

CARLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

**Minutes of the January Monthly Meeting of Carlow County Council,
held in The Council Chamber, County Offices, Athy Road, Carlow, on
Monday 14th January 2013 at 2.00 p.m**

Present: Councillor M. Abbey, Cathaoirleach
Councillor A. Ahern (Nee Long)
Councillor F. Browne
Councillor M. Doran
Councillor W. Fennell,
Councillor D. Foley,
Councillor F. Hunter
Councillor D. Hurley
Councillor T. Kinsella
Councillor W. Lacey
Councillor A. McDonald,
Councillor J. Murnane-O'Connor,
Councillor C. Murphy,
Councillor J. Murphy,
Councillor T. O'Neill
Councillor P. O'Toole
Councillor W. Paton
Councillor J. Pender,
Councillor W. Quinn.
Councillor C. Townsend,
Councillor J. Townsend,

In attendance: Mr. T. Barry, County Manager
Ms. B. O'Brien, Director of Service - Community and Enterprise,
Economic Development & Corporate Services.
Mr. J. Carley, Director of Service - Environment, Water Services
& Health and Safety.
Mr. D. McInerney, Director of Services
Transportation & Safety & Emergency Services.
Mr. P. Delaney, Head of Finance
Mr. T. Butler, Acting Director of Services, Housing,
Recreation & Amenity & Special Projects.
Mr R. Fitzgerald, Financial Accountant
Ms. Lilly Slye, Acting Senior Executive Engineer

Ms. J. Coyne, Acting County Librarian
Ms. S. Dowling, Arts 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.

The Chairman wished members and staff a Happy New Year.

VOTES OF SYMPATHY

The Members expressed votes of sympathy to:

- Pat Grassick, IT Section on the death of his mother Bridie Grassick, Mallow, Co. Cork
- Murt O'Neill and Family, Kilgreaney, Bagenalstown on the death of his brother Michael, Castle Inn, Castledermot and formerly of Kilgreaney Lr. Bagenalstown
- The Fitzgerald Family, Upper Tomard, Milford on the death of their brother William.
- Hugo Jellett, Arts Centre on the death of his father Benjamin Hewitt Jellett, Grangecon, Co. Wicklow
- Ina Doyle and Family on the death of her husband Alec Doyle, Coolyhune, Graiguenamanagh

VOTES OF CONGRATULATIONS

The Members expressed votes of congratulations to:-

- Patrick Mullins, Closutton, Bagenalstown, on breaking the record with 74 wins in a calendar year for an amateur jockey.
- Francis Coady, Rathanna, on compiling an architectural and photographic record report of the bridges of the county's Mountain River and its many tributaries.
- Carlow Music Education Partnership on being selected for participation in **Music Generation** which over the next three years plans to bring €1.1million worth of music education for young people throughout the county.

1. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

- (a) Proposed by Councillor F. Browne
Seconded by Councillor T. O'Neill
AND**

Following a showing of hands it was unanimously resolved:-

“That the Minutes of the December Meeting of Carlow County Council held in the Council Chamber, County Offices, Athy Road, Carlow, on Monday 14th December at 2.00 p.m having been circulated to each Member, be taken as read, confirmed as to accuracy and accordingly signed.

2. CIRCULARS

- (a) Circular RW 13/2012 Community Involvement Schemes**

Members had Circular letter RW 13/2012 in respect of Community Involvement Schemes.

Mr. McInerney advised that it is intended to operate a pilot revised Community Involvement Scheme in 2013 and local authorities will be requested to directly seek funding from the Department under this pilot scheme where they wish to undertake Community Involvement projects.

Mr. McInerney set out the criteria for funding which applies to public lanes/cul de sacs. The terms of the revised scheme are likely to require a 50% contribution rather than the 25% sought under the old scheme (CIR).

In response to Members queries Mr. McInerney advised that a survey and report on public lanes was carried out last year and this report will be brought to area meetings for members' consideration.

Councillor Browne raised the issue of taking in charge of laneway at Ballylennon. Mr. McInerney to examine.

Queries raised by Members were addressed by Mr. McInerney.

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

- (a) Lease of 53 Mullaunmore, Ballon to Cluid Housing Association.**

**Proposed by Councillor J. Pender
Seconded by Councillor J. Murphy
AND**

Following a showing of hands it was unanimously resolved:-

“That we, the Members of Carlow County Council hereby approve in accordance with Local Government Act 2001 Section 183, Planning & Development Act 2000 Section 211, the lease of 53 Mullaunmore, Ballon, to Cluid Housing Association, 63 – 66 Amiens Street, Dublin 1, in the sum of €10.00 per annum up to 16th July, 2015, in accordance with the terms of the statutory notice already circulated.

