

MINUTES OF MONTHLY Meeting OF ROSCOMMON COUNTY COUNCIL
COUNCIL Chamber, Áras an Chontae, Roscommon
MONDAY, 20TH OCTOBER, 2025 AT 2.15 pm.

PRESENT: Councillor Liam Callaghan **PRESIDED**

MEMBERS: Cllr M.Holland, Cllr R. Conboy, Cllr L. Brennan, Cllr V. Byrne, Cllr T. Crosby, Cllr L. Cull, Cllr N. Dineen, Cllr V. Duffy, Cllr L. Fallon, Cllr P. Fitzmaurice, Cllr M. Frain, Cllr E. Kelly, Cllr J. Keogh, Cllr S. Moylan and Cllr M. McDermott.

OFFICIALS: Shane Tiernan, Chief Executive
 Caitlín Conneely, Director of Services
 Mark Keaveney, Director of Services
 Sean Mullarkey, Director of Finance
 Karen Hanley, Meetings Administrator
 Claudette Collins, Staff Officer
 Fiona Ni Chuinn, A/Director of Services
 Rachel O'Farrell, Staff Officer

Apologies: Cllr D. Connolly and Cllr T. Ward.

135.25 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.

136.25 ADOPTION OF MINUTES

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

It was **AGREED** to adopt the minutes of the Plenary Meeting of 22nd September 2025.

137.25 MATTERS ARISING

Cllr. Crosby asked if a response was received from the Minster in relation to Wind Turbine Planning Applications. He also queried a response to the original Notice of Motion by Cllr. Kelly and subsequently by Cllr. Crosby with regards to the wavier of Development fees and water charges in Roscommon and rural counties. Cathaoirleach Cllr. Callaghan informed members that both letters were in the correspondence pack.

Cllr. Crosby enquired if the minutes of the September plenary meeting could be amended to reflect that the Notice of Motion by Cllr. Crosby 21:25 Resurfacing was agreed by members.

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

It was **AGREED** to amend the minutes of the meeting to reflect the Notion of Motion which was agreed by members.

138.25 MANAGEMENT REPORT

- Management Report for Q3 2025 noted.

139.25 DISPOSAL OF LANDS

139.25a DISPOSAL OF LANDS - ASSETS

Cllr. Moylan expressed a conflict of interest and exited the meeting for this item.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Byrne

SECONDED by Cllr. Frain

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 0.0314 hA (0.0776 acres) at Lisryone, Strokestown, Co. Roscommon

The person(s) from whom the land was acquired: Unknown

The person(s) to whom the land is to be disposed of: Paul Moylan

The consideration proposed in respect of the disposal: €20,000

140.25 DISPOSAL OF LANDS - ASSETS

Cllr. Moylan rejoined the meeting.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Fitzmaurice

SECONDED by Cllr. Moylan

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 0.123hA (0.304 acres) at Rathra, Tibohine, Ballaghaderreen, Co. Roscommon

The person(s) from whom the land was acquired: Unknown

The person(s) to whom the land is to be disposed of: John and Phil Butler

The consideration proposed in respect of the disposal: €2,000

141.25 DISPOSAL OF LANDS - ASSETS

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Fallon

SECONDED by Cllr. 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 0.0315hA (0.0778 acres) at Monksland, Co. Roscommon

The person(s) from whom the land was acquired: Unknown

The person(s) to whom the land is to be disposed of: Greener Ideas Ltd.

The consideration proposed in respect of the disposal: €1,200

142.25 CORRESPONDENCE

Noted as circulated in advance of the meeting.

143.25 NPF IMPLEMENTATION

Cllr. Callaghan, Cathaoirleach introduced the presentation by Mary Grier, Senior Planner on Housing Growth Requirements – Guidelines for Planning Authorities, issues under Section 28 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended). This presentation follows from the request from the Minister for Planning Authorities to revise their County Development Plan to allow for the revised National Planning Framework.

