

MINUTES OF MONTHLY MEETING OF ROSCOMMON COUNTY COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, COURTHOUSE, ROSCOMMON, ON MONDAY THE 23rd MARCH, 2015 AT 2.15 P.M.

PRESENT Councillor John Cummins, Cathaoirleach **PRESIDED**

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

OFFICIALS: Tommy Ryan, Chief Executive.
Majella Hunt, Director of Services.
Martin Lydon, Head of Finance & Planning
John O'Rourke, A/ Director of Services.
Pat Murtagh, A/Director of Services.
Fiona ní Chuinn, Meetings Administrator.

At the outset the meeting the Cathaoirleach welcomed the Transition Year students from the Convent of Mercy, Roscommon, to the meeting.

18.15. ADOPTION OF MINUTES:

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Murphy
SECONDED by Councillor Dineen
It was **AGREED** to adopt the Minutes of the Plenary Meeting held on 26.1.2015.

19.15. DISPOSAL OF LAND:

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Doherty
SECONDED by Councillor Hopkins
It was **AGREED** that the Council consent to the lease of lands pursuant to the provision of Section 211 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 and Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001. Particulars of the land which the County Council proposes to lease:-
The land: Boyle Courthouse .
The persons from whom the land was acquired: Not ascertained.
The person to whom the land is to be leased: Boyle Courthouse Development Ltd.,
Consideration: €500 per annum. 10 year Lease.
Any covenants, conditions or agreements to have effect in connection with the lease:
None.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Connaughton

SECONDED by Councillor Dineen

It was **AGREED** that the Council consent to the lease of lands pursuant to the provision of Section 211 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 and Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001. Particulars of the land which the County Council proposes to lease:-

The land: 0.0164 ha or thereabouts in Corskeagh Td , (Frenchpark Courthouse).

The persons from whom the land was acquired: The Trustees of the Congested Districts Board for Ireland, 23, Rutland Square, Dublin.

The person to whom the land is to be leased: Frenchpark Youth Space Ltd.,

Consideration: 6 year Lease. Nominal Rent €100 per annum.

Any covenants, conditions or agreements to have effect in connection with the lease:

None.

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

- **January/February, 2015.**

Members noted the Monthly Management Reports for the months of January/ February, 2015 and raised the query on the possibility of including the housing list allocations for the period in the Management Report.

Tommy Ryan, Chief Executive confirmed that this could be covered in the Quarterly Reports.

21.15. BOYLE TOWN COMMISSIONERS AFS 2013:

Martin Lydon presented the Boyle Town Council AFS for 2013 as circulated to the members.

Members noted the Boyle Town Commissioners AFS 2013 and requested an update as to what is happening with the 11 houses in Boyle - the cost involved and what balance is left to be spent in the Boyle area.

Martin Lydon responded that the figure of €305,075 as discussed previously is being used to refurbish houses in Boyle and an update will be provided to the members at the next Municipal District meeting.

22.15. REPORT ON AUDIT COMMITTEE'S FINDINGS IN RELATION TO THE 2013 AFS AS PER LOCAL GOVERNMENT (AUDIT COMMITTEE) REGULATIONS 2014:

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Fitzmaurice

SECONDED by Councillor Murphy

It was **AGREED** that item number 8 on the Agenda would be dealt with in conjunction with item number 5.

Martin Lydon, Head of Finance & Planning referred the members to a report from the Audit Committee Chairperson which stated that the Audit Committee had considered the 2013 audited Annual Financial Statement (AFS) and the Local Government Auditor's report at its meeting

held on 25.2.2015. He stated that the Auditor's opinion is that the AFS presents fairly in accordance with the Code of Practice and Accounting Regulations, the financial position of the Council at 31.12.2013 and its income and expenditure for the year reported.

