

Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

Ordinary Meeting

8th April 2024 @ 1.30p.m.

Buvinda House, Navan (and online via zoom)

Presiding

An Cathaoirleach, Councillor Tommy Reilly

Councillors Present:

Councillors, Joseph Bonner, Eugene Cassidy, Francis Deane, Aisling Dempsey, Edward Fennessy, Brian Fitzgerald, Padraig Fitzsimons, Joe Fox, Noel French, Michael Gallagher, David Gilroy, Trevor Golden, Wayne Harding, Geraldine Keogan, Nick Killian, Alan Lawes, Paul McCabe, Paddy Meade, Helen Meyer, Ronan Moore, Gerry O'Connor, Caroline O'Reilly, Amanda Smith, Emer Tóibín, Sharon Tolan, Gillian Toole.

Councillors Present via Zoom:

Councillors Yemi Adenuga, Mike Bray, Sean Drew, Deirdre Geraghty-Smith, Suzanne Jamal, Stephen McKee, Maria Murphy, Sarah Reilly, Niamh Souhan, Alan Tobin, Conor Tormey.

Apologies: Councillors Tom Behan, Elaine McGinty

Officials in attendance:

Chief Executive: Kieran Kehoe

Directors of Service: Des Foley, Fiona Lawless, Barry Lynch, Dara McGowan, Martin Murray, Fiona Fallon

Meetings Administrator: Elaine Daly

1 Confirmation of Minutes

1.1 Confirmation of minutes of Ordinary meeting held on 4th March 2024.

The minutes of the Ordinary meeting held on 4th March 2024 were confirmed on the proposal of **Councillor Gillian Toole** and seconded by **Councillor Nick Killian**.

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2 Matters arising from the Minutes

Councillor Gillian Toole raised the following matters:

- School Safety at Rathbeggan National School
- Ongoing issues relating to flight paths at Dublin Airport

3 Expressions of Sympathy and Congratulations

3.1 Expressions of sympathy were extended to:

Louise Cavalier, Library Services, on the death of her mother, Jane (Jenny) Leonard.

Grainne McCarthy, Human Resources, on the death of her mother, Cecilia O'Brien.

3.2 Expressions of congratulations were extended to:

Liam Foley on winning the double gold at the Trisome Games World Championship 2024.

The voters in the recent care and family referenda for resoundingly voting against the Government's proposal to change the Constitution.

4 Disposal of Land in accordance with Statutory Notices circulated pursuant to the provisions of Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001

- 4.1 Disposal of 0.0220Ha of land at Johnstown, Dunshaughlin, Co. Meath, in accordance with Section 211 of Planning & Development Act 2000 and subject to the provisions of Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001. The lands are not affected by the provisions of the Land Development Agency Act 2021.

The disposal, in accordance with the statutory notice issued on January 30, 2024, under Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001, was approved on the proposal of **Councillor Gillian Toole** and seconded by **Councillor Brian Fitzgerald**.

5 Statutory Business

5.1 Corporate Affairs and Governance

- 5.1.1 To note the Meath County Council Progress Report 2019 - 2024.

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The Chief Executive introduced the report. He noted the significant spend of almost €1.5bn in the past five years, across all service departments within the Council. He acknowledged the significant role of the Councillors and paid tribute to his predecessors Ms. Jackie Maguire and Ms. Fiona Lawless. There were interventions from **Councillors David Gilroy; Michael Gallagher; Noel French; Joe Fox; Trevor Golden; Sharon Tolan; Gillian Toole; Nick Killian; Brian Fitzgerald; Eugene Cassidy; Gerry O'Connor; Joe Bonner; Emer Tóibín; Ronan Moore; Alan Lawes; Yemi Adenuga; Sean Drew; Alan Tobin and An Cathaoirleach.** The Elected Members welcomed the report and the snapshot of achievements were noted including the investment in Housing, Greenways, Age Friendly Programmes as well as the impact on communities. The ongoing commitment and support of community and voluntary organisations was noted. It was further noted that the Council would continue to build on progress to date.

