

**MINUTES OF MONTHLY MEETING OF ROSCOMMON COUNTY COUNCIL
IN COUNCIL CHAMBER, ÁRAS AN CHONTAE, ROSCOMMON
ON MONDAY, 24TH JANUARY, 2022 AT 2.15 PM.**

PRESENT: Councillor Joe Murphy, Cathaoirleach 2021/2022 **PRESIDED**

MEMBERS: Cllr L. Fallon, Cllr E. Kelly, Cllr P. Fitzmaurice, Cllr D. Kilduff, Cllr T. Crosby, Cllr M. McDermott, Cllr A. Waldron, Cllr T. Ward, Cllr N. Dineen, Cllr V. Byrne, Cllr J. Cummins, Cllr M. Mulligan, Cllr J. Naughten, Cllr K. Shanagher and Cllr L. Callaghan.

OFFICIALS: Eugene Cummins, Chief Executive
Majella Hunt, Director of Services
Shane Tieman, Director of Services
Caitlín Conneely, A/Director of Services
Sean Mullarkey, Acting Head of Finance
Patricia Bohan, Meetings Administrator
Claudette Collins, Asst. Staff Officer

Apologies: Cllr O. Leyden and Cllr J. Keogh

1.22 DISCLOSURE OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST (SECTION 177 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001 AS AMENDED)

No declarations of interest from the Members.

2.22 ADOPTION OF MINUTES

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Crosby

SECONDED by Cllr. Shanagher

It was **AGREED** to adopt the minutes of the Plenary Meeting of 20.12.2021

3.22 MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

4.22 DISPOSAL OF LANDS - ASSETS

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Shanagher

SECONDED by Councillor Fitzmaurice

It was **AGREED** that the Council consent to the disposal of property pursuant to the provisions of Article 206 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, Section 211 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) and Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001 of particulars of property which it is proposed to dispose of at the location in County Roscommon and to the persons set out in the schedule hereunder. Particulars of the property which the County Council proposes to dispose:

The Property: Sites No 9 & 10 comprising 0.4062ha (1.0037acres) at Ballyboughan Industrial Estate, Ballyboughan Td., Roscommon, Co. Roscommon

The person(s) from whom the land was acquired: Eircom Ltd., Harcourt Centre, 52 Harcourt Street, Dublin 2

The person(s) to whom the land is to be disposed of: Mark Lohan Fitted Furniture Ltd.

The consideration proposed in respect of the disposal: €70,000 plus VAT

5.22 MANAGEMENT REPORT

- Management Report for December 2021 noted.

6.22 PRESENTATION ON DRAFT RIVER BASIN MANAGEMENT PLAN

Mr Gerard Hannon Senior Environmental Executive Technician in the Environment Unit gave a presentation to the Members on the Draft River Basin Management Plan for Ireland 2022-2027:

- A national plan that aims to protect and restore good water quality in our rivers, lakes, estuaries, groundwater, and coastal waters for the benefit health, biodiversity, climate, communities, and jobs.
- The National picture shows just over half (53%) of surface waters are in good or high ecological status
- There are 4,842 water sources measured nationally including rivers, lakes, canals, coastal & transitional waters and groundwater - 1,603 require restoration measures to meet WFD quality, 1,256 are in review and 1,983 categorised as not at risk.
- In Roscommon, Water quality is not improving at a fast enough rate. There have been significant changes in water quality over time (EPA reporting periods).
- Roscommon rivers 'at risk' of not meeting the water quality objectives show pressures on water quality of agriculture, hydromorphology etc.
- The main themes of the plan:
 - Increased national ambition to halt the decline in water quality and reverse the damage.
 - Integrated Catchment Planning – a specific plan put in place for each of the 46 river catchments (hydrometric areas) in the country.
 - Proposed County level implementation plans.
 - Greater coordination and collaboration between State agencies, local authorities, and LAWPRO.
 - Delivering multiple benefits for nature, air quality, climate change, and local communities.
- 12 actions focused on urban wastewater treatment plants and run-off from urban areas including Irish Water Investment, investment in unsewered villages, review of EPA discharge licences and promote sustainable urban wastewater systems nationally and protect bathing waters.
- Key actions focused on Agriculture include:
 - New GAP Regulations to address impacts on water quality
 - Proposals for a stronger and more effective Nitrates Action Programme, with tighter controls on nitrogen inputs,
 - Establishment of a chemical fertiliser register and improved enforcement and compliance of Nitrates Regulations by local authorities
 - CAP strategic plan to be submitted to EU in January 22, aims to deliver and reward positive environmental outcomes
 - Increased focus on sustainability across all advisory services
 - New authorisation system for instream engineering works to strengthen controls on land drainage practices and their enforcement
- Hydromorphology/ Physical alterations include:
 - Comprehensive new legislation and management system being developed:
 - Controlled Activities for the Protection of Waters regime
 - DHLGH to establish a restoration programme to mitigate negative impacts of past construction
 - Implement actions in the Lower Shannon at the hydroelectric scheme in Parteen and Ardnacrusha
- Domestic Wastewater systems:
 - Grants for upgrades to septic tanks – a review of uptake of existing schemes will be undertaken