The Audit Committee wish to bring the following to the attention of the members:-

- The Revenue account shows an accumulated surplus of €148k at the end of 2013, which demonstrates that the budgetary controls put in place by the Council are operating effectively.
- The Council has €4.8m. in adverse balances in relation to water and sewerage projects at the end of 2013.
- The 77% collection yield for rates was highlighted as 'weak' in the Auditor's report – The Council needs to take steps to improve performance in this area .
- Collection rate for Rents & Annuities (91%) which was above the national average of 83%.
- The loans collection yielded 42% and was below the national average – but it should be noted that €192k of the outstanding debt related to 10 customers.
- The Local Government Auditor has requested a review of all customer accounts during 2014 so adequate provision is provided for under performing accounts. The Council has agreed to this proposal and the Committee will seek confirmation that the AFS reflects the review as part of its deliberations of the 2014 AFS.
- The Local Government Auditor has recommended that resources be secured for the services of an Internal Auditor and Roscommon County Council has now entered into a Shared Service Agreement with Sligo County Council for this service.

Martin Lydon, Head of Finance & Planning referred the members to the Report as circulated on Uncollected Rates as at 31.12.2014. He stated that arrears of rates at 1.1.2014 amounted to €2.2 million, a reduction of €360k on the figure reported for 2013. The total rate demand for 2014 was €11.2 million with rates of €8.8 million collected, a 3.52% or €300k increase on the level of receipts reported for 2013. 'Write-offs' (adjustments to accounts) for vacant premises, exemptions etc equated to €2.7 million in the financial year. The collection percentage rate for 2014 was 80% - an increase of 3% on the performance reported for 2013.

Members noted the Audit Committee's findings in relation to the 2013 AFS and raised the following issues:-

- A review of rates is urgently needed throughout the country.
- A rates reduction of 25% should be introduced throughout the whole country.
- Casual traders don't have to pay any rates – this needs to be examined.
- Rates should be based on net profit of business.
- Queried the outstanding development contributions of €12.7m. as to what years these represented.
- Unfinished housing estates need to be prioritised and tackled.
- An incentive needs to be given to encourage people to pay outstanding development contributions.
- Queried the amounts being expended in legal and debt collection fees?
- Casual trading needs to be regularised.
- On line selling is a huge problem and needs to be looked at.
- Small businesses in small towns are worst hit by rates payments
- Not possible for members to reduce rates when the Government is reducing the Local Government fund.
- Sceptical of using rates money to set up Town Teams.
- Queried if Roscommon County Council can charge interest on adverse Irish Water balances.

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

It was **AGREED** that Roscommon County Council write to Minister Alan Kelly, T.D., and Minister Richard Bruton, T.D., requesting that the revision of valuations for rates purposes be expedited.

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

It was **AGREED** that Roscommon County Council proceed with the introduction of Casual Trading Bye Laws.

Martin Lydon responded in detail to all the queries raised:-

- Legal Agents cost €79,200 - the first letter issued is free.
- Roscommon County Council is happy to assist with payment plans.
- No interest will be charged on adverse Irish Water balances

John O'Rourke responded in relation to Casual Trading and confirmed that the matter has been referred to the Strategic Policy Committee for consideration.

At this stage Councillor Shanagher informed the meeting that the Students from the Convent of Mercy were going to leave the meeting. A spokesperson for the students thanked the Cathaoirleach and members for allowing them the opportunity to attend the Council meeting and made a Presentation to the Cathaoirleach before leaving the meeting.

23.15. AUDIT COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT AS PER LOCAL GOVERNMENT (AUDIT COMMITTEE) REGULATIONS 2014:

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

It was **AGREED** to adopt the Audit Committee Annual Report as per Local Government (Audit Committee) Regulations 2014 as circulated

24.15. AUDIT COMMITTEE ANNUAL WORK PROGRAMME AS PER LOCAL GOVERNMENT (AUDIT COMMITTEE) REGULATIONS 2014:

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

It was **AGREED** to adopt the Audit Committee Annual Work Programme as per Local Government (Audit Committee) Regulations 2014 as circulated

25.15. REPORT ON UNCOLLECTED RATES AS AT 31.12.2014 AS PER LOCAL GOVERNMENT (FINANCIAL & AUDIT PROCEDURES) REGULATIONS 2014:

As agreed by the members this item was taken in conjunction with item number 5 on the Agenda and the members noted the Report on Uncollected Rates at 31.12.2014 as circulated.

