

**MINUTES OF MONTHLY MEETING OF ROSCOMMON COUNTY COUNCIL  
COUNCIL CHAMBER, ÁRAS AN CHONTAE, ROSCOMMON  
MONDAY, 27TH MARCH, 2017 AT 2.15 PM.**

**PRESENT:** Councillor Tony Ward, Cathaoirleach Roscommon County Council  
**PRESIDED**

**MEMBERS:** Cllr V. Byrne, Cllr I. Connaughton, Cllr M. Creaton, Cllr J. Cummins, Cllr R. Doherty, Cllr L. Fallon, Cllr P. Fitzmaurice, Cllr J. Keogh, Cllr P. Kilduff, Cllr O. Leyden, Cllr M. Mulligan, Cllr J. Murphy, Cllr J. Naughten, Cllr K. Shanagher and Cllr L. Callaghan.

**OFFICIALS:** Eugene Cummins, Chief Executive  
Derek Caldbeck, A/Director of Services  
Majella Hunt, Director of Services  
Martin Lydon, Director of Services  
Christina Fannon, A/Meetings Administrator  
Cait Kenny, Assistant Staff Officer

**Apologies:** Cllr D. Connolly.

**33.17 ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Cummins  
**SECONDED** by Councillor Dineen  
It was **AGREED** to adopt the minutes of the Plenary Meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2017

**34.17 MATTERS ARISING**

There were no matters arising.

**35.17 MANAGEMENT REPORT**

Members noted the Management Report for February 2017.  
Councillor Connaughton requested that the number of planning applications granted and refused is noted in future Management Reports. Martin Lydon, A/Director of Services, confirmed that this information will be included in future reports.

**36.17 CEMETERY IMPROVEMENT GRANTS 2017**

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Fitzmaurice  
**SECONDED** by Councillor Byrne  
It was **AGREED** to adopt the Cemetery Improvement Grants 2017 as circulated

### **37.17 LEAD REMEDIATION GRANT UPDATE**

- This grant scheme was introduced in February 2016 and has now been updated
- Irish Water has introduced a Customer Opt-In Lead Pipe Replacement Scheme where the customer agrees to replace lead pipes on their side of the property and Irish Water will replace the lead piped on the public side of the property
- Roscommon County Council did not receive any applications to date under this Scheme
- Members need to get the message out to the public.

Members raised the following issues and queries:

- It is a positive initiative and it is important that the public are made aware of it
- Irish Water should inform the public of the Scheme
- Can a householder make an application retrospectively under this Scheme if they have carried out the works already?

Majella Hunt, Director of Services, responded as follows:

- As part of the metering programme, Irish Water informed householders where there were lead pipes in place
- Roscommon County Council has no access to this information because of Data Protection implications
- Irish Water will be requested to notify customers and the Council will do all it can to publicise the Scheme
- Householders who carried out works since 6<sup>th</sup> February 2016 may make an application under this Scheme for grant approval subject to meeting the criteria and the relevant documentation being in place.

### **38.17 COUNTY ROSCOMMON TOURISM STATEMENT OF STRATEGY 2017 - 2022**

Councillor Shanagher, Chairperson of the Economic Development and Enterprise Support (including Roads & Culture) SPC presented to the Members the County Roscommon Tourism Statement of Strategy 2017-2022 for adoption.

The Statement of Strategy and the Tourism Strategy that is proposed will develop as one cohesive document setting out local priorities and goals for the next six years. Tourism is an important economic driver in County Roscommon generating approximately €42.8m in revenue. The Statement of Strategy that is put forward for adoption sets out a clear roadmap for growing the sector in the years ahead. The strategy aims to develop quality tourism experiences that meet and preferably exceed the needs and expectations of visitors. Roscommon County Council is working with partner agencies, the tourism trade and communities throughout the county in a collaborative, coordinated and measured approach.

