

**MINUTES OF MONTHLY MEETING OF ROSCOMMON COUNTY COUNCIL
IN COUNCIL CHAMBER, ÁRAS AN CHONTAE, ROSCOMMON
ON MONDAY, 28TH JANUARY, 2019 AT 2.15 PM.**

PRESENT: Councillor Ivan Connaughton **PRESIDED**

MEMBERS: Cllr O. Leyden, Cllr R. Doherty, Cllr T. Ward, Cllr N. Dineen, Cllr V. Byrne, 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, Cllr K. Shanagher and Cllr L. Callaghan.

OFFICIALS: Majella Hunt, Director of Services
Martin Lydon, Director of Services
Shane Tiernan, Director of Services
Patricia Bohan, Meetings Administrator
Michelle Carney, Assistant Staff Officer
Patricia Bohan, Meetings Administrator

Apologies:

In the absence of the Chief Executive, Mr. Martin Lydon is Deputy Chief Executive today at the meeting.

1.19 ADOPTION OF MINUTES

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Cummins

SECONDED by Councillor Doherty

It was **AGREED** to adopt the Minutes of the Plenary Meeting held on 17.12.2018

2.19 MATTERS ARISING

Cllr. Kilduff stated that he wanted it recorded that in advance of his visit last month, Minister Kevin Boxer Moran had informed the executive and Deputy Naughten of his visit to the county and this should have then been advised to the Members. Cllr. Ward asked that in future, when a Minister visits the county, all the Members should be notified.

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

The Members noted the Management Report for Quarter 4 2018

4.19 SECTION 85 AGREEMENT WITH LEITRIM COUNTY COUNCIL IN RESPECT OF THE CARRICK ON SHANNON FLOOD RELIEF SCHEME

The Chief Executives Report states that the Office of Public Works has approved funding for the Carrick-on Shannon Flood Relief Scheme with Leitrim County Council as the Lead Authority. The project arose from the publication of the Flood Risk Management Plans in 2018 and the project is due to commence in 2019, subject to funding.

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

It was **AGREED** that Roscommon County Council enter into a Section 85 agreement with Leitrim County Council for the Carrick on Shannon Flood Relief Scheme.

5.19 PRESENTATION ON SOCIAL CAR SCHEME - MS. CAMILLA KELLY

The Cathaoirleach welcomed Camilla Kelly Manager of the Sligo Leitrim Roscommon Rural Transport Co also known as Local Link and based in Carrick on Shannon. Ms. Kelly thanked the Council for the opportunity to make a presentation on Local Link, the rural transport service that was established under the remit of the National Transport Authority in January 2015.

- Local Link provides a quality nationwide community based transport system in Rural Ireland which responds to Local need.
- A voluntary board oversees the delivery of the service with community directors from the three respective counties, Roscommon RICC and Leitrim LDC, Waterways Ireland, Tourism Development and ETB.
- There is a strategic focus to address transport deficits and facilitates people to make onward connections via National rail and Bus and a social inclusion focus.
- In Roscommon, there are 15 weekly demand responsive house to house transport services enabling cross connectivity from isolated townlands to local villages and towns; 7 dedicated to active age and social day care centres; 7 national schools in Mid and North Roscommon providing connectivity to pre and after school services; Castlerea Round Town Daily bus service; hail & ride between Castlerea and Roscommon; Daily service Boyle to Roscommon and Arigna to Boyle.
- Volunteer Community Car Scheme has five registered drivers in Athleague, Ballydangan, Roscommon, Castlerea and Ballaghaderreen. Local Link defray fuel costs. The scheme is for people in isolated circumstances with no access to a car and passengers agree and pay a voluntary contribution. In special circumstances a car is provided to UCHG with 50% contribution expected. 424 trips were supported in 2018.
- The Boyle to Roscommon service facilitates access to Roscommon Hospital and clinic services and free travel pass is accepted on all Local Link Services.
- Local link work collaboratively with key visitor attractions and waterways Ireland and Hidden Heartlands to promote tourism.

The members welcomed the presentation and addressed the following queries:

- There is potential in South Roscommon for Local link as there is currently only one bus service in a fast growing area. There is a demand in the Monksland Curraghboy and Kiltoom area and Local Link should consider this area to develop a service. The Clonown service is under the auspices of Westmeath area.
- The service in Castlerea is working well however it would be desirable to extend this from Ballintubber/Lisalway areas to Castlerea on a Friday.
- What analysis has been carried out in other rural areas?
- Is a Roscommon around town route feasible?