4 HOUSING, RECREATION & AMENITY & SPECIAL PROJECTS

(a) Process for inspection of Private and Leased Properties

Members welcomed report from Ms. L. Slye, Acting Senior Executive Engineer on Carlow Local Authorities policy and guidelines in relation to the minimum standards requirement for Private Rental Accommodation including Rental Accommodation and Leasing Schemes.

These requirements were discussed and recommended for approval by the Housing and Social Policy Committee at their meeting held on 13th December 2012.

Members raised issues in relation to number of flats and standard of dwellings let under RAS scheme prior to Carlow Local Authority policy requirements and new BER regulations which came into effect 9th January 2013.

Queries raised by Members were addressed by T. Butler and L. Slye.

5. COMMUNITY & ENTERPRISE & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & CORPORATE SERVICES

(a) Progress Reports

(i) Corporate Services and Human Resources

Members had progress report to 31st December 2012 from Ms B. O'Brien for their consideration. The report covered the following areas of responsibility under the Directorate of Corporate Services and Human Resources.

Corporate Services

- Management of Council and Corporate Policy Meetings, Attendance of Councillors at Conferences, Payment of Councillors Allowances and Expenses, Civic Receptions, Twinning, Linkage with National Bodies such as LAMA and ACCC, Burrin Drainage Committee, Joint Policing Committees

- Register of Electors
- Local Elections
- Higher Education Grants
- Customer Service
- Co-Ordination of Customer Service Performance Indicators
- Control of Dogs
- Coroners Court
- Management of Council Property
- Preparation of Annual Report
- Preparation of Corporate Plans
- Ethics Register
- Freedom of Information
- Ombudsman
- Data Protection
- Public Relations
- Irish Language Scheme
- Disability Plan – Towards Universal Access for All 2008 – 2015
- Schools Business Programme Partnership
- Promotion of new Council initiatives such as Fix My Street, MapAlerter
- Major Emergency Management – Communications. Liaison with public, media and Councillors including during severe weather

Human Resources

Employees: 362 as at 31/12/2012 (including 45 Retained Fire Fighters)

- Workforce Planning, Recruitment & Selection
- Reassignment and redeployment of staff to service areas of greatest need
- Training, Learning & Development
- Performance Management (PMDS)
- Industrial Relations
- Staff Wellbeing and Employee Assistance Programme
- Equality & Diversity
- Work Life Balance
- Creating a Positive & Safe Working Environment
- Workplace Partnership

- Superannuation
- Continuing Professional Development (CPD)
- Implementation of Core HR/Payroll/Superannuation System

Members raised the following issues:-

➤ Recruitment of outdoor staff and staffing issues. Members expressed their gratitude to staff for their work and commitment to delivering of services with reduced staff numbers and in difficult economic circumstances.

➤ Register of electors.

➤ SUSI

➤ Customer Service – answering, returning calls and voicemails

➤ Planning enforcement and staffing issues Planning Department.

➤ Control of dogs and dog fouling. Members raised issue in relation to mobile number of dog warden being made available to Members.

Councillor Pender proposed that the dog warden be invited to address the Council. This proposal was seconded by Councillor Fennell.

Queries raised by Members were addressed by County Manager and Ms. O'Brien.

(ii) Carlow County Library Service

Members welcomed progress report in respect of Carlow County Library Service from Ms. Josephine Coyne, Acting County Librarian.

Councillor Hunter raised issue of Hacketstown Community Library and queried the prospect of it being upgraded to a Branch Library.

Councillor Browne raised issue in relation to studies into the harmful effects of WIFI.

Members thanked Ms Coyne for her report and paid tribute to her work with Carlow County Library Service.

PRESENTATION CARLOW VOLUNTEER CENTRE

The Cathaoirleach welcomed Ms. Fiona Cunnane and Ms. Aisling O'Rourke of Carlow Volunteer Centre to the Chamber.

Ms. Cunnane gave an overview of Volunteering Services and working with Local Volunteering Centre. She outlined process involved with Database of volunteers, voluntary organisations and opportunities. She advised of Garda vetting authorised signatory service. She spoke of Volunteer expectations, organisational expectations and matching people to the role.

Ms Aisling O'Rourke spoke of training and how to manage volunteers. She advised of placement of clients, volunteer role development and management training.

Members thanked Ms. Cunnane and Ms. O'Rourke for their presentation and queries raised by Members were addressed by Ms. Cunnane.

