

Miontuairiscí / Meeting Minutes

Ordinary Meeting

27th January 2025 @ 1.30p.m.

Buvinda House, Navan (and online via zoom)

Presiding: An Cathaoirleach, Councillor Sharon Tolan

Councillors Present:

Councillors Fionnán Blake, Joe Bonner, Mike Bray, Peter Caffrey, Eugene Cassidy, Pdraig Coffey, Francis Deane, Sean Drew, Yvonne Everard, Brian Fitzgerald, Pdraig Fitzsimons, Joe Fox, Noel French, Michael Gallagher, David Gilroy, Wayne Harding, Suzanne Jamal, Alan Lawes, Carol Lennon, Helen Meyer, Linda Nelson-Murray, Gerry O'Connor, Caroline O'Reilly, Paul O'Rourke, Sarah Reilly, Amanda Smith, Alan Tobin, Emer Tóibín and Maria White.

Councillors Present via Zoom:

Councillors Yemi Adenuga, Eddie Fennessy, Geraldine Keogan, Nick Killian, Paddy Meade, Ronan Moore, Maria Murphy, and Conor Tormey.

Apologies:

Councillors Dave Boyne and Stephen McKee.

Officials in attendance:

Chief Executive: Kieran Kehoe

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

Meetings Administrator: Elaine Daly

1.0 Confirmation of Minutes

1.1 Confirmation of minutes of Ordinary meeting held on 2nd December 2024

The minutes of the Ordinary meeting held on 2nd December 2024 were confirmed on the proposal of **Councillor Gerry O'Connor** and seconded by **Councillor Sarah Reilly**.

1.2 Confirmation of minutes of Special meeting held on 18th December 2024

The minutes of the Special meeting held on 18th December 2024 were confirmed on the proposal of **Councillor Noel French** and seconded by **Councillor Carol Lennon**.

2.0 Matters arising from the Minutes

None

3.0 Expressions of Sympathy and Congratulations

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Expressions of Sympathy were extended to:

Mr. Denis Lynch, Buvinda House Security on the death of his mother, Teresa Helen Lynch.

Mr. Paul Kelly, Water Services on the death of his father, Don (Donald) Kelly.

Ms. Assumpta Hubble, Library Service on the death of her mother, Frances Brogan.

Ms. Maura Daly, Housing on the death of her mother, Niamh Daly former Councillor of Kells UDC.

Ms. Wendy Bagnall, Planning on the death of her father, Thomas (Tom) Moffett.

Ms. Yvonne Morrisson, Library Service on the death of her mother, Mary Morrisson.

Ms. Rosemary Corr, Housing on the death of her mother, Margaret Corr.

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

- 4.1 To consider the disposal of 0.320Ha of Land by a Freehold Interest at Kells Business Park, Kells Co. Meath, in accordance with Statutory Notice dated 6th January, 2025

The disposal, in accordance with the statutory notice issued on 6th January, 2025 under Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001, was approved on the proposal of **Councillor Sarah Reilly** and seconded by **Councillor Sean Drew**.

- 4.2 To consider the disposal of 0.1127Ha of Land by way of Licence at Townsparks, Kells Co. Meath, in accordance with Statutory Notice dated 28th November, 2024

The disposal, in accordance with the statutory notice issued on 28th November, 2024 under Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001, was approved on the proposal of **Councillor Sean Drew** and seconded by **Councillor Sarah Reilly**.

- 4.3 To consider the disposal of 0.0021Ha of Land by way of transfer of a freehold interest at St Cianan's Villas, Balsaran, Duleek, Co. Meath, in accordance with Statutory Notice dated 30th October, 2024

The disposal, in accordance with the statutory notice issued on 30th October, 2024 under Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001, was approved on the proposal of **Councillor Wayne Harding** and seconded by **Councillor Noel French**.

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- 4.4 To consider the disposal of 0.1523Ha of Land by way of transfer of a freehold interest at Baconstown, Enfield, Co. Meath, in accordance with Statutory Notice dated 14th November, 2024

The disposal, in accordance with the statutory notice issued on 14th November, 2024 under Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001, was approved on the proposal of **Councillor Joe Fox** and seconded by **Councillor Noel French**.

5.0 Statutory Business

5.1 Transportation

- 5.1.1 To receive a presentation from Iarnród Éireann regarding the development of the Navan Rail Line

The Chief Executive welcomed the representatives from Iarnród Éireann, Mr. Paul Hendrick, Director of Capital Investment, Mr. Alan Lord, Director of Development and Design, Capital Investment and Mr. Senan Moynihan, Programme Manager, Capital Investment. He noted that the delivery of the Navan Rail Line was critical for the future development of County Meath.

