

MINUTES OF MONTHLY Meeting OF ROSCOMMON COUNTY COUNCIL
COUNCIL Chamber, Áras an Chontae, Roscommon
MONDAY, 28TH APRIL, 2025 AT 2.15 pm.

PRESENT: Councillor Paschal Fitzmaurice **PRESIDED**

MEMBERS: Cllr L. Brennan, Cllr V. Byrne, Cllr L. Callaghan, Cllr R. Conboy, Cllr D. Connolly, Cllr T. Crosby, Cllr L. Cull, Cllr N. Dineen, Cllr V. Duffy, Cllr L. Fallon, Cllr M. Frain, Cllr E. Kelly, Cllr J. Keogh, Cllr S. Moylan and Cllr T. Ward.

OFFICIALS: Shane Tiernan, Chief Executive
 Caitlín Conneely, Director of Services
 Chris Flynn, Director of Services
 Mark Keaveney, Director of Services
 Sean Mullarkey, Director of Finance
 Karen Hanley, Meetings Administrator
 Claudette Collins, Staff Officer
 Michaela Fallon, Assistant Staff Officer

Apologies: Cllr M. McDermott.

45.25 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.

46.25 ADOPTION OF MINUTES

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Crosby

SECONDED by Cllr. Fallon

It was **AGREED** to adopt the minutes of the Plenary Meeting of 24.03.2025

47.25 MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

48.25 CO-OPTION OF CASUAL VACANCY

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Callaghan

SECONDED by Cllr. Connolly

It was **AGREED** to fill the casual vacancy in the membership of Roscommon County Council by the co-option of Ruth Conboy, Fine Gael, in accordance with Section 19 of the Local Government Act 2001, following the resignation of Cllr. Gareth Scahill, following his recent appointment as a Senator to Seanad Éireann.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Callaghan

SECONDED by Cllr. Connolly

It was **AGREED** that Cllr. Conboy is nominated to the following SPCs, Economic Development, Enterprise

and Regeneration SPC, and Housing, Integration, Community and Culture SPC.

Cllr. Conboy spoke on her co-option. She stated it was an honour to join Roscommon County Council and thanked everyone for welcoming her. She thanked the Fine Gael party and members for their trust in appointing her. She also expressed thanks to her fellow Elected Members, especially fellow party members, her work colleagues, family, friends and neighbours for their support.

She remembered both John Naughten (RIP) and Anthony Waldron (RIP) and noted their contribution to the county. She congratulated Senator Scahill on his appointment to Seanad Éireann and acknowledged his community work both as a councillor and prior to his election to Roscommon County Council.

Cllr. Conboy mentioned a number of projects that she was keen to get involved in such as the Lough Ree Greenway, road safety issues at Trien junction and establishing safe routes to schools. She also mentioned recent events that she has been a part of, such as the launch of the Roscommon Ploughing Championships and the Castlerea Agriculture Show, the Roscommon Easter Parade and attending a meeting with Minister of State for Local Government and Planning, John Cummins, to whom she conveyed the urgent planning and development challenges that the county faces.

Cllr. Conboy expressed her interest in supporting young people throughout their important milestones and how important it was to inspire them to stay in their local communities in County Roscommon.

Chief Executive Shane Tiernan welcomed Cllr. Conboy on behalf of the management and staff of Roscommon County Council. He noted that it was a great honour to represent the people of County Roscommon and that he looked forward to working with her. Mr. Tiernan also wished every success to Senator Scahill on his recent appointment and noted that it was an honour to represent Roscommon in Seanad Éireann.

Members welcomed Cllr. Conboy:

- Acknowledged the work of her and her family in the community.
- Expressed their delight at welcoming another female member to the Council.
- Looked forward to working with her for the people of Roscommon.

Members also congratulated Senator Scahill on his recent appointment to Seanad Éireann, acknowledged his community advocacy for Roscommon, and welcomed the impact he has had as his role as Senator so far.

49.25 MANAGEMENT REPORT

- Management Report for Quarter 1 - 2025 noted.

Chief Executive Shane Tiernan informed members that the Management Team had recently been restructured following the appointment of Mr. Chris Flynn as Director of Services. He welcomed Mr. Flynn to Roscommon County Council and wished him well in his new role.

Cathaoirleach Cllr. Fitzmaurice also welcomed Mr. Flynn on behalf of the Elected Members.

Mr. Flynn thanked the Chief Executive and the Cathaoirleach for their kind words and said he was delighted to continue the great work being carried out in the organisation.

