

CARLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of the November Monthly Meeting of Carlow County Council, held in The Council Chamber, County Offices, Athy Road, Carlow, on Monday 10th November 2014 at 2.00 p.m.

Present: Councillor F. Browne, Cathaoirleach
Councillor A. Ahern (Nee Long),
Councillor J. Cassin,
Councillor J. Deane,
Councillor M. Doran,
Councillor A. Gladney
Councillor T. Kinsella,
Councillor W. Lacey,
Councillor A. McDonald,
Councillor J. Murnane-O'Connor
Councillor C. Murphy,
Councillor J. Murphy,
Councillor B. O'Donoghue,
Councillor W. Paton,
Councillor J. Pender,
Councillor F. Phelan
Councillor W. Quinn.

Apologies: Councillor D. Foley

In attendance: Mr. T. Barry, Chief Executive
Ms. B. O'Brien, Director of Service – Corporate, Planning,
Economic Development, Health and Safety
Mr. D. McInerney, Director of Services
Transportation, Environment & Water Services
Mr. Gerard Guerin, Chief Fire Officer
Mr. Eoin O'Dowd, Assistant Chief Fire Officer
Mr. E. Brophy, Senior Executive Officer, Corporate
Services.
Ms. B. Whelan, Assistant Staff Officer, Corporate Services.

OPENING PRAYER

The opening prayer was recited in Irish by the Members.

VOTES OF SYMPATHY

The Members expressed votes of sympathy to:-

- The Farrell Family on the death of Leo Farrell, 5 Watchhouse Village, Clonegal.
- Councillor Ann Ahern and the Ahern Family on the death of her father- in- law William Ahern, Green Road, Carlow.
- Councillor Quinn on the death of his uncle Kevin Quinn in England.
- The Monaghan Family on the death of Paul Monaghan, Ballinaboley, Leighlinbridge.
- The McDonald Family on the death of Andy McDonald, Bagenalstown.
- The Quinn Family on the death of Joe Quinn, 'Fatima', Woodgrove, Tullow Road, Carlow.
- The Byrne Family on the death of J.J. Byrne, England and formerly 145, Duggan Ave., Graiguecullen, Carlow
- Councillor Lacey and the Lacey Family on the death of his aunt Anne Lacey, 12 Riverside, Carlow.
- To the Family and Fianna Fáil organisation on the death of Joe Walsh former Minister for Agriculture and Food.
- The family of the late Brian Farrell, academic and broadcaster.
- To the Family of Jackie Rea, former Chief Fire Officer, Carlow.

VOTES OF CONGRATULATIONS

The Members expressed votes of congratulations to:-

- Members paid tribute to all the groups who participated in Carlow Pride of Place 2014. Members congratulated Ballon Community Group on winning the overall Carlow Pride of Place Award 2014.
- Ballon GFC on winning the Carlow Junior A Football Championship 2014.
- Councillor Cassin paid tribute to all who supported the walk in Carlow against water charges.

- Arboretum Garden Centre on winning Retail Excellence Ireland Award 2014.
- Councillor Paton on achieving first class honours in Masters Business Administration degree.
- Professor Gerry O’Boyle, Director of Teagasc on the launch of DVD on Oak Park and Oak Park House.
- Presentation College Autolaunch Racing FI Teams in qualifying and securing the opportunity to participate in the World Finals in Abu Dhabi. Members unanimously approved an allocation of €1,000 to the Presentation College Autolaunch Racing Teams under the Economic Development and Promotion function of the Council.

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Proposed by Councillor W. Lacey

Seconded by Councillor J. Murnane-O’Connor

AND

Following a showing of hands it was unanimously resolved:-

“That the Minutes of the October Monthly Meeting of Carlow County Council held in the Council Chamber, County Offices, Athy Road, Carlow, on 13th October 2014, at 2.00p.m having been circulated to each Member, be taken as read, confirmed as to accuracy and accordingly signed.

Presentation by Waterways Ireland on the Barrow/Blueway.