The Elected Members received a presentation on the development of Navan Rail Line. Key developments in relation to population growth and climate change were noted. In addition, draft objectives for the Scheme were outlined including the development of high-capacity, efficient public transport links between Meath and the Dublin Metropolitan Area from M3 Parkway to Navan. The anticipated date of Q4 2026 for the preferred route approval, in principle, was noted.

There were interventions and queries from Councillors **Wayne Harding; Alan Tobin; Noel French; Brian Fitzgerald; Gerry O'Connor; David Gilroy; Maria Murphy; Linda Nelson-Murray; Mike Bray; Emer Tóibín; Yemi Adenuga; Joe Bonner; Sean Drew; Nick Killian; Ronan Moore; Yemi Adenuga** and **An Cathaoirleach**. Queries raised included proposed costs, timeline for delivery, impact on County Development Plan, process for route selection, engagement with Elected Members, passenger capacities, car-parking arrangements and fare structures. Responses to queries raised were provided by Mr. Senan Moynihan and Mr. Paul Hendrick.

5.2 Planning

- 5.2.1 To consider the Chief Executive's Report in accordance with Section 13(4)(a) of the Planning & Development Act, as amended, on submissions to Proposed Variation No. 3 to the Meath County Development Plan 2021 – 2027, and to consider making, not making or modifying the Proposed Variation.

Mr. Alan Russell, Senior Planner outlined the salient details of the Chief Executive's Report in accordance with Section 13(4)(a) of the Planning & Development Act, as amended, on submissions to Proposed Variation No. 3 to the Meath County Development Plan 2021 – 2027. The process to date was and the role of the Elected Members were noted.



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On the proposal of **Councillor Noel French**, seconded by **Councillor Joe Fox** and unanimously agreed by the Elected Members, it was resolved to make the proposed Variation No. 3 to the Meath County Development Plan 2021 – 2027.

- 5.2.2 To resolve to hold a Council Meeting on 19th February 2025 @ 2.30pm (hybrid) to consider the proposed material alterations and the report of the Chief Executive on the Draft Maynooth & Environs Joint Local Area Plan 2025 – 2031.

On the proposal of **Councillor Joe Fox**, seconded by **Councillor Gerry O'Connor** and unanimously agreed by the Elected Members, it was resolved to hold an ordinary meeting of the Council on 19th February 2025 at 2.30pm (hybrid) to consider the proposed material alterations and the report of the Chief Executive on the Draft Maynooth & Environs Joint Local Area Plan 2025 – 2031.

5.3 Corporate Affairs and Governance

- 5.3.1 To consider the 5 Year Communications Strategy 2024-2029

Ms. Ailish Shaw, Communications Manager, outlined the salient details of the proposed Communications Strategy 2024 – 2029, including the communication objectives, communications resources and performance measurement.

There were interventions from **Councillors Wayne Harding; Ronan Moore; Nick Killian; David Gilroy; Yemi Adenuga; Brian Fitzgerald; Sarah Reilly; Alan Tobin; Gerry O'Connor; Emer Tóibín** and **An Cathaoirleach**. The members welcomed the strategy and acknowledged the high level of communication within the Council. In addition, suggestions for calendar of events and a photo bank facility for Elected Members were noted.

On the proposal of **Councillor Joe Bonner**, seconded by **Councillor Sarah Reilly** and unanimously agreed by the Elected Members, the Meath County Council Communications Strategy 2024 – 2029 was approved.

- 5.3.2 In accordance with Section 134A of the Local Government Act 2001, as amended, to adopt the Meath County Council Annual Service Delivery Plan 2025

Mr. Des Foley, Director of Services outlined the salient details of the Annual Service Delivery Plan.

On the proposal of **Councillor Gerry O'Connor**, seconded by **Councillor Wayne Harding** and unanimously agreed by the Elected Members, the Meath County Council Annual Service Delivery Plan 2025 was adopted.

- 5.3.3 To appoint a Councillor to Boyne Valley Tourism Ltd following the election of former Councillor Aisling Dempsey to Dáil Éireann

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On the proposal of **Councillor Wayne Harding**, seconded by **Councillor Sean Drew** and unanimously agreed by the Elected Members, **Councillor Paul O'Rourke** was appointed to Boyne Valley Tourism Ltd.

- 5.3.4 To appoint a Councillor to the Members Forum of the East Border Region Ltd following the election of former Councillor Aisling Dempsey to Dáil Éireann

On the proposal of **Councillor Wayne Harding**, seconded by **Councillor Padraig Coffey** and unanimously agreed by the Elected Members, **Councillor Paul O'Rourke** was appointed to the East Border Region Ltd.

- 5.3.5 To appoint a Councillor to the Regional Health Forum following the election of former Councillor Gillian Toole to Dáil Éireann

On the proposal of **Councillor Brian Fitzgerald**, seconded by **Councillor Francis Deane** and unanimously agreed by the Elected Members, **Councillor Yvonne Everard** was appointed to the Regional Health Forum.