50.25 DISPOSAL OF LANDS

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Callaghan

SECONDED by Cllr. Byrne

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 0.0175 ha (0.041 acres) at Frenchpark Courthouse Td., Co. Roscommon

The person(s) from whom the land was acquired: N/A

The person(s) to whom the land is to be leased to: Roscommon Integrated Development Co. Ltd. t/a Roscommon LEADER Partnership, The Shambles, Market Street, Ballaghaderreen, Co. Roscommon.

The consideration proposed in respect of the lease: €100 per annum

51.25 CAPITAL ASSISTANCE SCHEME - TUATH HOUSING ASSOCIATION

Director of Services Chris Flynn advised that the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage has approved a budget of €1,515,786 for the construction of 6 new social homes at the Meadows, Longford Lower, Castlerea, Co. Roscommon by Tuath Housing Association for the purpose of assisting the provision of housing accommodation under Section 6 of the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 1992.

The Scheme involves the construction of 6 no. 2-bedroom age-friendly bungalows to be built in 3 semi-detached blocks within the existing The Meadows Estate in Castlerea along with all associated site works of Social Housing accommodation to meet elderly needs.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Connolly

SECONDED by Cllr. Frain

It was **AGREED** to approve the making of a loan of **€1,515,786** to Tuath Housing Association, 33 Lesson Street Lower, Dublin 2 D02 KD68 pursuant to the provisions of Section 6 of the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 1992 and in accordance with the terms of Circular/Memorandum VHU2/02 for the construction of 6 new age-friendly social homes at the Meadows, Longford Lower, Castlerea, Co. Roscommon to meet elderly social housing needs.

52.25 UNAUDITED ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENT 2024 AND APPROVAL OF EXPENDITURE

Director of Finance, Sean Mullarkey gave a detailed account of the report, in particular the Income and Expenditure account and the Transfers between Revenue Account and Capital Account.

Members expressed their views as follows:

- Concerns were expressed that the €266,000 allocated to unfinished estates was not sufficient for

the 70 plus number of unfinished estates, the majority of which, it was noted, are in north Roscommon.

- The UHD team were commended for their work on unfinished estates to date.
- Calls for the Department to supply sufficient funding for the completion of the estates.
- Important to get estates finished and taken in charge as maintenance of estates is often an issue.
- A long-term view is needed on this issue, it is important for estates to be taken in charge, bonds must be considered in most of these estates.
- Calls to increase the funding allocated to unfinished estates and to allocate a sum for critical emergency works within estates.
- Acknowledgement and support for funding assigned to projects such as the Hodson Bay and Lough Key Masterplans.

Director of Finance, Sean Mullarkey acknowledged the Members points regarding increasing the allocation for unfinished estates and allocating a sum to critical emergency works, and noted these are budget considerations for the next Budget Meeting. He thanked the Planning Department for their work in compiling a schedule of estates to be taken in charge and assured the Members that unfinished estates will be an ongoing item for a number of years until they are all finished, and that all the estates were at varying levels of completion.

Cathaoirleach Cllr. Fitzmaurice thanked Director of Finance Sean Mullarkey for the work on the Unaudited Financial Statement and Approval of Expenditure and acknowledged that unfinished estates are a huge issue. He mentioned two issues which have caused particular problems were estates in the past being granted planning permission without adequate paths and boundary walls. He reiterated the need for adequate services and conditions in all estates. He also thanked the taking in charge team for their work.

Chief Executive Shane Tiernan reassured members that unfinished estates remain an area of focus for the Council and referred them to the Management Report which outlined that the Council was active in twelve estates, with nine contractors appointed in this quarter. He hoped that more estates will be taken in charge throughout the year, but some estates will be more difficult than others. He reminded the Members that the Council cannot take roads and lighting in charge until Uisce Éireann agrees to take over the water/wastewater facilities, noting that public health was of the utmost importance.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Keogh

SECONDED by Cllr. Byrne

It was **AGREED** to approve the Unaudited Annual Financial Statement 2024 and Approval of Expenditure, as circulated.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Crosby

SECONDED by Cllr. Byrne

It was **AGREED** to write to the Department of Local Government to highlight that national funding is required to address the challenges posed by unfinished housing estates, to support local authorities in managing and remediating these developments.

53.25 CEMETERY IMPROVEMENT AND MAINTENANCE SCHEME 2025

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Connolly

SECONDED by Cllr. Byrne

It was **AGREED** to approve the Cemetery Maintenance Grant Scheme 2025, as circulated.

