

**Minutes of July Monthly Meeting of
Westmeath County Council held at 3.00 p.m. Monday 24th July 2017
In Council Chambers, Athlone Civic Offices, Co. Westmeath**

Presiding: Cllr. J. Shaw.

Members present: Cllr. Ailish McManus, Cllr. F. Keena, Cllr. T. Farrell, Cllr. M. O'Brien, Cllr. P. Hill, Cllr. U. D'Arcy, Cllr. E. Wallace, Cllr. J. Penrose, Cllr. K. Glynn, Cllr. A. Duncan,

Officers present: Mr. Pat Gallagher, Chief Executive.
Mr. Martin Murray, Director of Service.
Mr Hugh O'Reilly, A/ Director of Service.
Mr. Billy Coughlan, Meetings Administrator.
Ms Una Doris, Tourism Officer
Ms Melanie McQuade, Heritage Officer
Ms Corrina Elder, Executive Engineer
Ms. Amanda Nulty, Assistant Administrator.

Apologies: Cllr. P. Hogan, Cllr. B. Collentine, Cllr. S. Clarke, Cllr. L. McDaniel, Cllr. A. O'Rourke, Cllr. J. Dolan, Cllr. F. McDermott, Cllr. M. Dollard.

3:00 pm: An Cathaoirleach, Cllr. John Shaw opened the meeting.

Matters arising: Cllr. Farrell advised the members on Cllr. John Dolans improving situation and all the members wished him a speedy recovery.

1. Miontuairiscí.

(i) On the proposal of Cllr. Farrell and seconded by Cllr. Glynn, the Members agreed to approve the minutes of June Monthly meeting of Westmeath County Council held in Council Chambers, Áras an Chontae, Mullingar on Monday, 26th June 2017 at 3.00 pm.

(ii) On the proposal of Cllr. Penrose and seconded by Cllr. Glynn, the Members agreed to approve the minutes of Annual Meeting of Westmeath County Council held in Council Chambers, Áras an Chontae, Mullingar on Monday, 26th June 2017 at 2:00pm.

(iii) On the proposal of Cllr. Hill and seconded by Cllr. Penrose, the Members agreed to approve the minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting of Westmeath

County Council held in Council Chambers, Áras an Chontae, Mullingar on Monday, 26th June 2017 at 1:00 p.m.

(iv) The members noted the minutes of CPG meeting of Westmeath County Council held in the Board Room, Áras an Chontae, Mullingar at 8.30 a.m. on Wednesday, 21st June 2017.

(v) The members noted the minutes of Mullingar Municipal District meeting of Westmeath County Council held in Council Chambers, Áras an Chontae, Mullingar on Monday, 12th June 2017 at 2.00pm.

(vi) The members noted the minutes of Annual Meeting of Mullingar Municipal District of Westmeath County Council held in Council Chambers, Áras an Chontae, Mullingar on Monday, 12th June 2017 at 1.30 pm.

(vii) The members noted the minutes of the Athlone Municipal District Meeting held in Civic Centre, Church Street, Athlone on Monday, 12th June 2017 at 3.00 p.m.

(viii) The members noted the Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Athlone Municipal District held in the Civic Centre, Church Street, Athlone on Monday, 12th June 2017 at 2.00 p.m.

2. Management Report.

The Members noted the Management Report as circulated.

3. Chief Executive Orders.

The Members noted the Chief Executive Orders as circulated.

In response to Cllr Keena's request that minutes of municipal district meetings are updated more frequently on the Westmeath County Council website, the meetings administrator advised the members that following approval of the minutes for County Council and Municipal District meetings they will be published online.

4. Disposal of Land/Property

- (i) Proposed disposal of site at St. James Tce., Kilbeggan, Co. Westmeath to James Joseph O'Neill, Legal Personal Representative of Mary

O'Neill, deceased in accordance with the terms of Section 183 Notice of the Local Government Act 2001 circulated within the specified period.

An Cathaoirleach called for a vote by a show of hands and declared the disposal passed.

5. To receive update on Civil Defence

Mr. Martin Murray, Director of Service, gave the Members an update on the new Civil Defence Accommodation:

He advised the Members a meeting was held on 5th May with a Department official (in Mullingar) regarding the emerging preferred options from the report including the necessary financial provision associated to the different options. The final report was presented to the Department which outlined the preferred option of a stand - alone facility for Civil Defence to be located in Mullingar. The Department subsequently endorsed the report.

Mr Murray furthered that the Department has indicated its willingness to increase this grant having regard to the requirements of the proposed stand alone Civil Defence facility. The Council is in ongoing communication with the Department regarding the details of the increased grant.

In response to the Members questions in relation to anticipated timeframe, Mr Murray advised it is hoped a suitable facility will be identified in September or October 2017.

Cllr Glynn requested a further update at the September meeting of Westmeath County Council.

6. To receive presentation from the Tourism Officer

An Cathaoirleach, Cllr. John Shaw welcomed Westmeath County Council's new Tourism Officer Mrs Una Doris.

Mrs Doris briefed the Members on the current status of tourism in Westmeath. The Members thanked Mrs Doris for her presentation and welcomed her into her new role.

Cllr's Glynn and Keena stated the importance of the greenway for tourism in Westmeath. Cllr Keena requested Ms Doris to consider an increase in information signage when developing the 2017-2018 action plan.

Cllr Farrell stated it was crucial to work as a whole county on the development of tourism and not as separate municipal districts.

