

MINUTES OF MONTHLY MEETING OF ROSCOMMON COUNTY COUNCIL HELD IN ÁRAS AN CHONTAE, ROSCOMMON ON MONDAY THE 26th SEPTEMBER, 2016 AT 2.15 P.M.

PRESENT Councillor Tony Ward, 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 J. Cummins, Cllr J. Keogh, Cllr O. Leyden, Cllr J. Murphy, Cllr J. Naughten, Cllr K. Shanagher, Cllr P. Kilduff, Cllr M. Mulligan, Cllr. L. Callaghan

OFFICIALS: Mr. Eugene Cummins, Chief Executive
Mr. Martin Lydon, A/Director of Services
Ms. Majella Hunt, Director of Services
Mr. Derek Caldbeck, A/Director of Services
Ms. Patricia Bohan, Meetings Administrator
Mr. Alan O'Connell, Executive Planner

The Leas Cathaoirleach Cllr Nigel Dineen took the chair and advised that the Cathaoirleach would join the meeting shortly.

95.16. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Creighton
SECONDED by Councillor Fitzmaurice
It was **AGREED** to adopt the minutes of the plenary meeting held 25.07.2016

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

Members noted the Monthly Management Report for the months of July and August 2016.

97.16. DISPOSAL OF LAND:

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

It was **AGREED** that the Council consent to the disposal 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 dispose of:-

The land: 0.15 ha. at Cloonkeen, Ballinasloe, Co. Roscommon.

The persons from whom the land was acquired: Patrick O'Rourke

The person to whom the land is to be disposed: Frank Doran

Consideration: €1,300

The land: 0.1641 ha. (plot 1) and 0.3924 ha. (plot 2) at Rathpeak, Ballinasloe, Co. Roscommon.

The persons from whom the land was acquired: Patrick Naughten (plot 1) and Patrick Whelan (plot 2)

The person to whom the land is to be disposed: Patrick Dillon

Consideration: €1,500

The land: 0.226 ha. at Cloonkeen, Ballinasloe, Co. Roscommon.
The persons from whom the land was acquired: Dympna Grenham
The person to whom the land is to be disposed: Dympna Grenham
Consideration: €2,500

The land: 0.499 ha. at Toberiheem, Ballydangan, Athlone, Co. Roscommon.
The persons from whom the land was acquired: Joseph Ryan & Anthony Nevin
The person to whom the land is to be disposed: Anthony & Maureen Nevin
Consideration: €1,000

98.16. Specified Development under Section 179 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and Article 81 of Part 8 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended)

- Road Improvement Works Project, Hodson Bay, Athlone, Co. Roscommon
- N61 Knockcroghery Traffic Calming, Co. Roscommon

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

It was **AGREED** that the Council proceed with both schemes.

Cathaoirleach Tony Ward took the chair.

99.16. RURAL WATER MULTI ANNUAL PROGRAMME 2016-2018

Majella Hunt, Director of Services updated members on the allocation from the Department of Housing, Planning Community & Local Government. An interim grant allocation of €608,000 was made for 2016 to support the water quality problems in the rural water sector and this was not increased following the final allocation.

100.16. PRESENTATION BY OPW ON CATCHMENT FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT (CFRAM) DRAFT FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT PLANS (FRMP)

Mark Adamson, Head of Flood Relief and Risk Management at OPW gave a detailed presentation on the current progress of the Catchment Flood Risk Assessment & Management (CFRAM) Draft Plans.

- This plan will set out the road map for flood risk management in Ireland with the main focus on communities at risk and a €430m programme involving protection schemes is envisaged over the 2016-2021 period.
- The FRMP recommendations for Roscommon include prevention, preparedness and protection measures under the minor works programme.
- Public consultation commenced on 6th September and submissions are encouraged from Local Authorities and the public with a deadline of 17th October 2016.
- When completed, the plan will be submitted to the Minister for approval and the Local Authority will have 3 months thereafter to adopt it.

The following points were raised by the members:

- The views of locals given a low weighting in the study.
- The rivers Shannon and Suck must have their capacity increased for progress to be made. The cost of dredging the Shannon would significantly outweigh the benefits
- Rivers omitted from maps i.e. River Jiggy not on map displayed during consultation phase
- Plans based on one in one hundred year flooding events – this is now a more regular occurrence

- Should consider flood plains to hold back water with farmers compensated for these lands.
- Were there satellite images taken of last winter flooding at the time of the occurrences?
- Some measures have not been costed – will this affect the credibility of the study?
- A study of the turloughs were not included in this study.
- How much did this study cost and how much were consultants paid?
- RCC should forward a clear and concise proposal to CFRAM that includes all areas of the county
- There should be one Authority to oversee the Shannon flood management

