

**Minutes of November Monthly Meeting of
Westmeath County Council held at 3.00 p.m. Monday 28th November 2016
in Council Chambers, Áras an Chontae, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath**

Presiding: Cllr. F. McDermott (Cathaoirleach)

Members present: Cllr. F. Keena, Cllr. A. McManus, Cllr. P. Hogan, Cllr. T. Farrell, Cllr. J. Dolan, Cllr. A. O'Rourke, Cllr. M. O'Brien, Cllr. P. Hill, Cllr. B. Collentine, Cllr. J. Shaw, Cllr. U. D'Arcy, Cllr. E Wallace, Cllr. M. Dollard, , Cllr. L. McDaniel, Cllr. J. Penrose, Cllr. K. Glynn, Cllr. S. Clarke, Cllr. A Duncan, Cllr. A Whitney

Officers present: Pat Gallagher, Chief Executive.

Barry Kehoe, Director of Service.
David Hogan, Director of Service.
Martin Murray, Director of Service
Jimmy Dalton, Head of Finance.
Billy Coughlan, Meetings Administrator.
Gerald Loughrey, A/ Administrative Officer Housing
Amanda Nulty, Graduate, Corporate Services.

An Cathaoirleach Cllr. Frank McDermott opened the meeting and welcomed the Members.

5.00pm – The Members resolved to go in-committee to consider correspondence received by the Chief Executive.

5.30pm – Meeting Resumed

1. Miontuairiscí.

- (i) On the proposal of Cllr. Glynn, seconded by Cllr. Hogan the Members approved the minutes of October Monthly meeting of Westmeath County Council held in Áras an Chontae, Mullingar at 3.00p.m. Monday 24th October 2016.
- (ii) 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, 19th October 2016.

- (iii) The Members noted the minutes of Mullingar Municipal District meeting of Westmeath County Council held in the Council Chambers, Áras an Chontae, Mullingar on Monday 10th October 2016 at 2.00pm
- (iv) The Members noted the minutes of the Athlone Municipal District Meeting held in Civic Centre, Church Street, Athlone on Monday 3rd October 2016 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

4. Disposal of Land/Property

- i. Proposed disposal of property at 8, John Paul Park, Athlone, to Esther Murtagh to rectify Title, 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 approved.

- ii. Proposed 3 year Lease of office space on ground floor of Market House, Mullingar to Mullingar Chamber of Commerce Ltd, 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 approved.

- iii. Proposed disposal of circa 1.039 acre site being the former Mullingar Area Chip Dump at Clonmore, Mullingar, to Mr Ronan Fagan, Hill Road, Collinstown, 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 approved.

- iv. Proposed disposal of former Incubation Units at Clonmore, Mullingar to D&N Group, Mullingar Business Park, Mullingar, 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 approved.

5. To approve submission to the OPW in respect of the Eastern River Basin Flood Risk Management Plan.

The Chief Executive, Mr Pat Gallagher advised the draft submission was prepared having regard to Members observations and had been circulated to the Members electronically.

The Members unanimously agreed to approve the submission to the OPW in respect of the Eastern River Basin Flood Risk Management Plan.

6. Motions:

Cllr Michael O'Brien

That Westmeath County Council write to the Minister for Health calling on him to legalise cannabis oil for medicinal purposes.

Cllr O'Brien spoke in detail on this matter and stated this motion proposes to allow cancer sufferers the option of purchasing cannabis oil legally for medicinal purposes. Cllr O'Brien outlined the benefits of cannabis oil and stated whilst he is fully opposed to cannabis as a recreational drug the benefits of its oil for medicinal purposes should be taken into consideration. By legalising the oil, patients who wish to use it would be allowed to acquire it via a doctor rather than a drug dealer.

The Members overwhelmingly stated that whilst they support Cllr O'Brien's will to help cancer sufferers, until there is solid medical evidence on the use of cannabis oil, they were unable to support the motion.

An Cathaoirleach Cllr Frank McDermott declared the motion lost.

Cllr Andrew Duncan:

Can Westmeath county council outline its strategy in relation to the sourcing of a permanent home for the civil defence.

This Motion was considered at the Statutory Budget Meeting of Westmeath County Council (Number 57 Environmental Services) on 28th of November 2016.

7. Recommendation(s) from Corporate Policy Group

- Schedule of Council Meetings for 2017

On the proposal of Cllr Glynn and seconded by Cllr Farrell, the Members unanimously agreed the 2017 Council Meetings schedule.

