

## **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 11th November 2013 at 2.00 p.m**

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Present: Councillor D Hurley, Cathaoirleach  
Councillor M. Abbey  
Councillor A. Ahern (Nee Long)  
Councillor F. Browne  
Councillor M. Doran  
Councillor W. Fennell,  
Councillor D. Foley,  
Councillor F. Hunter  
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  
Mr. J. Carley, Director of Service - Environment, Water Services & Health and Safety.  
Mr. D. McInerney, Director of Services  
Transportation & Safety & Emergency Services.  
Ms. B. O'Brien, Director of Service - Community and Enterprise, Economic Development & Corporate Services.  
Mr. P. Delaney, Head of Finance  
Mr. T. Butler, Senior Executive Officer, Housing  
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:-

- Carol Travers, Staff Officer on the death of her father, Paudie Duggan, Graiguecullen
- Anselm McGowan, Administrative Officer on the death of his father Hugh McGowan, Claremorris, Co. Mayo.
- The family of the late Jim Fyffe retired General Operative, Southern Area.
- The Family of the late Hugh Browne, Ballinabranna, Milford, Co. Carlow
- The Family of the late Margaret Monaghan, Maple Drive, Royal Oak Road, Bagenalstown
- The Family of the late Frances O'Malley, Strawhall, Carlow
- The family of the late James Wynne, 98, Kevin Barry Ave., Carlow
- The Family of the late Marie O'Neill, Busherstown, Bennekerry, Carlow
- The Family of the late Margaret Dowling, Coolroe, Graiguenamanagh, Co. Kilkenny
- The family of the late Paul Hennessy, 2 Sunset View, Burrin Road, Carlow
- People of the Philippines following recent typhoon

Members also remembered Armistice Day celebrated 11th November to commemorate all those who lost their lives during World War1.

### **VOTES OF CONGRATULATIONS**

The Members expressed votes of congratulations to:-

- Councillor Browne on the birth of his baby son.
- Myshall Camogie Club on reaching the All – Ireland Junior Camogie Final.

- Mount Leinster Rangers on reaching the Leinster Club Senior Hurling Championship semi-final.
- Rachel Doyle, Arboretum Garden Centre on being appointed president of the International Garden Centre Association.
- Carlow Gymnastics Club on their success at the 2013 European Acrobatic Gymnastics Championships in Lisbon maintaining 7th place in Europe.
- Oakpark Woodlands on winning the National Community Woodland Award 2013. Seamus O'Connor is credited with this initiative.
- Aubrey Fennell, Palatine on the launch of his book 'Heritage Trees of Ireland'.
- Eoin Duffy, formerly Old Chapel Lane, Tullow on being shortlisted for an Oscar for Irish animation 'The Missing Scarf'.
- Carlow Fire and Rescue Service on their success at the World Championships 2013 held in Florida.
- All the 2013 'Pride of Place' award winners.
- Ballinabranna Karate Club on competing in the IKU World Championships 2013 in Italy.

## **1. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

- (a) Proposed by Councillor M. Doran  
Seconded by Councillor M. Abbey  
AND**

Following a showing of hands it was unanimously resolved:-

*"That the Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of Carlow County Council held in the Council Chamber, County Offices, Athy Road, Carlow, on Monday 14th October 2013, at 2.00p.m having been circulated to each Member, be taken as read, confirmed as to accuracy and accordingly signed.*

## **2. BUSINESS PRESCRIBED BY STATUE, STANDING ORDERS OR RESOLUTIONS OF THE COUNCIL**

- (a) Approve Overdraft Accommodation for the year ending 31st December 2014.**

**Proposed by Councillor T. O'Neill**

**Seconded by Councillor M. Abbey**

**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 €4 million for year ending 31st December 2014 in accordance with Section 106 of the Local Government Act 2001.*

In response to Members query in relation to percentage of property tax to be allocated as part of the Local Government Fund 2014 Mr. Delaney advised that the allocation will form part of the Local Government Fund but will not be itemised. No formal notification of 2014 Local Government Fund has been received.

