

**MINUTES OF MONTHLY MEETING OF ROSCOMMON COUNTY COUNCIL
IN COUNCIL CHAMBER, ÁRAS AN CHONTAE, ROSCOMMON
ON Monday, 23rd October, 2017 AT 2.15 pm.**

PRESENT: Councillor Orla Leyden, Cathaoirleach **PRESIDED**

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

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

Apologies: Cllr L. Callaghan

130.17 ADOPTION OF MINUTES

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Dineen
SECONDED by Councillor Cummins
It was **AGREED** to adopt the minutes of the Plenary Meeting held 25.09.2017

131.17 MINUTES SILENCE

The Cathaoirleach Cllr. Orla Leyden informed the meeting that the late start was due to the funeral of the late Gerry Callaghan, brother of Cllr. Liam Callaghan and son of former Councillor Mr. Tom Callaghan. Members expressed their sincere sympathies to the Callaghan family, his wife Teresa, daughters Orla, Fiona and to their colleague Cllr. Liam Callaghan and his father Tom who served on the Council for many years. On behalf of the Management and staff of Roscommon County Council the Chief Executive Mr. Eugene Cummins wished to offer his condolences to the Callaghan family. Ar dheis dé go raibh a anam dílis.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Creaton
SECONDED by Councillor Leyden
It was **AGREED** to hold a minute's silence in memory of the late Gerry Callaghan.

132.17 MATTERS ARISING

Lough Funshinagh

Cllr. Ward requested an update in relation to Lough Funshinagh.

The Chief Executive advised that a report from the Geological Survey has been circulated today to the

members setting out the current position. He asked Members to consider the report that outlines the creation of a model so that works can be planned for in the future. If Members have any questions arising from the report, they should be submitted to Head of Roads and Infrastructure. A further meeting with the various stakeholders will be held in early November whereby further information will be available and this will be reported back to the members.

Cllr. Connaughton requested that all reports should be circulated in advance of the meeting so that the Members can be briefed and be familiar with the item to be discussed. The Chief Executive noted that this was reasonable and reports will be circulated as early as possible in advance of the meeting.

133.17 MANAGEMENT REPORT

Members noted the Management report for Quarter 3 2017.

134.17 DISPOSAL OF LANDS - RESCINDING OF RESOLUTION 142.16 DATED 25TH JAN 2017 (ROADS & TRANSPORTATION)

On 25th January 2017 Roscommon County Council approved the disposal of land 1.247 hectares (Plot 68) in the Townland Taduff, Thomastown, Ballinasloe, Co. Roscommon to Seamus McManus, Ardnanure, Bealnamulia, Athlone, Co. Roscommon. Approval is sought to rescind Resolution dated January 25th 2017 as the land is now to be sold to Kathleen McManus.

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

It was **AGREED** that the County Council of the County of Roscommon does hereby rescind in its entirety its Resolution dated January 25th 2017, which approved the disposal of land 1.247 hectares (Plot 68) in the Townland Taduff, Thomastown, Ballinasloe, Co. Roscommon to Seamus McManus, Ardnanure, Bealnamulia, Athlone, Co. Roscommon.

135.17 DISPOSAL OF LANDS (ROADS AND TRANSPORTATION)

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

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: 1.2747 ha. (Plot 68) at Taduff, Thomastown, Ballinasloe, Co. Roscommon

The persons from whom the land was acquired: Francis McManus and Anne Igoe

The person to whom the land is to be disposed: Kathleen McManus

Consideration: €1,500

136.17 DISPOSAL OF ROSCOMMON COURTHOUSE

Ms. Majella Hunt, Director of Services informed members that the disposal of Roscommon Courthouse was

part of the overall project to develop Áras an Chontae. In compliance with the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform's "Protocol on Intra-State transfer of State Property Assets", agreement was reached with the Courts Service for the sale of Roscommon County Council's 56% share of the Courthouse to proceed, subject to approval of the members.