Members welcomed the Statement of Strategy and the following issues were raised:

- A Tourism Officer is required for the county
- The work of the Suck Valley Development Co-Op was complimented
- Develop accessible tourism
- Build on the success of Cuisle Holiday Centre
- Preserve Edenville House for the future

- Many attractions are supported by the Council - Lough Key Forest and Activity Park, Bay Sports, King House, Rathcroghan, Rindoon and Strokestown House
- Roscommon should tap in to the success of Clonmacnoise and should try to benefit from the number of visitors that visit Clonmacnoise each year
- Develop the potential of the River Shannon, access to the river should be improved
- It is important that the proposed Beara Breifne Way goes ahead
- Link up the waterways and cycle route and build on the success of existing walking and cycling routes
- A feasibility study is required on the River Hind
- Castlerea Rose Festival, Elphin and Strokestown not featured
- Clonalis House is not being promoted enough
- The potential Castlerea should be tapped into, it is the birthplace of Douglas Hyde and Oscar Wilde's father
- Elphin and Strokestown not featured
- Not sufficient support from Fáilte Ireland – there should be a designated fund
- Better management of funding, currently small sums of money is being allocated to community groups through Town Teams, Village Renewal and LCDC Scheme
- There should be a new Lakeland brand for the counties that fall outside Ireland Ancient East and the Wild Atlantic Way
- The county has spectacular waterways and heritage sites
- The county should be marketed to its full potential – drone footage to promote the county, utilise Facebook
- South Roscommon has much to offer – Athlone town, Shannonbridge, Glendeer Pet Farm, award winning Derryglad Folk Museum, should be included in the work programme
- The threat of industrial wind farms is a threat to tourism.

Martin Lydon, A/Director of Services, responded as follows:

- The Council has engaged with Fáilte Ireland and a meeting is scheduled with them
- Feedback from this meeting will be communicated to the Strategic Policy Committee
- The Council has not been approached regarding any proposed industrial wind farms and therefore not in a position to comment.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Shanagher

**SECONDED** by Councillor Dineen

It was **AGREED** to adopt County Roscommon Tourism Statement of Strategy 2017-2022

### **39.17 LCDC COMMUNITY FACILITIES SCHEME 2017**

Martin Lydon, A/Director of Services, presented an overview of the Communities Facilities Scheme which was announced on 10<sup>th</sup> March 2017 by the Minister of State for Communities and the National Drugs Strategy:

- This is a new €2m capital grants scheme aimed primarily at disadvantaged urban and rural areas
- €64,500 per local authority with a maximum of €1,000 grant per project
- Scheme is being administered by the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC)
- LCDC make the initial decision which are then forwarded to the Municipal Districts for approval
- Groups must be affiliated to the PPN to avail of the grant.

Members raised the following issues and queries:

- Can money from this grant be used as match funding?
- A maximum of €1,000 per project is small, is there discretion to exceed this amount?
- Rural isolation is a problem and groups working in this area should access these funds
- Will decisions be made on grants prior to the closing date of 30<sup>th</sup> June 2017?
- Will the funding be allocated by Municipal District area?
- Groups accessing these funds should be aware that they need to be affiliated to the PPN
- Funding under this scheme will be of assistance to small groups

Martin Lydon, A/Director of Services, responded to queries as follows:

- This is a national scheme and local authorities will have to follow the guidelines
- It is not explicit from the information provided if funds from this grant scheme can be used as match funding
- Funding is for small-scale capital works and will not be allocated by Municipal District area
- The deadline for receipt of applications is 30<sup>th</sup> June 2017 and no applications will be processed before this deadline and there will be no allocation of funds before this date
- Application forms will be available online and will be advertised on social media

#### **40.17 ATHLONE BOUNDARY AND IRELAND 2040**

The Chief Executive presented the draft jointly prepared scoping report on the implementation of the Athlone Boundary Review Committee's recommendations to the Members. The report is in response to the letter of 30<sup>th</sup> December 2016 from the Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government. The Chief Executive and the Westmeath Chief Executive have signed off on the document to be presented to each Council for approval.