26.15. ALLOCATIONS UNDER THE TIDY TOWNS & AMENITY GRANTS SCHEME 2015:

Pat Murtagh, Acting Director of Services, circulated to the members a list of the recommended allocations under the Tidy Towns & Amenity Grants Scheme 2015 for approval.

Members welcomed the allocations under the Scheme and queried whether safety Plans were required from the relevant Committees.

Pat Murtagh confirmed that the Scheme does not stipulate such a requirement.

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

It was **AGREED** to adopt the Allocations under the Tidy Towns & Amenity Grants Scheme 2015 as circulated.

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

It was **AGREED** that increased funding for the Tidy Towns & Amenity Grants Scheme be allocated in the Budget for 2016.

27.15. SERVICE DELIVERY PLAN 2015:

John O'Rourke, Acting Director of Services, informed the members that in the context of new governance arrangements under the 2014 Reform Act a key purpose of the Corporate Plan is to provide a framework within which Annual Service Delivery Plans are formulated. The Annual Service Delivery Plan will, inter alia, identify the services to be provided and the standards to which they are to be delivered, monitored and evaluated so as to ensure that objectives for the optimum delivery of services is achieved. This is the first of these Service Delivery Plans and it is likely that its form and content will evolve to best reflect the Council's activities and the methods used to monitor and evaluate them.

He continued that the Service Delivery Plan is consistent with the adopted Budget for 2015 and will also take account of National Policies and of existing adopted policies of Roscommon County Council. Additional reporting on the local authorities activities will be done through the Monthly and Quarterly Management Reports and through the Performance Indicator process.

Members raised the following issues:-

- Queried progress on the review of Speed Limits in Housing Estates.
- Need to re-look at the wording on shared services.
- Unfinished housing estates – need to call in the Bonds and accelerate the taking in charge of estates.
- Need more time to read through the document.
- Premature to adopt the Plan when Fire Services and Libraries are under review.

John O'Rourke responded to the queries raised and stated that this is an operational plan – not a policy document – whereby local authorities can gauge and be gauged on their own year-on-year performance.

Pat Murtagh, Acting Director of Services, informed the members that a new Circular is due to issue from the Department of Transport regarding the review of Speed Limits. A two year time frame appears to have been proposed by the Minister and clarification on resources is awaited from the Department.

Tommy Ryan, Chief Executive, responded that the Service Delivery Plan is a combination of the Adopted Budget and the Corporate Plan. He continued that Roscommon County Council are not looking to slip in amalgamation of services.

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

It was **AGREED** that Roscommon County Council issue a letter to the Minister for Transport, Tourism & Sport requesting that adequate resources be put in place to enable the immediate roll out of the Speed Limit review throughout the county.

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

It was **AGREED** that adoption of the Services Delivery Plan be deferred to the next meeting to allow the members a chance to read the document that had been circulated and if members wish to make submissions these should be submitted to Fiona ni Chuinn ahead of the next plenary meeting.

28.15. UPDATE ON CONNACHT-ULSTER REGIONAL WASTE MANAGEMENT PLAN 2015 – 2021:

Majella Hunt, Director of Services outlined to the members that the Connacht-Ulster Regional Waste Management Plan 2015-2021 is presented in three parts beginning with Part 1, '*Background*' which sets out the strategic and policy context for the Plan including a detailed profile of the region. Part 2 '*Present Position*' sets out the existing situation with regard to waste data, prevention and reuse activities, waste collection and infrastructural arrangements and the management of priority waste streams. Part 3 '*Implementation*' deals with waste projections, infrastructure planning and the roles and responsibilities of the various Stakeholders to the delivery of the Plan.

She stated that the closing date for receipt of written submissions/observations was the 30th January, 2015. 49 submissions were received from the industrial sector and 16 from individuals. All these submissions/observations will be examined and adjudicated upon under all of the policy headings. On completion of this process the Plan may or may not be amended and will then be discussed with the Chief Executive in each county. The adoption of the Plan is an executive function and it is envisaged that this will take place in late April/early May, 2015.

She stated that the amount of residual municipal waste being exported has increased each year since 2011. In 2013 over 300,000 tonnes of residual municipal waste was exported. This equates to approximately 20% of the available residual waste leaving the county and can be viewed as a resource and there is a need to utilize this resource through investment. She continued that U.C.D. are carrying out a study on the utilisation of waste.