The following keys points were made:

- The purpose of these guidelines is to outline the implications and required actions following the issue of an updated Section 28 Guidelines on Housing Growth Requirements by the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage. These guidelines were first issued in July 2025 to replace the 2020 Housing Supply Target Methodology and align with the National Planning Framework
- The Local Authority have a legal requirement under Section 28 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) to have regard to Ministerial Guidelines
- The guidelines forecast housing demand to 2040, estimating an additional 50,000 units will be required, they mandate a review of Core Strategies in current County Development Plans and allow provisions of up to 50% above baseline housing growth. The current Core Strategy in Roscommon allows for 2,353 new residential units which is equivalent to 392 units per annum
- The guidelines recommend a baseline figure for Roscommon for the provision of housing units from 2025-2034 is 392 units per annum and between 2035-2040 356 units per annum – so what is currently in the County Development Plan already accommodates for this
- The guidelines request Local Authorities to distinguish between serviced and serviced lands, conduct a Settlement Capacity Audit to identify these lands and follow the criteria set out in the 2022 Development Plan guidelines
- Implementation of the guidelines require Roscommon County Council to review its Core Strategy, look at housing growth figures, land zoning requirements, survey potential land for zoning, begin the Settlement Capacity Audit and revise the zoning maps
- The revisions above will impact the Athlone Joint Plan, Roscommon Town LAP, Carrick-on-Shannon JLAP, New Boyle Area Plan (advised that this should be incorporated into the County Development Plan) and multiple revisions to the Roscommon County Development Plan 2022-2028
- The timeline for the Plan variation process is expected to commence in early 2026. There is a 14-week statutory process including minimum 4-week Public Consultation, CE report issued 8 weeks

after consultation starts and a final decision 6 weeks after the CE report.

Members raised the following observations and questions following the presentation:

- Members thanks Mary for her comprehensive presentation and noted that these revisions will bring a considerable amount of work to the Planning Department
- It was expressed that the plan will have to take into consideration the new census figures as the figures used were based on the 2016 census data. The Housing development requirements should also reflect these census figures. The housing growth figures for other counties with similar or lower population appear to be higher and what is the reasoning for Roscommon figures
- Questions were asked as to whether Uisce Eireann have capacity to service 2,360 houses over the next 8-9 years? Will villages that have no serviced land indicate no development? Appears to be eight larger areas in Roscommon of focus. Lack of infrastructure will hold back on growth – it is important that smaller and more rural areas are considered also
- What is the commencement rate or the percentage of zoned land with has been taken up for development?
- It was suggested that a greater emphasis should be put on derelict properties/sites
- Concerns were raised as there is no variation of the Monksland Plan – will the variation of the County Development Plan will be in place before the Athlone/Monksland/Bealnamullia Joint Urban Area Plan? Will this impact on the ability for Monksland to develop further. Will there be scope to zone land in the Monksland area? Is there also scope to amend or vary the Hodson Bay/Ballymore Plan?
- It was queried, if possible, could Roscommon exceed the expectations for housing supply – making Roscommon an attractive place to live.
- Some land in Roscommon town was deemed not suitable for development due to a flood risk – who decides that this land is unsuitable? Could this be looked at again for development?
- Members asked for the presentation to be circulated as it was difficult to see some of the data in the tables
- Members queried the timeframe – is this outlined the timeframe for the variation of the County Development Plan or the Roscommon Town Local Area Plan or both. The timeframe for the variation also suggests it will be 12 months from the initial letter to the variation in place approx. mid-year 2026
- Proposed that the County Development Rural Design Guidelines also be reviewed stating it can be difficult and challenging for people to build houses on rural Ireland to meet the requirements.
- Questions arose as to whether the OPR will be involved as previous directions were to de-zone land and will they be providing any further direction. Members also asked whether there were any other factors outside market demand as to why development is not undertaken in Roscommon
- It was raised that the Local Authority should increase support for private development as lack of private development can potentially increase the demand for social housing
- What impact will this variation to the Plan have on Housing and Planning in Roscommon and will this reduce the Housing List significantly
- Concerns raised in reducing housing units between 2035-2040
- It was asked if there will be public consultation in relation to additional zoning of land
- Appears to be a very strict planning rules and a very rigid approach in Roscommon
- Question around a timeline for the Boyle re-zoning
- Banks appear to be lending primarily for social and affordable housing and not for private developments. How many planning applications for one-off houses were applied for in 2024 and

how many of those were granted?