- Does the social car scheme only facilitate medical appointments? Has there been a trial on facilitating rural pubs?
- How are drivers recruited?
- There was a commitment for a link from Ballinasloe to Athlone – what is the update?
- Can Ballyfarnon and Cootehall be facilitated in the Arigna, Boyle to Carrick scheme.,?
- Are there any plans for night time services?

Ms Kelly addressed questions as follows and encouraged the members to contact her directly with specific queries:

- The numbers using Local link have increase from 15,000 passengers in 2015 to an estimated 130,000 in 2018.
- Historically the Longford Westmeath Local link cover the South Roscommon area. A tender process is currently underway and details of the provider for this area will be known in March/April
- It would be desirable to have many more volunteers for the social car scheme but it is difficult to retain their services.
- A pilot scheme was undertaken last winter regarding night services and its recommendations are awaited. The expectations vis a vis the resources may be hard to match.

6.19 PART 15 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001 - ETHICS REGISTER

The Meetings Administrator informed the members that in accordance with Section 171 of the Local Government Act 2001 they are obliged to prepare and furnish an annual written declaration within the meaning of S175 of the Act. The form is to be completed and returned to the Ethics Registrar no later than the last day of February 2019. And failure to do so is an offence under the Act. Furthermore the Donation Statement required under the Local Elections (Disclosure of Donation and Expenditure Act 1999 is required to be returned by 31st January 2019 to the Ethics Registrar.

7.19 CORRESPONDENCE

- Letter dated 17th December, 2018 from Donegal County Council proposing that Donegal County Council support the demands from the public for an Irish Language Act in the Six Counties and if the motion is carried, that this information is circulated to all the political parties in the Six Counties and to all the City and County Councils throughout the country.
- Letter dated 18th December, 2018 from Monaghan County Council calling on the Minister for Health to request the Health Service Executive to include the Medical Report, required by a person over 70 applying for a driving licence for a car, to be included in the Medical Card services. Currently if you are under 70 the fee for a 10 year licence is €55. It is free for over 70's, but a Medical Report is required. This can cost €40 - €60 for a visit to your G.P. If the person over 70 has an illness that limits their licence to 1 year, that means a visit to the G.P. each year for 10 years, costing nearly 10 times the fee to an under 70's person.
- Letter dated 31st December, 2018 from Minister for Health, Mr. Simon Harris T.D. concerning the Central Sterile Services Department in Roscommon University Hospital.

- Acknowledgement Email dated 3rd January, 2019 from Minister for Health Mr. Simon Harris T.D. concerning Home Help Hours and Home Care Packages.
- Acknowledgement Email dated 2nd January, 2019 from Deputy Eugene Murphy's office concerning Home Help Hours and Home Care Packages.
- Letter dated 2nd January, 2019 from Limerick City and County Council calling on the Taoiseach, Leo Varadkar and Micheál Martin, to consider the position of Minister Shane Ross following his proposals to increase fines and penalty points for speeding and the non-carrying of a drivers licence.
- Acknowledgement Email dated 4th January, 2019 from TII in relation to the N60 between Ballymoe and Harristown.
- Acknowledgement Email dated 8th January, 2019 from Minister Ross in relation to the N60 between Ballymoe and Harristown.
- Letter dated 15th January, 2019 from Sligo County Council regarding a resolution to recognise the Irish Nurses and Midwives Organisation (INMO), which represents 40,000 nursing professionals, have overwhelmingly balloted to strike in light of rejecting pay proposals brought forward by the Government in Budget 2019; and that that Government has failed to address matters such as pay quality and the over reliance of hiring of agency nurses; Sligo County Council affirms its support of nurses and midwives and that we support them in their demand for a better health service which treats them as essential skilled workers with dignity and value.
- Letter dated 22nd January, 2019 from Leitrim County Council asking support from elected members to call on the Minister for Health, Simon Harris T.D. and the Minister for Education and Skills, Joe McHugh, T.D. to work together in providing Speech Therapy in our Primary and Post Primary Schools for children with special needs.
- Email dated 23rd January, 2019 from Minister Shane Ross, Minister for Transport Tourism and Sport advising Roscommon County Council that our correspondence was forwarded to TII for response.

8.19 NOTICE OF MOTION 01/19: CHANGING PLACES CAMPAIGN - CLLR. ORLA LEYDEN

The Meetings Administrator read the following reply:

The 'Changing Places Ireland' Campaign was set up by Inclusion Ireland in 2014 to lobby for the introduction of fully accessible toilets public places such as shopping centres, libraries and sporting arenas across the country.

