**Minutes of Meeting of Cavan County Council held on 9th January 2017 in the Council Chamber**

Councillor F. Curtin, Cathaoirleach Presiding

Present: Councillors M. Argue, W. Bennett, C. Brady, P. Brady, N. Connell,

J.P. Feeley, E. Greenan, C. Kelly, P. McDonald, P. McVitty, P. O’Reilly, S. O’Reilly, S. P. O’Reilly, P. Smith, S. Smith, V. Smith.

In Attendance: T. Ryan, Chief Executive

E. Doyle, Director of Service

J. McLoughlin, Director of Service

G. Finn, Director of Service

E. McGinn, Meetings Administrator

An apology was received from Councillor D. Brady.

1. **To confirm Minutes of Meeting of Cavan County Council held on 9th December 2016. Miontuairiscĺ cruinnithe 9 Nollaig 2016 a dhearbhu.**

It was:

Proposed by Councillor P. McVitty

Seconded by Councillor J.P. Feeley

And

Resolved:

“that minutes of monthly meeting of Cavan County Council held on 9th December 2016 be hereby approved”.

Councillor J.P. Feeley stated that at the December meeting he asked that Sligo and Leitrim County Councils also be invited to attend a meeting in relation to the East West Link Road with Cavan, Monaghan and Louth County Councils.

It was proposed by Councillor C. Kelly and seconded by Councillor S. Smith to suspend standing orders in order to discuss the North South Interconnector. Councillor C. Kelly stated that despite the many objections to the project lodged with An Bord Pleanála during its public consultation process in 2015, and concerns raised by farmers during the oral hearings in 2016, the planning body has granted permission to EirGrid to carry out its 400kv North – South Interconnector with overhead power lines and pylons. Councillor Kelly proposed that Cavan County Council hold a special meeting inviting all Oireachtas members and Minister Humphreys to attend.

Councillor P. McDonald seconded Councillor Kelly’s proposal. Councillor P. McDonald noted that previously Eirgrid had stated that the cost of undergrounding was up to forty times that of providing an overhead line and this has now been downgraded in more recent submissions to just 1.5% more. Councillor P. McDonald stated that landowners will not let Eirgrid on to their lands.

Councillors V.Smith, S. O’Reilly and F. Curtin supported the motion.

It was agreed that the members be invited to attend a special meeting of Cavan County Council on the morning of Monday 13th February.

**2. To note minutes of Corporate Policy Group meeting held on 6 December 2016**

Noted.

**3. To note Chief Executive’s Orders.**

Noted.

**4. To note Chief Executive’s monthly report.**

Noted.

Councillor J.P. Feeley asked what initiative is being taken by the executive to look for alternative funding to develop the Cavan Leitrim Railway Greenway.

Mr. Eoin Doyle informed the members that the Council had made an application to Fáilte Ireland and hoped to have a reply in the first half of this year. He stated that the Council will also be making an application to LEADER for funding.

**5. To approve draft Public Lighting Policy for new developments.**

It was:

Proposed by Councillor C. Kelly

Seconded by Councillor S. Smith

And

Resolved:

“that the draft Public Lighting Policy for new developments be hereby approved”.

Mr. Ger Finn, Director of Services informed the members that it is a policy of Cavan County Council to ensure the development of a sustainable energy efficient public lighting network.

**6. To note statutory requirement to complete Annual Declaration in accordance with Section 5 of the Local Government Act, 2001 – Part 15, Section 171 (Ethics Register) by 28 February 2017.**

Noted.

Mr. Doyle informed the members that in accordance with section 171 of the Local Government Act 2001 each member must submit a full and comprehensive declaration of interests to the Ethics Registrar by 28th February 2017. He advised that the Chief Executive has appointed Ms. Evelyn Smith, Senior Staff Officer as the Ethics Registrar and that correspondence will be sent to the members on this matter shortly.

**7. (a) To note reply from Department of Finance regarding the taxation of self-employed cross border workers.**

Noted. Councillor J.P Feeley proposed that the Council write to neighbouring County Councils seeking their views in relation to taxation of self-employed cross border workers.

**(b) To note replies from AIB and Bank of Ireland regarding provision of an ATM in Kilnaleck**

Noted.

**(c) To note correspondence from Deputy Niamh Smyth.**

Noted.

**(d) To note reply from Minister for Health regarding the future of Cross Border Health Services.**

Noted.

It was agreed to send reminders in relation to school transport, updating of water supply in Ballinagh and septic tank treatment systems in Cavan.

**8. To approve attendance of members at AILG Training Day in Cavan on 7th**

**February, 2017.**

It was:

Proposed by Councillor J.P. Feeley

Seconded by Councillor W. Bennett

And

Resolved:

“that the attendance of Councillors E. Greenan, P. McDonald, J.P. Feeley, S. O’Reilly, P. Brady, S. Smith, C. Kelly, S.P. O’Reilly, F. Curtin, P. McVitty, V. Smith, P.O’Reilly, W. Bennett, M. Argue, C. Brady and P. Smith at AILG Training Day in Cavan be hereby approved”.

**Votes of Congratulations:**

* Cavan County Council for their support to The Kevin Bell Trust and Vincent Magee Benefit Fund on hosting a Remembrance Ceremony and switching on of lights on the remembrance tree so that people could remember their loved ones.
* Superintendent Leo McGinn and Gardai of Bailieborough Garda Station on their Open Day at Bailieborough Garda Station. The open day was a great opportunity to meet local Gardai and see the inner workings of the Garda Station.
* Cavan County Council staff for the excellent organization of the Taste of Cavan Christmas Markets. It was suggested that these markets be situated in other towns within the County over the coming years.