Mr. Delaney also advised that 2014 Budget will be adopted for Carlow Town Council and both budgets will be merged in June 2014.

**(b) Taking-in-Charge Roads and Services Brookfield Court, Palatine**

Mr. McInerney in his report dated 5th November 2013 advised that following the public consultation process no submissions were received.

Members’ approval was sought to the taking-in-charge of roads and services Brookfield Court, Palatine.

**Proposed by Councillor F. Browne**

**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 taking- in- charge of Brookfield Court, Palatine in accordance with Section 11 of the Roads Act, 1993, and Section 180 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 as amended; and Section 59 of the Planning and Development Act, 2010”.*

**(c) Agree dates for 2014 Budget Meetings**

It was agreed that the 2014 Budget Meeting be held on 16th December at 2p.m with the Pre Budget Meeting at 11.00a.m unless advised otherwise.

### **3. HOUSING, RECREATION & AMENITY & SPECIAL PROJECTS**

#### **(a) Housing Progress Report**

Members welcomed report from Mr. S. O'Connor on Housing to 31st October 2013.

The report highlighted activities to date in the following areas:-

- 1. Social Housing Supply**
- 2. Part V**
- 3. Housing Needs Assessment**
- 4. Affordable Housing**
- 5. Housing Grants**
- 6. Housing Loans and Tenant Purchase**
- 7. RAS (Rental Accommodation Scheme)**
- 8. Traveller Accommodation**
- 9. Casual Vacancies**
- 10. Housing Maintenance**
- 11. Strategic Policy Committee**

Members raised the following issues:-

- The proposed purchase of 4 affordable dwellings in Lime Grove, Palatine, currently under negotiation with the Developer
- Waiting period for repairs to windows/doors
- Energy Efficiency Programme 2013
- Tenants in receipt of rent subsidy should be notified that the subsidy will be withdrawn for anti social behaviour.
- Members welcomed the submission to the Department for the construction and purchase-lease of houses and apartments as an alternative to lease only. Members expressed dissatisfaction with the Governments social housing policy over the past number of years with sourcing social housing units from the private sector through Rental Accommodation Scheme (RAS) and Voluntary leasing schemes. Long term Capital Funding needs to be addressed.
- Current position in relation to Part V agreements.
- Fr Cullen Terrace, Hacketstown poor condition of roads network.

- Labour Activation Scheme – training for housing maintenance/ repairs. Mr Brophy advised that the scheme is not designed to replace employees and participants will be generally assigned to parks and open spaces. A small training budget is provided.
- Provision of solid fuel heating system instead of oil in homes for the elderly.
- Mortgage to Rent Scheme – requires bank approval.
- Traveller Accommodation Scheme. Members noted that the target allocation of 66 families has been exceeded.
- Housing Grants. Priority 1 will be allocated firstly and priority 2 and 3 will depend on 2014 allocation.

Members complimented Tim Butler for his work as Housing Officer. Queries raised by Members were addressed by Mr. Butler.

### **(b) Recreation and Amenity Progress Report**

Members welcomed Recreation and Amenity Progress Report to 31st October 2013.

Members were unanimous in their praise of recreation and amenity facilities in the County with such excellent facilities as Ducketts Grove, Oak Park, Bagenalstown Town Park and Tullow Town Park. Members raised the following issues:-

- Funding for adult recreation facilities at Tullow and McGrath Park.
- Provision of Playground facilities Ducketts Grove and lighting issue. Designating Ducketts Grove as a no smoking area.
- Litter Mount Leinster area
- Cycle and footpath facilities to Oak Park Forest Park
- Cycling path along River Barrow
- Finger signs along River Barrow
- Dining/restaurant facilities at St. Mullins to enhance recreation facilities on the Barrow. Overnight camping facilities causing some concern at St. Mullins.
- Tinryland Park. Members welcomed this excellent facility and thanked all involved in bringing this project to fruition with particular mention of Director of Services Bernie O'Brien and Seamus O'Connor.

