

**MINUTES OF MONTHLY MEETING OF ROSCOMMON COUNTY COUNCIL  
IN COUNCIL CHAMBER, ÁRAS AN CHONTAE, ROSCOMMON  
ON MONDAY, 22nd July, 2024 AT 2.15 pm.**

<b>PRESENT:</b>	Councillor Paschal Fitzmaurice	<b>PRESIDED</b>
<b>MEMBERS:</b>	Cllr L. Cull, Cllr S. Moylan, Cllr M. Frain, Cllr G. Scahill, Cllr L. Brennan, Cllr D. Connolly, Cllr J. Keogh, Cllr L. Fallon, Cllr E. Kelly, Cllr T. Crosby, Cllr T. Ward, Cllr V. Byrne, Cllr J. Naughten and Cllr L. Callaghan.	
<b>OFFICIALS:</b>	Shane Tiernan, Chief Executive Caitlín Conneely, Director of Services Mark Keaveney, Director of Services Fiona Ni Chuinn, A/Director of Services Greg O'Donnell, A/Director of Services Mary Grier, Senior Planner Claudette Collins, Staff Officer Declan Dolan, Senior Executive Officer, Corporate Services Darragh Kelly, Communications Officer	
<b>Apologies:</b>	Cllr M. McDermott, Cllr A. Waldron, Cllr N. Dineen and K Hanley	

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

There were no Disclosures of Conflict of Interest declared by Members.

**2.24 ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Crosby

**SECONDED** by Cllr. Keogh

It was **AGREED** to adopt the minutes of the Plenary Meeting of 27/5/2024

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Callaghan

**SECONDED** by Cllr. Scahill

It was **AGREED** to adopt the minutes of the Annual Meeting of 21/6/2024

**3.24 MATTERS ARISING**

RE: Minutes of Plenary Meeting 27/05/2024 – Purchase of sweeping machines for each Municipal District. The Cathaoirleach Cllr. Fitzmaurice enquired what progress had been made on this matter.

Responding, Acting Director of Services Greg O'Donnell said all Municipal Districts have been met and a list of works required prepared. This is being considered, and a decision is then to be made on whether to purchase or rent machines, based on the functionality of machines for the work required, whilst being efficient with available funding.

**4.24 MANAGEMENT REPORT**

- Management Report for May 2024 noted.
- Management Report for Q2 June 2024 noted.
- Cllr Keogh asked if there were any legal proceedings or planning enforcement matters being taken by the Council.

- Acting Director of Services Greg O'Donnell confirmed there are some legal proceedings ongoing. Mr. O'Donnell will seek clarity on whether court dates have been set.

## 5.24 DISPOSAL OF LANDS - ASSETS

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Callaghan

**SECONDED** by Councillor Keogh

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:** Site comprising 4.495 HA (11.106 acres) at Ballyboughan and Carrownabrickna Td., Roscommon Co. Roscommon

**The person(s) from whom the land was acquired:** Roscommon County Council

**The person(s) to whom the land is to be disposed of:** Roscommon GAA for the provision of a GAA Centre of Excellence

**The consideration proposed in respect of the disposal:** €240,000 ex. VAT

Director of Services Caitlín Conneely informed members of this proposed disposal, including the Chief Executive's report, prepared in accordance with Article 206, Subarticle 1 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, and Section 211 of the Planning and Development Act 2000.

- The lands are required by Roscommon GAA for the development of a Centre of Excellence for Co. Roscommon.
- The project represents an opportunity of significant community and economic value for Co. Roscommon.
- A discount of 10% on the sale price has been applied in view of the community and economic benefit.

Addressing members, the Chief Executive said:

- The disposal of the lands would enable the development of a significant sports amenity for the county, located in Roscommon town, delivering significant social, sporting and recreational benefit.
- Roscommon County Council will also be seeking funding for the further development of Roscommon Sports Centre in Roscommon. These two facilities, if developed, will complement each other.

The Cathaoirleach confirmed his support for the proposal.

Cllr. Naughten said the development had the full backing of the North Western Regional Assembly (NWRA) of which he was a member.

