

- PRESENT:** Councillor Paschal Fitzmaurice, Cathaoirleach **PRESIDED**
- MEMBERS:** Cllr D. Kilduff, Cllr T. Crosby, Cllr M. McDermott, Cllr A. Waldron, Cllr O. Leyden, Cllr T. Ward, Cllr N. Dineen, Cllr V. Byrne, Cllr I. Connaughton, Cllr J. Cummins, Cllr L. Fallon, Cllr M. Mulligan, Cllr J. Murphy, Cllr J. Naughten, Cllr K. Shanagher and Cllr L. Callaghan.
- OFFICIALS:** Eugene Cummins, Chief Executive
Majella Hunt, Director of Services
Martin Lydon, Director of Services
Shane Tiernan, Director of Services
Liam Bergin, Director of Services
Patricia Bohan, Meetings Administrator
Michelle Carney, Staff Officer
- Apologies:** Cllr J. Keogh

1.20 ADOPTION OF MINUTES

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Cummins

SECONDED by Cllr. Crosby

It was **AGREED** to adopt the minutes of the Plenary Meeting of 16.12.2019

2.20 MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

3.20 MANAGEMENT REPORT

- The Management Report for December 2019 was noted.

4.20 LEASE OF LANDS (ASSETS, CLIMATE ACTION AND ENERGY MANAGEMENT)

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Cummins

SECONDED by Councillor McDermott

It was **AGREED** that the Council consent to the lease 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 lease 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 lease:

The Property: Site comprising 0.0219hA (0.054 acres) and including Right of Way at Keenagh Td., Athleague, Co. Roscommon

The person(s) to whom the land is to be leased to: Signal Infrastructure Ltd., Suite 309 Q House, 76 Furze Road, Sandyford Industrial Estate, Dublin 18.

The consideration proposed in respect of the lease: €2,000 plus VAT @23% per annum.

Term of Lease: 35 years

5.20 PART 15 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2015 - ETHICS REGISTER

The Meetings Administrator informed the members that under S19 of the Local Elections (Disclosure of Donations and Expenditure) Act 1999, the deadline for reporting of political donations by elected members is 31st January and the appropriate documentation had been circulated. Ethics Declarations under S171 Part 15 of the Local Government Act 2001 will be due for return by 28th February.

6.20 APPOINTMENT OF EXTERNAL MEMBER TO PLANNING, ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE CHANGE AND CORPORATE STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Ward

SECONDED by Cllr. Cummins

It was **AGREED** to appoint Trade Union nominee Ms. Fiona Fallon (Forsa Union) to the Planning, Environment Climate Change and Corporate Strategic Policy Committee.

7.20 CHIEF EXECUTIVE BUSINESS

The Chief Executive had three items of business:

7.20a ENTERPRISE IRELAND

The Chief Executive outlined the lack of success in relation to Roscommon County Council's application for funding for the Incubation Unit in Monksland under the REDF Funding scheme. The application had been submitted initially in 2017 and despite fulfilling requirements as requested since, the application was once again recently refused. Despite this setback the application was successful in receiving some funding under the Rural Regeneration scheme. He called on Enterprise Ireland to have more engagement in the way County Roscommon is promoted for investment and he will be submitting a Freedom of Information request to Enterprise Ireland in relation to the marking scheme for applications.

The Cathaoirleach supported the Chief Executive in his remarks and paid tribute to all of the work done by staff in relation to the application. He also expressed his disappointment in relation to the result and lack of engagement in Roscommon by Enterprise Ireland.

All of the members expressed their disappointment with the decision of Enterprise Ireland not to fund the enterprise hub in Monksland:

- Roscommon County Council purchased this building and have committed to a science and innovation hub, a key component in the development of Monksland and South Roscommon.
- Roscommon has a very strong innovation strategy and the lack of will from Enterprise Ireland is not acceptable.
- Our Oireachtas members have to work harder to highlight the lack of investment in jobs in the county.
- It is in the interest of both Roscommon and from a National perspective that jobs are created rurally as people want to live and work at home in Roscommon as opposed to commuting to Dublin and large Urban areas.