An Cathaoirleach Councillor Tommy Reilly left the meeting at 3.00pm and the **Leas-Chathaoirleach, Councillor Paul McCabe** presided in his absence.

- 5.1.2 To consider the Audit Committee Annual Report 2023 from Mr. Tom McGuinness, Chair of the Audit Committee.

Ms. Fiona Lawless welcomed Mr. Tom McGuinness, Chair of Meath Audit Committee to the meeting. She acknowledged the independent role of the Audit Committee in advising the Council on financial reporting processes, internal control, risk management and audit matters, as part of the governance arrangements within the Council.

Mr. McGuinness noted that during the past year the Audit Committee actively engaged with Senior Management, Internal Audit, and the Local Government Auditor in exercising its duties and the Committee is satisfied that it has fulfilled its statutory obligations under the regulation and the Local Government Acts. He further noted that the Committee meets in closed confidential session, without officials present, at the start of each meeting, as this reinforces its independence from the Executive. Finally, he thanked the members of the Audit Committee and the staff of the Council for their ongoing commitment and support and paid tribute to the former Chief Executive, Ms Jackie Maguire.

The report was noted by the Elected Members.

- 5.1.3 To consider the Audit Committee Report in relation to the AFS and LG Auditor's Report 2022.

Mr. McGuinness noted that the members of the Audit Committee had met with the Local Government Auditor in December 2023 to review the Council's Annual Financial Statement.

Councillor Gillian Toole raised a query in relation to the Fixed Assets of the Council, a response was provided by Ms. Fiona Lawless.

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The report was noted by the Elected Members.

5.1.4 To adopt the Audit Committee Charter 2024.

The Audit Committee Charter 2024 was adopted on the proposal of **Councillor Noel French** and seconded by **Councillor Nick Killian**.

5.1.5 To adopt the Audit Committee Annual Work Programme 2024.

The Audit Committee Annual Work Programme 2024 was adopted on the proposal of **Councillor Noel French** and seconded by **Councillor Gillian Toole**.

There were interventions of appreciation to Mr. McGuinness and the members of the Audit Committee from **Councillors Gerry O'Connor; Alan Tobin** and **An Leas-Chathaoirleach**. The Chief Executive thanked Mr. McGuinness and the members of the Audit Committee for their ongoing commitment and he welcomed their invaluable expertise.

5.2 Community

5.2.1 To approve a replacement member of the Meath LCDC & LAG from the Social Inclusion Pillar of the Public Participation Network, Aileen Brady (nominated by Prosper Meath)

On the proposal of **Councillor Brian Fitzgerald** and seconded by **Councillor Alan Lawes**, Ms. Aileen Brady was approved as a replacement member of the Meath LCDC & LAG from the Social Inclusion Pillar of the Public Participation Network.

6 Reports

6.1 Chief Executive's Report

There were interventions from **Councillors Nick Killian; Gillian Toole; Joe Bonner; Paul McCabe; Alan Tobin; Alan Lawes; Helen Meyer** and **Sean Drew**. Local Authority matters raised included:

Housing: Acquisition of Land, Homelessness, Emergency Accommodation, Hostel, Judicial Reviews for Housing Schemes

Planning: Taking in Charge, Solar Farms, Planning Conditions for Planting,

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Transport: Ratoath Outer Relief Road, Roadworks in Ashbourne,

Community: Community Integration Forum,

Econ. Dev: Centre for Food Culture,

In addition, matters relating to Uisce Eireann and Bus Services in Ashbourne were raised. Responses to queries raised were provided by Ms. Fiona Fallon, Mr. Barry Lynch, Mr. Martin Murray, Mr. Dara McGowan, Mr. Des Foley and the Chief Executive.

An Cathaoirleach Councillor Tommy Reilly returned to the meeting at 3.30pm and presided over the meeting.