On 16<sup>th</sup> March Roscommon County Council made a submission under the National Planning Framework 2040 clearly setting out the Vision for Athlone - to be a Regional City in the Midlands. 'Destination Athlone' has also made a submission under the National Planning Framework. This is a public document and is endorsed by relevant parties including Roscommon and Longford County Councils.

In this scoping report, two very important developments have been included which neither the Boundary Committee nor the Department had considered i.e. the implications of the Ireland 2040 National Planning Framework and the joint retail strategy which warrant the preparation of a Regional Economic and Spatial Strategy. This document states clearly that it would be most beneficial if the Department recognises under the National Planning Framework the potential of Athlone as a centre of growth by appropriate designation as a regional growth centre.

The report was submitted to both Corporate Policy Groups and the full Council in both Roscommon and Westmeath today and in the spirit of good cooperation and confidentiality it was not possible to circulate it earlier. There are many controls build into this document, the Members have full control over the process and everything will revert back to the Members for approval.

Cllr. Keogh advised the meeting that the Fianna Fáil grouping met in relation to this issue. The document

was first circulated at the Corporate Policy Group meeting held this morning and Members have not had an opportunity to consider the content in its entirety. Cllr Keogh was of the opinion that the last paragraph of Mr. Paul Lemass's letter of 30<sup>th</sup> December did not impose a strict deadline.

In the circumstances having regard to the content of the correspondence:

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Keogh on behalf of the Fianna Fáil Group  
**SECONDED** by Councillor Connaughton

that the matter be deferred to the April meeting of the Council so that full consideration can be given to the content of the reply that is being prepared, full consideration be given to the submission from Roscommon County Council in relation to the Ireland 2040 National Planning Framework and more importantly that full consideration and a briefing be given by the Elected Members of Athlone Municipal District to the Save Roscommon Committee to give the Committee the opportunity to have any additional input into the submission before it goes to the Department.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Keogh on behalf of the Fianna Fáil Group  
**SECONDED** by Councillor Connaughton

that a letter be written to Assistant Secretary, Paul Lemass, to advise this matter has been deferred to April meeting of County Council.

A discussion ensued and Members made the following comments:

- Need to clarify if there is a deadline of 31<sup>st</sup> March
- Any merit / value to extend this to another meeting
- The Members have had no chance to examine the contents
- All documents should issue with the Agenda for the meeting
- This matter should go to the Save Roscommon Group for comment
- This document gives Roscommon a great position, is positive, enhances the position of Monksland and Bealnamullia
- The executive was not in a position to issue the draft report before this date
- It is an issue for the full council and not just the Athlone MD

The Chief Executive responded that Ireland 2040 National Planning Framework changes the context for every boundary issue in the country. There is nothing new in the response except the National Planning Framework and the Economic and Spatial Strategy. Out of respect and confidentiality, the document did not issue sooner but it is important to meet the deadline of 31<sup>st</sup> March.

Cllr Ward stated that he would not do anything to jeopardise the work that has been done in relation to the boundary and in response to the proposal by Cllr Keogh, Cllr Ward put forward a counter proposal:

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

That this issue be adjourned to next Thursday at 11.00 a.m. if this suits Members.

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

It was **AGREED** to adjourn the meeting for ten minutes

On resumption of the meeting Cllr. Ward stated that he would withdraw his counter proposal to allow Councillors time to read and absorb the draft report and time to meet the Save Roscommon Group .He asked the Fianna Fáil group to consider a date to meet before 24<sup>th</sup> April. He stated that he would organise a meeting with the Chief Executive and officials on the matter.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Ward

**SECONDED** by Councillor Dineen

It was **AGREED** that the Counter Proposal be withdrawn

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Keogh

**SECONDED** by Councillor Connaughton

It was **AGREED** that

- The matter be deferred to the April Plenary Meeting
- A meeting be organised with the Save Roscommon Group
- A letter is written to Mr. Paul Lemass to confirm the deferral of the submission.