Mr. Adamson responded to queries as follows:

- All of the points made should be included in a submission from Roscommon County Council
- All measures will be costed and works commence in 1-2 years. Minor works up to €500k may be commenced out earlier.
- Dredging the Shannon has been looked at since 1956 but would cost tens of millions of euro. This is not cost beneficial.
- There were satellite pictures of the flooding last winter but because of cloud cover pictures not clear.
- CFRAM looking at turloughs with GSI
- The study follows a process that includes public submissions – have looked at other measures and costed them.
- There are seven river catchment areas included in the CFRAM study that commenced in 2011. The cost of €25m includes the surveying of 6,500km of rivers.

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

It was **AGREED** that Roscommon County Council submit a detailed submission to CFRAM and ensure all areas are identified.

The CE confirmed that Roscommon County Council would be making a submission and advised members that a meeting would be arranged before the deadline of 17th October.

101.16 LOCAL PROPERTY TAX ADJUSTMENT FACTOR

Mr. Derek Caldbeck, A/Head of Finance presented to the members the Local Property Tax (Local Adjustment Factor) 2016 Report as circulated to the members.

- There is a predicted €500k deficit to be met due to a number of pressures including an increase in payroll costs (FEMPI refund), increased insurance premiums and no guarantees of compensation for decrease in global costs as was received in 2016.
- RCC recoup €5.9m from national equalisation fund
- As 55% of local LPT is paid at the €90 annual rate an increase of 15% in LPT would yield an additional €595,000 for the Council
- Public Consultation undertaken and no submissions received.
- It is recommended that there is no change property tax rate for 2017.

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

It was **AGREED** that Roscommon County Council maintain the current local property tax.

102.16 Overdraft Approval 2017

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

It was **AGREED** to approve an Overdraft Facility for 2017 in the sum of €6 million.

103.16. FIXING OF DATES FOR PLENARY & MUNICIPAL DISTRICT BUDGET MEETINGS

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

It was **AGREED** that the date for the Budget Meeting would be set as the **18th November 2016** and the dates for the Municipal District Draft Budget Plans would be as follows:

Athlone MD	17 th October 2016 at 9.30 a.m.
Boyle MD	17 th October 2016 at 2.30 p.m.
Roscommon MD	19 th October 2016 at 2.30 p.m.

104.16. PRESENTATIONS ON HOUSING/PLANNING

Mr. Derek Caldbeck, A/Head of Finance, Housing and ICT gave a detailed presentation on current Housing activities which included key housing statistics, 2016 initiatives, Public Private Partnership and current engagement with private sector. He outlined the Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness - Rebuilding Ireland, including Roscommon County Council Housing specific actions arising from this plan.

Alan O'Connell, Executive Planner briefed members on Rebuilding Irish Planning and Housing Policy. He outlined the new approach to planning for housing and town centre development which is a town centre first emphasis aiming to increase population and investment in town centres through Urban Design Frameworks. This will mean change at local level for Town Teams who would be expected to play a large role implementing this new approach, positively impacting growth and prosperity of the town centres through increased visitation, business, revenues and jobs.

All members welcomed the comprehensive presentations and raised the following queries:

- What delays are encountered in acquisition of houses ?
- Elaborate further on PPP scheme for The Walk
- Derelict site in Henry Street (Matthews house) – can CPO for this property?
- Can RCC facilitate affordable sites?
- Concern about 613 families in private rented accommodation on the housing waiting list if rents continue to rise.
- Why is rent being paid is not considered when applicant on approved waiting list applies for a housing loan.
- Concern regarding the rate of refusals for accommodation
- HAP does not deal with long term housing need
- Encouraging that we intend to improve turnover of voids
- We need to reopen businesses in towns to increase footfall and encourage more living in towns.
- First priority should be to get a hotel in Boyle to encourage tourists to stay longer.
- Have we any policy to encourage more people to live in small towns and villages – we need a detailed plan
- Must be a priority to tackle derelict buildings boarded up in our towns
- Government need to get industry and consequently employment into our towns
- Rural areas cannot be neglected

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

It was **AGREED** to commence CPO of derelict site in Henry Street (Matthews) to develop social housing.

Mr. Eugene Cummins, CE informed members that before recourse to a CPO it is necessary to exhaust all other options. Mr. Derek Caldbeck informed members that discussions at a recent meeting with Housing Agency confirmed no element of affordable sites to the development at The Walk, Roscommon Town.

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

It was **AGREED** to contact the Housing Agency to challenge this and seek clarification on the matter.