Members thanked Majella Hunt for the update and raised the following issues:-

- Level of litter along the roadsides and in hedges around the county is not acceptable.
- Illegal dumping is a huge problem in the county.
- Significant amounts of rubbish is being dumped in bogs in the Kiltewan area.
- Litter bins outside shops need to be addressed.
- Dumping of dead animals in drains is not acceptable.
- Queried the operation of fixed payment notice.

Majella Hunt responded in detail to all the queries raised as follows:-

- The launch of the Connacht-Ulster Regional Waste Management Plan 2015-2021 will be in late April early May.
- Litter Wardens are vigilant at all times.
- Cameras are concentrated around bottle banks in towns.
- Roscommon County Council from time to time recruit a Company to carry out monitoring.
- Litter Bins in towns were proving to be a problem as they were being used for the disposal of household waste.
- The fixed payment notice fee has not been fixed as yet and will be complimented by the Waste Regulations.

29.15. RATIFICATION OF SECTORAL NOMINATIONS FOR STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEES – ELECTIONS TO BE HELD ON 19.3.2015:

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

It was **AGREED** that Ms. Margaret Mulligan, Grange Boyle, Co. Roscommon be nominated to the Housing & Corporate SPC and that John Roche, Kidlawn, Ballinasloe, Co. Roscommon, be nominated to the Planning SPC.

30.15. NOMINATION OF TWO MEMBERS TO THE WESTERN INTER- COUNTY RAILWAY:

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

It was **AGREED** that Councillor Maura Hopkins be nominated to the Western Inter-County Railway Committee.

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

It was **AGREED** that Councillor Nigel Dineen be nominated to the Western Inter-County Railway Committee.

31.15. GRANT SCHEME FOR IMPROVEMENT/MAINTENANCE OF CEMETERIES 2015:

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

It was **AGREED** to adopt the Grant Scheme for Improvement/Maintenance of Cemeteries 2015 as circulated.

32.15. L.E.C.P. DRAFT SOCIO ECONOMIC STATEMENT FOR COUNTY ROSCOMMON:

Pat Murtagh, Acting Director of Services, informed the members that the Socio-Economic Statement is an integral part of the development of a Local Economic and Community Plan for County Roscommon. This process will form the economic and community development of our County for the next six years and will affect everyone who lives, works, does business or visits County Roscommon. The Local Economic & Community Plan (LECP) will set out, for the next six years, the objectives and actions that are required to promote and support the economic, local and community development of County Roscommon. In January 2015 public consultations took place in the 6 electoral areas and the next step is that the Statement will be advertised for further public consultation for a period of four weeks. The Statement will be assessed with reference to any submissions received and following this assessment may be amended, if necessary. It will then be referred to the Regional Assembly and Municipal Districts for feedback. It is hoped to adopt the final LECP in September, 2015.

He continued that the Draft Socio Economic Statement is before the members today for their information and there will be further consultation Workshops prior to the final adoption of the Statement.

Members noted the L.E.C.P. Draft Socio Economic Statement for County Roscommon.

33.15. BUSINESS ENTERPRISE AND INNOVATION FUND:

Councillor Tony Ward, Chairperson of the Economic Development Strategic Policy Committee informed the members that an allocation of €100,000 was approved by Roscommon County Council Members for the Business, Enterprise and Innovation Fund. It was agreed at the Budget meeting that the Economic Development & Enterprise SPC would formulate proposals for the utilisation of this fund in 2015. The following initiatives were outlined at the time;

- Business Area and Retail promotion such as Christmas lights, shopping weeks, loyalty promotions and activities to encourage businesses to work collectively.
- Marketing and branding activities such as brochures, maps, marketing documents, food trails, shopping and tourist trails.
- Digital strategies, websites and 'Invest Roscommon' digital presence.
- Organisation of knowledge, business, innovation and networking events and showcases promoting the county.
- Enhancement of the county through revitalisation of the towns, a retail enhancement programme, shop front enhancement, provision of retail and hospitality design expertise.
- Support for networking and a collective voice for business
- Targeted rates incentives schemes to encourage new business into vacant buildings and pop-up shop initiatives, whilst ensuring there is no displacement of existing business.
- Leveraging of public funding support by developing proposals for specialist enterprise infrastructure and shared facilities.
- Developing a common identity and brand to promote the county and attract enterprise.
- Enhancement of the public realm and environment through support for community, voluntary and tidy towns groups.
- Enhancement of signage within towns relating to facilities, attractions and parking.
- Support for business groups for dealing with contingency emergency situations.