Members noted the following:

- Historic day and welcome the confirmation of the sale that will allow for the continuation of the Courts Service in Roscommon and the modern development of the courts infrastructure.
- Savings in the cost of continuing to maintain the courthouse is welcome.
- What are the plans for the restoration of the photographs of former Cathaoirleach/Lord Mayors and County Managers etc. and their relocation to Áras an Chontae.
- When will the upgrading of the Courthouse take place?

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Cummins

SECONDED by Councillor Leyden

It was **AGREED** that a letter be sent to the Courts Service to ensure that circuit court services are kept within the boundaries of County Roscommon and not amalgamated in the future. The courthouse is a landmark building in the middle of the town and the refurbishment of the building is a priority once the sale has been finalised.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Kilduff

SECONDED by Councillor Naughten

It was **AGREED** that the photographs of past Mayors and Cathaoirleach and County Managers be restored and transferred to Áras an Chontae.

Ms. Hunt responded as follows:

- The sale price agreed was determined by the Valuation Office under the Protocol.
- Closing of sale will take place before the year end but there is no confirmed timescale for refurbishment works.
- All items will be removed from Courthouse. A project is underway with a photographer engaged to upgrade the photographs with a view to hanging them in the Gallery and updating the website.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Cummins

SECONDED by Councillor Byrne

It was **AGREED** that the Council consent to the disposal of property 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 property which the County Council proposes to dispose of:-

The Property: Roscommon Court House, Ardnanagh, Roscommon Town.

The persons from whom the Property was acquired: Unknown

The person to whom the Property is to be disposed: The Courts Service

Area: 0.1025 ha

Consideration: €240,800

137.17 REPORT FROM DIRECTOR OF SERVICES - NATIONAL PLANNING FRAMEWORK - IRELAND 2040

Martin Lydon, A/Director of Services gave a presentation to the members on the Draft National Planning Framework 2040 that was recently published.

- Legislative backing for the document.
- Creation of the Office of Planning Regulation will have an important role
- Link to the National Investment Plan – need to ensure our Development Plan and L.A.P.'s link into this Plan in the future. This will have a big impact on the type of funding that will come into the county in the future including Towns & Villages funding.
- Identification of Metropolitan Areas of Dublin, Cork, Waterford, Limerick and Galway – this is where major investment will be channelled.
- Opportunity to make much more of marine resources and the need to tackle carbon intensity
- Bring brownfield sites back into use.
- Population growth of North, West and Southern Regions to match growth in the five named metropolitan areas. Weakness in growth of North West Region. – 9 counties with a pop increase of 150,000 to 170,000 but 45,000 of this is earmarked for Galway City area. There will be provision for 110,000 jobs.
- 40% of housing to be delivered within the existing cities/towns/villages.
- Definitions of Rural and Urban to be enforced – large towns >10,000. In Roscommon we have no towns of this size so all towns in Roscommon will come under the small town/ village category.
- Must start planning for the doubling of the Over 65 population in the country.
- This document will determine the population in Roscommon up to 2040 and while Roscommon is not named specifically, the document has a strategy of links to areas of major urban centres
- Unsure if Monksland population figures growth belongs to NWRA or Midland as yet. This dictates the level of growth allowed for under the Plan. This could allow Monksland to grow by up to 40% depending on the area it is in.
- Small towns are allowed growth of 15% i.e towns < 10k.
- Between now and 2040 the plan allows for growth of 880 people, however our CSO figures for 2014 – 2020 we included this same projection over only the next 6 years.
- Some good things in plan as there is clear road maps – we need to be ready to apply for grants
- Sustainable rural housing guidelines will remain relevant. There will be an emphasis on tackling vacancy and dereliction.
- Smart growth initiative – what we are doing already but link in future to improve towns.
- There will be decisions to be made in our County Development Plan process regarding zoning.
- Deadline for submission on Draft Plan is 12 noon on 3rd November.