Mr. Caldbeck addressed member's queries as follows:

- Variety of reasons for delays in acquisitions including solicitors, NPPR, water charges, boundary and planning issues.
- Rooftop gardens are possible at first floor level but gets more difficult above this level
- A more tailored approach is required for smaller towns
- Issue of derelict buildings discussed at Town Teams meetings and urban design frameworks will address this.
- Lack of hotel in Boyle and overnight accommodation an issue for developing tourism in the area and is being considered by Town Teams
- Commercial first, residential second priority but mixed use development is to be considered.
- All affordable sites have been sold in Roscommon Town. Currently taking steps to address outstanding issues in relation to such sites in Boyle.
- There is a national policy on how to deal with refusal rates this need to be developed further
- Housing Agency initially makes decision on all applications for housing loans. The criteria states that an applicant must have received refusals from two lenders in order to qualify.

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

It was **AGREED** to write to Housing Agency to seek further clarification on why an applicant on the approved housing waiting list who applies for a loan and rent payable is not taken into consideration.

105.16. EXTENSION OF STANDING ORDERS:

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

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

106.16. UPDATE ON TOWN AND VILLAGE RENEWAL SCHEME 2016

The closing date for receipt of expressions of interest was 16th September. Twenty two applications received with eight applications submitted for further consideration and decision by the Department. Successful applicants will be notified in due course. Matched funding will be required from all successful applicants.

107.16. RATIFICATION OF NEW MEMBERS OF ROSCOMMON LCDC

- Eamon Hannan, Health Service Executive.
- Margaret Glacken, Brothers of Charity Services.

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

It was **AGREED** to ratify Eamon Hannan, Health Service Executive and Margaret Glacken, Brothers of Charity Services to Roscommon Local Community Development Committee (LCDC).

108.16. ELECTION OF TWO NEW MEMBERS TO LOCAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (LCDC) FOLLOWING RESIGNATION OF CLLRs KATHLEEN SHANAGHER AND ORLA LEYDEN

It was noted that the resignations were necessary as a member could not sit on both the Economic Development SPC and the LCDC.

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

It was **AGREED** to elect Cllr Nigel Dineen to Roscommon Local Community Development Committee (LCDC).

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

It was **AGREED** to elect Cllr Paddy Kilduff to Roscommon Local Community Development Committee (LCDC).

109.16. CORRESPONDENCE

1. Letter from Leitrim County Council re: resolution adopted on all future afforestation under the planning regulations.
2. Letter from HSE/Saolta re: Re-opening of A&E Department at Roscommon University Hospital.
3. Letter of acknowledgement from Billy Kelleher TD re: resolution passed in respect of the reopening of Roscommon Emergency Department.
4. Letter from Dublin City County re: resolution adopted to pass the Road Traffic Amendment Bill 2015 commonly known as Jake's Law.
5. Letter from Cork County Council re: Global valuations of utility companies

110.16. NOTICES OF MOTION ROAD SAFETY

Notice of Motion from Councillor Murphy – 10/16

"That Roscommon County Council call on TII to erect warning lights on approach roads to Scramogue Junction and also to move the signs on approach road from Rooskey and approach road from Lanesboro following many road traffic accidents at this location".

The Meetings Administrator read the following reply:-

This Notice of Motion requires a Resolution of the Council.

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

It was **AGREED** that Roscommon County Council call on TII to erect warning lights on approach roads to Scramogue Junction and also to move the signs on the approach road from Rooskey and approach road from Lanesboro.

TELEPHONE RENT ALLOWANCE

Notice of Motion from Councillor Ward – 11/16

"That Roscommon County Council call on the Minister for Social Protection, Mr. Leo Varadkar T.D., Minister for Finance, Mr. Michael Noonan T.D., to restore the Telephone rent allowance to old age pensioners in the forthcoming Budget.

The Meetings Administrator read the following reply:-

This Notice of Motion requires a resolution of the Council.

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

It was **AGREED** that Roscommon County Council call on the Minister for Social Protection Mr. Leo Varadkar T.D., and the Minister for Finance, Mr. Michael Noonan T.D., to restore the Telephone rent allowance to old age pensioners in the forthcoming budget.

ROSCOMMON A&E UNIT

Notice of Motion from Councillor Kilduff – 12/16

“That Roscommon County Council calls on the Government to revisit the decision to close the A&E at Roscommon Hospital and in light of its failure to provide a proper ambulance service for the region to reopen the A&E facility in the interest of public safety”.

The Meetings Administrator read the following reply:-

This requires a resolution of the Council.

Cllr Kilduff informed members that it is five years since the closure of the A&E and given the current concerns about the ambulance service, he is calling on the government to re-open Roscommon A&E. He also outlined his concerns that A&E in Galway can't cater for the people of Roscommon.