6.2 Report from the Corporate Policy Group

The Meetings Administrator reported that the CPG met on Friday, April 5, 2024, and reviewed the agenda for the April Council meeting. She further noted that the members had been updated on the recent activities of the Economic Development Forum and that the Action Plan of short and medium term actions would be brought before the Economic Development SPC and the Council at the May Council meeting. It was further noted that the recent acquired River View Building would accommodate a Business Centre of Excellence for the County.

Ms. Daly noted that the members of the CPG had agreed that the May Council meeting, being the last meeting of this Council Term, should be held in person only. It was noted that this would require the agreement of the majority of the Elected Members and that an email had issued to the Elected Members in that regard.

Ms. Daly further noted that the schedule of meeting dates for Plenary Council and Municipal District AGMs and July Council meetings had been agreed and these would be brought before the full Council for resolution at the May Council meeting.

Finally Ms. Daly advised that the Transportation SPC of 21st March 2024 were noted. In addition, the recommendation from the Housing, Community and Cultural Development SPC that one of the members of the SPC should sit on the Community Integration Forum was agreed and the minutes of the meeting were noted.

6.3 Report from the Protocol Committee

The Meetings Administrator reported that the Protocol Committee held a special meeting on Tuesday, April 2, 2024 and that the Committee had agreed to refer the previously deferred Notice of Motion back to the full Council without an opinion.

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Ms. Daly further reported that the Protocol Committee met on Friday April 5, 2024 and had discussed the proposals for the May Council Meeting, as well as the schedule of meeting dates for Plenary Council and Municipal District AGMs and July Council meetings.

Finally, Ms. Daly noted that the Conference and Training Schedules were approved.

7 Correspondence

Correspondence was noted by the Elected Members.

8 Notice of Question

8.1 Submitted by Councillor Elaine McGinty

“Can Meath County Council commit to allocating additional resources for the recruitment of extra dog and litter wardens across the county?”

Response

No grant funding has been allocated or no provision made in the Council’s revenue budget for the recruitment of additional dog/litter wardens but should the position change the matter can be re-examined as part of the Budget 2025 review.

The response was noted by the Elected Members.

8.2 Submitted by Councillor Helen Meyer

“To ask Meath County Council to provide details of all public parks per MD and what measures the Council is taking to deliver on the public park objectives in the current County Development Plan, most particularly in areas where the Council has little or no publicly-owned land including if Meath County Council has ever purchased land, through CPO or otherwise, for the purposes of delivering public parks.”

Response

Meath County Development Plan, has objectives to deliver public parks in towns and villages. The update on the delivery of these parks can be seen in the 2 year progress report of the County Development Plan. Meath has to date, not used CPO to deliver public parks.



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<u>NAVAN MD</u>	<u>TRIM MD</u>	<u>ASHBOURNE MD</u>	<u>RATOATH MD</u>	<u>LAYTOWN BETTYSTOWN MD</u>	<u>KELLS MD</u>
Blackwater Park, Navan	Norman Pratt Park, Dublin Rd, Trim	Linear Park, Ashbourne	Dunshaughlin Park	Slane – Beside N2 at Slane Bridge	Fair Green Kells
Andy Brennan Park, Navan	Maudlins (Our Lady), Dublin Road, Trim	Deerpark, Ashbourne	Dunboyne Park	Duleek Station Road	People’s Park Lloyd
	Millennium Park, Avondale, Trim	Millenium Park, Ashbourne		Laytown 1916 garden	Deerpark cowpark Carlanstown
	Trim Castle Park and Amenity Area, Castle St, Trim	Balrath Woods, Kentstown (maintained by MCC but not owned by MCC)		Laytown Seafields	Athboy Cowpark
	Trim Porchfields			Julianstown Community Garden	

Councillor Helen Meyer sought clarification on the details, with response provided by Ms. Fiona Fallon.