The Cathaoirleach welcomed Eanna Rowe, Rosanna Nolan, Cormac McGrath and Stephen Forrest from Waterways Ireland to the meeting to brief Members on the Barrow Blueway proposals.

Members of ‘Save the Barrow Line’ were also in attendance.

The development of a Blueway Scheme along the Barrow line would entail the development of the present towpath. Members expressed concern in relation to the replacement of grass surface with hard surface trackway.

Waterways Ireland cited the success of the Great Western Greenway in Mayo and the economic and social benefits contributing €7.2 million annually to the local economy and creating employment.

Waterways Ireland in partnership with other agencies have undertaken survey work along the Barrow on the various environmental reports necessary for the planning process. A debate ensued with Members expressing concern at Waterways Ireland's ability to deliver and monitor the project successfully and the upkeep going forward. Members spoke of ongoing issue of dredging and vegetation control on the Barrow at Carlow Town. The Chief Executive thanked Waterways Ireland for their presentation and said he welcomed the open and transparent debate. Waterways Ireland will formally apply for Planning Permission in early 2015 relating to the upgrading of the Barrow Track in County Carlow and adjoining Counties. Public Information Events will be held at various locations to enable the public to view proposals. It was proposed by Councillor Pender and seconded by Councillor Murnane-O'Connor that representatives from 'Save the Barrow Line' are afforded the opportunity to address Members at the December meeting of Council. This was unanimously agreed.

2. CIRCULARS

E. Brophy advised of dissolution of Joint Drainage Committees and transfer of functions to Local Authorities as it relates to the Burrin Joint Drainage Committee. Local Government Act 2011 (Section 231) Order 2014 refers.

3. BUSINESS PRESCRIBED BY STATUE, STANDING ORDERS OR RESOLUTIONS OF THE COUNCIL

(a) To approve Overdraft Accommodation in the sum of €2 million for the year ending 31st December 2015 in accordance with Section 106 of the Local Government Act 2001.

P. Delaney advised that following the unification of Carlow Local Authorities, the transfer of services to Irish Water and the current level of activity on the Capital Programme, it is considered prudent to reduce the overdraft accommodation level to €2 million.

**Proposed by Councillor W. Paton
Seconded by Councillor M. Doran
AND**

Following a showing of hands it was unanimously resolved:-
“That we, the Members of Carlow County Council, hereby approve overdraft accommodation in the sum of €2 million for year ending 31st December 2015 in accordance with Section 106 of the Local Government Act 2001.

(b) To approve the Constitution and Standing Orders of Carlow County Museum

Members had for their consideration from Mr. D. Mulligan, Museum Curator seventh annual report from Board of Carlow County Museum. Members’ approval was sought to the Constitution of Carlow County Museum and to ‘Standing Orders’ of Carlow County Museum.

Proposed by Councillor A. Ahern
Seconded by Councillor J. Murnane-O’Connor
AND

Following a showing of hands it was unanimously resolved:-
‘That we, the Members of Carlow County Council hereby approve the Constitution and ‘Standing Orders’ of Carlow County Museum as set out and approved by the Board of Carlow County Museum at their meeting on Thursday 29th October 2014.

4. DEPARTMENTAL PROGRESS REPORTS

(a) Housing Progress Report

Members welcomed Housing Progress Report to 31st October 2014. The report highlighted activities in the following areas:-

- **Social Housing Supply**
 - Energy Efficient Programme 2014
 - Extensions
 - Void properties
 - Voluntary Housing
 - Current Projects
- **Part V – Little activity process being reviewed by Department.**
- **Housing Needs Assessment**
- **Housing Grants**
- **Housing Assistant Payment (HAP)**

- **Housing Loans**
- **RAS (Rental Accommodation Scheme)**
- **Traveller Accommodation**
- **Vacant Properties**
- **Housing Maintenance**
- **Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2014.**

Members raised the following issues:-

- Members complimented T. Butler, Housing Officer and Housing staff for services delivered despite budgetary constraints.
- The need to increase rent payable to Landlords under RAS in line with the Private Rented market to encourage more landlords to register with RAS.
- Tenants paying rent through some Postpoint Services outlets in Carlow being charged a fee
- Low rate of rent supplement adding to housing needs.
- Growing issue of homelessness in Carlow and the need for emergency accommodation.
- Government Policy to rent rather than build resulting in greater numbers on housing waiting list.
- Members requested actual number on housing list as against number of households and also number that do not qualify for housing list.
- Single people not being accommodated and the need for more 1/2 bedroomed houses.
- 1 off rural housing.

