

CARLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

**Minutes of the September Monthly Meeting of Carlow County Council,
held in The Council Chamber, County Offices, Athy Road, Carlow, on
Monday 14th September 2015 at 2.00 p.m.**

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

In attendance: Mr. D. McInerney, Acting Chief Executive
Ms. B. O'Brien, Director of Service – Corporate, Planning,
Economic Development, Health and Safety
Transportation, Environment & Water Services
Mr. P. Delaney, Head of Finance
Mr. R. Fitzgerald, Financial Accountant
Mr. G. Guerin, 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

- Frances Haughney, Cleaner on the death of her father John Callinan, 143, JKL Ave., Carlow
- Adrian Howard, Burial Ground Caretaker on the death of his father Jack Howard, 5 St. Joseph's Terrace, Tinryland
- Jacqueline Murphy, Clerical Officer, Tullow Civic Offices, on the death of her mother, Mary O'Toole.
- Matt O'Connor, Former County Manager, on the death of his wife, Ryta.
- The Family of the late Kevin Attride, Shean, Garryhill, Bagenalstown former Executive Engineer, Carlow County Council.
- John Dwyer and Family 10 Talbot Terrace, Browneshill on the death of his wife Mary.
- The Clerkin Family on the death of their mother Delia Clerkin, Haymarket, Carlow
- Ben Brennan, Laois County Council on the death of his brother Eamonn.
- O'Brien Family on the death of Teddy O'Brien, Ashgrove, Tullow Road
- The Family of late Margaret Dermody, Ballinaboley, Leighlinbridge
- The Family of the late Martin and Madeline McDonald, Slyguff, Bagenalstown
- The Family of the late Mary McDonnell, Rathellen, Leighlinbridge
- Joan Culleton and Family 56, St. Fiac's Terrace, Graiguecullen on the death of her son Michael
- Matt and Noeleen English-Hayden, Rathrush, Rathoe on the death of their son Dónal
- Marc Wouters and Family, Blackwood, Athy on the death of his wife Margaret
- DJ and Josephine Byrne, 6 Carrigduff, Bunclody on the death of their son Aaron.
- The Family of the late Tom Butler, Ballaghmore, Myshall.

VOTES OF CONGRATULATIONS

- Borris Vocational School on celebrating their 75th anniversary
- John Rossiter, Garryhill on winning a gold medal in the World Handball Championship in Calgary, Canada.
- Muinebheag Ladies Rounders on winning the All Ireland Final 2015.
- Carlow Camogie on winning the Junior Camogie Final 2015.
- Bennekerry Tinryland on winning the Ladies Football Senior A County Championship.
- Eoin Lyng, Head of IT and his staff on the excellent new Carlow County Council Website Page.
- All involved with the success of the National Dawn Walk over Mount Leinster in aid of cancer
- All the County Carlow participants, mentors, parents, guardians and organisers on competing in the National Community Games Finals in Athlone.
- Tommy Caulfield, Ballymurphy on competing in the ‘Strongman’ Competition.
- The Foley Family, Aughabeg, Bagenalstown on competing in the junior section at RDS Horseshow 2015.
- O’Hara’s Carlow Brewing Company on being awarded €200,000 under Failte Ireland Capital Grants Scheme.
- Graiguecullen Minor Football Team on winning the Laois Minor Football Championship
- The Committee involved with the success of ‘Elvis Roots Festival’, held in Hacketstown.

1. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Proposed by Councillor D. Foley
Seconded by Councillor W. Quinn
AND

Following a showing of hands it was unanimously resolved:-

“That the Minutes of the July Monthly Meeting of Carlow County Council held in the Council Chamber, County Offices, Athy Road, Carlow, on 6th

July 2015, at 2.00p.m having been circulated to each Member be taken as read, confirmed as to accuracy and accordingly signed.

Proposed by Councillor W. Lacey
Seconded by Councillor J. Murphy
AND

Following a showing of hands it was unanimously resolved:-
 “That the Minutes of the Special Meeting of Carlow County Council held in the Council Chamber, County Offices, Athy Road, Carlow, on Tuesday 11th August, 2015 at 11.30 a.m having been circulated to each Member be taken as read, confirmed as to accuracy and accordingly signed.