The response was noted by the Elected Members.

8.3 Submitted by Councillor Emer Tóibín

“To ask Meath County Council to outline in tabular form how many long-term housing leases are there across the county per MD per year since 2015 and how much it costs per MD per year.”

Response

Year	2023		2022		2021		2020		2019	
Municipal District	No of Units	Amount	No of Units	Amount	No of Units	Amount	No of Units	Amount	No of Units	Amount
Ashbourne	7	98,934	6	77,291	3	43,147	3	41,542	3	40,435
Kells	4	46,136	3	36,887	3	36,048	3	33,521	3	32,760
Laytown / Bettystown	49	442,623	25	202,682	25	202,160	25	196,726	25	192,196
Navan	73	956,880	72	939,882	58	714,382	22	161,114	4	37,741
Ratoath	1	13,665	1	13,260	1	13,260	1	13,296	1	6,685
Trim	4	50,520	4	43,537	2	22,200	2	20,513	2	19,432
Totals	138	1,608,758	111	1,313,539	92	1,031,197	56	466,712	38	329,249

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The response was noted by the Elected Members.

9 Notice of Motion

9.1 Submitted by Councillor Elaine McGinty

“To ask Meath County Council to consider the introduction of columbarium walls in the cemeteries under its management.”

Supporting Information subject to the motion being proposed, seconded and considered.

The Council has initiated a tender process for the procurement of suitably qualified Contractors for the development of Columbarium Walls and Urn Plots in The Good Shepard Cemetery Duleek, St Declan’s Ashbourne, St Finian’s Navan and Rooske Cemetery Dunboyne.

The Columbarium Walls in each Cemetery will be developed to accommodate 80 niches over two blocks- one block has already been developed as part of the extension to Rooske Cemetery. The development of the plots in the four cemeteries will accommodate circa 900 urn burials. It is hoped that construction works will commence in Q3 2024.

It is also proposed to include Columbarium Walls and Urn Plots within the Loganstown Trim Cemetry which is at an advanced stage of development, and within the new Cemetry in Stamullen which is currently the subject of a detailed design tender process.

The Meetings Administrator advised that the motion would be postponed to the May Council meeting, in accordance with Standing Order No. 18.3.

9.2 Submitted by Councillor Helen Meyer

“To call on Meath County Council to prepare a standard protocol for traffic calming measures outside schools to include a standard approach to assessing and mitigating risk and a clearly outlined plan regarding the measures selected and the implementation of those measures.”

Supporting Information subject to the motion being proposed, seconded and considered.

In assessing and mitigating risk on public roads outside schools, Meath County Council has regard to the following programmes and strategies:

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- An Taisce’s Safe Routes to School Programme, which aims to improve ongoing issues of safety and congestion at the school gate and on routes to school. The programme involves eight stages: dissemination, expression of interest, selection, communication and liaison, interventions, submission, community support and delivery. The programme includes a Safe Routes to School Design Guide, which references other relevant national design guides and provides a standard approach to design.
- Meath County Council’s Road Safety Plan 2023 – 2024.
- Meath County Development Plan 2021 – 2027.

Councillor Helen Meyer introduced the motion noting that she was aware of four schools in the area who were dissatisfied with current road safety measures at the school. There were interventions and queries from **Councillors Michael Gallagher** and **Alan Tobin**. Responses to queries raised were provided by Mr. Martin Murray.

The motion proposed by **Councillor Helen Meyer** and seconded by **Councillor Michael Gallagher** was agreed.

9.3 Submitted by Councillor Helen Meyer

“That Meath County Council request a substantial increase in funding from the Department of Transportation for the Community Involvement Scheme (CIS) so that roads that are heavily used and taken in charge by the council can be maintained in a timely manner.”

Supporting Information subject to the motion being proposed, seconded and considered.

Meath County Council spends the full allocation of CIS funding and would welcome any additional funding made available under this specific scheme.