Roscommon County Council's statutory Building Control functions include technical assessment of Disability Access Cert applications for design compliance with Part M of the Building Regulations in all new builds where such regulations apply. The additional design requirements of the 'Changing Places Ireland' campaign are outside the minimum legal requirement.

Roscommon County Council as a public body is legally bound to comply with the requirements of the Disability Act. There has been considerable investment in providing improved disability access in public buildings in recent years including Áras an Chontae and the refurbished Arts Centre and the Council will continue to comply in making our buildings as accessible as possible for all users and compliant with the Part M building regulations.

Cllr. Leyden welcomed representatives from the Brothers of Charity who are an advocate group for the changing places campaign and part of a regional campaign to encourage local authorities and business owners to support the initiative. In welcoming the reply she said that this campaign is about challenging the

status quo and asking Roscommon County Council to take a lead role by including the 'Changing Places' facilities in such public places as Lough Key. These facilities are fully accessible and include additional equipment which offer extra support to people with a range of disabilities so they can change with dignity and respect and standard disabled changing facilities did not meet the needs of all. Plans for social days out for those with disabilities are dependent on the availability of appropriate facilities. Such facilities are available in the new Centre Parcs development.

Members supported the motion and raised the following points:

- These facilities should be provided in every town to encourage disability groups or individuals to visit public spaces
- The Council should write to the Minister to seek grant funding for community groups to install such facilities.
- Changing Place facilities should be in all shopping centres
- This should be included the planning guidelines for all new buildings and community facilities
- People with disabilities entitled to the same facilities.
- The cost of providing such facilities in a premises is estimated at €16,000

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Leyden

SECONDED by Cllr. Connolly

It was **AGREED** that Roscommon County Council supports the development of "Changing Places" facilities in private and public enterprises in the County, including it's own facilities to support the full participation of people with disabilities. Changing places facilities are fully accessible and include additional equipment which offer extra support to people with a range of disabilities so that they can avail of changing with dignity and respect.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Keogh

SECONDED by Cllr. Leyden

It was **AGREED** to write to the Minister of Housing, Planning and Local Government and circulate this motion to all Local Authorities.

9.19 NOTICE OF MOTION 02/19 - CLLR. TONY WARD 'ONE HOME ONE VISIT' POLICY

Notice of Motion from Cllr. Tony Ward

"I am calling on the Minister for Communications, Climate Action and Environment Mr. Richard Bruton T.D., and Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland to change the Policy of One Home One Visit. I am proposing that these older houses which received minimal energy efficient works: be allowed to re-apply for further works to be carried out which are now available; thereby bypassing the One Home One Visit policy which Departments / Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland has in place"

Cllr. Ward outlined the anomaly that homes that applied for and were inspected for SEAI grants ten years ago are not eligible for a second visit to assess and avail of new initiatives as they have already been inspected.

He was supported by other members who agreed that work done ten years ago bears no relation to current upgrades and in light of reducing our carbon footprint, this motion should be forwarded for action to the relevant Authorities as soon possible.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Ward

SECONDED by Cllr. Dineen

It was **AGREED** to write to the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment and the SEAI to change the Policy of the 'One Home One Visit' and that older houses which received minimal energy efficient works be allowed to re-apply for further works to be carried out which are now available. This notice of motion should be circulated to all local authorities.

On The **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Callaghan

SECONDED by Cllr. Ward

It was **AGREED** to invite a representative of the SEAI to make a presentation to a Plenary Meeting of Roscommon County Council.

10.19 COUNCILLORS CONFERENCES - PAYMENT/ATTENDANCE

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Keogh

SECONDED by Cllr. Ward

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

11.19 VOTES OF CONGRATULATIONS AND SYMPATHY

Cllr. Valerie Byrne wished the Civil Defence Officer Mr. Ray Dunne well in his forthcoming retirement after 17 years in his position with Roscommon County Council. The Cathaoirleach, on behalf of the members complimented Ray on the work done in the community by the volunteers of the Civil defence under his guidance.

12.19 DATES OF PLENARY MEETINGS

The Meetings Administrator informed the members that at the Corporate Policy Group meeting it was agreed that the April meeting, scheduled to take place on Easter Monday 22nd April should be rescheduled to Monday 29th April. In addition, as the Local Election date is 24th May, there will be no plenary meeting in May, the AGM of the new Council will take place on Friday 7th June and the June Plenary meeting will take place on Monday 24th June.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr Ward

SECONDED by Cllr. Fallon

It was **AGREED** that the April Plenary meeting take place on 29th April, the AGM on 7th June and the June Plenary meeting on 24th June. There will be no meeting in May.