In response to Councillor Phelan’s query the Chief Executive advised that no Ministerial Order has been received in relation to amendments made to the recommendations in the Chief Executive’s Report to Carlow County Development Plan 2015-2021.

Councillor McDonald made reference to the design of bridge at Bagenalstown. He advised that the engineering department at Carlow Institute of Technology has indicated their interest in this project to advance their students’ knowledge and expertise. Councillor McDonald said this would resolve funding issues for Carlow County Council and help advance the project. The Chief Executive welcomed the suggestion as Carlow County Council and Carlow Institute of Technology have collaborated on a number of projects. Councillors Phelan, Foley and Gladney supported this initiative.

2. CIRCULARS

(a) Circular RW 12/2015 Speed Limit Funding for 30 km/h in Housing Areas

Members noted Circular RW 12/2015 setting out details of allocation of €65,400 towards signage in housing areas in 2015. This allocation allows for the provision of the total number of portable speed measurement devices requested by Carlow County Council.

Proposed by Councillor M.Doran
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 approve the funding of €65,400 Speed Limit Funding for 30km/h in Housing Areas as set out in Circular RW12/2015.'

(b) Circular RW 13/2015 Additional Funding under the Restoration Improvement Programme.

Members welcomed the additional funding of €309,700 under the Restoration Improvement Programme bringing the Council's total funding allocation in 2015 under the Restoration Improvement Grant to €2,219,387.

Proposed by Councillor A. McDonald

Seconded by Councillor W.Quinn

AND

Following a showing of hands it was unanimously resolved:-

'That we, the Members of Carlow County Council approve the additional funding of €309,700 under the Restoration Improvement Programme as set out in Circular RW 13/2015.'

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

(a) To agree date for a Special Meeting to consider the setting of a Local Adjustment Factor in accordance with the Finance (Local Property Tax) Act 2012 (as amended).

Proposed by Councillor W. Paton

Seconded by Councillor J. Murphy

AND

Following a showing of hands it was unanimously resolved:-

'That the Special Meeting of Carlow County Council to consider the setting of a Local Adjustment Factor in accordance with the Finance (Local Property Tax) Act 2012 (as amended) be held on Monday 14th September at the conclusion of the September Meeting of Council'.

(b) Hacketstown Training and Development Centre – Planning and Development Act 2000 (Part XI); Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (Part VIII).

Gerard Guerin, Chief Fire Officer gave an overview to Members on the proposed expansion and development of the Training and Development Centre in Hacketstown. It will further advance the current Training and Development Centre which provides specialist training for fire fighters in the South East of Ireland and is wholly owned by Carlow County Council. It is envisaged that the future development and expansion of the facility will become the largest Training and Development Centre for fire fighters in the country. It is proposed that this expansion will take place on a phased basis over the next 3-5 years. An internal project team has been set up to manage the ongoing operation and the future expansion of the facility with support from the National Directorate.

Members welcomed the initiative and paid tribute to the Chief Fire Officer and his team for their dedication and leadership not just to Carlow Fire and Rescue Service but nationally as well.

The Chief Executive also concurred with the Members sentiments. He advised of requirement under the Planning and Development Act 2001 Part 8 for Members approval to initiate the process.

Proposed by Councillor B. O'Donohoe

Seconded by Councillor J. Pender

AND

Following a showing of hands it was unanimously resolved:-

'That we, the Members of Carlow County Council hereby approve the initiating of the processes required to be carried out in accordance with the Planning and Development Act 2000 (Part XI) Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (Part V111) for the expansion of development at Hacketstown Training and Development Centre.'

Councillor Quinn raised issue in relation to new regulations for one off housing. The Chief Fire Officer advised that the Minister for the Environment has removed the mandatory requirement for statutory certificates of compliance with building standards to be produced for single unit development and domestic extensions. An owner will be given the choice to opt out of statutory certification and may instead demonstrate by alternative means that they have met their general obligation. The inspection system imposed a huge cost burden on builders of single homes as certifiers sought substantial fees. A Local Authority inspection process will be developed. Owners who wish to invest in statutory certification may continue to do so.

The Chief Fire Officer also advised that Local Authorities will no longer be exempt from S.I.9 regulations.

The new regulations came into effect on 1st September 2015.