The matter of allocation of the Business, Enterprise & Innovation Fund was discussed at the Economic Development & Enterprise SPC meeting held on Tuesday 10th March 2015. In order to facilitate the development of the Town Teams and Town Plans it was agreed to allocate the amount of €30,000 from the fund to this initiative. This equates to €5,000 per town involved.

It was also agreed that the allocation of the remainder of the fund will be discussed in greater detail at the next Economic Development & Enterprise SPC and further proposals will be brought to the Council Members for consideration following agreement of a proposal.

Councillor Ward recommend that Members agree the allocation of €30,000 to the Town Teams initiative, the development of which will have positive impacts on the towns involved and their hinterlands as well as reflecting the commitment of Roscommon County Council to this worthwhile initiative and to the economic development of County Roscommon.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Ward

SECONDED by Councillor Fitzmaurice

It was **AGREED** to allocate the amount of €30,000 from the Business, Enterprise & Innovation Fund to facilitate the development of the Town Teams and Town Plans initiative.

34.15. ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR.

John O'Rourke, Acting Director of Services, addressed the meeting on 'Anti-social Behaviour, He stated that while there were isolated problems with anti-social behaviour in Council Housing estates it was not a widespread problem. He continued that the Council had received 31 complaints of anti-social behaviour since 2013, of which 17 related to one series of incidents. The Council received 19 complaints in 2013, 10 in 2014 and 2 so far in 2015. 60% of the complaints were 'one-off' and were dealt with through mediation and discussion and were subsequently closed off. He stated that the Council has never had to evict any tenant from a Council house, based on anti-social behaviour. Roscommon County Council has an Anti-Social Behaviour Policy and this is taken extremely seriously in the management of housing estates.

Members raised the following issues:-

- Anti-Social behaviour in housing estates should not be tolerated by the Council.
- Concern expressed at the fact that the trouble makers are left in the estate while the victims of the anti-social behaviour have to move out.
- Tenants who are involved in anti-social behaviour should be evicted.
- Need to enforce the seven day Eviction Notice.
- Unemployment is linked to anti-social behaviour.
- Do RAS clients fall under the remit of the Council's Policy?
- Figures do not reflect the true situation.
- The sale of cheap alcohol is a major factor in anti-social behaviour and needs to be addressed.
- The Anti-Social behaviour Policy is not addressing the problem.
- Concern expressed that complaints of anti social behaviour are not being made because people are afraid to do so.
- Urge the Council to re-let boarded up houses.
- Noise control is a major concern to residents – need to invest in more software to monitor noise levels.
- Should be an onus on private Landlords to ensure tenants behave properly.
- How many people have relinquished tenancies due to anti-social behaviour.
- When will Joint Policing Committee meeting take place?

John O'Rourke responded to the queries raised:-

- Roscommon County Council does not accept anonymous complaints.
- If criminality is involved the Guards are involved.
- Figures quoted for anti-social behaviour represented the true situation.
- Confidentiality is assured where an individual makes a complaint to the Council.
- He suggested that the members should request to have the Anti-Social Behaviour Policy referred back to the Strategic Policy Committee for review if they feel that it is not working.

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

It was **AGREED** to refer the matter to the Housing SPC for review of the Anti-Social Behaviour Policy.

Pat Murtagh informed the members that the first meeting of the Joint Policing Committee was due to be held on the 17th April, 2015.