- National Inspection Plan – local authorities will continue to prioritise inspections in areas of greatest environmental and public health risk
- Key Messages for County Roscommon:
 - Agriculture – poor practices and not necessarily linked to intensive farming; small transgressions can have a large impact on water quality in sensitive environments.
 - Hydromorphology – well intentioned but possibly inappropriate drainage works leading to excessive build-up of sediment.
 - Land-spreading still a concern – promote best practice.
 - Successes – private group water supply and community-based involvement such as the Mid-Roscommon Group scheme.
- Selected Plan Measures include:
 - LAWPRO, in consultation with all stakeholders, will produce templates for the catchment management plans that will be put in place for each of the 46 hydrometric catchments (Rivers Barrow, Nore and Suir in Kilkenny).
 - Each local authority will put in place a County level plan.
 - Carry out a review of Local Authority Resources to put in place appropriate resources to support individual local authorities in fulfilling their role in water quality protection and restoration.
 - The Department, along with the governance tiers, will continually review progress in implementation of measures and the distance to the 2027 target.
 - DHLGH will finalise new water and planning guidance.
 - Focus on nature based solutions
 - Complete a review of the National Inspection Plan (NIP) 2018-2021 to inform the next NIP for the period 2022-2027. Prioritise inspections to areas of greatest environmental and public health risk and secure upgrading works where required.
 - DHLGH will deliver a multi-annual investment programme to provide wastewater infrastructure for un-sewered villages.
 - The Department, together with the Department of Rural and Community Development, will develop and publish in 2024 a Rural Water Services Strategic Plan for the period 2025 to 2050.

The Department will strengthen water protection provisions where necessary in relevant sectoral policies. These include water services policy, spatial planning policy, agricultural policy and aquaculture policy.

LAWPRO – Online Public consultation events - 2nd and 8th March @ 19.30pm

The members welcomed the presentation and the Cathaoirleach noted the importance of good water quality for tourism and fishing and that many rivers are overgrown.

The members discussed the presentation as follows:

- What are the proposals for unsewered villages – septic tanks or treatment plants?
- There are a number of successful group water schemes in the county but poor uptake on group sewerage schemes and is there anything that can be done to encourage houses to join existing schemes?
- It is important that submissions are made to the plan
- There are no grants available for septic tank upgrades unless they are inspected as part of the National Inspection Plan.
- Teagasc need to inform farmers of best practice
- Bord na Mona should be required to remove silt from the River Shannon.
- It is welcomed that there are some measures that are working as the position has stabilised in some areas.
- What are the main problem areas in agriculture as it appears to be a major contributor.