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

Recess 3.30 p.m to facilitate Eirgrid and Save Our Heartland' Presentations.

Mr. Brophy outlined regulations and proceedings of Standing Orders where no more than two persons may speak on behalf of the deputation and for no more than fifteen minutes in total, unless permitted by the Chair.

### **Eirgrid Presentation**

Mr John Lowry, Project Manager Eirgrid and Mr John Shalloe gave a presentation to Members on the Grid Link Project and the purpose of the project.

The estimated €500 million project consists of a new high voltage 400kV power line linking Leinster and Munster. Mr. Lowry said the project is vital development that will deliver a wide range of benefits, including secure and affordable electricity supply, attract inward investment and will help enable Ireland to meet its 40% renewable electricity target.

The Grid Link project includes four main corridor options through County Carlow. In determining corridors constraints such as mountains, rivers and lakes, designated or protected areas such as Special Areas of Conservation, existing infrastructure and archaeological and heritage sites were considered. The constraints were mapped to facilitate the identification of corridors.

Mr. Lowry emphasised that no decisions have been made regarding the route of overhead lines as the project is at an early stage and welcomed public input.

Following the presentation a long and detailed debate ensued with each Member expressing their views on the project. Councillor J. Townsend supported the project. Councillor C. Townsend expressed dissatisfaction with the manner in which opposition groups used social media to heighten their campaign. Members were not against the project in principle but were emphatic on the impact overhead lines may have on public health and the environment and called for underground cabling. Mr. Lowry advised that underground cabling is more expensive and that overhead lines provide a better technical solution.

On the proposition of Councillor W. Paton it was unanimously agreed to continue the meeting until such time as all issues relating to Eirgrid's proposals were dealt with satisfactorily.

### **Presentation SAVE OUR HEARTLAND**

Ms Helena Fitzgerald and Ms Cornelia McCarthy representing 'Save our Heartland' Group, Borris gave a presentation to Members voicing their opposition to Eirgrid's proposed corridors through County Carlow.

Ms Fitzgerald highlighted the inconsistency in Eirgrid's constraint mapping. She spoke of high amenity areas mapped as a primary constraint by Eirgrid to be avoided if possible in selecting pylon routes. She said the absence of high amenity areas from Carlow County Development Plan has clearly disadvantaged County Carlow in Eirgrid's route selection process. Kilkenny County Development Plan protects the landscape of east County Kilkenny with a high amenity area designation. Two of the potential pylon routes are located in the landscape containing St. Mullins Monastic settlement, Borris House and against the backdrop of Mount Leinster and the Blackstairs Mountains.

Ms Fitzgerald called for the following actions:-

1. Variation of Carlow County Development Plan
2. Prepare report on each route showing constraints
3. Revise landscape character assessment
4. Let Eirgrid know these actions are being taken.

Members complimented 'Save our Heartland' group and all groups for their commitment to the protection of County Carlow scenic landscape.

A discussion ensued on Variation of Carlow County Development Plan to show 'high amenity' in designated areas and the impact it may have for future economic development and infrastructure.

The County Manager said it is important to strike a right balance.

It takes a 28 week process to vary the County Development Plan.

He advised that the status of review of County Carlow Development Plan has commenced. The Draft will be prepared by end of May 2014 with adoption September 2015. Eirgrid's planning application to An Bord Pleanála will not be lodged until 2016 but it is uncertain if An Bord Pleanála will make decisions based on the newly adopted Plan.

### **CAAS-Ltd – High Level Strategic Report**

CAAS had been requested by Carlow County Council to provide a high level strategic report to assist Carlow County Council in their submission to Eirgrid on the 1km route corridor options through County Carlow.

Mr. Conor Skeahan of CAAS presented the report to Members.