Other matters raised by members:

- Proposal for a review of existing adjacent idle sites and locations where there is or was sporting activity, as to whether use could be made for playgrounds and play areas.
- Consideration is needed to ensure the Council had an adequate bank of land for future development in Roscommon town for expansion of existing businesses, and potential new businesses.

Responding to the matters raised, the Chief Executive Shane Tiernan said all of the Council's land assets were continually under review, and noted that the Council is engaging with community groups on an ongoing basis.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Ward

**SECONDED** by Councillor Naughten

It was **AGREED** a review of existing idle land sites, especially in rural areas, whether use could be made for playgrounds and play areas.

#### **6.24 DISPOSAL OF LANDS - ASSETS**

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Naughten

**SECONDED** by Councillor Keogh

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:** Site comprising 4.52 HA (11.17 acres) at Monksland Td., Athlone Co. Roscommon

**The person(s) from whom the land was acquired:** Roscommon County Council

**The person(s) to whom the land is to be disposed of:** Novo Nordisk

**The terms of agreement:** €1.55m

The Director of Services Caitlín Conneely said the proposed disposal of the lands represented market value which would enable the purchasers expand their existing business. This would support the strategic development of the Monksland area.

Members discussed the matter with the following comments:

- Members welcomed the development, and they agreed it had huge potential for the development of the Monksland area.
- Enquiry if the Council had plans for proposed purchase of additional lands for future development in the Monksland area.
- Enquiry regarding TII and the importance of engagement with them on access and capacity for the M6 motorway, including the link road to the N61, to ensure the infrastructure is in place to support development.

Responding, the Chief Executive said the decision of members would have an important role to play in the development of Monksland. The money from the sale will be focussed on further development in Monksland District Centre. He confirmed that Roscommon County Council is working closely with the management of TII on infrastructure requirements.

Acting Director of Services Greg O'Donnell confirmed that Roscommon County Council is in discussions with TII and Novo Nordisk, and there are plans to have sequential infrastructure improvements in line with development plans as they are delivered.

Members requested that they would be keep informed of developments and engagement with TII.

#### **7.24 DISPOSAL OF LANDS - ASSETS**

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Scahill

**SECONDED** by Councillor Keogh

It was **AGREED** that the Council consent to the disposal of lands 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:** Site comprising 0.0625 HA (0.154 acres) at The Demesne, Castlerea, Co. Roscommon  
**The person(s) from whom the land was acquired:** Roscommon County Council  
**The person(s) to whom the land is to be disposed of:** Trustees of Castlerea Rose Festival  
**The consideration proposed in respect of the disposal:** €1 p.a. for a period of 25 years

Due to conflict of interest, Cathaoirleach Cllr. Fitzmaurice absented himself from the chair for this item. In his absence, the item was chaired by Leas Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Brennan.

#### **8.24 DRAFT STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE SCHEME 2024-2029**

Details of the Draft Strategic Policy Committee (SPC) Scheme 2024-2029 as circulated to members and agreed by the Corporate Policy Group on 16 July was presented by Director of Services, Caitlín Conneely.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Keogh

**SECONDED** by Cllr. Crosby

It was **AGREED** to adopt the Draft Strategic Policy Committee Scheme 2024-2029.

#### **9.24 ADOPTION OF STANDING ORDERS**

Director of Services Caitlín Conneely stated:

- ‘Standing Orders for the Regulation of Business and Proceedings at Meetings of the Council’ have been circulated for adoption. Minor amendments had been made to amalgamate previous documents as follows:
  - Standing Orders
  - Municipal District Standing Orders and
  - Supplementary Standing Orders (adopted 1<sup>st</sup> February 2021)
- It is proposed that the Standing Orders Committee meeting August or September to review the Standing Orders and make any recommended changes if required.
- The members of the Standing Orders Committee are:
  - Cllr. Moylan
  - Cllr. Crosby
  - Cllr. Scahill
  - Cllr. Fitzmaurice
  - Cllr. Naughten
  - Cllr. McDermott

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Keogh

**SECONDED** by Cllr. Naughten

It was **AGREED** to adopt the new Standing Orders, subject to a review by the Standing Orders Committee in due course.