In response Ms. Grier provided the following updates:

- The new variation of the County Development Plan will use the most up to date figures available. Roscommon when preparing the County Development Plan did however over provide for housing Units.
- Roscommon County Council are liaising with Uisce Eireann and have an up-to-date capacity register – plan to link in with their asset manager in relation to areas at or near max capacity
- The Housing Activation Team has been set up Nationally and they will be in contact with Local Authorities and Infrastructure providers
- Does not have commencement rate figure to hand but this will be included in the analysis and CE Report
- There has been limited uptake on development land – pre planning discussions are taking place with the hope to change this. Market conditions have a big impact on development.
- Currently working with colleagues in Westmeath County Council on the Monkland JAP so it is not possible to give a timeline at this point. The Athlone Plan will reflect the uplift and additional zoning. The Area Plan for the Hodson Bay did not include any land for residential zoning so this would not be altered with the variation
- The variation to the County Development Plan will make provisions for providing over 392 units per annum. The guidelines have reduced the housing growth requirements between 2035-2040 as it is anticipated housing units will have caught up with housing need or demand, but this is subject to change if subsequent guidelines are issued
- Flood risk guidelines were provided previously, and the Planning Authority are required to abide by guidelines issued under Section 28 which sets out the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment
- The hope is that the Roscommon Town LAP will coincide with the County Development Plan
- The policy Roscommon County Council have in relation to rural housing is consistent with the Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines. The Rural Design Guidelines are local to Roscommon and is a guidance document prepared to assist individuals which has been evident in the planning applications received after the introduction of these guidelines
- The Office of the Planning Regulator will continue to be involved in consultation with regards to the planning making process
- The time scale is a 14-week process and when the variation is agreed it will come into immediate effect. There was significant preparatory work and complexity with regards to potentially conflicting guidelines
- There is no scope for prior consultation and the variations must be prepared on a factual basis but when the draft variation is published the public will have an opportunity to provide feedback
- Development proposals in towns are subject to the overall planning process – factors that can hinder developments are architectural conservation area, protected structures and are subject to National Guidelines.
- The intention is that the Boyle re-zoning will be incorporated into the variation of the County Development Plan
- The guidelines do not make provisions to expand out to any other rural towns or village but Roscommon has settlement boundaries and any un-zoned land in these can be considered for development. The opportunity that exists now will still exist including one off houses and larger developments subject to appropriate design and scale. Some serviced villages were included in the original plan
- 90% of planning applications were granted and with regards to the 10% which was refused, one off

houses are a limited number. Many refusals were due to the wastewater treatment proposals not meeting the Environmental Protection Agency standards.

Mark Keavney, Director of Services in response to queries around the timeframe stated that Roscommon County Council are in line Nationally with LGMA timelines for the variation of the County Development Plan.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Fitzmaurice

SECONDED by Cllr. Dineen

It was **AGREED** to write to Minister Browne seeking permission for Roscommon County Council to review the Rural Guidelines in the County Development Plan, at the same time as the revision of the Roscommon County Council County Development Plan in accordance with the National Planning Framework.

It was proposed by Cllr. Conboy and seconded by Cllr. Duffy to establish a standing item on the agenda for the Director of Service to give an update on progress on the variation to the County Development Plan. The Chief Executive confirmed that the Management Report circulated to members as part of the monthly plenary meeting agenda fully complies with statutory guidelines and contains the relevant information on these matters.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Conboy

SECONDED by Cllr. Byrne

It was **AGREED** to write to the Minister regarding the Croi Connaithe scheme requesting Roscommon County Council be considered as a pilot to allow staggered drawdown to help individuals availing of the scheme who currently find it difficult to fund the works upfront.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Frain

SECONDED by Cllr. Fitzmaurice

It was **AGREED** to write to the Minister requesting decisions made by elected representatives of Roscommon County Council in the matter of the variation to the County Development Plan are not overturned by the Office of the Planning Regulator, as planning is a reserved function of the elected representatives of the Council. It was also agreed to request that the Minister review flood plains and the negative impact these have on planning decisions.