35.15. SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS:

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

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

36.15. QUESTIONS IN ACCORDANCE WITH STANDING ORDER NO. 135.

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

37.15. CORRESPONDENCE:

1. Letter dated 29.1.2015 from the Department of Transport, Tourism & Sport re a letter concerning the introduction of a HGV road user levy in the UK.
2. Letter dated 11.2.2015 from Wicklow County Council seeking support for a Motion re the National Association of Regional Game Councils.
3. Letter dated 12.2.2015 from the Department of Environment, Community & Local Government re Elphin Fire Station.
4. Letter dated 13.2.2015 from Limerick City & County Council seeking support for a Motion calling on the Minister for Justice to investigate the alleged movement of sex offenders from Northern Ireland to the twenty-six county Republic.
5. E-mail from Fingal County Council seeking support for a Motion re the Local Property Tax.
6. Letter dated 24.2.2015 from Offaly County Council seeking support for a Motion re the condemnation of the targeting of the President of Ireland for any protests or demonstrations.
7. Letter dated 12.3.2015 from Monaghan County Council seeking support for a Motion re the creation of a newly funded Co-ordinator post for the PPN throughout each local authority.

38.15. NOTICES OF MOTION:

14.15. BROADBAND SCHEME:

Notice of Motion from Councillor Naughten – 14/15.

“That Roscommon County Council call on the Minister for Communications to ensure that a new broadband scheme is rolled out across the country that ensures that all communities both urban and rural have minimum broadband speeds of 30mb/second to ensure that all families and businesses can avail of all future online services”.

The Meetings Administrator read the following reply:-

This Notice of Motion requires a Resolution of the Council.

Members raised the following issues:-

- People are at a severe disadvantage in the county with the very slow broadband and our infrastructure is falling behind.
- Recent BMW meeting gave very little hope for better broadband in the area.
- Cost of fibre optic broadband is astronomical.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Naughten

SECONDED by Councillor Creaton

It was **AGREED** “That Roscommon County Council call on the Minister for Communications to ensure that a new broadband scheme is rolled out across the country that ensures that all communities both urban and rural have minimum broadband speeds of 30mb/second to ensure that families & businesses can avail of future online services”.

15.15. BUS EIREANN:

Notice of Motion from Councillor Fallon – 15/15.

“That Roscommon County Council ask the Minister for Transport Mr. Pascal Donoghue T. D. to instruct Bus Eireann to maintain the current Bus service from Roscommon to Athlone .

The Meetings Administrator read the following reply:-

This Notice of Motion requires a Resolution of the Council.

Members raised the following issues:-

- Need to maintain and enhance services rather than reduce them.
- Government trying to close down rural Ireland.
- Losing the Bus route would be detrimental to rural Ireland.
- Need to look at integrated transportation schemes.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Fallon

SECONDED by Councillor Naughten

It was **AGREED** “That Roscommon County Council ask the Minister for Transport Mr. Pascal Donoghue T. D. to instruct Bus Eireann to maintain the current Bus service from Roscommon to Athlone .

16.15. NEW CIVIC OFFICES – OFFICIAL OPENING:

Notice of Motion from Councillor Connaughton – 16/15.

“That Roscommon County Council invite a citizen of County Roscommon to officially open the new Civic Offices when completed”.

The Meetings Administrator read the following reply:-

It is anticipated that the official opening of the new Civic Headquarters will take place in early 2016. As this is a major significant project for the county, Roscommon County Council will be using this platform to achieve maximum publicity for the organisation.

Roscommon County Council will be cognisant of the required protocol surrounding the opening of such a significant building and due process will be followed in consultation with the Department of the Environment, Community & Local Government on this matter.

Members raised the following issues:-

- Somebody who is a descendant of a person involved in the 1916 Rising should be asked to open the new Civic Offices.
- Somebody with a disability should be asked to open the new Civic Offices.

Councillor Cummins stated that it would be normal procedure that the executive nominate a person to open the new Civic Offices, through discussion with the Cathaoirleach, and that this could be done coming closer to the date for the opening of the Offices. He suggested that the executive come back to the members on this matter.

39.15. COUNCILLORS CONFERENCES:

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

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

Cllr. L. Fallon Planning Training, AILG, Great Northern Hotel, Bundoran, Co. Donegal
Irish Water Regional Briefing Session, McWilliam Hotel, Claremorris.