(iii) Economic Development – Carlow Local Authorities Business Support Unit/Update on Local Enterprise Offices

Members welcomed progress report from Ms. B. O'Brien on Economic Development - Carlow Local Authorities Business Support Unit. The report also set out collaborative initiatives Carlow Local Authorities participated in during 2012 in association with Carlow County Development Board's Economic Development Strategy for County Carlow, 2009-2012.

The report also set out reform proposals in '**Putting People First- Action Programme for Effective Local Government.**

Members also noted Carlow County Enterprise Board January – December 2012 Performance Review.

Ms. O'Brien advised on new Local Enterprise Offices (LEO's) which will be integrated with Local authority business support units to create a one-stop-shop for business support.

(iv) Community and Enterprise

Members welcomed progress report for period July 2012 to December 2012 from Ms. B. O'Brien.

The report covered the following areas of responsibility.

1. Carlow County Development Board
2. Community Initiatives
3. Arts
4. County Carlow Sports Partnership
5. Other Initiatives / Areas of Responsibility

Ms. Sinead Dowling, Arts Officer advised of Carlow's Music Education Project which plans to bring €1.1million worth of music education for young people throughout the county in the next three years.

Members praised the initiative of Carlow Music Education Partnership on securing the funding from Music Generation – Ireland's National Music Education Programme, initiated by Music Network and funded by U2 and the Ireland Funds. The *Go Music* programme was developed by local

musicians and music teachers, with foundation local funding commitment from County Carlow VEC, Carlow Local Authorities and development support from many other local agencies.

(b) The Gathering 2013 Funding Allocations (i) IPB & (ii) Local Community Fund

Ms B. O'Brien advised Members of recent announcement of Irish Public Bodies Insurance Gathering Ireland Fund of €2million to support flagship county and local/community Gathering events and activities in Ireland during 2013.

The Carlow County fund allocation for three flagship projects, funded by IPB, is up to a maximum of €25,000 and a further €30,000 in matched funding from the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport giving a total allocation of €55,000 for the county.

Members had details of schedule of thirty three projects/events to be held throughout County Carlow.

The three flagship projects to be funded by IPB will be formally announced on 17th January 2013.

(c) Local Electoral Boundary Review

Mr. E. Brophy advised of invitation for submissions from Local Electoral Boundary Committee in respect of Local Electoral Boundary Review.

Members also had Terms of Reference of the Review Committee.

Mr. Brophy advised that submissions must be received not later than 25th January 2013 at 5.00pm.

Members also noted correspondence from Laois County Council advising that they have sought a briefing from Oireachtas Members and requesting other local authorities to consider if they wish to do likewise.

Following discussion it was unanimously agreed that E. Brophy would make a submission on behalf of Carlow County Council requesting twenty members for Carlow having regard to the committees Terms of Reference.

(d) Set dates for Corporate Policy Group Meetings 2013

The County Manager invited Members to set dates for Corporate Policy Group Meetings 2013.

Following discussion it was agreed that the Corporate Policy Group would meet on the morning of every second Council meeting.

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.

(e) Health

Councillor Fennell advised Members of €14,000 funding to ÉIST cancer support services.

A lengthy discussion took place in relation to realignment of hospital services Carlow/Kilkenny and pairing of hospitals with affiliated teaching Hospitals in Dublin. Councillor Fennell proposed that Carlow County Council send a resolution to the Minister for Health and Children supporting the call by Saint Luke's Medical Board, the GP's of Counties Carlow and Kilkenny and the GP/Hospital Liaison Committee that Saint Luke's Hospital Kilkenny be aligned to the James's / Tallaght / Trinity Group as part of the Governments Strategic Framework for reform 2012-2015. This proposal was seconded by Councillor Lacey. Members raised issues in relation to the status of Waterford Regional Hospital if this proposal was carried through. The County Manager advised that in terms of economic development the South East Region would be weakened. Following debate on the issue a vote was taken as follows:-

That St. Lukes Hospital, Kilkenny be aligned to James's/Tallaght/Trinity Group

<i>Members of Carlow County Council</i>	<i>For</i>	<i>Against</i>	<i>Abstain</i>	<i>Absent</i>
<i>Cllr. Michael Abbey</i>	✓			
<i>Cllr. Anne Aherne(Nee Long)</i>				✓
<i>Cllr. Fergal Browne</i>				✓
<i>Cllr. Michael Doran</i>	✓			
<i>Cllr. Wayne Fennell</i>	✓			
<i>Cllr. Denis Foley</i>	✓			
<i>Cllr. Fred Hunter</i>	✓			
<i>Cllr. Des Hurley</i>			✓	
<i>Cllr. Thomas Kinsella</i>	✓			
<i>Cllr. Walter Lacey</i>	✓			
<i>Cllr. Arthur McDonald</i>			✓	
<i>Cllr. Jennifer Murnane-O'Connor</i>				✓