Mr Skeehan advised of assessment of the potential environmental impacts on the areas of the County which may be affected, including natural and built heritage and tourism assets including historic and scenic sites and locations. Mr Skeehan set out method of assessment including mapping of environmental constraints, landscape constraints and ecological constraints. A tabular comparative assessment of the relative pros and cons of each route was prepared.

Mr Skeehan advised of the importance of providing Eirgrid with clear and specific indications of the routing priorities, highlighting sensitivities along each route including non negotiable factors of County wide significance. Mr Skeehan's report set out recommendations for additional policies and measures that would strengthen the levels of environmental protection for the County's natural and built heritage and tourism assets.

Following a questions and answer session it was proposed by Councillor Paton and seconded by Councillor Ahern to adjourn the meeting to Monday 18<sup>th</sup> November at 2.00pm to enable a full discussion on Eirgrid Route Options through County Carlow in the context of the current County Development Plan and to conduct remainder of November Agenda. This was unanimously agreed.

The meeting concluded at 8.20pm.

#### **4. TRANSPORTATION & EMERGENCY SERVICES**

##### **(a) Winter Services Plan 2013/2014**

Deferred to Monday 18th November.

##### **(b) Rural Transport Programme – Restructuring Plan**

Deferred to Monday 18th November.

##### **(c) Building Control (Amendment) Regulations 2013**

Deferred to Monday 18th November.

#### **5. PLANNING**

**To consider report on Eirgrid Route Options through County Carlow in the context of the current County Development Plan.**

Deferred to Monday 18th November.

**6. COMMUNITY & ENTERPRISE & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & CORPORATE SERVICES**

**(a) Local Government Bill 2013**

Deferred to Monday 18th November.

**(b) Agriculture**

Deferred to Monday 18th November.

**(c) Health**

Deferred to Monday 18th November.

**(d) Tenders for opening, if any**

Deferred to Monday 18th November.

**7. CORRESPONDENCE**

Deferred to Monday 18th November.

**8. Notices of Motion.**

Fógraí Rúin/Notices of Motion.

Standing in the names of Councillor William Paton and Councillor William Quinn

“That Carlow County Council amend the 2009-2015 County Development Plan and insert the following paragraphs into Page 108 of the plan (immediately after the paragraph ending – “The local cultural and social landscape, which includes

interpretation of local traditions and customs, can contribute to and enhance the visitor's enjoyment of their holiday, while also being sustainable for local people in the long term".)

*There is a need to protect and conserve views and prospects adjoining public roads and river valleys throughout the county where these views are of high amenity value. In conserving views, it is not proposed that this should give rise to the prohibition of development along these routes but development, where permitted, should not seriously hinder or obstruct these views and should be designed and located to minimise their impact. The views and prospects to be preserved and protected are contained in Appendix 7 to the Plan.*

*It is the policy of Carlow County Council to preserve and improve places or areas from which views or prospects of special amenity value exist, as identified in Appendix 7, particularly but not confined to, those Views and Vistas listed in Table 1 of Appendix 7 and the Scenic Routes listed in Table 2 of Appendix 7".*

Deferred to Monday 18th November.

Standing in the names of Councillor William Paton

"That Carlow County Council call on the Minister for Agriculture, Food and Marine to set up an amnesty for unwanted horses and ponies whereby the animals are brought to local marts on appointed days and destroyed humanely by registered vets, rather than being allowed to starve in fields over the coming winter or turned out on the road posing a considerable danger to motorists and pedestrians alike."

Deferred to Monday 18th November.

Standing in the names of Councillor Jim Townsend

" That the Lime Kiln on The Sugar Factory site on the Athy Road be classified as a National Monument in order to remind people of the mistakes which were made during the "Celtic Tiger" era. Consideration should also be given to erect a small interpretative centre on the site in order to attract more tourists to Carlow."

Deferred to Monday 18th November.

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

Deferred to Monday 18th November.