- Full confidence in the Executive to keep the pressure on Enterprise Ireland with regard to this issue.
- Decentralisation programme did not work for Roscommon and there is now an opportunity for a reformed decentralisation programme.
- Urgency in seeking meeting with Minister to discuss this matter.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Naughten

SECONDED by Cllr. Cummins

It was **AGREED** to seek an urgent meeting with Minister Heather Humphreys by a delegation on behalf of Roscommon County Council, including our local Oireachtas Members.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Fitzmaurice

SECONDED by Cllr. Byrne

And **AGREED** to write to the Chief Executive Officer of Enterprise Ireland, Ms Julie Sinnamon to attend a forthcoming meeting of Roscommon County Council to discuss lack of investment in County Roscommon.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Kilduff

SECONDED by Cllr. Fallon

And **AGREED** that if there is a formal mechanism to do so, the Chief Executive, Mr. Cummins should challenge the decision of Enterprise Ireland in relation to the Monksland Hub.

7.20b DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

The Chief Executive outlined the progress to date in relation to Digital Transformation that will change the way the Council do business with the public. The first phase will be launched next month and a brief presentation will be given to the elected members.

The Director of Services, Mr. Martin Lydon confirmed that the self-service module for the reporting of issues by the public will be launched next month. The facility will also include for the administration of grants online with tidy towns and amenity grants the first to be rolled out with a closing date of 24th March. The facility will improve internal work flows and enable internal processes to be more efficient while providing feedback and progress to the public on issues raised.

7.20c LEGAL SERVICES

The Chief Executive informed the members that the Council have recently signed a Legal Services contract with Dermot McDermott that was advertised through an open and transparent procurement process.

The Director of Services Mr. Liam Bergin outlined the procurement process involved through the National Framework to secure a two-year contract, with provision to extend up to two more years, which provides certainty of fees.

The members discussed procurement and raised the following matters:

- Oireachtas members need to address procurement guidelines to allow for contracts to be awarded locally to keep employment locally.

- Lowest price is not always best value
- Can past history of completed a contract be taken into account when awarding a contract?

In reply Mr. Bergin stated that most procurement rules are EU directives and therefore legally binding although lots can be used to filter requirements but cannot limit geographically. The Council has a Procurement Plan and had discretion on contracts up to a value of €3,000 while past history difficulties would have to be proven in a court of law.

8.20 NOTICES OF MOTION

There were two Notices of Motions submitted as follows:

8.20a 01.20 PERSONAL ASSISTANCE SERVICES (PAS) - CLLR. WALDRON

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr Waldron
SECONDED by Cllr. Ward

It was **AGREED** that this Local Authority calls to support the right to Personal Assistance Services (PAS) for disabled people to have freedom, choice and control over all aspects of their lives to enable them to fully participate in an inclusive society as equals.

Independent living means an individual can live with freedom and control to have the same choices in life that everyone else has in terms of housing, transportation, education and employment. PAS is a tool for independent living that allows disabled people to live independently, providing individuals with the freedom and flexibility they need to live their lives as they choose.

Cllr. Waldron asked that this Notice of Motion is to be circulated to all Local Authorities.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr Ward
SECONDED by Cllr. Waldron

It was **AGREED** to send a letter to the Minister for Health, Mr. Simon Hariss T.D. and the Government to bring forward legislation in the Dáil, to make it a statutory entitlement that persons who qualify for home help hours and home care packages must be immediately provided for by the Health Services Executive.

8.20b 02.20 CHRISTMAS DAY TAX EXEMPTIONS - CLLR. CONNAUGHTON

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Connaughton
SECONDED by Cllr. Ward

It was **AGREED** that Roscommon County Council call on the incoming Minister for Finance after the 2020 General Election to include provision in Budget 2021 for all employed in both the Public & Private sectors and who work on Christmas Day, do so exempt of all taxes including PAYE, PRSI & USC. It is important we financially acknowledge the dedication of those who give up their Christmas Day away from family to ensure important services are provided for all living in or visiting this country.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Dineen
SECONDED by Cllr. Connaughton

It was **AGREED** that this motion to be circulated to all Local Authorities.

9.20 CORRESPONDENCE

Acknowledgments to Resolutions from Roscommon County Council:

- Acknowledgement email dated 19th December, 2019 from Minister Eoghan Murphy's Office – R 200.19b (Dec 19) - Joint Athlone Urban Area Plan to be provided for under the legislative framework following adoption of RSES
- Acknowledgement email dated 23rd December, 2019 from Minister Simon Harris Office – R 137.19b (Sept 19) – Carers Allowance

Replies to Resolutions from Roscommon County Council:

- Letter dated 16th December, 2019 from HSE, Community Healthcare West in reply to a recent resolution letter regarding referrals to Roscommon County Hospital – Ref 157b.19;
- Letter dated 23rd December, 2019 with three attachments from Irish Wheelchair Association in reply to a recent resolution letter – Reference 186.19d (Nov 2019)

Resolutions from other Local Authorities:

- Letter dated 17th December, 2019 from Kerry County Council:
“That this Council calls on the Minister for Business, Enterprise and Innovation to remove the cap on County Enterprise Boards which prevents them from dealing with enterprises that have more than ten employees and that this motion will be circulated to all Local Authorities in the county”
- Letter dated 19th December, 2019 from Westmeath County Council
“That Westmeath County Council calls on the Office of Public Works to carry out the necessary excavation works to recover the remains of Joe Brady, Daniel Curley, Michael Fagan, Thomas Caffrey and Tim Kelly, in what is commonly known as the Invincibles Yard at Kilmainham Gaol. The bodies of these five members of the Irish National Invincibles lie beneath the paving slabs of the yard where they were executed in 1883 for their part in the Phoenix Park assassinations. The families of the five men are represented by the National Graves Association and the wish of the families is for their relatives to be exhumed from Kilmainham Gaol and reinterred in consecrated ground at Glasnevin Cemetery”;
- Letter dated 19th December, 2019 from Westmeath County Council
“That Westmeath County Council would request that in future the LPT basic rate would be discussed and fixed in conjunction with the full budget meeting with all the up to date comprehensive budgetary information available”

Other Correspondence:

- Letter dated 10th December, 2019 from the OPW in relation to a list of former Garda properties in County Roscommon which closed under the Rationalisation Programme of 2012 and 2013 as part of the development of policing plans for An Garda Síochána.

10.20 VOTES OF CONGRATULATIONS AND SYMPATHY

- Congratulations to Elphin Community College for winning two All Ireland titles in volleyball
- Vote of sympathy to the family of the late Ann Shally, Cloverhill R.I.P

11.20 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Cathaoirleach confirmed that he and the Chief Executive were invited to the County Roscommon Society of New York Annual Dinner on 6th March and would be accepting the invitation to attend. He would also be travelling the following week to attend the St. Patrick's Day parade and has meetings arranged with Irish Americans from Roscommon with further meetings to be confirmed.

The Cathaoirleach and Chief Executive wished Cllr. Leyden best of luck in the forthcoming General Election.

11.20a CASTLEREA FIRE STATION

Cllr. Dineen enquired if there was any update on Castlerea Fire Station and Cllr's Mulligan, Waldron, Leyden and Fitzmaurice also referenced the matter.

The Chief Executive stated that the Fire Station in Castlerea was closed on 20th January 2017 because we had to be and this was an unfortunate situation. He confirmed that in the meantime, the fire service cover that is being provided meets all insurance requirements and Roscommon County Council can provide evidence to that effect. He is currently carrying out a review as requested by the elected members and when it is completed he will make a decision and take on board comments from the elected members. In response to Cllr. Dineen, the chief executive confirmed the review will be completed in the very near future.

In reply to a query from Cllr. Mulligan, the Director of Services Mr. Shane Tiernan stated that the Lanesboro Fire Tender attended fire in Castlerea last week due to communication issues with CAMP and the postcode supplied.

11.20b GRANT ASSISTANCE FOR DOMESTIC WASTE WATER TREATMENT SYSTEM

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Ward

SECONDED by Cllr. Dineen

It was Agreed to write to the Minister for Housing, Planning and Local Government to increase the grant available for the repair, upgrade or replacement of a domestic wastewater treatment system (septic tank) to 90% of the total cost of same and to remove the means test.

11.20c CUISLE RESPITE CENTRE

Cllr. Ward expressed his concern of the recent removal of equipment from the Cuisle Respite centre by the IWA.

He was supported by Cllrs. Shanagher, Waldron, Leyden, Connaughton who also stated that the fight to reopen Cuisle will continue and the IWA must engage with the committee and their members and hold an EGM.

12.20 UROLOGY PILOT IN ROSCOMMON HOSPITAL

Cllr. Connaughton raised the matter of the funding of the Pilot Scheme in the Urology Department of in Roscommon Hospital under Dr. Eamonn Rogers. He said that the information to hand is the HSE will not

fund the continuation of the scheme following the completion of the successful pilot where over 1,600 appointments have been seen to date.

Cllr. Ward confirmed that as a member of HSE West forum, he was not made aware of this and will raise this matter at the next meeting.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Connaughton

SECONDED by Cllr. Mulligan

It was **AGREED** to write to the manager of Roscommon Hospital to seek clarification on future funding of Urology Programme following completion of pilot period.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be on Monday, 24th February, 2020.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

The foregoing Minutes are
Confirmed and Signed:

Petrizis Bohon

Meetings Administrator

Cathaoirleach

Countersigned