Director of Services Caitlín Conneely confirmed that any requested amendments or changes are to be addressed to the Standing Orders Committee, either directly or enquiries can be sent to the Meetings Administrator on same.

#### **10.24 TWO YEAR PROGRESS REPORT - ROSCOMMON COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2022-2028**

Senior Planner Mary Grier presented a two year progress report on the County Development Plan (CDP), which was adopted by members on 8/3/2022 and became effective on 29/4/2022. This is a legislative requirement of all CDPs.

The report consists of three elements as circulated:

- Main report - a main analysis of progress since the plan's adoption.
- Appendix 1 - summary of progress on 475 policy objectives.
- Appendix 2 - Strategic Environmental Assessment Interim Monitoring Report.

Key Points delivered by Ms. Grier:

- The county's population has increased as recorded by census in 2022, in most of the main settlements.
- A cornerstone of the CDP was derived from evidence based, strategic planning for the future, projecting housing unit demand and residential zoned land requirements as a consequence.
- Residential Permissions between April 2022 and 2024

Residential Unit Type	No of Permissions Granted	% of Residential Related Permissions
Singal Rural Dwellings (Greenfield)	133	39.4%
Single Rural Dwellings (Infill/brownfield)	25	7.4%
Change of Use (Single Rural Dwellings)	6	1.8%
Change of Use (Single Urban Dwellings)	6	1.8%
Single Urban Dwelling (Infill/brownfield)	9	2.7%
Multi-use Residential (Greenfield)	1	0.3%
Multi-use Residential (Infill/brownfield)	13	3.8%
Residential Extensions/ Refurbishments	144	42.7%

- There has been significant uptake on refurbishment of properties due to the new Croí Conaithe Scheme.
- Progress report on the local areas plans currently under consideration:
  - Athlone Joint Urban Area Plan is pre-draft phase post public consultation. Tender is being prepared for consultants.
  - Carrick-on-Shannon Joint Local Area Plan, strategic issues paper has gone to public consultation in Q4 2023. Preparation of draft plan is ongoing.
  - Roscommon Town Local Area Plan, public consultation complete, The Chief Executive report is with MD members.
  - The Boyle Local Area Plan has been paused and is currently at the pre-draft phase.
- People, Places and Housing – significant number of approved applications are for one-off houses.
  - In respect of planning considerations where areas are under urban influence, planning was granted for 67 dwellings or 51% of all applications.
  - In respect of locations considered as rural areas, 66 dwellings or 49% of all applications were granted in the same period.
- Rural Development - there had been a reasonable proportion of planning applications and permissions granted for agricultural led development, with a considerable volume of exempted development applications.

- Economic Development – between the 2016 and 2022 census there has been increases in manufacturing industrial activity by 15%, transport and communications industries by 38%, while there was 24% increase in building and construction projects. Significant new floor space has been granted in Roscommon, largely in Roscommon Town, also in Ballaghaderreen and Hodson Bay.
- Towns and Villages – focus on placemaking and regeneration.
  - Boyle Library/Ballaghaderreen Public Realm/ Strokestown Public Realm/ Castlerea Food Hub/ MIH/ An Rioga/ Roscommon Public Realm.
- Social and Community Facilities – significant growth in applications put forward. 66 permissions granted for sporting facilities, e.g. GAA/Astroturf, walking tracks. 11 permissions granted for Education facilities.