#### **41.17 CORRESPONDENCE**

- Letter from Kilkenny County Council regarding resolution passed resolution passed to address the review on the standard of cancer care in Ireland from 10 years to 5 years
- Letter from Office of the Tánaiste and Minister for Justice and Equality in response to a resolution passed by Members of Roscommon County Council to issue a letter to Rates Valuation Office
- Letter from Office of the Tánaiste and Minister for Justice and Equality acknowledging receipt of letter from Roscommon County Council dated 15 February 2017
- Letter received from Department of Public Expenditure and Reform regarding a resolution passed by Members of Roscommon County Council regarding the Valuation Office
- Letter received from Minister Denis Naughten, T.D. enclosing copy letter of response from Simon Harris, T.D., Minister for Health
- Letter received from Simon Harris, T.D., Minister for Health, regarding a resolution of Roscommon County Council relating to a decision to close the Accident and Emergency Department at Roscommon University Hospital
- Letter received from Department of Finance
- Letter received from the Valuation Office regarding resolution of Roscommon County Council in relation to lack of information in the letters to ratepayers
- Letter received from the Valuation Office regarding a resolution of Roscommon County Council in relation to extending the date for receipt of representations in respect of Proposed Valuation Certificate
- Letter received from Tipperary County Council regarding Notice of Motion passed in relation to Bus Eireann services.

#### **42.17 NOTICE OF MOTION**

##### **UPGRADE N60 (WEST OF CASTLEREA)**

##### **Notice of Motion from Councillor Creaton – 02/17**

“That Roscommon County Council call on the T.I.I. to carry out urgent upgrade works to the N60 west of

Castlerea from Arm to the railway bridge at Meelickaduff.”

***The Meetings Administrator read the following reply: -***

This Notice of Motion requires a Resolution of the Council.

Cllr Creaton stated that this section of road on the Ballyhaunis side of Castlerea has disintegrated over the past number of years and is in a very dangerous condition. It is only a matter of time before there is a serious accident with responsibility falling on the Council.

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

It was **AGREED** that Roscommon County Council call on the T.I.I. to carry out urgent upgrade works to the N60 west of Castlerea from Arm to the railway bridge at Meelickaduff.

#### **43.17 COUNCILLORS CONFERENCES - PAYMENT/ATTENDANCE**

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

It was **AGREED** to adopt the list of payments for attendance at conferences as circulated to the Members.

#### **44.17 VOTES OF CONGRATULATIONS/SYMPATHY**

Votes of Sympathy were extended to:

- The Clarke family, Low Parks, Boyle on the death of Jim Clarke.

Votes of Congratulations were extended to:

- Roscommon Solstice Choir, winners of the People’s Choice Category at the 2017 Epic Awards.

#### **45.17 A.O.B.**

##### **Tender for Legal Services**

Cllr. Keogh referred to the recent Request for Tender for N60 Oran Re-alignment Road Project – Land Conveyance and Legal Services advertised by Roscommon County Council on eTenders. He queried that in light of the fact that there is a national framework in place, was the Council entitled to advertise for legal services in the manner in which they have? The Chief Executive confirmed that the Council was entitled to advertise the Tender.

##### **Castlerea Fire Station**

Cllr. Mulligan requested an update in relation to the temporary closure of Castlerea Fire Station. He stated that the people of Ballaghaderreen are afraid for their safety. He referred to rumours circulating that businesses in Castlerea may not be covered by their insurance when there is no service. Cllr. Fitzmaurice stated that he had heard the rumours but there were unfounded. The Chief Executive advised Members that the Council understands the concerns and is working through a process and until the Council is satisfied that the crew can work safely together the station will remain closed.

#### **NEXT MEETING**

**The next meeting will be on Monday, 24th April, 2017.**

This concluded the business of the meeting.

The foregoing Minutes are  
Confirmed and Signed:

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Cathaoirleach

\_\_\_\_\_  
Countersigned