**Vote of Sympathy:**

* The Reynolds Family, Corraback, Belturbet on the death of Mr. Oliver Reynolds, retired member of Cavan County Council outdoor staff.
* The Fitzpatrick Family, Clowney, Ballyconnell on the death of Mrs. Martha Fitzpatrick, mother of Pat Fitzpatrick, General Services Supervisor, Cavan County Council.
* The Lynch family, Curragho, Cavan on the death of Mr. Frank Lynch, retired member of An Garda Siochana.

Councillor W. Bennett informed the meeting that a new All-Ireland Civic Forum on Brexit is being established. It was proposed at a recent LAMA meeting that a representation would be made to the Office of An Taoiseach to have one member from LAMA and the AILG to sit on this Committee.

**MEMBERS’ ITEMS**

1. **That Cavan County Council opposes staffless libraries.**

Councillor E. Greenan stated that Johnston Central Library is among twenty three libraries named nationwide to introduce staffless hours. Councillor Greenan noted that our libraries provide an efficient service and we need to protect our local services. Councillor Greenan felt that this move would devalue our libraries as social, cultural, educational and economic focal points. Councillor Greenan stated that staffless libraries are an insult to the profession of a librarian. Councillor Greenan stated that staffless libraries in the United Kingdom led to closure of libraries. He stated that €1.9m is being spent to give updated cards and codes to access the building. He stated that if CCTV is not manned it will lead to incidents of anti social behavior and other health and safety issues. Councillor Greenan proposed that Cavan County Council oppose staffless libraries.

Councillor J.P. Feeley stated that the libraries in Cavan provide an excellent service. He stated that we need to wait and see how the trial system will work in enhancing the general public.

Councillor P. O’Reilly supported the extension of opening hours and felt it was the best way forward.

Councillor S.O’Reilly feared anti-social behaviour would become an issue in libraries when they are not staffed and also felt that library cards could be given to those who are not members to gain access to the library. He praised all libraries in County Cavan for the service they are providing. Councillor S.P. O’Reilly asked Mr. Sullivan, County Librarian to give an update on all libraries in the County to the members at another Council meeting later in the year.

Mr. E. Doyle, Director of Services and Mr. Tom Sullivan, County Librarian presented to the members an account of the new open library initiative. The principal points raised were as follows:

* Open libraries offer a different service to regular opening hours. There will be no reduction in staffed hours. This is an extension of an existing service and people can use the service from 8.00-10.00a.m. and from 5.30/8.30p.m. to 10.00p.m.
* Evidence shows that people who use the Open system do not do so to borrow books but to study and meet up. We have an onus to give the best service possible to the people of Cavan and having the building open will add life to the town.
* In 2015 Johnston Central Library had approximately 110,000 visitors and going on statistics from the Open Library initiative currently being run as a pilot scheme in Tullamore, Sligo and Banagher we could see our numbers rise by 20,000.
* Risk Assessment/Heath and Safety/Fire Safety audits have been carried out. CCTV will be checked daily by library staff.
* Under 16’s can use the library if accompanied by an adult
* A survey was carried out on 30 students within the library who said they would be delighted to use the Open library initiative.

1. **That Cavan County Council supports all efforts by Kells Chamber of Commerce, the North Meath Action Group and businesses of East Cavan in ensuring that Kells be included along with Navan for a rail link.**

Councillor S.P. O’Reilly stated that it was agreed at the Ballyjamesduff Municipal District meeting to support Kells Chamber of Commerce in ensuring that Kells be included along with Navan for a rail link and he asked that all members unanimously support this proposal. He stated that Deputy Shane Cassells has invited Minister Shane Ross to come to Navan to discuss the Navan rail line project and to hear the case for it to be resurrected. Councillor O’Reilly noted that the project is of great importance to the people of Meath and would also benefit those living in East Cavan. Councillor O’Reilly stated that if the rail link is extended to Kells a lot of the ghost estates in East Cavan may be inhabited.

Councillors P.O’Reilly, N. Connell, P.McDonald, C. Kelly and S.P. O’Reilly supported the motion. It was unanimously agreed that Cavan County Council supports all efforts by Kells Chamber of Commerce, the North Meath Action Group and businesses of East Cavan in ensuring that Kells be included along with Navan for a rail link.

1. **“That this Council call on the Minister for Social Welfare to reverse changes made to the Rural Social Scheme which limit participants to three years”.**

Councillor J.P. Feeley stated that the Rural Social Scheme is aimed at providing income and employment to low-income farmers which helps them supplement their household earnings as well as deliver high quality services within local communities. Councillor Feeley stated that the Rural Social Scheme had provided stability for farm families by guaranteeing financial security for those on the lowest incomes. He stated that the changes made to the scheme limiting participants to three years will leave families in financial and job insecurity. Councillor J.P. Feeley proposed that the Council write to the Minister for Social Welfare asking the Government to reverse changes made to the Rural Social Scheme which limit participants to three years.

Councillor P. Brady seconded Councillor Feeley’s proposal stating that the Rural Social Scheme greatly benefits rural communities.

Councillor P. McDonald supported the motion.

The meeting concluded at 4.00p.m.

Chairman: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Certified Correct: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_