- Lack of drainage is an issue that needs to be addressed – need a National Drainage Scheme.
- There is a lack of a meaningful plan long term for unsewered towns and villages.
- Rivers are an important resource and there appears to be a lack of understanding of where water from land goes.
- Farmers are the custodians of lands and need to be rewarded or incentivised to continue to do this to the best of their ability and clean water and air is needed to produce good quality food – a fundamental change in thinking is required.
- Illegal dumping is an issue and has been a particular problem on shores of Lough Gara– CCTV and drones need to be employed to identify offenders, who are often repeat offenders.
- The statistics for pollution include the latest review done 2013 – 2018 – what is the actual % change?

Mr. Hannon replied to comments as follows:

- Land Use in Roscommon is a predominant factor to be addressed including increased engagement with farmers and appropriate advice on nutrient input and when to landspread (6c soil temperature and not air temp)
- The main issue with septic tanks is failure to empty and lack of maintenance
- Irish water and the Department are currently assessing group sewerage schemes facilitation.
- Pollution mapping is available on the EPA website catchmentmaps.ie
- All queries should be included in a submission on the Plan.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Crosby

SECONDED by Cllr. Byrne

IT was **AGREED** to write to Bord na Mona regarding removing silt in the River Shannon.

7.22 LOCAL ELECTIONS (DISCLOSURE OF DONATIONS & EXPENDITURE) ACT 1999 AS AMENDED

The Meetings Administrator advised the members of the requirements to submit a completed signed Donation Statement on or before 31st January 2022.

8.22 ETHICS FRAMEWORK - PART 15 OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001

The Meetings Administrator advised the Members of the requirements to complete and return an Ethics Declaration on or before 28th February 2022. The return will be online and details will be forwarded in due course.

9.22 CHIEF EXECUTIVE BUSINESS

9.22a LEO JOB CREATION

Director of Services, Ms Majella Hunt informed the members of a recently published report from Department of Trade, Enterprise and Employment on the performance of the Local Enterprise Offices in 2021:

- Net employment gain of 104 jobs in Roscommon
- 167 small businesses are clients of our LEO, employing 900 people
- Roscommon performed in the top six of smaller counties
- 13 companies received microfinance
- There were 30 recipients of online trading vouchers – there has been a significant shift to online

- trading in the past two years due to the pandemic
- Grants were administered for business expansion
- 730 companies received training and 300 mentoring

The Chief Executive noted that it was a great report for Roscommon and thanked the Director and Manager of the LEO Louise Ward and her staff for their success.

The members congratulated the staff of the LEO on the report and the work they carry out for the small businesses for the county. This is a very important office as all businesses need to be supported. Business Adviser Anne Browne was congratulated on her recent retirement.

9.22b ACTIVE TRAVEL GRANT ALLOCATION 2022

Mr. Shane Tiernan, Director of Services advised the members of the recent Active Travel Allocations for County Roscommon for 2022. This will contribute to the development of new and improved walking and cycling infrastructure across the country by 2025 as per the NTA's multi-year draft programme to be published shortly. It will enable more people to walk and cycle in their daily lives, improving the quality of life, the fabric of our urban centres and, in particular, a reduction in carbon emissions as part of the government's Climate Action Plan.

A total of €280m was announced nationally with Roscommon County Council awarded €3.2m (including a rollover of 2021 projects). Some of the schemes will be in collaboration with the Regeneration projects to enhance access. He outlined the projects to be funded and the list will be circulated to the Members.

The Members welcomed the allocations:

- The funding for Bealnamullia and Clonakilla NS projects
- The Director was thanked for the work carried out to extend the footpath from Knockcroghery village to St Dominics GAA club.
- Welcome the announcement for Lecarrow to extend footpath to astroturf facility
- €70k to install footpath on Golf Links Road welcomed.
- Welcome funding for Creagh and South Roscommon projects
- Positive announcement to facilitate four housing estates in Tarmonbarry and the funding to complete works in Rooskey as the work to date has transformed the village.
- The projects in Elphin are welcome and all villages should benefit from this type of project
- Welcome funding for LoughGlynn and Cloonfad. This funding will prove a huge value over the next 50 years.
- Can consideration be given to install footpath from Hannon's Hotel to the Hospital

In reply Mr. Tiernan confirmed it is positive that projects can roll over as there are complexities to some schemes such as part 8's to be completed in relation to such schemes as the Golf links Road project as well as procurement and environmental requirements. The Bealnamullia project is €100k and it will be used for footpaths and other measures that will complement the existing proposed work at the new mini roundabout. There is also an allocation €6.2m for the NTA to undertake projects on national primary and secondary roads (primarily projects on the N5) and funding for greenway projects that are being progressed by the Regeneration Unit.