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

It was **AGREED** that Roscommon County Council write to Minister for Health, Mr. Simon Harris T.D., and Taoiseach Enda Kenny to re-visit the decision to close Roscommon A&E. This letter should also be sent to Minister Denis Naughten, Deputy Michael Martin and Deputy Billy Kelleher .

CAR PARKING BYE-LAWS

Notice of Motion from Councillor Leyden – 13/16

“That Roscommon County Council introduces new Parking Bye-laws to permit the parking of campers, mobile homes etc. in public car parks throughout the County day and night to show that Roscommon is open and welcome to tourists exploring the country by camper and interested in visiting the County of Roscommon. The Car Parking Bye-Laws 2011 prohibits the parking of campers, caravans, mobile homes etc. parking in public car parks in Co. Roscommon overnight from 8 p.m. to 8 a.m.

The Meetings Administrator read the following reply:-

Car Park Bye Laws were adopted by Roscommon County Council in September, 2011, under the Road Traffic Acts 1961 – 1994. The Bye Laws refer to 39 public car parks throughout the county and include conditions to regulate and manage the use of the public car parks.

The conditions prescribe the duration and method of parking and the restrictions that apply to all vehicles including cars, buses, caravans, motorhomes, camper vans etc. using the car park. Caravans, motorhomes, camper vans and other vehicles providing living accommodation may park in the car park between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m. daily. This differentiates between the two concepts of parking and camping. These vehicles may not park overnight because the car parks are not designed to facilitate vehicles providing living accommodation. There are caravan parks geographically located throughout the county that provide overnight parking facilities for caravans, camper vans and motorhomes visiting the county.

Roscommon County Council welcome all tourists to the county and has a proud record of the development of a number of tourist attractions, leisure facilities and amenity areas in the county and also work with and support tourist organisations, tourist providers and the community in tourism development and promotion. The Council is satisfied that the Car Parking Bye Laws do not have a negative effect on tourism in the county.

Cllr Leyden stated that tourists who use motorhomes have no facility for overnight parking. Other members agreed that there should be some scope for a compromise to allow overnight parking as some people don't

want to go to campsites and if someone wants to stay in a hotel can't park their campervan. Roscommon has a limited number of campsites in Boyle and Athlone.

Ms. Majella Hunt, Director of Services advised members that Roscommon County Council are responsible for maintaining and managing a large number of car parks in the County, and have to be mindful of the facilities available to users. She advised that the whole statutory process of the carparking byelaws would need to be revisited to reverse this decision.

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

It was **AGREED** that this item be brought back to the SPC for full review.

111.16. COUNCILLORS CONFERENCES PAYMENT

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

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

112.16 VOTES OF SYMPATHY

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

It was **AGREED** to send a letter of sympathy to the family of the late Catriona Lucas a coast guard volunteer from County Clare

113.16. APPROVAL OF CIVIC RECEPTION RECIPIENTS

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

It was **AGREED** that Roscommon County Council hosts a Civic Reception in recognition of the Roscommon Coat of Arms which celebrates fifty five years this November to celebrate our County Identity.

114.16. A.O.B.

LOUGHFUNSHINAGH

Mr. Eugene Cummins, CE informed members that a decision was made to raise the road at Lisphelim in the coming weeks to above last winter's flood level and to commence design on a flood defence for individual properties and road at Ballagh. He also added that a significant amount of money would be spent on the roads in the next ten weeks and that works were ongoing across the county.

The statement was welcomed by the members.

RATES INCENTIVE SCHEME

Cllr. Keogh complimented the executive on the continuation of the Rates Incentive Scheme that has led directly to the creation of 8-10 jobs and possibly more. This is a scheme that could be replicated in other local authorities.

TIDY TOWNS 2016

Cathaoirleach Tony Ward congratulated the Tidy Towns Groups who were successful at the Awards Ceremony at the Helix in Dublin earlier today and thanked Cllr Shanagher for the information as she had attended the awards.

List of award winners included:

Castlecoote and Keadue - Gold
Roscommon Town - Silver
Ballintubber and Cloontuskert - Bronze
Kilteevan - Endeavour

FAS SCHEME

Cllr. Beirne proposed that a letter be sent to Minister Varadkar in relation to the FAS Scheme which in its current format, is not working, as limited or no funding is available for works.

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

It was **AGREED** that a letter be sent to Mr. Leo Varadkar T.D., Minister for Social Protection in relation to the FAS Scheme which in its current format, is not working, as limited or no funding available for works.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be on Monday 24th October 2016.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

The foregoing Minutes are
Confirmed and Signed:

Meetings Administrator

Cathaoirleach

Countersigned