Members broadly welcomed the plan. The following enquiries and points were made:

- An enquiry about the Planning and Development Bill 2023 that states CDPs will cover 10 years, with review every 5 years.
- An enquiry why Castlerea Enterprise Hub was not featured on the Economic Development section of the report.
- It was enquired when the Draft Joint Area Plan for Athlone will be ready.
- It was enquired if there would be any reviews of rural housing design guidelines. There are concerns on requirements of same.
- It was enquired if the zone of urban influence can be reviewed, querying whether it accurately reflects the needs of Roscommon for rural development of housing.
- It was asked that 8km or 10km of radius be considered, to enable persons from that catchment to be granted planning permission to build their own home.
- Concerns were raised on newer house designs, whether they were standing up to the test of time.
- Long-term leasing of lands should be considered as sustainable farming for the purposes of planning requests, highlighting the need for provision of services for agriculture in rural areas.
- Planning criteria in rural areas shouldn't be limited by distances but rather on the place where the applicant was from. This was advised to go to the SPC for consideration.
- Government exemptions for new builds should be extended, to encourage more building.
- It was asked when planning restrictions would be lifted on the route off the old N5 Dublin to Westport Road.
- It was stated that the backlands in towns offered considerable development potential, and many buildings in towns were in a poor state of disrepair.
- The requirement for provision of rural bus stops on the Rural Link bus routes was asked about, to allow more frequent pick up along the route.
- The matter of lack of childcare across the county was also raised.
- The Cathaoirleach advised €500,000 had been allocated by the National Transport Authority (NTA) in respect of bus stops.
- It was enquired what was the standing or authority of old area plans.
- Greater effort was needed to help people acquire planning in rural areas to support farm development, and encourage people to work in the services sector.
- It was enquired if there was any update on pre-planning meetings with applicants.
- An update was requested on the status of the lands that were frozen for development for the proposed Knockcroghery bypass.
- It was asked in reference to unsafe protected structures, whether there is an obligation on the local authority to make the buildings safe, or support the property owners to apply for funding to make building safe.
- It was stated there was very little multi-house development in the county with a consequent need to facilitate planning of once off or two-off housing plans.
- It was requested that the interpretation of intrinsic rural link in the County Development plan be

reconsidered, as the current interpretation is too restrictive. It was requested whether this matter could be addressed in the CPG, as the SPCs are not yet formed, and it will be a number of months before they are in place.

- As part of the discussion, it was proposed by a member that external advice is sought for support in planning considerations.
- Shane Tiernan, Chief Executive responded directly on this matter clarifying that under the Local Government Act it is the duty of the Executive of Roscommon County Council to advise Elected Members in line with the legislative framework and public policy in relation to all policy areas. He outlined that there are qualified planners in the Council who develop the County and Local Development Plans. The Executive is obliged to adhere to planning code and legislation, as well as complying with recommendations from the Office of the Planning Regulator in delivering the best plans for the economic, social and cultural growth of Co. Roscommon. Mr Tiernan stressed there is no requirement for additional external resource in this regard.

Acting Director of Services Greg O'Donnell responded as follows:

- Strict national guidelines are in place regarding rural planning, this must be adhered to. The Council couldn't encourage once-off rural homes, but endeavours to support people with connections to build in their local area.
- The points made by members will be brought forward to the SPC and the review of the CDP.
- The old N5 will revert to local primary road, and once that happens the relevant planning guidelines will apply.
- The Council's objective was to encourage development in the backlands of towns.
- Funding of €500,000 had been received from NTA for bus stops for existing locations.
- It was the desire of the planning office to have pre-planning meetings with applicants, subject to available staffing.
- They would communicate with the Regional Roads Design Office regarding lands frozen along the proposed route for the Knockcroghery bypass. It is likely this will remain, as there is still potential to deliver this project, although funding not yet secured.
- The management team will review whether that it is possible whether the interpretation of intrinsic rural link be reconsidered, and will revert to the members on same.