Cathaoirleach Cllr. Callaghan requested that Standing Orders to be suspended at 5pm to facilitate the attendance of the members at the launch of the Roscommon Age Friendly Strategy 2025-2030, Health Roscommon Community Wellbeing Strategy 2025-2029 and the Roscommon Community Resilience Toolkit.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Conboy

SECONDED by Cllr. McDermott

It was **AGREED** that Standing Orders will be suspended at 5pm.

144.25 ROSCOMMON COUNTY COUNCIL TOURISM STRATEGY

Cllr. John Keogh, Chairperson of the Economic Development & Enterprise Support SPC introduced the presentation of the County Roscommon Tourism Strategy 2025-2030. The strategy sets out the vision for growth and development of tourism in County Roscommon. The strategy has been developed through

collaboration with Roscommon County Council, tourism business, community groups and stakeholders as well as aligning with regional and national tourism policies.

Lisa Joy, Tourism Officer, delivered a presentation outlining the County Roscommon Tourism Strategy 2025-2030. The overall objective of Roscommon Tourism is to develop and promote County Roscommon as a year-round tourist destination. Lisa outlines how they worked alongside local community groups, elected members, tourism providers and businesses throughout County Roscommon. The strategy aligns with National Tourism Policy Framework and Failte Ireland – Irelands Hidden Heartlands brand. The goals of Roscommon are to grow tourism numbers, increase overnight stays and support local jobs and enterprise while safeguarding our communities and quality of life.

The presentation highlighted the Tourism Vision for Roscommon:

- A year-round immersive tourist destination with quality attractions
- A well-connected county with authentic and meaningful experiences
- A sustainable tourist destination through rich biodiversity and eco-tourism experiences
- A county with strong outdoor recreation offering – Greenways, Walking Trails and Cycleways
- A destination with vibrant festivals and events for all to enjoy

To achieve the Tourism Vision the strategy sets out five key strategic pillars:

1. Destination Management – enhance public spaces, improve transport and access, build strong partnerships with tourism bodies and local businesses
2. Visitor Experience Development – Engaging and Cultural activities, expand outdoor infrastructure, consider immersive technology for historical sites, improve visitor facilities
3. Marketing and Communications – digital marketing, live stream of events, collaboration with influencers, journalists, TV production companies, strengthen the Roscommon brand
4. Industry Support and Collaboration – Tourism network, engage local communities, grants, funding, support to businesses
5. Accessible Outdoor Recreation - Enhance and expand existing outdoor recreation, expand water based- tourism, promote wildlife and biodiversity

Ms. Joy highlighted two Strategic Vision Projects – Hudson Bay Waterfront Park funded by the EU Just Transition and Lough Key Forest and Activity Park Masterplan led by Coillte in partnership with Roscommon County Council.

Members thanked Ms. Joy for the informative presentation and praised the work of her and her team promoting and enhancing tourism in Roscommon in recent years. The members mentioned many events, projects and festivals which have been a huge success. They agree that Roscommon has a lot to offer – low crime rate, longest shoring access, served by three major railway lines, heritage, walkways, cycleways. The members discussed the following to further support tourism in Roscommon:

- Increasing accommodation as this is a major barrier with very little options for tourists
- Ensuring tourist attractions are accessible
- Holding family events
- Promoting tourist attractions in smaller towns and village
- Increase the use of the water in attracting tourists to Roscommon

Cllr. Cull asked if there was anything to direct members of the public to the start of the Miners Way walking trails. She asked for an update on the funding allocated for Audio Guide or QR codes for walkways. Ms. Joy

to follow up with a response. Cllr. Cull also expressed the difficulty in obtaining insurance for the Discovery Park in Agrina and welcomed support with this.

Shane Tiernan, Chief Executive, thanked Cllr. Keogh, the committee, elected members and the tourism team involved in the Tourism Strategy. He expressed his support of the strategy stating that tourism is a huge economic enabler and pivotal to the success of Roscommon with regards to job creation and economic growth. There is a great vision for Roscommon making it a wonderful place to visit.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Keogh

SECONDED by Cllr. Byrne

It was **AGREED** to adopt the Tourism Strategy 2025-2030.