Tourism Technology & Competitive Strategies for 2015, Four Seasons
Hotel, Carlingford, Co. Louth.
AILG Training for Councillors (Finance), Nuremore Hotel,
Carrickmacross, Co. Monaghan

Cllr. I. Connaughton Tourism Technology & Competitive Strategies for 2015, Four Seasons
Cllr. P. Fitzmaurice Hotel, Carlingford, Co. Louth

Cllr. M. Creaton
Cllr. J. Keogh

Cllr. P. Kilduff Sustainable Tourism Development, Connacht Hotel, Galway.
AILG Training for Councillors, Welcome Inn, Castlebar.
AILG Annual Conference, Nuremore Hotel, Carrickmacross

40.15. A VOTE OF SYMPATHY was extended to:

The Doyle family, Ballynerrin Lower, Wicklow, on the death of Kathleen Doyle, sister of Mary Small and Breege McNeill, who are members of staff of Roscommon County Council.

41.15. ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

LEADER Funding:

Councillor Kilduff enquired if there was any reply from the Department regarding clear and concise guidelines for *LEADER* funding.

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

It was **AGREED** that Roscommon County Council secure from the *LEADER* Company a briefing document explaining how the funding will be implemented/distributed in County Roscommon and same to be available for the members at the next meeting.

Pat Murtagh responded to the queries raised and confirmed that a Presentation on the programme will be made to members when same is being developed and their views will be sought on the proposed programme. He confirmed that Alan Kelly is currently looking for Expressions of Interest, however, no update has been received by Roscommon County Council to date with regard to same.

Tommy Ryan, Chief Executive confirmed that Expressions of Interest are now being sought from bodies to administer the Scheme. He continued that heretofore *LEADER* would have run the Scheme, however, Roscommon County Council and the L.C.D.C. will be submitting an Expression of Interest. He anticipated that *LEADER* funding will not come on stream until the second half of the year.

Civic Reception:

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

It was **AGREED** that Marcus Conroy receive a civic honour at the forthcoming Civic Reception to be held on the 2nd April

Funding for Children with Special Needs:

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

It was **AGREED** “that Roscommon County Council issue a letter to the respective Ministers requesting that at the framing of all future budgets priority funding should be given to providing critical services for children with special needs and funding to provide family supports to families of children with special needs.

And further that the Government ban all involuntary electro convulsive therapy of persons suffering from mental illness, in accordance with the international call for such a ban.”

Downgrading of Boyle Garda Station:

Councillor Doherty raised the issue of Boyle Garda Station and the proposal by the Minister for Justice to radically reduce the opening hours of the Station as and from the 6th April next.

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

It was **AGREED** that a letter issue to Minister Frances Fitzgerald, Minister for Justice, and the Garda Commissioner, Noirin O'Sullivan, stating that Roscommon County Council will not accept the down grading of Boyle Garda Station. This is a further erosion of services and is totally unacceptable.

The Late Dr. Pat McHugh:

Members from both sides of the house extended a vote of sympathy to the family of the late Pat McHugh who served as a Medical Consultant at Roscommon County Hospital for many years and was actively involved with the Hospital Action Committee in the fight to save the services at Roscommon County Hospital. Sincere sympathy is extended to his wife Bridie and family.

Tommy Ryan, Chief Executive on his own behalf and on behalf of the executive and staff of Roscommon County Council extended deepest sympathy to the McHugh family on their recent sad bereavement.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

The foregoing Minutes are
Confirmed and Signed:

Meetings Administrator

Mayor

Countersigned

QUESTIONS – MARCH, 2015

Question 1 – Councillor Keogh:

'What is the amount allocated for non-national roads and footpaths in County Roscommon (all local authorities therein) in 2014 and 2015;

The Meetings Administrator circulated the following reply:-

Amounts allocated for non-national roads and footpaths are outlined in the table below;

Funding Type	2014	2015
Non-National Grant	€11,498,692	€11,826,615
Local Roads (own resources)	€1,207,000	€1,282,000
Footpaths (own resources capital)	€300,000	€300,000

Question 2 – Councillor Keogh:

With regard to the old Boyle Town Council, is there any block grant funding this year?

The Meetings Administrator circulated the following reply:-

No block grant funding has been provided for the old Boyle Town Council in 2015.