Notice of Motion

Standing in the name of Cllr. William Paton

"That Carlow County Council host a page on its website outlining the location of defibrillators in the county and whether or not the defibrillator is available 24/7" (c/f from July Agenda)

A discussion took place on the location, accessibility and maintenance of defibrillators in the county.

The Chief Fire Officer advised that the best way forward is by collaboration with a number of stakeholders. He said he would like to see the National Ambulance Service and the HSE to the forefront. He advised of communication with Anthony Byrne of the National Ambulance Service to progress the matter. A meeting is scheduled for the 7th October in Carlow Fire Station and an invitation to attend will issue to all stakeholders. At this meeting discussions will take place as to the best way forward.

Councillor Ahern paid tribute to the Barry Geoghegan Trust Fund for their fund raising efforts towards the provision of defibrillators at various locations in County Carlow.

Members thanked the Chief Fire Officer for bringing this issue forward for the benefit of everyone in County Carlow.

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

(a) Establishment of statutory committee to carry out Review of the Local Government Boundary between County Carlow and County Laois.

A discussion took place in relation to the establishment of statutory committee to carry out review of Local Government Boundary between County Carlow and County Laois.

E. Brophy advised of independent committee to carry out review.

Members queried if it is a review for administrative purposes only or a boundary review. E. Brophy advised that the Terms of Reference refers to boundary review between County Carlow and County Laois.

Members queried the financial and other relevant implications and if all services will recognise boundary changes.

E. Brophy advised that the review is at a preliminary stage. The committee will meet with the elected Members. There will be a public advertisement and a special website to advise of the process.

B.O'Brien advised Members that issues of concern may be addressed at meeting to be arranged by the Committee with the Members.

E. Brophy will act as the Liaison Officer between the Council and the Committee.

(a) Health

The following issues are to be raised by the Members at the Health Service Executive Committee South meeting.

- Councillor McDonald raised issue of 92 year old woman receiving only 10 minutes Home Care help per day.
- Councillor Murnane-O'Connor raised issue of the number of people on trolleys in Waterford General Hospital and the practice of referring patients on two year waiting list to Mullingar Private Hospital for surgical procedures. This practice puts extra burden on patients who are not in a position to provide their own means of transport.
- Councillor O'Donohoe raised issue of patients in the Hacketstown area having to wait to receive a GP appointment in the absence of a full time GP.
- Councillor Gladney raised issue of patients having to wait four years for appointments with consultants
- Councillor Cassin raised issue of lack of adequate Mental Health Services in Carlow/Kilkenny. Councillor Gladney and Phelan supported Councillor Cassin. Councillor Phelan requested that the HSE be invited to attend a meeting of Carlow County Council to address Members concerns.
- Councillor Paton raised issue of patients having to travel from Tullow to Rathvilly in order to avail of the free U/6 medical card service.

Meeting Adjourned at 3.45p.m to facilitate presentation to Ms. Rachel Doyle of Arboretum Garden Centre, Leighlinbridge.

The Cathairleach welcomed Rachel Doyle, her husband Frank, son Fergal and extended family to the Chamber. The presentation was to honour Ms Doyle on being elected President of The International Garden Centre Association 2013-2015.

E. Brophy gave an overview of Ms Doyle's achievements to date culminating in her election as the first Irish President of The International Garden Centre Association.

The Members paid glowing tributes to Ms. Doyle as an entrepreneur. They praised her enthusiasm, her expertise, her passion and her commitment to staff making the Arboretum Garden Centre, Carlow a centre of excellence. The Members also thanked her for promoting Carlow at every opportunity and for her readiness to mentor and offer help and advice to individuals and organisations working towards the betterment of County Carlow.

Members also spoke of her proactive role with Carlow Tourism.

Ms Doyle thanked the Members for their kind words and said to be honoured and recognised by her Home County was greatly appreciated and cherished. She thanked her husband Frank, sons Barry and Fergal and extended family for their support. She also thanked Carlow County Council for their support through the years.

Ms Doyle was also wished well with her new outlet in County Wicklow.

The Cathairleach made a presentation to Ms Doyle to honour her election as President of the International Garden Centre Association 2013-2015.

Presentation by the Carlow Barrow Users Group

The Cathairleach welcomed Rosalind Murray and Art Mooney of Carlow Barrow Users Group to the Chamber.