13.19 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Cathaoirleach indicated that Cllr's Shanagher, Keogh, Fitzmaurice and Leyden had asked to speak on specific matters.

13.19a AN CHISTIN - THE FOOD HUB, CASTLEREA

Cllr. Shanagher attended the graduation of eight first year graduate chefs from The Hub (An Chistin) in

Castlerea. This facility was opened in 2015 by Enterprise Castlerea with the support of Roscommon County Council. The training for the graduates was provided by GRETB, the premises by Roscommon County Council and the equipment by Harmac. There are currently 15 students training and doing work experience in local food premises. Cllr. Shanagher paid tribute to all involved in the project and highlight the good news story for Castlerea.

Cllr. Fitzmaurice said that this was success story for Castlerea and County Roscommon and Enterprise Castlerea have applied for funding for Phase 2 of the project – the installation of ten food incubation units. Cllr Dineen also paid tribute to the project and its success to date.

13.19b UPGRADE OF N60 - ROSCOMMON TO BALLYMOE

Cllr. Fitzmaurice enquired about the status of funding for improvement works on the National N60 route. Part of the road sunk during the summer and the funding for repair works is the responsibility of the TII and no specific funding was announced in the recent 2019 allocations for this section. An enquiry to the TII was responded to with confirmation that they are aware of this stretch of road and pavement improvements identified as in a 3 year programme and to check with LA as to when works will start. Cllr. Fitzmaurice sought clarification from Director of Services if funding has been allocated to carry out improvements.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Dineen

SECONDED by Cllr. Fitzmaurice

It was **AGREED** that that signs be put up to alert road users, especially lorry drivers of the poor condition of the road.

The Director of Services, Mr. Shane Tiernan confirmed that funding was not allocated in the recent announcement. The Council are putting together a proposal for Category B funding for carry out some repairs and is awaiting a reply from TII. He will liaise with Roads Department regarding the signage.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Fitzmaurice

SECONDED by Cllr. Dineen

It was **AGREED** that the Director of Services write to the TII to clarify the status of funding and works for this stretch of road as a matter of urgency.

13.19c HOUSING RENT

Cllr. Keogh raised the matter of the recent increase in housing rents. While the decision was made in June to lift the cap, the timing of the increase has caused a problem for some families where rents may have as much as doubled. He asked if such a mechanism could have been put in place to pay the increase over a period of time. Acknowledging that tenants' circumstances will have changed following the previous rent review, it is unfair that some tenants are unduly burdened especially at Christmas. This has happened in other counties including Westmeath.

The following points were raised:

- What was the reason for the removal of the cap?
- Many tenants would be better off buying or renting a private house
- Why did the Government remove the cap? Letter to minister

- Income of other members of the household taken into consideration
- We do not want to be forcing people into the private rented sector.
- Can the rent review be carried out annually so the increases can be managed better?

Mr. Martin Lydon replied that the removal of the cap was discussed at the Housing SPC. It is a condition of tenancy that the local authority is informed of change of income and the rent is calculated on the figures provided by the tenant. The maximum of the rent is generally no more than 25% of their take home pay. If the members would like a report on the matter, it can be provided and it's important to remember that social housing is provided for a sector of society cannot afford to provide other housing. It is also noted that there has been an increase in tenant purchase scheme applications since the review.

13.19d HEALTH SERVICES

Cllr. Leyden highlighted the publication of the Mental Health Services Report 2018 on the Roscommon Hospital Dept. of Psychiatry. While acknowledging the positive news with installation of sensory garden and relaxation room, of concern is the high risk due to the lack of planned facility maintenance and lack of privacy for patients. She asked the Roscommon County Council members of the HSE Forum to keep the issues on the agenda of forum meetings.

Cllr. Ward, Byrne, Keogh, Dineen, Fitzmaurice, Callaghan, Leyden and the Cathaoirleach expressed concern about the upcoming nurses strike and affirmed their support for front line staff and the work they do. They questioned the use of agency staff at a very high cost throughout the sector and stated the Government must negotiate and not allow this strike to go ahead.

On the proposal of Cllr. Connaughton, the members unanimously agreed the resolution received from Sligo County Council as agreed at their meeting on 14th January affirming its support of nurses and midwives in their demand for a better health service which treats them as essential skilled workers with dignity and value.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be on Monday, 25th February, 2019.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

The foregoing Minutes are
Confirmed and Signed:


Meetings Administrator


Cathaoirleach

Petrizis Bohan
Countersigned