The Members discussed the following points:

- The funding allocated was welcomed but it was noted that the amount was not sufficient and should be increased in line to what it was previously, up to €150,000.
- There was widespread appreciation for the cemetery committees, along with the Tidy Town committees throughout the county.
- There was also widespread appreciation for those on social employment schemes who contribute to the work carried out in cemeteries throughout the county.
- It was noted that not all committees received the same amount and yet all were expected to carry out the same work.
- A concern was raised regarding the committees needing their own insurance and the burden it puts on those committees.
- It was queried if cemetery committees could be covered under the insurance pilot scheme for Tidy Town committees which was recently launched.
- The Council staff were thanked for their work since Storm Éowyn, particularly in regards to the damage to cemeteries.
- It was queried what the process was in relation to damage on cemeteries from Storm Éowyn.
- It was queried if insurance cover includes ride on lawnmowers which is a huge expense to committees.

Director of Services, Caitlín Conneely, outlined that the Tidy Town committee insurance scheme is a pilot, over 25 groups have expressed interest in the scheme and while the hope is to expand it, the Council would have to cover the cost. Ms. Conneely added that members of the public could claim any damage to cemeteries from Storm Éowyn to IPB, they would be dealt with on a case-by-case basis and could not guarantee that all claims would be paid. She also clarified that lawnmowers are not covered under the pilot scheme and Tidy Town committees will have to get separate cover for same.

Cathaoirleach Cllr. Fitzmaurice thanked the cemetery committees and Tidy Town committees for their hard work.

Chief Executive Shane Tiernan also thanked the committees and noted their importance. He noted that the insurance scheme with IPB was pilot, and it will be reviewed in due course.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Byrne

SECONDED by Cllr. Fitzmaurice

It was **AGREED** that the pilot insurance scheme for Tidy Town committees should be expanded to include cemetery committees.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Crosby

SECONDED by Cllr. Frain

It was **AGREED** to write to the Minister of Rural Affairs to seek a review of the Community Employment Scheme, to make it more attractive for people to participate in, and to also allow people to participate in the scheme for longer periods of time.

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

It was **AGREED** to follow up with IPB in relation to insurance for lawnmowers for Tidy Town committees.

Cllr. John Keogh advised he would raise the issues discussed including insurance for cemetery committees and insurance for lawnmowers at the IPB AGM this Friday, 2nd May, as Roscommon County Council's representative on the IPB committee.

54.25 HOUSING, INTEGRATION, COMMUNITY, CULTURE SPC CHAIRPERSON

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Duffy
SECONDED by Cllr. Callaghan

It was **AGREED** to appoint Cllr. Dominick Connolly as the Housing, Integration, Community, Culture SPC Chairperson.

55.25 COUNTY ROSCOMMON HERITAGE FORM VACANCY

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

It was **AGREED** to appoint Cllr. Liam Callaghan to the County Roscommon Heritage Form Vacancy.

56.25 GALWAY AND ROSCOMMON EDUCATION AND TRAINING BOARD VACANCY

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

It was **AGREED** to appoint Cllr. Ruth Conboy to the Galway and Roscommon Education and Training Board.

57.25 REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM WEST VACANCY

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

It was **AGREED** to appoint Cllr. Valerie Duffy to the Regional Health Forum West Board.

58.25 ROSCOMMON COMHAIRLE NA NÓG STEERING COMMITTEE VACANCY

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

It was **AGREED** to appoint Cllr. Ruth Conboy to the Roscommon Comhairle na nÓg Steering Committee.

59.25 ROSCOMMON COUNTY COUNCIL AUDIT COMMITTEE VACANCY

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

It was **AGREED** to appoint Cllr. Ruth Conboy to the Roscommon County Council Audit Committee.

60.25 WESTERN INTER-COUNTY RAILWAY COMMITTEE VACANCY

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Duffy

SECONDED by Cllr. Connolly

It was **AGREED** to appoint Cllr. Ruth Conboy to the Western Inter-county Railway Committee.

61.25 STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE VACANCIES

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Connolly

SECONDED by Cllr. Duffy

It was **AGREED** to appoint Cllr. Liam Callaghan to the Standing Orders Committee.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Callaghan

SECONDED by Cllr. Duffy

It was **AGREED** to appoint Cllr. Ruth Conboy to the Standing Orders Committee.

62.25 CORRESPONDENCE

Noted as circulated in advance of the meeting.

63.25 NOTICE OF MOTION

63.25a CLLR. MCDERMOTT - M10:25 SACRED HEART HOSPITAL

Due to the absence of Cllr. McDermott from the meeting,

On the **PROPOSAL** by Cathaoirleach Fitzmaurice

SECONDED by Cllr. Keogh

It was **AGREED** to defer the motion until the May meeting.