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- To award a Civic Reception to honour the Westmeath soldiers of A Company of the 35th Battalion of the United Nations Peace Keeping Forces that fought at Jadotville in The Congo in September 1961”.

On the proposal of Cllr Penrose and seconded by Cllr D’Arcy, the Members unanimously agreed to award a Civic Reception to honour the Westmeath soldiers of A Company of the 35th Battalion of the United Nations Peace Keeping Forces that fought at Jadotville in The Congo in September 1961

8. To receive reports and recommendations from SPC Chairpersons.

- **To receive report and recommendation from the Housing, Community, Corporate and Culture SPC Chairperson:**
 - To approve the Tenants Handbook.
 - National Broadband Plan

Tenants Handbook

Cllr Ken Glynn, Chairperson of the Housing, Community, Corporate and Culture SPC invited Mr Gerard Loughrey to provide the Members with an overview of the Tenants Handbook.

In response to Cllr Hogan, Mr Loughrey advised the Members in relation to Older person's dwelling (OPD), tenant responsibility regarding maintenance is always flexible. He furthered there is no increase in responsibility for tenants but the maintenance section of the new handbook is larger and contains more information.

In relation to Anti-Social behaviour, Mr Loughrey advised every tenant of Westmeath County Council will receive a copy of the policy upon its completion.

On the proposal of Cllr Glynn and seconded by Cllr D'Arcy, the Members unanimously approved the Tenants Handbook.

National Broadband Plan

The Members noted the National Broadband Plan as circulated.

- **To receive report and recommendation from the Environment, Water and Emergency Services SPC Chairperson:**
 - To Consider the draft Cemetery Policy Document

Cllr Paul Hogan, Chairperson of the Environment, Water and Emergency Services SPC advised the Members the draft policy had been circulated. He furthered the new policy considered the best use of all cemeteries in Westmeath.

Mr Martin Murray, Director of Services, provided the Members with an overview of the draft Cemetery Policy Document.

In response to Cllr Dolan, Mr Murray advised burial plots are currently sold on a next available basis. Families may be sold two plots. This will remain procedure going forward.

Cllr Paul Hogan, Chairperson of the SPC advised the Members the policy encapsulates a broad and sensitive area. Westmeath County Council is trying to create capacity from the resources available to them. Ground radar technology can be used to identify if a burial plot contains a person's remains. In response to Cllr Keena's concerns the Members were informed that if there is any indication someone is laid to rest in a plot, it will not be reused.

Mr Murray advised the Members no funding is made available from Government for burial grounds. Westmeath County Council will look at every other option before the purchase of new lands.

In response to Cllr Whitney in relation to capacity issues in parish graveyards, Mr Murray advised there are currently no capacity issues in Westmeath graveyards but going forward this policy would ensure sufficient burial space.

The Members agreed to adjourn consideration of the policy to allow further discussion at SPC level and a redrafting to be brought back to the full Council.

- To continue the service provision as outlined within the Tender Documents which maintains the key provision of the direct control of the Gate fee with WCC in knowledge of the cost increase as outlined by DOS. The Environment Section to carry out a review of the service provision within 18 months of the commencement of the 3 year contract.

Mr Murray advised the Members of the current situation regarding the tender for new service provision at the Recycling centres in Athlone and Mullingar. He informed the Members that both sites will close for a short period to facilitate the change of the Council's operator on these sites and that any closure will be kept to a minimum.

9. Correspondence

There was no correspondence.

10. Aon Gnó Eile.

Vote of Sympathy:

On the proposal of Cllr. D'Arcy and seconded by Cllr Dollard the Members unanimously agreed to extend a vote of sympathy to the families of the late Nicholas Nally, Mullingar, former editor and owner of The Westmeath Examiner. Chief Executive Mr Pat Gallagher also extended sympathy to Mr Nally's families on behalf of the staff of Westmeath County Council.

Vote of Congratulations:

Mr Coughlan informed the Members of the following:

- On the proposal of Cllr. Farrell and seconded by Cllr. Dolan it was unanimously agreed to extend a vote of congratulations to Moate Action Group on winning their category (population between 2,000 and 5,000) at the All Irish Pride of Place awards and to Rosemount, joint runners-up in the population under 300 category.

The Members also extended congratulations to Rosemount Intermediate Football Club on reaching their second Leinster final.

This concluded the business of the meeting

Cathaoirleach

Date