- 5.3.6 To approve a nomination to Údarás na Gaeltachta for the 2025 and 2026 period

On the proposal of **Councillor Sarah Reilly**, seconded by **Councillor David Gilroy** and unanimously agreed by the Elected Members, Mr. Cathal Joyce/Mr. Cathal Seoige was appointed to Údarás na Gaeltachta.

6.0 Reports

6.1 Management Report

The Chief Executive provided details on the Council's response to Storm Éowyn as well as the humanitarian response of the Local Co-Ordination Group. The Elected Members thanked the staff of Meath County Council and the wider Meath Community for their response during the recent Storm.

There were interventions from **Councillors Nick Killian; Helen Meyer; Wayne Harding; Sarah Reilly; Sean Drew; Mike Bray; Michael Gallagher; Carol Lennon; David Gilroy; Alan Lawes; Maria White; Noel French; Paddy Meade; Fionnan Blake; Brian Fitzgerald; Alan Tobin; Maria Murphy; Emer Tóibín** and **Padraig Coffey**. Matters raised included:

Housing: Aylesbury development, affordable housing, adaptable dwellings, housing inspections, emergency accommodation standards, tenant-in-situ scheme;

Planning: Enforcement timelines, settlement capacity audit;

Community: Ashbourne Skate Park, community integration;

Storm Response: Water locations, boil water notice, power restoration timeframes and communications, tree-felling;

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Transport: Winter gritting, revised speed limits.

Responses to queries raised were provided by Ms. Fiona Fallon; Mr. Pádraig Maguire, Mr. Barry Lynch and Mr. Martin Murray.

6.2 Report from Corporate Policy Group

The Meetings Administrator noted that the CPG met on Monday, January 17, to review the draft agenda and arrangements for the February Council Meeting. She noted that the members had received an update on the Communications Strategy and the Annual Service Delivery Plan and that travel arrangements for the St. Patrick's Day period were agreed. It was further noted that the reports of the Economic Development, Enterprise, Tourism, EU Affairs and Rural Regeneration SPC of 12th December 2024 were received. In addition, the work programmes of the Housing and Integration SPC and the Community, Cultural Development and Gaeltacht Affairs SPC were approved and these will be uploaded to the documents library in Decision Time. Finally, it was noted that the Conference and Training Schedules were approved and circulated.

7.0 Correspondence

None

8.0 Notice of Question

8.1 Submitted by Councillor Emer Tóibín

“To ask Meath County Council to detail the plans and progress made towards securing a Homeless Hostel in Meath following the passing of a motion in 2024 and to update the members of the timeline ahead against the backdrop of increasing homelessness figures in Meath and across the the country?”

Response

In accordance with the Mid-East Region Homelessness Action Plan 2024 – 2026, the Council is committed to delivering a Short Term Accommodation (STA) Facility in the County. Several options have been explored to date and discussions are ongoing. The Housing Authority will continue to explore all avenues in the provision of an STA. In addition, the Council is seeking expressions of interest from land owners and developers who may wish to express an interest in selling property or land which may be suitable for Social, Affordable or Emergency Accommodation to Meath County Council.

Noted by the Elected Members

8.2 Submitted by Councillor Alan Lawes

“Will Meath County Council recognise a homeless persons address registered with “Address Point” the service that provides a fixed address for those without a fixed home for the purpose of their “Local Connection”?

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Response

In accordance with Meath County Council's Allocation Scheme, a PO. Box or Address Point does not establish a local connection. A local connection may be established by living and working independently in the Local Authority area.

Noted by the Elected Members

8.3 Submitted by Councillor Maria White

"How many cases involving houses with defective blocks has the Council referred to the Department for Housing?"

Response

Meath County Council has forwarded two possible cases of defective blocks (East Meath) to the department. The Housing Agency has appointed the TA Group from their Capital Works Management Framework panel to assist the Housing Agency in their investigations and consultations.

Noted by the Elected Members

9.0 Notice of Motion

9.1 Submitted by Councillor Alan Lawes

"I am calling on Meath County Council to instruct all their emergency accommodation providers to remove CCTV cameras from private areas inside their properties immediately".

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

The installation, operation and the determination as to the purpose and means of the processing of CCTV, within or around an emergency accommodation (EA) Centre, is a matter for the owner or service provider of the premises, who is a Data Controller as defined in the GDPR.