Senior Planner, Mary Grier responded as follows:

- The Planning and Development Bill is due to be enacted in Autumn 2024. The review of the current CPD will be in another 2 years. She advised that the Revised National Planning Framework is under consultation, and will likely require variations to the existing CDP.
- Castlerea Enterprise Hub was not mapped as part of the report process as planning had been approved before the period of the CDP.
- The CDP process is currently a 6 year cycle. There is this 2 Year Progress Report, and then review of the plan commences in Year 4. The review process is the start of the development of the new CDP.
- The Athlone Joint Area Plan is at pre-draft stage. A tender has been developed to secure consultants to deliver the plan. Once the tender process is completed, there will be a timeline on development of the draft plan.
- Design guidelines were produced in 2018, this was the first time Roscommon had design guidelines. Design guidelines allow a significant degree of expression depending on landscape.
- Planning in villages is not subject to rural housing policy.
- Zone A and Zone B are accurate, based on National Planning Framework.
- The pre-planning process is currently temporarily paused, due to staffing resources. That is still the current situation. It is expected that pre-planning meetings will resume. On average 210-220 pre-planning meetings are held per annum.
- Following the conclusion of works on the new Ballaghaderreen to Scramoge bypass, the existing N5 will be downgraded, enabling wider planning considerations for applicants.

- Local Area Plans for Castlerea, Ballaghaderreen, Strokestown, Elphin, ceased on the publication of the CDP. Vol II of CPD has settlement plans for these settlements – these are in effect now.
- Work will begin on a new Boyle Area Plan.
- The advice delivered by planning officials in the development of the CDP sets out obligations that have to be complied with. The OPR run training for elected members, and this may be considered. The advice provided is the appropriate advice for members, and the planning section have endeavoured to assist members in that regard.

The Chief Executive stated:

- 88% of all planning applications were approved by the planning section in the first 6 months of 2024 (National Average 87%).
- The number of invalidations is down from 37% to 21% (National Average 18%).
- The planning system in Roscommon is very solid and progressive, in supporting the growth of Roscommon.

It was **PROPOSED** by Cllr. Naughton

**SECONDED** by Cllr. Keogh

and **AGREED** that Roscommon County Council review and consider planning permission is granted to build one-off houses in rural areas within a 10km radius of their place of origin or home. This matter is to be considered in the Planning SPC.

It was **PROPOSED** by Cllr. Fallon

**SECONDED** by Cllr. Keogh

and **AGREED** that it is considered that long-term lease of agricultural land is seen as a commitment to agriculture, in a similar way to 5 years farming is, for the purposes of planning permission. This matter is to be considered in the Planning SPC.

It was **PROPOSED** by Cllr. Crosby

**SECONDED** by Cllr. Moylan

and **AGREED** that a letter is sent to the Minister for Housing to request an extension of at least 2 years, of exemptions on development charges and Irish Water charges for new developments in Co. Roscommon.

#### **11.24 CHIEF EXECUTIVE BUSINESS**

There was no Chief Executive business

#### **12.24 NOTICES OF MOTION**

##### **12.24a COUNCILLOR FITZMAURICE - 14.24 COMMUNICATION BOARDS AT PLAYGROUNDS**

I am calling on Roscommon County Council to fund and install augmentative and alternative communication boards at every community and council playground in County Roscommon.

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

A Communication Board is a type of augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) providing ready access to core and fringe words. The boards are primarily a communications support, with particular benefit to children and adults who are either pre-verbal or non-verbal and/or have communication difficulties.

Communication Boards, which include picture representations of day-to-day words relevant to the setting, help bridge the communication gap and serve to connect people. They also act as a symbol of inclusion for children and their families and benefit everyone involved in the communication transaction.



There are currently 24 playgrounds in County Roscommon of which 16 are Council owned. The Council will seek funding to design and install Communication Boards in all of its playgrounds and will work with community groups to achieve the same outcome in their playgrounds.

Moving the motion, Cllr. Fitzmaurice said he has spoken to the parents of non-verbal children on this issue, allowing the children to communicate with their parents and peers on what activity they want to undertake.

Seconding the motion, Cllr. John Keogh asked what the likely costs were for such information boards. He also stated that the Council should consider installing these in RCC owned and community playgrounds.

Members supported the motion and raised the following:

- The remaining eight community playgrounds should also be given grant assistance for such boards. He said the information boards would also be beneficial for new arrivals and non-nationals.

Responding, Director of Services Mark Keaveney said the cost of installing the information boards would be approximately €3,000 per location. He said it was the Council's intention to cover all playgrounds in the county, subject to engagement with community groups on their playgrounds.