All queries raised by Members were addressed by Mr. Butler.

(b) Recreation and Amenity Progress Report

Members had for their consideration Recreation and Amenity Progress Report to November 2014.

The report covered the following areas:-

- Ducketts Grove Castle and Walled Gardens

- Oak Park Forest Park
- Walking
- Tullow Town Park
- Muinebheag Town Park
- River Barrow
- SEAI Better Energy Communities 2014

Councillor McDonald raised issue of proposal by Resource Centre, Bagenalstown to acquire parcel of land adjacent to Resource Centre. The Resource Centre has been informed that this proposal is not acceptable to the Department. The Resource Centre is also seeking a further site for 'Mens Shed' project. Councillor McDonald requested that both issues be investigated.

Members expressed concern in relation to the navigation of the Barrow for boaters and fishing interests due to silting and overgrowth. As a Special Area of Conservation, Members requested that The National Park and Wildlife Service be invited to make a presentation to Members on dredging of the River Barrow and vegetation control at a date yet to be decided.

All issues raised by Members were addressed by T. Butler.

5. COMMUNITY, HOUSING, RECREATION AND AMENITY, BUILDING CONTROL AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

(a) Croppy Graves

Members welcomed joint report from S. O'Connor and P Harrington on proposals for the development of Amenity areas at Graiguecullen Town Centre. The croppy graves will be a central heritage/amenity feature. The overall proposals will cost an estimated €70,000.

Members welcomed the proposals and complimented Mr. O'Connor and Mr. Harrington for bringing the project forward.

P. Harrington advised that the two trees were cut down, in the interest of public safety, following inspection by a qualified Horticulturist/Tree Surgeon. Members discussed memorial features on how the tree stumps may be incorporated back into the site.

Councillor Gladney requested that the 'Pikemen' be invited as part of any commemoration event that may take place.

All issues raised by Members were addressed by P. Harrington.

Councillor Pender raised issue in relation to NRA Safety Works Scheme for Tullow not being progressed. P. Harrington confirmed that the works will not be proceeding due to time constraints.

Members expressed disappointment at the NRA's decision and requested that the NRA be invited to attend Carlow Municipal District Meeting to discuss bringing the project to fruition.

4 (c) Fire Service Progress Report

Members had Emergency Services Progress Report January to November 2014 from G. Guerin, Chief Fire Officer.

Councillor Doran raised issue in relation to bon fires at Halloween. G. Guerin advised that the Fire Service work in collaboration with the Environmental Section and any unsafe bon fires are removed by the area engineer.

Councillors Cassin and Murnane raised issues in relation to Building Control (Amendment) Regulations 2014 and the complexity of Commencement Notices and queried what constitutes a registered builder.

Councillor Paton raised issue of Inspections of a range of buildings under the Fire Services Act and whether public entertainment buildings will be inspected over the Christmas and New Year period. Councillor Ahern raised issue of inspection of buildings subdivided into apartments.

Councillor McDonald raised issue of importance of insurance coverage to include Fire Brigade Charges.

All issues raised by Members were addressed by G. Guerin.

5 (b) Shared Services – Report on Fire and Emergency Services

The Chief Executive in his report outlined the development of a single delivery unit for the Fire and Emergency Services of Carlow and Kilkenny County Councils.

Members expressed reservations with the shared services approach and how it may impact on services in County Carlow.

The Chief Executive advised that the implementation process is an executive function but the Council can give direction to the Executive under legislation not to proceed. Fire Service Policies under Shared Services approach going forward will require Members' approval.

Extension of time

Suspension of Standing Orders

It was unanimously agreed to suspend that part of Standing Orders of Carlow County Council to facilitate the Meeting to 6.00pm.