Ms Murray said, in her presentation to Members, that to change the grassy surface of the Barrow Track towpath would irreversibly destroy the fabric of this well known, established and unique amenity. She said to replace the grassy sod with hard surface material would damage the banks and threaten wildlife. The River Barrow is a special area of conservation and the towpath is recognised as a unique habitat for all kinds of flora and fauna. The existing grassy surface is shared by walkers, joggers, cyclists and anglers alike and should be maintained as it is.

Ms Murray said the grassy surface dictates the pace. No one can go so fast that they intimidate or endanger other users.

Mr. Mooney advised that if an unbound two metre hard surface strip is put down it will be impermeable and there will not be room for people who wish to walk on the grassy surface. He also spoke of the disruption to wildlife if

machinery is brought in to carry out the works and to maintain the hard core surface.

He acknowledged remedial work is required along sections of the towpath and funding should go to improving these areas.

Following the presentation queries raised by the Members were addressed by Ms. Murray and Mr. Mooney.

Notice of Motion

Standing in the names of Cllr. Jennifer Murnane O'Connor, Charlie Murphy, Thomas Kinsella, Ann Ahern (nee Long), Brian O'Donoghue, Andy Gladney, John Cassin, Jim Deane, Denis Foley, John Pender & Walter Lacey

“That Carlow County Council resolves pursuant to sections 54 and 55 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended that the towpath/track along the River Barrow within the administrative boundaries of the County Carlow – and for the avoidance of doubt the existing drains, the grass surface of the towpath/track and riverbank forming part of the curtilage thereof be added to the Carlow County Record of Protected Structures as it is considered that the said addition thereto is necessary and desirable in order to protect the structure, namely the said towpath/track along the River Barrow which is of special historical, archaeological, cultural, scientific, artistic, social and technical interest.”

B. O'Brien advised in her report that the above Notice of Motion has been referred to Waterways Ireland and the National Parks and Wildlife Service Section of the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht for observation. The Notice of Motion has also been referred to a Conservation Specialist.

Members noted response from Waterways Ireland.

Councillor Doran proposed that, as the Barrow is a Special Area of Conservation and in the absence of a Conservationist Report, the Notice of Motion be withdrawn. He said if the towpath/track along the River Barrow was added to the Carlow County Council Record of Protected Structures it may have serious consequences for development and amenity and leisure facilities in the area.

Councillor Paton concurred with Councillor Doran and queried the definition of a Protective Structure and if the towpath could be defined as a structure.

Following discussion Councillor Doran's proposal was deemed invalid as two of the eleven Members who initiated and signed the Notice of Motion proposed a deferral of the Notice of Motion.

It was Proposed by Councillor Gladney and Seconded by Councillor Cassin that this Notice of Motion be deferred.

A vote was taken as follows:

<i>Member of Carlow County Council</i>	<i>For</i>	<i>Against</i>	<i>Abstain</i>	<i>Absent</i>
Ann Ahern nee Long	√			
Fergal Browne	√			
John Cassin	√			
Jim Deane	√			
Michael Doran		√		
Denis Foley		√		
Andy Gladney	√			
Thomas Kinsella			√	
Walter Lacey	√			
Arthur McDonald	√			
Jennifer Murnane O'Connor	√			
Charlie Murphy	√			
John Murphy		√		

Brian O'Donoghue		√		
William Paton		√		
John Pender	√			
Fintan Phelan	√			
William Quinn			√	

The vote resulted in: 11 for, 5 against and 2 abstentions

The Meeting adjourned at 5.00p.m to facilitate the holding of Special Meeting setting the Local Property Tax (Local Adjustment Factor) 2016.

The Meeting resumed at 6.15p.m. The following Members were not present for the remainder of the meeting;- Councillors Ahern, Phelan, Pender and Murnane-O'Connor.

(b) Regulation of Lobbying Act 2015

Members had report from E. Brophy on the Lobbying Act 2015 and Guidance for Local Authorities Members on the Regulation of Lobbying Act 2015.

(c) Tenders for opening, if any

Members noted tenders opened since last Council meeting.

(e) Conference Attendance Approvals

Members unanimously agreed to the attendance at Conferences listed hereunder.