#### **12.24b COUNCILLOR CROSBY - 15.24 ALLOCATION OF GRAVE SPACES**

That Roscommon County Council review the graveyards policy regarding the allocation of grave spaces, as currently graves are only allocated when the applicant is deceased. This policy causes great distress to the families or deceased relative where there is a surviving relative. The current policy also puts the graveyard caretakers around the county in an extremely difficult position trying to defend such policy at a very delicate time to their neighbours and friends. The caretaker's income is a miserable total of €6 per week with no travel expenses this should also be part of the review.

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

The Cemetery Bye-Laws 2020 were adopted by the Elected Members of Roscommon County Council on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2021 after a detailed process of public consultation followed by consideration and recommendation by the Strategic Policy Committee. In accordance with these bye-laws, burial plots shall not be purchased in advance of a bereavement. This clause was also contained in the earlier adopted Cemetery Bye-Laws 2008. Previously where advance purchases took place, this resulted in vacant plots in cemeteries that were never utilised. To ensure consistency of development and the need to conserve space, burial plots are now allocated in a structured way.

A review of the allowance paid to Cemetery Caretakers was carried out in 2021. Six new annual payment bands were identified, and each cemetery was placed in the relevant band based on average burials and cemetery activity. The annual rate of payment for each band is a fractional multiplier linked to a pay scale, and this allows future fairness and adjustment aligned to national pay scale adjustments. The set-up of the bands also allows for future review of cemetery activity and subsequent adjustment into the relevant band.

Moving the motion, Cllr. Crosby said that as an Undertaker, he is aware that some people wish to have their grave space in advance, he argued greater discretion was required for local Cemetery Caretakers

on this matter. He also noted that the current payment to caretakers is low, and this should be reviewed.

Cllr. Keogh seconded the notice of motion.

Members supported the motion.

Responding, Acting Director of Services Greg O'Donnell stated:

- The most recent policy on Graveyards, adopted in March 2021 stated that burial plots could not be purchased in advance, and that 2 could be bought at that time.
- Caretakers should not be left in the difficult position of allocating of burial plots. That is the responsibility of the Council, and bye-laws protect the caretaker.
- The rate of pay for Caretakers is linked to Council pay rates and are index linked, stating rates are appropriate, though some graveyards experiencing little activity.
- Matters can be brought to the SPC for discussion and review.

Responding, Cllr. Crosby agreed that these matters are brought to the SPC.

Chief Executive Shane Tiernan stated:

- He was the Director of Services in 2021 with responsibility for the Cemetery bye-laws as adopted. Previous to 2008 green spaces allocated in graveyards were unused and not maintained.
- The Council owns over 100 cemeteries, with limited resources to maintain them.
- Councillors have requested 2 new graveyards since the new council began.
- The cost to develop and maintain graveyards is considerable, and spaces must be allocated appropriately.
- There is no national funding stream to cover costs of maintenance.
- 2 grave spaces are 3 coffins spots.
- There is an appeals process, individual cases will be considered compassionately.
- The banding system of caretakers pay, brought in in 2021, raised the pay of all caretakers. This is linked to the outdoor workers pay scale.
- Minor reviews can be considered in the SPC.

#### **12.24c COUNCILLOR FRAIN - 16.24 HOUSEHOLD WASTE DISPOSAL**

To call on Roscommon County Council to establish and lead a multi-agency group to address landlords and tenants who fail to adhere to the correct methods of household waste disposal.

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

The Waste Enforcement Regional Lead Authorities (WERLA) are responsible for co-ordinating the waste enforcement actions of Local Authorities, setting priorities and common objectives for waste enforcement, and ensuring consistency of enforcement of waste legislation while leaving local authority personnel as first responders on the ground. Connacht-Ulster WERLA (CUWERLA) currently represent the Local Authority sector on the Connacht Ulster Multi Agency Network which has a coordination role in relation to illegal waste activity in the region.

