.16. RIVER SHANNON WORKS

Notice of Motion from Councillor Fallon – 02/16

“That in the interest of putting people first, Roscommon County Council request this Government to immediately develop a plan to significantly increase the capacity of the River Shannon to take water from its catchment and bring it out to sea and as an initial step would commit to the removal of peat, sediment and silt from the bed of the river. This work should commence in 2016 and be completed by the end of 2018.”

The Meetings Administrator read the following reply:-

This requires a resolution of the Council

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Fallon

SECONDED by Councillor Byrne

It was **AGREED** that Roscommon County council request the Government to immediately develop a plan to increase the capacity of the River Shannon and commit to the removal of peat, sediment and silt from the river bed and that works commence as soon as possible in 2016.

03.16. FREE LEGAL AID SYSTEM

Notice of Motion from Councillor Mulligan – 03/16

“That Roscommon County Council inform the Department of Justice that they are not happy with way the free legal aid system is being abused and ask the Department and Government to revisit and review this system.”

The Meetings Administrator read the following reply:-

This requires a resolution of the Council

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor

SECONDED by Councillor Creighton

It was **AGREED** that a letter be sent to the Department of Justice to revisit and review the free legal aid system.

16.16. COUNCILLORS CONFERENCES

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Naughten

SECONDED by Councillor Keogh

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

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| Cllr R. Doherty | Local Authority Budgets 2016, White's Hotel, Wexford |
| Cllr M. Mulligan | LAMA Autumn Training Seminar, The Lobbying Act, (Implications for Councillors), Hotel Kilkenny, College Road, Kilkenny. |
| Cllr. K. Shanagher | AILG Training (Module 4), Local Authority Finance & Housing, Hudson Bay, Athlone. AILG Training (Module 5) Roads, Transportation and Safety, Landmark Hotel, Carrick on Shannon. AILG (Module 6) Septic Tanks, Ground Water and Water Pollution, Shearwater Hotel, Ballinasloe. |
| Cllr. J. Keogh | Local Authority Budgets 2016, White's Hotel, Wexford |
| Cllr. N. Dineen | Local Authority Budgets 2016, White's Hotel, Wexford EU Cohesion Policy 2014-2020, The Four Seasons Hotel, Carlingford, Co.Louth. |
| Cllr. J. Cummins | Local Authority Budgets 2016, White's Hotel, Wexford EU Cohesion Policy 2014-2020, The Four Seasons Hotel, Carlingford, Co.Louth. |

17.16. VOTES OF SYMPATHY were extended to:

The Beatty family, Castlerea on the death of Kathleen Beatty
The Finch family, Castlerea on the death of Billy Finch
The Fahy family, Kilmurray on the death of Martin Fahy
The Shaughnessy family, Taughmaconnell on the death of Margaret Shaughnessy
The Leogue family on the death of Fr. John Leogue, P.P.
The Neilan family, Castlecoote on the death of Michael Neilan
The Smyth family, Athleague on the death of Margaret Smyth
The Keaveny family, Four Mile House & Glenamaddy on the death of Margaret Keaveny
The Connolly family, Four Roads on the death of Tommy Connolly

18.16. A.O.B.

Lead levels in water

Councillor Keogh raised the issue of a recent report in the Roscommon Herald whereby water in Co. Roscommon had 25 times greater levels of lead than permitted.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Naughten

SECONDED by Councillor Keogh

It was **AGREED** that Roscommon County Council request the head of Irish Water attend a plenary meeting of Roscommon County Council to clarify the situation with the water.

An Post

Councillor Naughten raised the issue of postal delivery in South Roscommon area and referred to the recent presentation by An Post to the Elected Members.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Keogh

SECONDED by Councillor Fallon

It was **AGREED** that Roscommon County Council seek a meeting with Senior Management of An Post.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

The foregoing Minutes are
Confirmed and Signed:

Meetings Administrator

Cathaoirleach

Countersigned