Govt Rethink on Districts: Municipal/Borough/Metropolitan
White's Hotel
Wexford
11th - 13th September 2015

Fee: €145

Environment Ireland 11 th Annual Conference Croke Park Dublin 16 th September 2015	Fee: €301.35
Regulation of Lobbying Act Four Seasons Hotel Carlingford, Co Louth 18 th - 20 th September 2015	Fee: €100
Public Affairs: Looking Beyond 2016 Chartered Accountants House 47-49 Pearse Street, Dublin 2 9 th October 2015	Fee: €239.85
National Disability Conference Croke Park Dublin 12 th October 2015	Fee: €0
National Freedom of Information Conference Hotel Kilkenny Kilkenny 22 nd October 2015	Fee: €375
Housing Conference 2015 A New Direction for Social Housing Chartered Accountants House 47-49 Pearse Street, Dublin 2 23 rd October 2015	Fee: €239.85
2015 ICSH Biennial Conference Tullamore Court Hotel Tullamore Co Offaly 16 th to 17 th September 2015	Fee: €290
Drugs and Alcohol Seminar Ballsbridge Hotel Dublin 24 th September 2015	Fee: €380

5. Chief Executives Monthly Management Report

Members noted Chief Executive's Monthly Management Report for the period 1st July to 31st August, 2015. The report outlined the main activities of Carlow County Council across the various service areas.

6. CORRESPONDENCE

Members had correspondence from Carlow Pipe Band formally requesting the attendance of two of their members at October's monthly meeting of Council to address the Members.

Carlow Pipe Band seeks financial support as well as backing from Carlow County Council so that they can promote and represent the county locally, nationally and internationally.

This item was deferred to the October meeting of Council.

Members had request by email from Annette Fox of Older Persons Forum requesting the opportunity to talk to the members about their work and the opportunities and challenges for older persons in Carlow.

This item was deferred to the October meeting of Council.

Members noted resolution from Monaghan County Council

'That in view of the work carried out by the Kevin Bell Repatriation Trust (KBRT) bringing home the remains of people who die as a result of an accident/tragic circumstances abroad, for burial at home in Ireland, and in view of the fact that KBRT is a non-profit making registered charity and operates on a voluntary basis, that Monaghan County Council calls on the Minister for Foreign Affairs to ensure that funding is allocated on an annual basis to the KBRT, thereby ensuring the viability of the KBRT into the future.'

Members noted resolution from The Municipal District of Carrickmacross – Castleblaney

'That Carrickmacross/Castleblaney Municipal District immediately calls on the Minister for Agriculture Simon Coveney, to intervene to ensure that maps that are being used for the new GLAS Environment Scheme, are the same as those used for the REPS Scheme which ends this year as there are serious discrepancies in the maps being used presently.'

Members noted notice of motion from Cork County Council

‘That State job activation measures should be available to all who are unemployed, not only to those on the Live Register. That if passed this motion would be circulated to all local authorities in the country for support.’

Members noted notices of motion from Leitrim County Council

‘That Leitrim County Council call on the Department of Agriculture and Minister Simon Coveney to reverse, the unjust Single Farm Payment cuts and penalties imposed on farmers, in marginal and disadvantaged areas across rural Ireland. Many farmers are struggling to survive, with loss of income and penalties imposed on farm land which had been actively farmed and properly maintained for generations but was deemed ineligible and not fit for farming in 2013. I also call on the Minister to cease all Land eligibility, ground and aerial satellite inspections, until this unfair situation is resolved.’

‘That Leitrim County Council write to the Minister for Agriculture, Mr. Simon Coveney not to implement the new regulations in regard to farmers having to get Planning Permission to replace existing fencing when erecting new fences on their lands.’

Members noted correspondence from the Office of the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation in response to Members correspondence regarding delays in obtaining type approval for commercial vehicles from the National Standards Authority of Ireland.

Members noted correspondence from the National Roads Authority in response to Members correspondence regarding the speed limit zone on the R448 between Kildare and Carlow County boundaries.

Members noted resolution from Donegal County Council.

‘For this Council to request that An Taoiseach Enda Kenny to formally ask the US Ambassador to Ireland to include Ireland in the next round of visa waivers for our undocumented Irish, and that this Council contacts all other Councils to request same.’