Locally, Roscommon County Council's Waste and Litter Enforcement Team work in collaboration with

CUWERA, Roscommon County Council Housing Liaison Officer, Roscommon County Council Planning Department, HSE Environmental Health Officer and An Garda Síochána.

Each year Roscommon County Council Waste and Litter Enforcement Team carry out Waste Bye-law surveys to ensure household and commercial premises in the county are disposing of their waste in compliance with the requirements of Roscommon County Council (Segregation, Storage and Presentation of Household and Commercial Waste) Bye-laws, 2019. To comply with the Bye-laws the occupier needs to demonstrate that they have a contract with an authorised waste collector, or demonstrate regular use of an authorised waste facility.

Since the start of 2023 the Waste and Litter Enforcement Team have carried out 814 waste bye-law surveys on households and commercial premises in the county concentrating on the Ballaghaderreen Area.

In 2023 Roscommon County Council produced a booklet "Your Guide to Household Waste Management & Recycling in County Roscommon" funded under the Anti-Dumping Initiative to raise awareness on how households in the county should correctly dispose of their waste. Each year Roscommon County Council also runs a Waste Presentation Bye-Law Awareness campaign on local radio and local media using ADI funding to raise awareness under the Anti-Dumping Initiative.

As the largest landlord in the county, Council tenants enter into a tenancy letting agreement whereby they must keep the premises in a clean, tidy and sanitary condition, and to dispose of rubbish securely in wheelie bins or other suitable waste receptacles; and to remove and properly dispose of unwanted items which are not collected in the normal household waste collection service at an authorised waste collection facility, or to arrange to have such items collected by a person who holds a valid waste collection permit authorising the collection of such waste items.

On behalf of the Director of Services Caitlín Conneely, Corporate Services Senior Executive Officer Declan Dolan stated:

- The onus is on householders to dispose of their waste in a proper manner.
- Householders are obliged to ensure they have evidence of proper disposal.
- The establishment of a new layer of management is unnecessary as the Council already works closely with the relevant stakeholders to address non-compliance in relation to household waste disposal.
- The Council would continue this work alongside public information campaigns to remind householders of their obligations.

Cllr. Frain complemented Roscommon County Council's environment and waste management teams. Cllr. Frain said there was a minority of people who had no regard in complying with the litter by-laws. As a result, hard sanctions are required and asked if the installation of CCTV cameras would assist as a deterrent.

Seconding the motion, Cllr. Keogh said it was difficult to bring prosecutions against offenders. He asked why particular focus on illegal dumping is on the Ballaghaderreen area, as this is a county wide problem.

Members supported the motion.

Responding, Acting Director of Services Greg O'Donnell stated:

- WERLA are progressive, they have maps showing households that don't have a registered bin service, allowing targeted approach to household surveys.
- For van collection services that are dumping, there does need to be a multi-agency approach, and this requires more planning.

- Based on evidence, Ballaghaderreen has a high rate of illegal dumping, and was targeted as a result.
- Overt CCTV is allowed to be used at bottle banks, signs need to be up to state that. The use of covert CCTV is now approved, restrictions are quite onerous with stringent justification on same. There is the opportunity to use this, there is some progress in this area.
- Education will continue regarding general littering.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Frain

**SECONDED** by Cllr. Keogh

It was **AGREED** to write to the Minister for Environment seeking the imposition of tougher and increased new fines to deter illegal dumping.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Frain

**SECONDED** by Cllr. Crosby

It was **AGREED** to circulate this notice of motion to all local authorities seeking support on the imposition of tougher new penalties to deter illegal dumping.

### **13.24 CORRESPONDENCE**

Correspondence was circulated to members in advance of the meeting.

### **14.24 VOTES OF CONGRATULATIONS AND SYMPATHY**

- Cathaoirleach Cllr. Fitzmaurice wished Castlerea boxer Aoife O'Rourke well in the forthcoming Olympic Games in Paris.

### **15.24 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

#### **Match Funding for Projects**

The Cathaoirleach Cllr. Fitzmaurice met the Taoiseach at the Night & Day Festival and raised the issue of local authority match funding requirements for capital projects, and asked for a reduction in requirement for match funding.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Fitzmaurice

**SECONDED** by Cllr. Naughten

It was **AGREED** to send a letter to the Taoiseach calling for a reduction in match funding requirements for major capital projects applied for by Roscommon County Council.

