**Minutes of Meeting of Cavan County Council held on 9th May 2017 in A.V. Room, Dáil Eireann, Leinster House at 11.00a.m. and Davenport Hotel at 3.00pm.**

Councillor F. Curtin, Cathaoirleach Presiding

Present: Councillors M. Argue, W. Bennett, C. Brady, D. 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: Minister S. Kyne, Minister of State for Natural Resources

Deputies B. Smith, N. Smyth, C. O’Caoláin, M. Kenny

Senators D. Wilson, J. O’Reilly, R. Gallagher, B. Lawless,

G. Craughwell, G. Horkan, D. O’Donovan

Ceann Comhairle S. O’Fearghaíl

Staff Members: E. Smith, K. Reilly, G. McGrath, J. Donohoe, G. Smith, C. Harrington, T. Tierney.

T. Ryan, Chief Executive

 E. Doyle, Director of Service

 G. Finn, Director of Service

 J. McLoughlin, Director of Service

 D. Maguire, Head of Finance

 E. McGinn, Meetings Administrator

1. **To confirm Minutes of Meeting of Cavan County Council held on 10th April 2017. Miontuairiscí cruinnithe 10 Aibreáin 2017 a dhearbhu.**

 It was:

 Proposed by Councillor J.P. Feeley

 Seconded by Councillor C. Kelly

 And

 Resolved:

“that minutes of monthly meeting of Cavan County Council held on 10th April 2017 be hereby approved”.

**2. To note Minutes of Corporate Policy Group meeting held on 6April 2017.**

 Noted.

1. **Launch of Diaspora Strategy.**

Cathaoirleach Fergal Curtin welcomed Minister Sean Kyne, T.D., Members of Dáil Eireann, Senators, Chief Executive, Cavan County Council and fellow elected members to the meeting. He stated that it was a great honour and privilege for him as Cathaoirleach of Cavan County Council to present the Cavan Diaspora Engagement Strategy 2017-2021. He stated that Cavan is a county with a significant Diaspora given our long history of emigration to all corners of the globe. He stated that Cavan County Council is immensely proud of the achievements of our Diaspora and recognise that Cavan’s people are its greatest asset – economically, culturally and socially. He stated that the Cavan Diaspora Engagement Project offers a chance to step forward and extend the hand of friendship to the thousands of people who may wish to shape the future of Cavan, no matter where they live. He stated that Cavan County Council acknowledges the importance of sustaining this unique Diaspora, creating a platform that deliberately connects with and supports this diverse community of people. He stated that County Cavan has stunning landscapes, vibrant sporting communities, proud heritage, incredible culture and a skilled workforce to offer and geographically it has great links to the West, to Northern Ireland and to Dublin. Cathaoirleach F. Curtin acknowledged the support and funding received in developing the Diaspora Strategy from the Department of the Taoiseach. Cathaoirleach Curtin also thanked Ms. Sally Murphy who was engaged by Cavan County Council to develop this strategy.

Mr. Tommy Ryan, Chief Executive stated that he was delighted to be part of this historic occasion. Mr. Ryan noted that this was the first time for a County Council to host a Council meeting in Dáil Eireann. Mr. Ryan noted that Cavan is a County with a significant Diaspora population. He stated that Cavan County Council recognises the many opportunities for communication, networking and partnership for the vibrant community of Cavan living at home in Ireland and across the globe. Mr. Ryan informed the meeting that the Cavan Diaspora Engagement Project was first launched to the Cavan Association in New York on St. Patrick’s weekend.