10.22 NOTICES OF MOTION

10.22a 01.22 UPGRADING OF RAIL SERVICES TO THE WEST - CLLR. MURPHY

"That Roscommon County Council supports the need to improve faster rail services from Sligo to Dublin and Westport to Dublin and to promote a daily train service from Longford to Sligo to benefit the towns

and villages along this route. That Roscommon County Council make a joint submission with Longford, Leitrim, Sligo, Donegal, Mayo and Galway on the Western Rail Corridor and the importance of this infrastructure and the need to reopen freight and rail services to benefit the North West and open these counties to the Western seaboard."

Cllr. Murphy stated he was bringing this notice of motion forward as a result of discussions with Sligo on the matter of improving the rail infrastructure between Dublin and the North West and also to the West. Now that there are third level colleges in Sligo and Athlone with University facilities and we are trying to find more options to climate change and the counties would be hoping to meet with the Minister for Transport in this regard.

The Members supported the motion:

- Need for greener travel and to encourage more use of the services
- Need to develop a local freight hub such as in Lecarrow. Upgrade of the N61 would encourage further development.
- An extension to the Western Rail Corridor is warranted and freight should move from the road to the rail network
- Some stations such as Knockcroghery should be reopened.
- If a rail service is fit for purpose, it needs to facilitate workers travelling to work.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Murphy
SECONDED by Cllr. Kelly

It was **AGREED** to support the need to improve faster rail services from Sligo to Dublin and Westport to Dublin and to promote a daily train service from Longford to Sligo to benefit the towns and villages along this route. That Roscommon County Council make a joint submission with Longford, Leitrim, Sligo, Donegal, Mayo and Galway on the Western Rail Corridor and the importance of this infrastructure and the need to reopen freight and rail services to benefit the North West and open these counties to the Western seaboard

10.22b 02.22 UPGRADE OF ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE BETWEEN CASTLEREA AND TUAM - CLLR. CALLAGHAN

"That Roscommon and Galway Co. Councils begin discussions on upgrading the road infrastructure between Castlerea and Tuam. This route is used on a daily basis by workers, students, patients and much more most of which are from west and north Roscommon and the Tuam MD".

The Meetings Administrator read the following reply:

The Castlerea to Tuam road consists of circa 43km of public road made up of National (N83) and Regional Routes (R360 & R361). In County Roscommon the route consists of circa 8km of Regional Road along the R361. Current Pavement Surface Condition Index (PSCI) for this section of road shows the majority of this regional road having a PSCI in excess of 7 which would suggest the pavement is in good condition. Roscommon County Council will however correspond with Galway County Council to determine their plans in relation to remaining road network to Tuam. Roscommon County Council remain committed to maintaining a high standard of pavement where possible along our Regional Road network.

Cllr. Callaghan thanked the Director of the reply. He stated that road users have to travel very slowly on this road due to its poor condition. However, this road is an important route to Galway city and the most direct from Roscommon. Bus travel along this route is very poor and he would like that discussions with Galway County Council be opened to discuss this route.

Cllrs. Fitzmaurice, Waldron and Dineen spoke in favour of the motion and emphasised how busy the road is.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Callaghan

SECONDED by Cllr. Fitzmaurice

It was **AGREED** that Roscommon and Galway Co. Councils begin discussions on upgrading the road infrastructure between Castlerea and Tuam. This route is used on a daily basis by workers, students, patients and much more most of which are from west and north Roscommon and the Tuam MD.