The Chief Executive also addressed the members:

- The Document has significant implications but also includes positive statements
- Reinforces the need to look at vacant properties in the county
- Plan will create difficulties for one off housing.
- Need to comply, and be part of growth framework
- There are contradictions in the plan
- When it is legislatively adopted, it will be referred to in all of our decisions

The members discussed the draft document as follows:

- Encourage everyone to make submission by the deadline of 3rd November
- Increase in stamp duty, vacant site levy all retrograde steps

- Need applications for LIS opened again
- Plan is disaster for rural communities. If there is no designated city adjacent to Roscommon we cannot grow.
- This plan is a stark warning for places like Roscommon as it concentrates on growth of designated cities and jobs will consequently follow there.
- Need for proper broadband, upgraded railways and roads in order to facilitate growth and jobs.
- Vital that Athlone is included as a designated city. Closest regional cities are Galway and Sligo or Letterkenny – these are too far away.
- Need for upgrading of National Primary roads in adjacent to the county
- How futureproof is the plan re implications of Brexit?
- Call on our local TD's to look closely at the Plan and look for more Regional Development – why have they not got more of an input to this plan
- There is no thought put into regional development – there is nothing in this plan for Roscommon or the Midlands.
- All members should make a submission

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Ward
SECONDED by Cllr. Keogh

It was **AGREED** to reject the Draft National Planning Framework Plan 2040 because there is nothing in this plan for County Roscommon.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Fallon
SECONDED by Cllr. Connolly

It was **AGREED** write to all parties in Government and individuals and all parties supporting the Government, that they would instruct their Ministers and their Deputies, that in the interest of balanced Regional development, that they would designate Athlone as city status similar to the other five that are designated in the plan as growth centres.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Keogh
SECONDED by Cllr. Ward

It was **AGREED** that a joint submission to the Department from the elected representatives of Roscommon County Council in advance of the deadline, assisted by the executive, to formulate the coordinated and articulated response.

The Chief Executive suggested that the submission made previously by Roscommon Country Council was the perfect solution. He will resubmit the document and insist that the Department look it again and implore that they accept it. He will also submit a summary of the members' response to the draft plan and articulate their feelings on the plan that will be jointly signed by the Chief Executive and Cathaoirleach on behalf of the Members.

138.17 ADOPTION OF ARTS PLAN 2017 - 2021

Cllr. Kathleen Shanagher, Chairperson of the Economic Development and Enterprise Support SPC, outlined the process involved in the creation of the Arts Plan, thanked all who had contributed and was happy to recommend the Plan for the approval of the members.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Shanagher
SECONDED by Councillor Creaton
It was **AGREED** to adopt the Arts Plan 2017 – 2021.

139.17 CORRESPONDENCE

- Letter from Offaly County Council RE: resolution on Social Housing Programme overhaul
- Letter from Minister Denis Naughten TD, Minister for Communications, Climate Action and Environment regarding resolution from Members on engaging mobile phone companies to put proposal in place to encourage use of mobile phones by older people.
- Letter from Minister Shane Ross TD, Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport regarding resolution from Members calling on TII to amend its approach to meeting with the Municipal Districts.
- Letter from Leitrim County Council RE: resolution to review terms on conditions of Housing Grant Scheme.
- Letter from Leitrim County Council RE: resolution banning the use of glyphosate weed killer in all public areas.
- Letter of acknowledgement from Minister Richard Bruton TD regarding resolution from members on admission rule change for Catholic run schools.
- Letter from Office of the Taoiseach regarding the resolution passed by members on the Early Years Sector.
- Letter of acknowledgement from Dept of Justice and Equality regarding the selection process for recruitment and graduation to An Garda Síochána.
- Letter of acknowledgement from Dr Zappone TD, Minister for children and Youth Affairs regarding resolution from members on the Early Years Sector.
- Letter from Limerick City and County Council RE resolution to put in place one Agency with full responsibility for the maintenance of all our rivers and streams.
- Letter from TII regarding a meeting with Roscommon County Council.
- Letter of acknowledgement from John Paul Phelan, TD, Minister of State for Local Government and Electoral Reform regarding Athlone Boundary Committee Report.
- Letter from Anne O'Connor, HSE National Director of Mental Health regarding resolution from members requesting a meeting.