The Data Protection Commission (DPC) has produced a useful guidance document with regard to CCTV. It can be found by searching for "CCTV guidance" in the DPC's website - www.dataprotection.ie - or by clicking on [CCTV Guidance Data Controllers November 2023 EN.pdf](#). While the determination of the purpose and means of the processing is entirely a matter for the service provider, as the data

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controller, Meath County Council has circulated this guidance to the EA providers and highlighted some pertinent points provided in this guidance including the importance of:

- Proportionality when assessing the impact of CCTV recording on individual's expectation of privacy;
- Using Data Protection Impact Assessment to determine the risks and possible mitigation measures regarding such issues such as the extent to which children or young people are present and the avoidance of placing cameras in areas where people have greater expectations of privacy; and
- Being transparent and provide adequate information for those in Emergency Accommodation.

As Meath County Council has no role in relation to CCTV in or around EA centres, any concerns or complaints that individuals have regarding CCTV in EA centres should be raised directly with the service provider or referred directly to the Data Protection Commissioner's office.

Councillor Alan Lawes introduced the motion. **Councillor Ronan Moore** queried the point of law and the response by the Council was noted.

The Elected members agreed to the Motion, together with the supporting information, on the proposal of **Councillor Alan Lawes** and seconded by **Councillor Maria White**.

9.2 Submitted by Councillor Helen Meyer

"I call on the council to create an allotment and community garden strategy for East Meath. There is strong public demand for this initiative. This will foster food independence, enhance social networks, encourage community building and promote sustainable practices."

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

As part of Meath County Council's Climate Action Plan, the Council has commenced a 'Let's Grow' series of events to train community groups to grow food, promoting awareness of eco-friendly food sourcing, composting and creation of sustainable gardens. If the motion is agreed the matter will be referred to the Climate Action, Environment and Emergency Services SPC for further consideration.

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Councillor Helen Meyer introduced the motion and acknowledged the Council's response. The Motion, together with supporting information was agreed on the proposal of **Councillor Helen Meyer** and seconded by **Councillor Maria White**.

9.3 Submitted by Councillor Maria White

"I call on Meath County Council to adopt a rights-based ethical procurement policy. This policy should align with the principles outlined in the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises, and the Global Sullivan Principles (1999). By doing so, the Council can promote respect for human rights among the companies it engages with in its tender processes."

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

In accordance with the Public Sector Directive 2014/24/EU on Public Procurement, National Guidelines from the OGP and Department Circulars, Meath County Council fulfils its obligations pertaining to the details set out in the notice of motion, by the inclusion of Article 57 declarations and by the use of the European Single Procurement Document (ESPD) for all EU threshold tenders. Article 57 declarations and ESPD are a list of questions that potential suppliers have to answer, to provide a self-declaration that none of the exclusion grounds has been breached, and that they meet the required selection criteria. All Office of Government Procurement (OGP) and Local Government Operational Procurement Centre (LGOPC) central procurement arrangements, in use within the Council, benefit from the inclusion of these declarations, at the initial procurement stage. The Council's current Procurement Policy includes a section on Social Considerations which includes social considerations in Public Procurement, where feasible, in order to support social policies in relation to employment opportunities, compliance with social and labour rights, social inclusion, equal opportunities and accessibility.

Councillor Maria White introduced the motion. There were interventions from **Councillors Gerry O'Connor; Paddy Meade** and **Brian Fitzgerald** noting the Council's response.

The motion, together with supporting information, was agreed on the proposal of **Councillor Maria White** and seconded by **Councillor Helen Meyer**. **Councillor Gerry O'Connor** dissented from the motion.

9.4 Submitted by Councillor Maria White

"To uphold the highest standards of consistency, transparency, and fairness in the allocation of social housing, all available housing units designated for allocation, should be advertised through the Choice Based Lettings (CBL) system, including all

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one, two, three, and four-bedroom houses, except in very limited cases eg medical priority, transfers etc.”

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

Meath County Council’s Housing Department advertises all three-bedroom properties and most two-bedroom properties on CBL (Choice-Based Letting). In some limited cases, two-bedroom properties may be offered outside of CBL to accommodate disability or transfer requests. Four- bedroom properties are not advertised on CBL due to their very limited availability; these are allocated to families in need of a transfer to larger accommodations. One-bedroom properties are also not advertised on CBL because of their limited availability, and applicants with the longest waiting times are prioritised for these homes, as set out in the Council’s Allocation Scheme for the Provision of Social Housing Support.

Councillor Maria White introduced the motion. There were interventions from Councillors Mike Bray, Maria Murphy and Nick Killian outlining their opposition to the motion. On the proposal of **Councillor Maria White** and seconded by **Councillor Helen Meyer** it was agreed to refer the matter to the Housing SPC in respect of the upcoming review of Meath County Council’s Allocation Scheme for Provision of Social Housing Support.

10.0 General Interest Motions

None

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

11.1 Schedule of Chief Executive’s Orders – Transportation
Noted by the Elected Members.

11.2 Schedule of Chief Executive’s Orders – Environment
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.

12.0 Any Other Business

There was no other business.

The meeting concluded at 5.55pm



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