Minister Sean Kyne, T.D., Minister of State for Natural Resources thanked Senators J. O’Reilly and D. Wilson for inviting him to the meeting and apologised on behalf of Minister Joe McHugh T.D. who was unable to attend the meeting. He stated that Cavan Diaspora from the proud kingdom of Breffni left in their droves for Canada many years ago. He stated that Global Irish – Ireland’s Diaspora Policy was published in March 2015 and it recognises that we have a unique and important relationship with our Diaspora that needs to be nourished and developed. He stated that it sets out the role of Government to drive and foster Diaspora engagement through better connecting with the Diaspora. He stated that in order to achieve this, a “Local Diaspora Toolkit” was commissioned by the Minister for Diaspora Affairs as a practical guide for Local Authorities and community groups to help develop strategies for local Diaspora engagement. He stated that in 2015 and again in 2016 a Local Diaspora Engagement Fund provided support to hundreds of local organisations around the country to further develop links with the Diaspora from their areas through cultural, heritage, communications and networking projects. He stated that projects supported in County Cavan by the funding included genealogy research and a project to map out the county’s Diaspora and improve Diaspora networks by the local Chamber of Commerce in collaboration with Connect Ireland to increase economic activity and job creation in the area. He stated that he was pleased to note that Cavan County Council has made excellent use of the support given to them and is now ready to further develop its Diaspora strategy through this engagement programme being launched today for the years up to 2021.

Senator Billy Lawless, an Irish businessman from Rahoon, Co. Galway now living in Chicago was appointed Senator in May 2016. Senator Lawless commended Cavan County Council on its Diaspora Engagement Strategy noting that Cavan had dispersed its population to every corner of the globe. He stated that many of the Diaspora are people rooted in the history of Ireland. Senator Lawless stated that the Government’s commitment to the Diaspora is growing from strength to strength and is number one priority with the Taoiseach. He stated that smoother return policies to Ireland are needed for Irish living abroad. He noted that 90% of people who leave do not want to leave and it is always their intention to return home. He encouraged Local Authority Members to continue to “think big”.

Ceann Comhairle of Dáil Eireann, Mr. Seán O’Fearghaíl stated that Cavan County Council’s decision to hold the Council meeting in the Oireachtas was a unique initiative. He stated that he was delighted to be able to facilitate the launch of the Diaspora Engagement Strategy. He stated that harnessing the resource that is the Diaspora is invaluable. He noted that Ireland has benefited greatly from our returning emigrants and the wealth of knowledge they bring.

Senator Joe O’Reilly welcomed the Council and Executive to Leinster House and stated that he was happy to have played a part in the historic meeting. Senator O’Reilly noted that every family in Cavan has been touched by emigration and this has potential for the county for tourism and culture.

Deputy Brendan Smith complimented Senators Wilson and O’Reilly for making the visit to Leinster House possible for the Members and Executive of Cavan County Council. Deputy Smith welcomed the strategy stating that it now must be implemented and then reviewed at a later stage.

Deputy Caoimhghin O’Caoláin T.D. welcomed the Members and Executive of Cavan County Council to Leinster House. He stated that the most important aspect of the day is the launch of the Diaspora Engagement Strategy. He wished all a happy and memorial day. Deputy O’Caoláin stated that he hoped the Government would consider working towards giving a vote to the Diaspora for Presidential elections in Ireland.

Deputy Niamh Smyth thanked all for coming to this historic meeting in Leinster House. Deputy Smyth congratulated Cavan County Council on producing a well presented Diaspora Engagement Strategy. She stated that the strategy has the capacity to deliver on tourism in the County and also to visit various festivals abroad.

Senator Denis O’Donovan, Cathaoirleach Seanad Eireann welcomed all to the meeting. Senator O’Donovan paid tribute to the work being done by Senator Lawless. He acknowledged the promotion of Diaspora and stated that we will always welcome our Diaspora back.

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

Noted.

Councillor E. Greenen queried why Cavan County Council are writing off a bill of €11,000 for fire brigade call outs to road traffic accidents because the Health Services Executive refuse to accept responsibility for the fees. Councillor Greenan asked if a breakdown of the figures could be provided to the elected members and details of the HSE’s position on the matter.