140.17 ADOPTION OF HERITAGE PLAN 2017-2021

Cllr. Kathleen Shanagher, Chairperson of the Economic Development and Enterprise Support SPC, outlined the process involved in the creation of the Heritage Plan. She referred to the annual work programs, the strategic goals and the local communities. She thanked all who had contributed to the Plan and was happy to recommend it for the approval of the members.

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

It was **AGREED** to adopt the Heritage Plan 2017 – 2021.

141.17 REVISION OF TAKE IN CHARGE OF HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS POLICY

Cllr Paschal Fitzmaurice, Chairperson Planning SPC presented to the members a Revision of the “Take in Charge Policy for Housing Developments Policy” as was adopted by the Planning Strategic Policy Committee on 6th October:

That the requirement that an application by house owners to have a housing development taken in charge by Roscommon County Council must be accompanied by either:

- (a) A copy folio (including map) of each property whose owner is requesting the taking in charge of the development or
- (b) Local Property Tax Bill together with a copy of planning map in respect of each property whose owner is requesting the taking in charge of the development

be removed from Roscommon County Councils Take in Charge of Housing Development’s Policy (October 2016 Revision).

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Fitzmaurice

SECONDED by Cllr. Naughten

It was **AGREED** to adopt the Take in Charge Policy as recommended by the Planning Strategic Policy Committee.

Cllr. Keogh stated that there would still be difficulties for estates which are predominately rented as it is often difficult to get owner occupiers to sign letters when they live elsewhere.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Keogh

SECONDED by Cllr. Dineen

It was **AGREED** that a letter to Minister requesting that he re-examine the requirement that a Take in Charge application is required to be submitted by the owner of the estate and not the occupiers.

142.17 REPORT FROM HEAD OF ROADS AND INFRASTRUCTURE - VERGE TRIMMING AND HEDGECUTTING

Mr. Eugene Dwyer, Head of Roads and Infrastructure gave a presentation to the members in relation to Verge Trimming and Hedgecutting:

- Statutory obligations on the Local Authority (verges), owner of lands (hedges) and issuing of notices and appeals process.
- It is the practice of Roscommon County Council to cut the verges and breast the hedges
- Japanese Knotweed is a difficulty as it is illegal to cut it thereby encouraging its spread– currently a 3 year plan to spray on secondary and national roads
- The Council have four tractors and flail cutters and hire in up to six in a year. Have invested €172k since 2015 and current assets worth €272k. Expected to have spent in excess of €300k by end of 2017.
- Outlined the current operations on hedgecutting in other counties including a Pilot Scheme in Clare and Leitrim that funds €50 per km to community to cut hedges with a minimum number of km.

- Recommendations of Senior Engineer are to roll out a Pilot Scheme similar to Leitrim and Clare, start issuing notices to landowners and hedge trimming on regional and local roads and on bends.

The report was welcomed and the following debated:

- The provision of €300,000 in 2018 would solve the problem and Pilot Community Schemes are the way forward.
- Refer this matter to the Roads SCP for look at this for 2018 and plan work
- If vegetation is outside the boundary it is the Local Authority who are responsible and not the landowner
- Clarification on how many notices were issued
- Verge trimming at the junctions should be a priority.
- What is the breakdown of costs per KM?
- Japanese Knotweed – the current programme includes spraying outside hedges only – is it possible to write to all landowners who have a problem explaining what needs to be done to tackle the problem. Not effective if no spraying taking place inside verge.
- Write to landowners who have a responsibility for trees overhanging and carry out a survey of all trees to remove dangerous ones as a matter of urgency.
- Difficulty in finding owners to issue notices to.
- What is the position regarding insurance and traffic management plans for contractors? This could work similarly to how group water scheme road opening licence
- Who would monitor work done by private contractors?
- A lot of briars and trees growing over the lands onto road ways and the Roads Acts empower the Local Authority to enter lands to carry out works to remedy this.