Councillor Helen Meyer introduced the motion and acknowledged the number of applications for the Scheme.

The motion proposed by **Councillor Helen Meyer** and seconded by **Councillor Michael Gallagher** was agreed.

9.4 Submitted by Councillor Mike Bray

“To call on Meath County Council to engage with the relevant authorities to begin the process of developing a bus lane in the area between the Southern M3 Toll Plaza and

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Mulhuddart with the view to improving bus journey times for commuters and other bus users travelling to Dublin.”

Supporting Information subject to the motion being proposed, seconded and considered.

Meath County Council does not have direct responsibility for the provision of bus infrastructure. However, we are committed to working with the National Transport Authority (NTA) in the delivery of strategic transportation projects and infrastructural improvements.

Councillor Mike Bray introduced the motion and noted the significant delays in commuter traffic and the impact that a designated bus lane would have. There were interventions from **Councillors David Gilroy; Maria Murphy** and **Trevor Golden**.

Councillor Trevor Golden proposed an amendment which was seconded by **Councillor Emer Tóibín** and agreed as follows:

“To call on Meath County Council to engage with the relevant authorities to begin the process of developing a bus lane in the area between the Southern M3 Toll Plaza and Mulhuddart and other major arterial routes into Dublin, with the view to improving bus journey times for commuters and other bus users travelling to Dublin.”

The motion, as amended, proposed by **Councillor Mike Bray** and seconded by **Councillor David Gilroy** was agreed.

10 General Interest Motions

10.1 Submitted by Councillor Ronan Moore

“To call on the Minister for Justice to refine the National Garda Vetting Process, so as to create a transferable Garda Vetting license, that once issued to vetted applicants can be employed across all roles where Garda Vetting is required thereby eliminating the costly and time-consuming practice of repeatedly vetting the same individuals when they apply for new roles of interest.”

Councillor Ronan Moore introduced the motion. He noted the significant number of Garda Vetting applications and the duplication of applications by individuals and he called for the creation of a Garda Transferable Licence. There were interventions from **Councillors Maria Murphy; Gerry O’Connor** and **Gillian Toole**. The different requirements for Garda Vetting were noted.

The motion proposed by **Councillor Ronan Moore** and seconded by **Councillor Joe Bonner** was agreed. **Councillor Maria Murphy** dissented from the Motion.

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10.2 Submitted by Councillor Ronan Moore

"That Meath County Council requests from the relevant government departments and agencies, clear visibility of all maintenance plans and/or schedules for all major assets in the county that are in the control of national agencies e.g. reservoirs; water treatment plants; sewer plants, etc."

Councillor Ronan Moore introduced the motion, noting the significant impact the failure of the assets would have on constituents.

The motion proposed by **Councillor Ronan Moore** and seconded by **Councillor Joe Bonner** was agreed.

10.3 Submitted by Councillor Emer Tóibín

"That Meath County Council calls on the Government to copper fasten women's identity in all future legislation pertaining to women's rights and words like woman, maternal and womanhood are never diluted, diminished or deleted from laws or regulations going forward."

Councillor Emer Tóibín introduced the motion, including an outline of the background of the motion, and she called for words like woman, maternal, and womanhood to be retained in legislation.

There were interventions and queries from **Councillors Ronan Moore; Sharon Tolan; Gillian Toole; David Gilroy** and **Gerry O'Connor**. The Meetings Administrator advised that the wording of the motion, as outlined on the agenda, was the matter being put before the Elected Members.

Councillor Sharon Tolan proposed an amendment noting the unique challenges faced by all women, including transgender women. The amendment was seconded by **Councillor Gerry O'Connor**. The amended motion, as follows, was put to a roll call vote.

"That Meath County Council calls on the Government to copper fasten women's identity, including transgender women, in all future legislation pertaining to women's rights and words like woman, maternal and womanhood are protected in laws or regulations going forward."