Mr. Joe McLoughlin, Director of Service stated that the HSE was not willing to pay the money and that the local authority had tried every avenue to secure payment. He stated that the Council had followed the matter as far as possible and it is not a clear cut matter. Mr. McLoughlin stated that at a further meeting of Cavan County Council he would provide the correspondence from the HSE on the matter.

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

Noted.

**6. To approve the disposal of 0.099 ha or 0.245 acres of land, including Clifferna Old National School, at Clifferna, Stradone, Co. Cavan for the sum of €20,000, to Veronica & Hugh Sheridan, 14 Deerpark Manor, Virginia, Co. Cavan pursuant to Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001 and Section 211 of the Local Government (Planning & Development) Act 2000, and notices circulated.**

It was:

 Proposed by Councillor C. Brady

 Seconded by Councillor P. Smith

 And

 Resolved:

 “that the disposal of 0.099 ha or 0.245 acres of land, including Clifferna Old National School, at Clifferna, Stradone, Co. Cavan for the sum of €20,000, to Veronica & Hugh Sheridan, 14 Deerpark Manor, Virginia, Co. Cavan pursuant to Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001 and Section 211 of the Local Government (Planning & Development) Act 2000 be hereby approved“.

**9. To approve the Review of the Corporate Plan in consideration of Adoption of Local Economic Community Plan under Section 134 (8)(a) of the Local Government Act 2001 and Section 49 of the Local Government Reform Act 2014.**

 It was:

 Proposed by Councillor J.P. Feeley

 Seconded by Councillor P. Brady

 And

 Resolved:

 “that the Review of the Corporate Plan in consideration of Adoption of Local Economic Community Plan under Section 134 (8)(a) of the Local Government Act 2001 and Section 49 of the Local Government Reform Act 2014 be hereby approved”.

**10. To note the 2017 Implementation Plans for the Community Elements and Economic Elements of the Cavan Local Ecomonic Implementation Plan (LECP).**

Noted.

**11. To consider Annual Financial Statement for 2016.**

Noted.

Mr. Des Maguire, Head of Finance outlined in great detail the annual financial statement of financial year ended 31st December, 2016 stating that this is the second most important document after the budget. He stated that the Annual Financial Statement is prepared in line with the private sector organization since 2001. He stated that the figures reveal an overall surplus of €110. Mr. Maguire informed the members that the annual financial statement will be audited by the Local Government Auditor and the report will be submitted to the members at a later date.

The members in turn thanked Mr. Maguire for his thorough presentation on the financial situation of Cavan County Council for year ended 31/12/2016.

**12. Approval for additional Revenue expenditure in 2016.**

It was:

 Proposed by Councillor S.P. O’Reilly

 Seconded by Councillor D. Brady

 And

 Resolved:

 “that additional revenue expenditure in 2016 be hereby approved”.

**13. Approval of transfer to Reserves 2016 Annual Financial Statement.**

 It was:

 Proposed by Councillor S.P. O’Reilly

 Seconded by Councillor D. Brady

 And

 Resolved:

 “that transfer to Reserves 2016 Annual Financial Statement be hereby approved”.

**14. Statement of Rate Collection for 2016.**

Noted.

**Meeting reconvened at 3.30p.m. in Davenport Hotel. Councillor P. McDonald, Leas-Cathaoirleach chaired the meeting in the absence of the Cathaoirleach.**

**7. To hear presentation and to adopt the Cavan Food Strategy.**

Mr. Eoin Doyle, Director of Service informed the members that the Cavan Food Strategy forms part of the Local Economic and Community Plan. He stated that the plan has already being put before the Strategic Policy Committee and is now for adoption by the Council.

 Mr. J.P. Feeley, Chairman of Economic Development Strategic Policy Committee stated that the food sector plays a big part in our economy generating over €26 billion annually. He stated that the idea behind the strategy is to bring all areas together and build on the success of the Taste of Cavan. He stated that publishing a strategy is one thing but as a Council we need to follow it through.