Members supported the proposal:

- It was agreed to circulate letter to all other local authorities in the NWRA region.
- It was enquired if the local authority can look for support of funds from the Western Development

Commission Western Investment fund.

Director of Services Mark Keaveney informed members that on recent schemes, including RRDF, match funding requirement has reduced from 20% to 10% for local authorities in the North West region.

The Chief Executive supported the motion, he stated:

- There is significant commitment of match funding throughout the county, and that is difficult to sustain going forward.
- Projects are expensive, 10% of project cost is going to consultants to get to planning stage.
- The letter should recognise the current reduction for the North West, while explaining that in light of increasing costs and consultancy costs, even 10% is not sustainable going forward for smaller local authorities.

## **Events**

The Cathaoirleach extended complements and thanks to all the people organising the following events and all other events across Co. Roscommon:

- Night and Day Festival
- Connacht Fleadh
- Percy French Festival
- Boyle Arts Festival
- Castlerea Festival
- Ballaghaderreen Festival
- Agricultural Shows

## **Dr. Bridget Lyons Thornton**

Cllr. Crosby raised this in relation to a notice of motion from 2013 to recognise Dr. Bridget Lyons Thornton, which brought about the Civic Memorials Policy, adopted in the May meeting of Roscommon County Council.

It was proposed by Cllr. Crosby to consider naming a roundabout on the new N5 roundabout in her honour, as recognition of her contribution. This was seconded by Cllr. Keogh.

Director of Services, Mark Keaveney welcomed the proposal and stated:

- The proposal would have to come through the new Memorials Policy. A copy will be sent to Cllr. Crosby with an application form. This will then go to the evaluation committee and then to the Council.
- A previous notice of motion called for the erection of a plaque in honour of Ms. Lyons Thornton, which he said, has been approved by the Council's Heritage Officer, subject to proceeding through the policy process.

The Cathaoirleach stated that Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) would have input into the naming of roundabouts.

The Chief Executive confirmed that TII had previously objected to roundabouts being named after public figures.

### **N5 Construction Works**

Whilst confirming their support of the project, members raised the following concerns from residents affected by the construction of the N5 Ballaghaderreen to Scramogue bypass:

- Noise from pile driving and rock blasting
- Deterioration in condition of roads due to works
- Insufficient notice of works
- Excess dirt and dust affecting crops, pets and livestock
- Uncovered lorries removing material from site, spreading dust and dirt
- Dust and dirt on cars and homes

Acting Director of Services Greg O'Donnell responded as follows:

- This can be managed through the MD Co-ordinator and MD meetings.
- The contractor conditions on time of activities can be checked.
- Dust suppression sweepers should be deployed when necessary – this can be checked.
- There is an on-site Project Liaison Officer and through the MD Co-ordinator the local authority will follow-up with the contractor in respect of the concerns raised by members.

### **VAT rate on Hospitality Sector**

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Keogh

**SECONDED** by Cllr. Fitzmaurice

It was **AGREED** to send a letter to the Minister for Finance Jack Chambers and Minister for Tourism Catherine Martin seeking the reintroduction of the 9% VAT rate for the hospitality sector. It was agreed to circulate this letter to all other local authorities.

This was supported by the members.

### **Best Wishes**

- Cllr. Connolly extended best wishes to the Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Fitzmaurice and his wife Ann on recently celebrating their 25<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary.

### **AOB Matters Going Forward**

- Concluding the meeting, the Cathaoirleach advised members to submit items as either a Notice of Motion or to the Municipal District, rather than dealing with a considerable amount of items under AOB.

### ***NEXT MEETING***

**The next meeting will be on Monday, 23rd September, 2024.**

This concluded the business of the meeting.

The foregoing Minutes are  
Confirmed and Signed:



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Meetings Administrator



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Cathaoirleach



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Countersigned