	For	Against	Abstain	Absent
ADENUGA, Yemi				✓
BEHAN, Tom				✓
BONNER, Joseph				✓
BRAY, Mike				✓
CASSIDY, Eugene	✓			
DEANE, Francis				✓



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DEMPSEY, Aisling	√			
DREW, Sean				√
FENNESSY, Edward				√
FITZGERALD, Brian		√		
FITZSIMONS, Pdraig		√		
FOX, Joe	√			
FRENCH, Noel				√
GALLAGHER, Michael		√		
GERAGHTY-SMITH, Deirdre			√	
GILROY, David		√		
GOLDEN, Trevor				√
HARDING, Wayne				√
JAMAL, Suzanne	√			
KEOGAN, Geraldine				√
KILLIAN, Nick		√		
LAWES, Alan		√		
MC CABE, Paul		√		
MC GINTY, Elaine				√
MC KEE, Stephen				√
MEADE, Paddy				√
MEYER, Helen		√		
MOORE, Ronan	√			
MURPHY, Maria	√			
O'CONNOR, Gerry	√			
O'REILLY, Caroline		√		
REILLY, Sarah				√
REILLY, Tommy		√		
SMITH, Amanda				√
SOUHAN, Niamh	√			
TOBIN, Alan	√			
TÓIBÍN, Emer		√		
TOLAN, Sharon	√			
TOOLE, Gillian		√		
TORMEY, Conor				√

Result: For = 10 votes; Against = 12 votes; Abstain = 1; Not Present = 17. The amended motion fell.

The substantive motion was put to a roll call vote.

	For	Against	Abstain	Absent
ADENUGA, Yemi				√
BEHAN, Tom				√
BONNER, Joseph				√
BRAY, Mike				√
CASSIDY, Eugene		√		

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DEANE, Francis				√
DEMPSEY, Aisling	√			
DREW, Sean				√
FENNESSY, Edward				√
FITZGERALD, Brian	√			
FITZSIMONS, Pdraig	√			
FOX, Joe		√		
FRENCH, Noel				√
GALLAGHER, Michael	√			
GERAGHTY-SMITH, Deirdre	√			
GILROY, David	√			
GOLDEN, Trevor				√
HARDING, Wayne				√
JAMAL, Suzanne		√		
KEOGAN, Geraldine				√
KILLIAN, Nick	√			
LAWES, Alan	√			
MC CABE, Paul	√			
MC GINTY, Elaine				√
MC KEE, Stephen				√
MEADE, Paddy				√
MEYER, Helen	√			
MOORE, Ronan		√		
MURPHY, Maria		√		
O'CONNOR, Gerry		√		
O'REILLY, Caroline	√			
REILLY, Sarah				√
REILLY, Tommy	√			
SMITH, Amanda				√
SOUHAN, Niamh		√		
TOBIN, Alan	√			
TÓIBÍN, Emer	√			
TOLAN, Sharon		√		
TOOLE, Gillian	√			
TORMEY, Conor				√

Result: For = 15 votes; Against = 8 votes; Abstain = 0; Not Present = 17. The substantive motion was carried on the proposal of **Councillor Emer Tóibín** and seconded by **Councillor Gillian Toole**.

11 Schedule of Chief Executive & Approved Orders (For Information Only)

11.1 Schedule of Chief Executive's Orders – Transportation

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Noted by the Elected Members.

11.2 Schedule of Chief Executive's Orders – Environment & Water Services

Noted by the Elected Members.

11.3 Schedule of Chief Executive's Orders – Housing

Noted by the Elected Members.

11.4 Schedule of Chief Executive's Orders – Community & Enterprise

Noted by the Elected Members.

12 Any Other Business

There were interventions from Councillors Gillian Toole and Nick Killian regarding matters pertaining to Uisce Eireann. Mr. Dara McGowan reiterated that such matters were the sole responsibility of Uisce Eireann.

The meeting concluded at 4.55pm