Ms. Caroline Brady, Administrative Officer gave a detailed presentation on Cavan Food Strategy. She noted that the main strategic aims and objectives of the Strategy are to create an integrated approach involving all relevant local and national agencies to support Cavan’s diverse food sectors over the lifetime of the strategy; promote inter food company networking, communication and collaboration; increase consumer awareness and consumption of locally produced Cavan food and drink; increase food innovation and promote and support the growth of food and drink producers in Cavan. Ms. Brady stated that the strategy had been developed under four headings namely, communication, business supports, food tourism and routes to market. She stated that each pillar sets out actions, objectives, bodies responsible, timeframe, progress milestones and performance indicators that the implementation of the strategy can be benchmarked against.

 It was:

 Proposed by Councillor J.P. Feeley

 Seconded by Councillor C. Kelly

 And

 Resolved:

 “that the Cavan Food Strategy be hereby approved”.

**8. To hear briefing on Cavan Tourism Strategy.**

Councillor J.P. Feeley Chairman of Economic Development Strategic Policy Committee acknowledged the success of tourism in Cavan over recent times some of which include Cavan County Museum, Cavan Burren Park, Geopark, Cavan Walking Festival, All-Ireland Fleadhs and Taste of Cavan. He stated that there is need for a second tourist officer in Cavan and a need for significant investment on various sites. He stated that we need to use our tourism strategy to ensure that the County gets its share of national coverage.

 Mr. Michael Counahan, CHL Consulting Company Ltd stated that the objective of the tourism strategy is to develop an all-county plan that will galvanise the tourism proposition and enable Cavan to grow and develop successfully as a unique destination within the island of Ireland. He stated that the aims of the plan are to increase tourist visits and economic return by 15-20% over the next five years, provide strategic direction on development and marketing, build capacity and galvanise tourism providers and invest in and improve on Cavan’s tourism experiences. He stated that Cavan’s strengths are its landscape, scenery, natural and built heritage. He noted that the County is natural, unspoilt, uncrowded and yet within easy reach of Dublin, Belfast and the North West. He stated that the County offers good food, good accommodation and things to do. He stated that emotionally the County is slow, real, authentic, provides the opportunity to de-stress, connect with loved ones and remember what is important in life. He stated that the County needs to make the best of what it already has such as focus on food, use the natural resource basis for activity development – lakes, forests, Geopark etc. He noted that there is a strong hotel and restaurant framework within the County. He stated that clearer messages for Cavan under its existing brand “This is Cavan” need to be developed. He stated that the County needs to go digital and know what the consumers want and what they like about the County making it easy to find and access. He stated that the plan details a set of actions which correspond to the strategic pillars and these actions will help Cavan meet its core objectives of increasing and sustaining visitor numbers. He stated that Cavan County Council will lead on some initiatives while other partner agencies can be mobilised to take the lead.

 Councillor P. McDonald thanked Mr. Counahan for his detailed presentation.

 Councillor C. Kelly stated that unless the whole of County Cavan is marketed together the plan will not be successful. He stated that separating the County into East and West will not work.

 Mr. Eoin Doyle, Director of Service stated that the plan will promote sites throughout all of County Cavan.

 Mr. Michael Counahan assured Councillor Kelly that the Plan is an all County plan.

**15. To approve attendance of members at the following:**

* **Association of Irish Regions (AIR) Seminar on “Brexit**”**, Regional Planning and EU Affairs” to be held in the Parkview Hotel, Newtownmountkennedy, Co. Wicklow on 26th May, 2017.**

It was:

Proposed by Councillor M. Argue

Seconded by Councillor P. McVitty

 And

Resolved:

“that the attendance of Councillors P. O’Reilly, P. McVitty, V. Smith and P. Brady at the Association of Irish Regions (AIR) Seminar on “Brexit”, Regional Planning and EU Affairs” to be held in the Parkview Hotel, Newtownmountkennedy, Co. Wicklow on 26th May, 2017 be hereby approved”.