Cllr Shaw requested a further presentation to both municipal districts later in the year.

7. To receive presentation from the Heritage Officer

An Cathaoirleach, Cllr. John Shaw welcomed Westmeath County Council's new Heritage Officer Ms Melanie McQuade.

Mr Pat Gallagher advised the Members that Westmeath County Council has formally re-entered the heritage officer programme with the Heritage Council. Ms McQuade briefed the Members on her role and outlined the development of the new county heritage plan.

In response to Cllr Duncan, Ms McQuade advised the new Westmeath Heritage Forum will be in place by September 2017.

An Cathaoirleach Cllr John Shaw proposed an update from the Heritage Officer to be presented to the Members later in 2017.

8. To consider and approve the Community Facilities Scheme

Mr Hugh O'Reilly, A/ Director of Services presented the Members with information on the Community Facilities Scheme. He advised that the Department of Housing, Community and Local Government provided €64,500 to Westmeath for the Community Facilities Grant Scheme 2017.

He furthered that 86 applications were received and assessed by the LCDC. 79 applications met criteria and the list of recommended grants was circulated to the Members for consideration.

The breakdown of grants is as follows:

Mullingar Municipal District: 55 scheme totalling €43,500

Athlone Municipal District: 24 schemes totalling €21,000

On the proposal of Cllr Penrose and seconded by Cllr Glynn the Mullingar Municipal District members present unanimously approved the Community Facilities Grant scheme recommendations for the Mullingar Municipal District.

On the proposal of Cllr Keena and seconded by Cllr McManus the Athlone Municipal District members present unanimously approved the Community Facilities Grant scheme recommendations for the Athlone Municipal District.

In response to Cllr Keena, Mr. O'Reilly advised the Members the time frame for groups to draw down the grants is the end of the year. He further advised that it is intended to issue the grants before the commencement of works and an update confirming the completion of works will be sought from community groups subsequently.

In response to Cllr Penrose, Mr. O'Reilly advised it is understood the grant scheme will run for a number of years.

In response to Cllr's Farrell and D'Arcy, Mr. O'Reilly stated he will advise grant recipients to spend locally where possible.

In response to Cllr Wallace's query in relation to unsuccessful applicants, Mr. O'Reilly advised the applications did not meet criteria as they were for ongoing as opposed to capital works. He further stated that these groups have been advised accordingly.

9. Motions

An Cathaoirleach, Cllr John Shaw advised the Members that the two motions submitted for consideration for the agenda of the July meeting had been deferred by the Corporate Policy Group to the September CPG meeting for consideration.

10. Recommendation(s) from Corporate Policy Group:

On the proposal of Cllr Farrell and seconded by Cllr Wallace the Members agreed to award a Civic Recognition for Joe Ward on winning his third European boxing championship. This recognition to be awarded by the Mayor of Athlone Municipal District in Athlone Civic Offices.

11. To receive reports and recommendations from SPC Chairpersons:

Ms Corrina Elder, Executive Engineer updated the Members in regard to the Public Lighting Policy.

On the proposal of Cllr Farrell and seconded by Cllr Wallace the Members approved the Public Lighting Policy.

Cllr Glynn thanked Ms Elder for her presentation and stated a budget needs to be provided for the installation of new LED lights in Westmeath to combat darkspots.

In response to Cllr Hill in relation to the installation of new lights, Ms Elder advised there are strong standards now in place for the erection of new lights and the limited current budget is prioritised for existing repairs.

In response to Cllr. Glynn in relation to the installation of LED's, Ms. Elder advised the public lighting budget is currently insufficient for the provision of second lights in particular areas.

In response to Cllr Keena, Ms. Elder advised there is a saving of 40-50% from the switch over to LED's which can be reinvested on future public lighting installation subject to budget provision. Ms. Elder furthered in addition to funding from SCAI every other source of funding is also considered.

Cllr. Keena questioned the possibility of the installation of ornate lighting poles in certain towns and villages throughout Westmeath. Ms. Elder responded that generally a standard lighting pole will be erected unless it is stated otherwise in an urban renewal scheme.

In relation to Cllrs. Penrose and O'Brien's query, Ms. Elder advised that consideration of a national strategy is progressing for greenway lighting.

In response to Cllr. Wallace in relation to surveying lights for effectiveness, Ms. Elder advised all new lights are designed to a set standard and it is not possible to retrofit lights.

An Cathaoirleach Cllr. John Shaw supported Cllr. Hills views on the need for further lighting in rural areas and requested it is considered at budget time.

12. Correspondence:

- **Letter from Minister Paul Kehoe T.D., in relation to wage restoration and conditions of employment in the Irish Defence Force.**

The Members noted this correspondence.

13. Aon Gnó Eile

On the proposal of Cllr Hill and seconded by Cllr Keena, the Members approved Conference attendance document as circulated:

- LAMA 2017 Autumn Training Seminar 29th & 30th September 2017

- Padraig Pearce Summer School 29th & 30th July 2017.

Cllr Michael O'Brien proposed Westmeath County Council take part in the Childhood Cancer Foundations 'light up gold' campaign from the 1st - 7th of September by lighting Athlone Castle, Civic buildings and Moate Library in gold. Cllr. Farrell supported this proposal.

Mr Pat Gallagher, Chief Executive advised the Members that Westmeath County Council receive a number of requests to support charities throughout the year which are all examined accordingly and Cllr O'Brien's proposal will be considered also.

This concluded the business of the meeting

Cathaoirleach

Date