<i>Cllr. Charlie Murphy</i>	✓			
<i>Cllr. John Murphy</i>	✓			
<i>Cllr. Tom O'Neill</i>	✓			
<i>Cllr. Pat O'Toole</i>	✓			
<i>Cllr. William Paton</i>			✓	
<i>Cllr. John Pender</i>			✓	
<i>Cllr. William Quinn</i>			✓	
<i>Cllr. Caroline Townsend</i>			✓	
<i>Cllr. Jim Townsend</i>			✓	

*The vote resulted as follows: 11 for, 0 against, 7 abstentions, 3 absent
The resolution was carried.*

6 (c) Audit Report 2011

Members had for consideration and approval the audited Annual Financial Statement for 2011 and the Auditor's Report.

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 the Local Government Audit Report for year ended 31/12/2011 in accordance with Section 120 of the Local Government Act, 2001.

Councillor Paton raised issue of bond register being completed by end of 2013.

5 (g) Tenders for opening, if any

Members noted tenders opened since the last Council meeting.

6. FINANCE AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

(a) Household Charge

Members noted correspondence from P. Delaney on update on Household Charge at 4th January 2013.

(b) Transfer of Driving Licence Responsibility to the R.S.A.

Members noted correspondence from P. Delaney on the transfer of Drivers Licensing to the Road Safety Authority from 19th January 2013.

7. ENVIRONMENT, WATER SERVICES AND HEALTH AND SAFETY

(a) Update on Irish Water

Deferred to February meeting.

(b) Grant Scheme for Septic Tanks

Deferred to February meeting.

5 (f) Agriculture

Councillor C. Townsend advised Members of the following issues which were discussed at recent Finance Health and Agricultural Strategic Policy Committee.

- The National Macra Conference will be held in Mount Wolseley in October 2013 and is expected that about 250 young farmers will attend which will be an economic boost to the area.
- During Ireland's Chair of the EU Commission, the congress of EU Young Farmers will be held in Dublin in March 2013.
- CAP Budget – CAP budget has still not been agreed. It is important that the budget be secured and the CAP programme agreed as it is currently leaving farmers in limbo.
- Commonage Restrictions – farmers are very concerned at the current proposal to limit REPS payments in respect of grazing on commonage.
- The Smallenberg Virus, which can cause birth deformities in farm animals including sheep and cattle, has been confirmed in farms in Wexford and Waterford. This virus is believed to be transmitted by midges. Presently there is no vaccination.

8. CORRESPONDENCE

Members noted resolutions from Donegal County Council

“Tourism in recessionary Times” A National Tourism Conference to be held from Thursday 17th January to Saturday 19th January, 2013 in the Falls Hotel, Ennistymon, Co. Clare.”

“That this Council requests the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine and his Department to subsidise the cost associated with the price of registration of ponies, horses and donkeys.”

Members noted resolution from Clones Town Council

“That this Council calls on the Minister of the Environment Community and Local Government to instruct all County Registrars, in future elections to take unemployed people of the dole on election day to carry out the duties required in polling stations, as there are many young people with the skills to do the work, and would be grateful for a few extra euro also saving the state on welfare for the day.

The practice of using people who are already in employment, and retired civil servants with good pensions, is wrong when so many of our people are on the breadline”.

Members noted resolutions from Monaghan Town Council

(a) “That this Council calls for a minimum jail term for anyone convicted of assaulting or threatening the life of a frontline emergency worker such as an on-duty garda, fireman, ambulance worker or nurse.”

(b) “That this Council calls for legislation to limit the height of overly tall boundary trees (such as Leylandi) which affect a neighbours “right of light” by casting excessive shade over persons property.”

Members noted resolutions from Galway City Council

“That this Council rejects the imposition of a Property Tax on Local Authority houses and houses provided by voluntary bodies.”

Members noted resolutions from Limerick County Council

“That, Limerick County Council calls upon the Minister for Public Expenditure & Reform to reform the present pensions and expenses arrangements of Oireachtas Members, Senior Civil Servants, Judges, Semi-State Senior Executives, including former office holders, in the interest of fairness.”

Members noted correspondence from the Department of Justice and Equality in relation to Discussion Document on the Role of the Joint Policing Committees.

(9) Any other business with the consent of the Cathaoirleach.

Councillor C. Murphy welcomed the Governments decision to reverse the cuts to the Senior Personal Security Alarm Scheme.

This concluded the business of the meeting.