On the proposal of Cathaoirleach Cllr. Callaghan it was agreed to extend standing orders for 15 minutes to conclude the meeting.

145.25 ANNUAL REPORT

Sean Mullarkey, Director of Finance, presented the draft Annual Report for 2024. The Annual Report outlines key activities and achievements of the Council over the past year. The report also reflects the Council's commitment to transparency, accountability and continuous improvement in the delivery of services and key strategic priorities. Sean acknowledged the work of the elected members, staff and stakeholders in their contribution over the past year.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Fitzmaurice

SECONDED by Cllr. Holland

It was **AGREED** to adopt the Roscommon County Council 2024 Annual Report

146.25 LCDC MEMBERSHIP - RATIFICATION OF GRETB REPRESENTATIVE

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Frain

SECONDED by Cllr. Conboy

It was **AGREED** to approve the nomination of Donal Walsh as GRETB interim member.

147.25 NOTICE OF MOTION

147.25a CLLR. FITZMAURICE - M24:25 - LAKESHORE & PUBLIC SPACES BY-LAWS

Notice of Motion from Cllr. Fitzmaurice

Notice of motion calling on Roscommon County Council to enact a lakeshore by-law and a parks, playgrounds and open spaces by-law to create regulations governing activities and behaviour near lakeshores, playgrounds and open spaces which are specific to the Local Authority or created by the Local Authority including Council owned lands and Council lands leased to community groups.

The Meetings Administrator read the following reply:

Currently Roscommon County Council has bye-laws in place, made under Part 19 of the Local Government Act 2001, as amended, specific to the Loughnaneane Park, Roscommon Town and the Boyle Pleasure

Grounds, Boyle. In both cases the bye-laws cover both parks and the recreational playgrounds within the parks. The byelaws are intended to control, regulate, protect, and manage the operation and day to day use of the parks. Prohibited acts governed by these bye-laws include litter, graffiti, traffic, bicycles, skateboards, animals, public disorder/nuisance, vandalism, drugs and intoxicating liquor, trading, musical performances etc.

Consideration can be given to the development of all-inclusive bye-laws for parks and open spaces to include playgrounds, skateparks, multi-games areas (MUGA), public realm, waters, sport pitches and recreational playing grounds under the control of Roscommon County Council. A draft bye-law(s) will be prepared and brought through the relevant Strategic Policy Committee(s). Note that a public consultation process will also be required.

Cllr. Fitzmaurice welcomed the reply and expressed his support for community groups. He proposed the Notice of Motion to go to the SPC and that the SPC not only look at lands under the control of Roscommon County Council but include land where community groups are running the facilities on the lands own by Roscommon County Council.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Fitzmaurice

SECONDED by Cllr. Brennan

It was **AGREED** that the Notice of Motion – Lakeshore & Public Spaces By-Laws would be brought forward to the SPC.

148.25 QUESTION

148.25a CLLR. DUFFY - Q7:25 - ROSCOMMON DIASPORA ENGAGEMENT AND OPPORTUNITIES

Response to the question was circulated to members in advance of the meeting.

149.25 CHIEF EXECUTIVE BUSINESS

None.

150.25 COUNCILLORS CONFERENCES - PAYMENT/ATTENDANCE

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr.Fitzmaurice

SECONDED by Cllr. Conboy

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

151.25 VOTES OF CONGRATULATIONS AND SYMPATHY

Sympathies were extended by the members to the families of James Tully, Frenchpark and Caroline Kennedy Cunnane, Tulsk who passed away recently.

152.25 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Cllr. Crosby expressed his concern over the bridge in Rooskey – a dangerous bridge for traffic and pedestrians and a risk for public safety. Funding was previously sought and approved but subsequently pulled prior to commencement works. He is requesting an enquiry as to why this funding was withdrawn.

Cllr. Callaghan in response to Cllr. Crosby stated that this matter had been dealt with at a MD meeting and three proposals put in place but no firm reaction had been received from the public.

Members showed their support for Cllr. Crosby around this issue.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be on Monday, 24th November, 2025.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

The foregoing Minutes are
Confirmed and Signed:



Meetings Administrator



Countersigned



Cathaoirleach