6. TRANSPORTATION, ENVIRONMENT & WATER SERVICES

(a) Winter Maintenance Plan

It was proposed by Councillor Quinn and seconded by Councillor C. Murphy and unanimously agreed that this item be deferred to the December meeting of Council.

(b) Litter Management Plan

Members had report from D. McInerney on the County Carlow Draft Litter Management Plan 2014-2017.

Councillor Murnane- O'Connor requested the re-establishment of Transportation, Environmental and Infrastructural Strategic Policy Committee where the Draft Litter Plan can be debated fully.

7. CORPORATE, PLANNING, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY

(a) Agriculture

Members requested that agriculture be placed on the agenda bi-monthly.

(b) Health

Councillors Cassin and Phelan expressed dissatisfaction with the Health Services Executive response to Members correspondence following HSE briefing on mental health issues in Carlow. Members requested that the HSE be again invited to address Members to deal with unanswered issues at a date yet to be decided.

Councillor Murnane-O'Connor expressed dissatisfaction with government policy, removing 7,000 medical cards for the over 70's out of the medical card system, and requested that this Council write to the Minister on the issue.

(c) Tenders for opening if any

Members noted tenders opened since the last Council meeting.

(d) Conference Attendance Approvals

The following Members Conference Events were unanimously approved by Members.

*Superior Training Event - Longford– 28th & 29th November
(Funding Public Services-General Taxation)*

*ACE training event, Clonakilty – 28th & 29th November
(The effects of Budget 2015)*

*Superior Training Event - Leighlinbridge– 5th & 6th December
(Housing Law)*

*ACE training event, Clonakilty – 5th & 6th December 2014
(Charities, Regulations and Legislation)*

*Esperanza Enterprises Training – Galway- 12th & 13th December
(Protected Disclosures Act 2014)*

8. Chief Executives Monthly Management Report

Members noted the monthly management report prepared by the Chief Executive as required under Local Government Reform Act 2014. The report set out the main activities of Carlow County Council across the various service areas for the period June 2014 to October 2014.

9. CORRESPONDENCE

Members noted correspondences from the Office of the Minister for Justice and Equality in response to Members Notice of Motion re-affirming support for full marriage equality for all citizens regardless of race, religion or sexuality.”

Members noted correspondence from the HSE South Carlow/Kilkenny Mental Health Services in relation to Members correspondence following briefing on mental health.

Members noted correspondence from Save the Barrow Line Committee in relation to the proposed works along the Barrow towpath.

Members noted correspondence from the Courts Service in relation to Carlow Courthouse railings.

10. NOTICES OF MOTION

Standing in the name of Councillor William Paton

Proposed by Councillor W. Paton

Seconded by Councillor C. Murphy

AND

Following a showing of hands it was unanimously resolved:-

"That Carlow County Council create a new Scheme of Development Charges to take into account that domestic water users pay for their domestic water supply with effect from 1st October 2014."

Members requested a report on Water Supply Services under Local Government Reform regarding responsibilities, requirements and costs under the planning process for water and sewerage connections, road openings and road reinstatements. Members also requested information on well grants.

Queries raised by Members were addressed by Mr. McInerney.

Standing in the name of Councillor William Paton

Proposed by Councillor W. Paton

Seconded by Councillor J. Cassin

AND

Following a showing of hands it was unanimously resolved:-

"That Carlow County Council set up a Committee to oversee the co-ordination of a suitable programme of events to commemorate the Easter 1916 Centenary."

Councillor Quinn raised issue of provision of funding towards the commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the bombing of house at Knockroe, Borris during World War 11.

11. Any other business with the consent of the Cathaoirleach

Councillor Cassin raised issue in relation to purchase of fuel for council vehicles. D. McNerney advised that Topaz was successful in the procurement process. Vehicles may refuel at other garages if it is not convenient to refuel at a Topaz garage.

The Chief Executive and D. McNerney updated Members on current position in relation to the viability of logistic park at Rathcrogue, Carlow.

This concluded the business of the meeting.