Members noted resolution from Clare County Council

‘In view of the extreme shortage of housing in County Clare and the difficulties elected members have in fully engaging with the process, I am asking the C.E.O. of Clare County Council, the Commissioner of Data Protection, the Minister for Justice and the Minister for Housing – what specific legal provisions are there to prevent members of this Council from assessing information held by the local

authority with regard to housing policy, housing provision, housing allocation and any other housing matters, and to address any such legislative anomalies so as to remove restrictions on local authority members fully exercising their mandated role as public representatives.'

Members noted resolution from Limerick City and County Council

'That, the relevant Ministers for Agriculture and Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht are contacted about the unsatisfactory situation regarding the marketability of lands designated for the hen harrier; in particular, where a farmer wants to upgrade his/her farm by purchasing non-designated agricultural lands from the sale proceeds of the designated land, that we call on the State to either purchase the relevant land at forestry value or remove the designation so the forestry companies can purchase and plant same.'

Members noted correspondence from Tullowphelim Historical Society Ltd. thanking Carlow County Council for the grant of €2,000 for the Tullow Museum.

7. Notices of Motion.

Standing in the names of Cllr. Jennifer Murnane O'Connor and Fintan Phelan

"That Carlow County Council put in place a programme now and going forward every year for security in Carlow Town Park i.e. Park Rangers, CCTV and in consultation with the local gardai because of the problem with litter and anti social behaviour in the park."

This Motion of Motion did not proceed as Councillors Murnane O'Connor and Phelan were not present in the Chamber to bring the Motion forward.

Standing in the name of Cllr. Jennifer Murnane O'Connor,

"That Carlow County Council re-examine parking issues in the Town Centre. With the amount of shop closures in the town we need to give incentives to people to come to Carlow Town Centre to shop i.e. free parking."

This Motion of Motion did not proceed as Councillor Murnane O'Connor was not present in the Chamber to bring the Motion forward.

Standing in the Name of Cllr. Arthur McDonald

“That Carlow County Council write to An Post and the Minister Ann Phelan asking for Bilboa Post Office to remain open as it provides a vital service to the people of Carlow, Kilkenny and Laois and has been in existence for the past 87 years. This service is vital to the rural community.”

Standing in the name of Cllrs. William Quinn and William Paton

That this Council calls on the Government to cease the closure of Rural Post Offices and Gardai Stations. In particular, this Council calls on Government to safeguard the future of the Post Office at Bilboa, County Carlow.

A discussion took place in relation to the above Notices of Motion to safeguard the future of Bilboa Post Office, Co. Carlow. Councillor Deane said people should be encouraged to support local and urged people to use their local Post Office.

Councillor Paton proposed that the Notices of Motion be combined and amended to read as follows:-

That Carlow County Council write to the Minister Ann Phelan and An Post asking for Bilboa Post Office, Co. Carlow to remain open as it provides a vital service for the people of Carlow, Kilkenny and Laois.

Proposed by Councillor W. Paton

Seconded by Councillor A. McDonald

AND

Following a showing of hands it was unanimously resolved:-

‘That Carlow County Council write to the Minister Ann Phelan and An Post asking for Bilboa Post Office, Co. Carlow to remain open as it provides a vital service for the people of Carlow, Kilkenny and Laois.

8 Any other business with the consent of the Cathaoirleach.

Councillor Quinn queried 1916 funding for ‘Borris Volunteers Project’.

Councillor Paton advised that the project did not comply with all the necessary criteria to qualify for funding.

Councillor Cassin proposed that Carlow County Council purchase the old St. Brigid's Hospital, Dublin Street, currently under NAMA and due to go to auction in November. He said the building comprises of 29 rooms and would be suitable as emergency accommodation in the current housing crisis. Councillor Paton supported Councillor Cassin's proposal and said there is a growing homelessness crisis in Carlow as rents are higher than the Housing Assistance Payments (HAP) and landlords are not accepting HAP.

Councillor Paton called on Carlow County Council to acquire vacant houses with particular mention of Fruithill Housing Estate and queried how quickly existing near habitable houses can be brought into the Council's housing stock. Councillor Paton also queried if the Government had made any demands on Carlow to house refugees/migrants.

The Chief Executive advised that the IDA will be attending the October meeting of Council.

This concluded the business of the meeting.