The Chief Executive replied to the matters as follows:

The Members function is related directly to the budget but the operational aspect is the responsibility of the executive including Health and Safety and Risk Management. Will take on board the introduction of community schemes but there has not been a great take up in the counties that have such schemes provided. The Council have over €270k worth of machines and a dedicated workforce who are very au fait with the Health and Safety requirements and also there are areas of the county that would be unable to organise themselves in terms of such a scheme. Accept that there are other ways of doing this work and will examine this and reverting to the SPC is a good idea. Perhaps members could consider an amount of €10,000 budget per M.D. out of the €300,000 allocation to put aside for a community based scheme. We will not be privatising the work as we have a dedicated staff and need to ensure the work is carried out everywhere. The CE assured members he will certainly take on board all of the matters outlined by the members today and is willing to look at the privatisation of works on National Primary Routes, the Pilot Community Schemes and use the resources we have currently to try to catch up and to make sure all our hedgecutters are employed all the time.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Byrne
SECONDED by Cllr. Mulligan

It was **AGREED** that Verge trimming and Hedgecutting be included as a matter for discussion by the Economic Development and Enterprise Support (including Roads and Culture) S.P.C.

Mr. Eugene Dwyer responded to the queries raised:

- The Municipal Districts will have to encourage participation in the Pilot Community Scheme
- The NRDO in Roscommon have agreed to write to the landowners to avail of the spraying for Japanese Knotweed at their own cost when it is being done on the verge of their property
- Insurances can be dealt with similar to GWS insurances
- His preference is to develop a Policy on Verge trimming and Hedgecutting and get better value for money.
- Only a very small number of notices have been issued as we currently do not have the staff or expertise to determine dangerous trees.
- The IFA have a role to play in encouraging landowners to avail of any scheme and the landowners themselves also have a big responsibility.
- The budget from the General Municipal Allocation can be revisited at any time if the need arises.

143.17 CIVIC RECEPTIONS

The Meetings Administrator notified Members a number of weeks ago that the Civic Reception will be held on 17th November 2017. In view of the fact that no Municipal District Meetings will be held in advance of this date, Members were requested to submit additional nominations for approval.

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

It was **AGREED** that Roscommon County Council honour at the next Civic Reception, Adam Donovan for his outstanding achievements winning five National Titles in Rowing including All Ireland School's Championships and All Ireland National Championship in Single Scull.

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

It was **AGREED** that Roscommon County Council honour at the next Civic Reception Elphin CCÉ Members, Breda Shannon, Ellen Tiernan, Emily Keane and Celine Shannon who won All Ireland Medals at Fleadh Cheoil na hEireann Inis 2017 in Grúpaí Ceoil as part of the Fred Finn Grúpa Ceoil, Sligeach.

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

It was **AGREED** that Roscommon County Council honour at the next Civic Reception Elphin CCÉ Member Emma Benson who won an All Ireland Medal at Fleadh Cheoil na hEireann Inis 2017 in Harp Slow Airs.

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

It was **AGREED** that Roscommon County Council honour at the next Civic Reception Ballinasloe CCÉ Member Padhraigh O hAnracháin who won an All Ireland Medal at Fleadh Cheoil na hEireann Inis 2017 in Mouth Organ.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Fitzmaurice

SECONDED by Councillor Shanagher

It was **AGREED** that Roscommon County Council honour at the next Civic Reception Kiltoom Cam 2017 Community Games Gold Medal Winners in the Indoor Soccer U10 Girls. Aleesha Joyce whyte, Aoife Minnock, Roisin O'Donovan, Lucy Shieffield, Aoife Walsh, Ciara Walsh, Lauren Walsh, Alison Nugent.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Fitzmaurice

SECONDED by Councillor Shanagher

It was **AGREED** that Roscommon County Council honour at the next Civic Reception Kiltoom/Cam 2017 Community Games Gold Medal Winner Josh Dowling in the U12 & 6 Boys Handwriting.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Fitzmaurice

SECONDED by Councillor Shanagher

It was **AGREED** that Roscommon County Council honour at the next Civic Reception 2017 Community Games Gold Medal Winner Jessica Gannon in the Girls 13-14 50 SC Meter Butterfly Swimming.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Fitzmaurice

SECONDED by Councillor Shanagher

It was **AGREED** that Roscommon County Council honour at the next Civic Reception 2017 Community Games Gold Medal Winner Scot Duda in the Boys 6-89 25 SC Meter Freestyle Swimming.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Fitzmaurice

SECONDED by Councillor Shanagher

It was **AGREED** that Roscommon County Council honour at the next Civic Reception Keisha Carty, Lanesboro Karate club and Ireland on winning a bronze medal in Karate World Championships.