63.25b CLLR. FITZMAURICE - M11:25 LIMITED MOBILITY PARKING

“Notice of Motion calling on Roscommon County Council to introduce a pilot scheme of self-regulating limited mobility parking spaces in Towns around our County in strategic places to helped people with limited mobility to access shops/ doctors surgeries/ chemistry shops/ care facilities etc. Current disability spaces are limited and sometimes far away from necessary services due to regulations.”

The Meetings Administrator read the following reply:

Disabled car parking spaces are provided in the towns in County Roscommon where adequate road space is available. These are designed to a specific standard in accordance with DMURS and the Traffic Signs Manual and are covered by relevant legislation. Roscommon County Council is not in a position to provide alternative limited mobility car parking spaces that are not covered by similar legislation but is open to providing extra disabled spaces in towns should there be a requirement for same.

The Council will examine the merit of providing “Age Friendly” parking spaces, perhaps on a pilot basis, as outlined in the Age Friendly Ireland *National Age Friendly Parking Space Guide*.

Cathaoirleach Cllr. Fitzmaurice stated that he was not happy with the Council's reply. He advised that he had been approached by a number of groups on this issue and as a former shop keeper, has witnessed the struggles of people with limited mobility if there is no parking in strategic places. He likened the proposed initiative to the 1-hour parking initiative that was introduced in recent years and said that initiative faced similar challenges when first proposed, however has been a success since introduced. Cathaoirleach Cllr. Fitzmaurice said that Roscommon, as a county, has one of the oldest populations in the country and questioned if the motion was fully understood.

Members supported the Cathaoirleach's motion and discussed the following:

- Disappointment at the reply and highlighted the need for such an initiative to support people with limited mobility and promote independence.
- Suggestion to change wheelchair parking spaces to mobility friendly spaces in places where wheelchair spaces are plentiful.
- It was discussed that people with certain disabilities cannot use wheelchair spaces or standard spaces and that vehicles that have been adapted often cannot fit in those spaces.
- Call for an accessibility report to be carried out for towns in the County.
- DMURS standards not suitable in every case.
- Reference made to difficulties to regulate spaces such as family spaces at supermarkets.
- Calls to pilot the scheme and review the outcomes.
- Issues discussed with regards the parking permits for existing wheelchair spaces and the current criteria needing to be reviewed to extend to people with limited mobility.

The Cathaoirleach thanked the Members for their support and ensured them he would continue to raise the issue.

Director of Services, Mark Keaveney clarified that the response from the Council was not aimed to frustrate the provision of spaces but outlined that more can be added if it is assessed that there is a need to. In relation to the limited mobility parking spaces, there is no national standard at which they can be provided to. He advised that the nearest national standard model is the Age Friendly parking spaces. He outlined that Age Friendly spaces are not solely for elderly people but are equally valid for people who are unable to walk far distances. He mentioned that Age Friendly spaces are roughly the same size as standard parking spaces which can be easier than wheelchair parking spaces to fit into current town landscapes.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Fitzmaurice

SECONDED by Cllr. Keogh

It was **AGREED** to write to the Minister of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth to raise the issue of the need for self-regulating limited mobility parking spaces in towns around our County in strategic places to help people with limited mobility to access shops, doctors surgeries and other essential retail and care services.

64.25 CHIEF EXECUTIVE BUSINESS

No further business.

65.25 COUNCILLORS CONFERENCES - PAYMENT/ATTENDANCE

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Connolly

SECONDED by Cllr. Brennan

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

66.25 VOTES OF CONGRATULATIONS AND SYMPATHY

Circulated at the meeting.

67.25 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Consultation on Public Realm Development in the County

Cllr. Frain raised this matter under AOB. The matter was discussed extensively by the Members and the Management Team. The potential to appoint an independent mediator was discussed and welcomed.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Frain

SECONDED by Cllr. Callaghan

It was **AGREED** to ask Roscommon County Council to engage in mediation, to include consultation talks with the local community, regarding the Ballaghaderreen public realm works.

Dermot Earley Bursary 2024

Cathaoirleach Cllr. Fitzmaurice congratulated the winners Tommy Morris, Four Roads and Charlotte Blackweir, Taughmaconnell. He also thanked Noelle Earley who presented the awards on behalf of the Earley family. The Members added their congratulations to this year's winners and thanked Noelle Earley on attending on behalf of the Earley family.

Cllr. Byrne issued an update on a bursary winner from last year, noting that Cormac Rynn continues to achieve success in sport.

St. Dominics Drama Group

Cllr. Tony Ward congratulated the St. Dominics Drama Group who won the All-Ireland Scór Competition recently.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be on Monday, 26th May, 2025.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

The foregoing Minutes are

Confirmed and Signed:



Meetings Administrator



Countersigned



Cathaoirleach