11.22 QUESTIONS

12.22 01.22 IPB FUNDING AND FOOTPATHS - CLLR. NAUGHTEN

“That Roscommon County Council outline the amount of funding that will be available from IPB in 2022 to upgrade and replace substandard footpaths throughout County Roscommon”

The Meetings Administrator circulated the following reply:

The Roads & Transportation Business Unit of Roscommon County Council, is planning to allocate a sum of circa €250,000 towards the repair of defective footpaths throughout the county on a risk basis in 2022. In addition, we continue to repair and enhance existing footpaths through other sources of funding including Active Travel funding from the National Transport Agency and Ordinary Maintenance and Safety Schemes from both the Department of Transport and Transport Infrastructure Ireland.

Defective Footpaths that are recorded on the Report It system are routed directly to a technical team within the Roads & Transportation Business Unit who call to all locations for risk assessment and prioritisation.

13.22 CORRESPONDENCE

Resolutions from other Local Authorities:

- **16th December, 2021 - Resolution from Donegal County Council**
That Donegal County Council apply to the Department for the restoration of Section 140 Motions to Councils.
- **23rd December, 2021 - Resolution from Louth County Council**
That Louth County Council supports the campaign of Epilepsy Ireland to address long standing issues that continue to impact on people with epilepsy and their families in Ireland today.
- **18th January, 2022 - Resolution from Leitrim County Council**
That Leitrim County Council call on the Minister for Health, Mr. Stephen Donnelly TD, as a matter of urgency, to put measures in place to deal with children who are on long waiting lists and are suffering from Spina Bifida and/or Hydracephalus
- **18th January, 2022 - Resolution from Leitrim County Council**
That Leitrim County Council call on the Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage to significantly increase the grant limits for Community Wastewater Connection Networks in the new Multi Annual Rural Water Programme 2022 – 2024, to allow some of these schemes to go ahead in County Leitrim.

Other Correspondence:

- **20th December, 2021 – Letter from - Transport Infrastructure Ireland Funding Allocations**
2022 National Road Grant Allocations for County Roscommon
- **21st December, 2021 – Letter from Thomas Byrne T.D., Minister for European Affairs.**
Correspondence regarding European Network of EU Councillors

14.22 COUNCILLORS CONFERENCES AND TRAINING

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Shanagher

SECONDED by Cllr. Naughten

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

15.22 VOTES OF CONGRATULATIONS AND SYMPATHY

- The Cathaoirleach stated that he had contacted the Cathaoirleach of Tullamore MD and the Cathaoirleach of Offaly County Council to extend his sympathy on behalf of Roscommon County Council and the people of Roscommon on the recent tragic passing of Aisling Murphy RIP
- The Cathaoirleach extended his sympathy to the family and parishioners of the late Monsignor Travers. RIP

16.22 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

16.22a SUCK VALLEY WAY CONFERENCE - CLLR. WALDRON

Cllr. Waldron announced that The Suck Valley Way Development Committee will be hosting a two-day conference promoting the area in April with keynote speakers to be confirmed. He asked that the AILG be contacted to support the conference which is expected to take place in Roscommon Town. The councillors welcomed the initiative of a conference in Roscommon and supported it.

16.22b HOSPITAL WAITING TIMES FOR CHILDREN WITH SPINA BIFIDA/HYDROCEPHALUS - CLLR. WARD

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Ward

SECONDED by Cllr. Mulligan

It was **AGREED** to request the Government and the Minister for Health Mr. Stephen Donnelly T.D to provide the necessary funding to reduce the waiting time for children with spina bifida and/or hydrocephalus currently requiring urgent orthopaedic intervention and to call on the Minister of Health to ensure that provision of services is made to disabled children within elective hospital setting as well as acute hospital.

NEXT MEETING

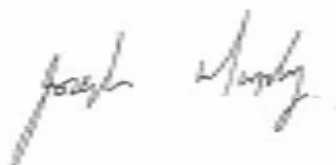
The next meeting will be on Monday, 28th February, 2022.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

The foregoing Minutes are
Confirmed and Signed:



Meetings Administrator



Cathaoirleach



Countersigned