144.17 NOTICE OF MOTION

Safety Measures at Schools

Notice of Motion from Councillor Fitzmaurice - 17/17

"I am calling on Roscommon County Council to paint line marking with 'slow school ahead' and children yellow emblem on the public road at entrance points at playschools and national schools where no warning flashing lights are in place."

The meetings administrator read out the following Reply:

Roscommon County Council received €406,500 CLÁR funding for safety measures at schools in 2017. If funding is received the programme will be continued in 2018. The provision of signage and road markings at schools and public playschools can be considered for funding by the Municipal Districts in the 2018 budgets.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr Fitzmaurice

SECONDED by Cllr. Leyden

It was **AGREED** to send a letter to the Department requesting that playschools be included in the CLAR funding allocation for proposed road safety works in 2018

Home Help Care

Notice of Motion from Councillor Ward - 18/17

"I am calling on the Minister for Health Mr Simon Harris T.D. and the Government to bring forward legislation in the Dail, to make it a Statutory entitlement that persons who qualify for Home Help Hours and Home Care Packages must be immediately provided for by the Health Services Executive."

The meetings administrator read out the following Reply:

This motion requires a resolution of the Council.

Cllr. Ward stated that he has raised this issue on many occasions at the Health forum and outlined the many instances where people are not receiving what they are entitled to.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Ward

SECONDED by Cllr. Kilduff

And **AGREED** that Roscommon County Council write to the Minister for Health Mr Simon Harris T.D. and the Government and request that they bring forward legislation in the Dail, to make it a Statutory entitlement that persons who qualify for Home Help Hours and Home Care Packages must be immediately provided for by the Health Services Executive."

This motion to be circulated to all Local Authorities.

145.17 COUNCILLORS CONFERENCES - PAYMENT/ATTENDANCE

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Ward

SECONDED by Councillor Dineen

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

146.17 VOTES OF CONGRATULATIONS AND SYMPATHY

Votes of sympathy were extended to:

- The Callaghan family, Drinane, Strokestown, Co. Roscommon on the death of Gerry Callaghan.

147.17 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Athlone IT

Cllr. Shanagher congratulated Athlone IT on being awarded the Sunday Times Institute of Technology of the Year Award 2018. She said AIT's strength comes from identifying areas of skills shortage and working with businesses to improve links between enterprise and academia. Cllr. Shanagher also acknowledged the good working relationship between Roscommon County Council and Athlone IT and said we are very fortunate to have a College, Lectures and Students of this caliber on our doorstep.

The Cathaoirleach also welcomed the announcement of a capital funding for AIT from the Department of

Education and Skills for a new STEM building which will create additional capacity for up to 1,000 additional STEM students to provide for increase student demand on STEM programmes in pharma, biopharma, microbiology, sport and health science and design, innovation and technology.

Roscommon University Hospital - Theatre

Cllr Fallon raised the issue that up to two months ago there were two theatres performing knee and hip operations for the entire region at Merlin Park Galway. Those two theatres have been condemned and closed down resulting in no operations taking place. Up to 70 operations were being carried out on a weekly basis now resulting in a huge backlog. Cllr Fallon was advised that two temporary mobile units will be in place in 2018, meaning there will be 1,000 cases backed up. As a matter of urgency, Cllr Fallon asked that we write to HSE requesting an update.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Fallon

SECONDED by Councillor Ward

It was **AGREED** to write to HSE and Minister for Health Simon Harris requesting an immediate update on the earliest possible opening of the two units in Merlin Park Hospital.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be on Monday, 27th November, 2017.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

The foregoing Minutes are
Confirmed and Signed:



Meetings Administrator

Cathaoirleach

Countersigned