

**Minutes of Finance Committee Meeting of Westmeath County Council held
on Monday, 26th June, 2017 at 1pm in the Council Chambers, Áras an
Chontae, Mullingar**

Presiding: Cllr. Frank McDermott, Cathaoirleach

Members Present: Cllrs. P. Hill; B. Collentine; J. Shaw; K. Glynn; F. Keena; J. Penrose; M. Dollard; A. Duncan; S. Clarke; U. D'Arcy; M. O'Brien;. Cllr. P. Hogan

Apologies: A. McManus; T. Farrell; J. Dolan; A. O'Rourke; E. Wallace; L. McDaniel

Officers Present: P. Gallagher, Chief Executive; J. Dalton, Head of Finance; D. Hogan, Director of Services; B. Coughlan, Corporate Services; A. Nulty, Corporate Services

At the request of the Cathaoirleach, Mr. Dalton presented the Finance Report. Mr. Dalton highlighted the key points of the reports and proceeded to reply to Members' queries as follows:

Cllr. Dollard queried the unwinding of FEMPI legislation and the DPER's funding towards its financial impact. Mr. Dalton advised Westmeath County Council must cover the financial impact as directed the Department. He further advised that Westmeath County Council will continue to manage this matter, noting the financial impact (estimated at €225,000) of this change had not been provided for in our 2017 budget.

Cllr. Dollard queried the position on the rent review currently being carried out. Mr. Dalton confirmed that the process was ongoing and that he was not yet in a position to confirm the outcome. However Mr. Dalton confirmed that he expected it to result in increased income for the Council based on the reduction in unemployment.

Cllr Penrose welcomed all the Government grants awarded to Westmeath and queried how many towns and villages are involved in the Town and Village Renewal Scheme. While Mr. Dalton did not have the numbers to hand he stated that applications will be submitted having regard to the maximum grant available. In response to Cllr Penrose's query in relation to a possible surplus from planning fees in 2017, Mr Dalton replied it depends on activity and is difficult to project.

Cllr O'Rourke thanked Mr Dalton for his report. In reference to item 4.6 car parking income, Cllr O'Rourke noted the views of the Members of Mullingar Municipal district and advised that the issue will be considered by Athlone Members over the coming weeks.

In response to Cllr Hogan's query in relation to rates revaluation, Mr Dalton advised that the Valuation Office will issue final valuation certificates in early September 2017 and that he will keep members updated on this matter.

Cllr's D'Arcy and Clarke thanked the staff of the planning department of Westmeath County Council for securing structures at risk and build heritage funding and queried how the projects were chosen and how they differed to the seven built heritage projects. While Mr. Dalton had not the exact conditions of each scheme he advised the three projects receiving Structures at Risk Fund funding are:

1. Moate Jail €23,000
2. Tullynally Castle €6,000
3. Ardnurcher Church, Horseleap €23,000

He further advised the members of the projects receiving built heritage funding under the Built Heritage Investment Scheme:

1. Convent of Mercy Rochfordbridge - €9,300
2. St. Marys Parish Church Collinstown (2 grants) - €9,300 & €6,500
3. Craddenstown House Raharny - €7,310
4. The Hevey Institute - €9,000
5. St. Michaels Church Castlepollard - €9,000
6. Sluich House - €10,000

The Cathaoirleach thanked the Members and Executive for their contributions and this concluded the business of the meeting.

The meeting concluded at 1:40pm.

END