* **AILG Training Day on Community Development Initiatives – Urban & Rural to be held in the Castlecourt Hotel, Westport on 13th May, 2017.**

It was:

Proposed by Councillor M. Argue

Seconded by Councillor P. McVitty

 And

Resolved:

“that the attendance of Councillors P. O’Reilly, P. McVitty and V. Smith, P. Smith, M. Argue, W. Bennett, J.P. Feeley, S. P. O’Reilly, S. Smith, S. O’Reilly, C. Kelly, P. Brady and F. Curtin at theAILG Training Day on Community Development Initiatives – Urban & Rural to be held in the Castlecourt Hotel, Westport on 13th May, 2017 be hereby approved”.

**12(a) To note reply from IDA Ireland, Senator Joe O’Reilly, Eamon Scanlon, T.D. regarding job creation in County Cavan.**

Noted.

 **(b) To note reply from Office of the Minister of Agriculture, Food and the Marine regarding agricultural educational requirements for applicants under the Young Farmers’ Scheme.**

Noted.

 **(c) To note replies from Department of Justice & Equality regarding the request to carry out an inquest in the campaign for answers surrounding the disappearance of Mary Boyle in 1977.**

Noted.

 **(d) To noted reply from Department of Social Protection regarding the overgrowth of tress and service poles with ivy.**

Noted.

 **(e) To note reply from Department of Social Protection regarding the Gateway Scheme.**

Councillor S. O’Reilly expressed her disappointment with the reply. She noted that the scheme will end in June and asked that the Council write again to the Minister asking him to provide assistance financially or otherwise for replacement of the scheme.

 **(f) To note reply from Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport regarding the Bus Eireann dispute.**

Noted.

 **(g) To note reply from Department of Social Protection regarding the proposals to restructure the MABs and CIS Offices.**

Noted.

 **(h) To note reply from Transport Infrastructure Ireland regarding the amenity park at Lavey, Co. Cavan.**

Councillor V. Smith stated that the reply received was a disgrace. He stated that the reply had nothing to do with what was asked for in the letter by the Council. He stated that the reply recommends developing a car park which has already been developed by Cavan County Council. Councillor Smith asked that TII clarify their response to the Council.

 Councillor C. Kelly stated that a letter should go to the Minister stating that Cavan County Council is unhappy by the way TII is treating the Council.

1. **To note ICBAN update – March 2017.**

 Noted.

Councillor P. Brady asked that a reminder letter be sent in relation to situations that have arisen whereby children under the age of six are not being seen by doctor on call and told to go to accident and emergency.

 **Vote of Sympathy:**

* Mr. Ger Finn, Director of Service and the Finn family on the death of his brother Mr. John Finn.

**Votes of Congratulations:**

* Bailieborough native Kevin Kelleher and his business partner Rhona Hunt on winning the AIB Start-Up Academy 2017 for their invention of Ostoform a medical device that prevents the output from an ileostomy leaking on to the patient’s skin.
* Ms. Martha Lievens, Ms. Mary McMullen and the staff and students of Bailieborough Community College on hosting the cycle against suicide.
* Coláiste Dún An Rí on their success at Dundalk Institute of Technology SciFest.
* Ms. Paula McPartland on winning the Cavan Rose Competition.

**MEMBERS’ ITEMS – DEFERRED FROM APRIL MEETING.**

1. **To ask Irish Water why there seems to be so much lime in the water supply at present.**

Councillor C. Kelly welcome the €3m spent in Kingscourt on a new reservoir. He stated that a number of residents in have raised the issue of why there is so much lime in the water supply in Kingscourt presently. He stated that people have had their washing machines and dishwashers destroyed as a result of the lime in the water and in some cases it has created problems to the heating system. Councillor Kelly proposed that the Council ask Irish Water why there seems to be so much lime in the water supply at present.

Mr. Ger Finn, Director of Service stated that the source in Kingscourt had not changed over the years and lime is only becoming an issue now. He stated that contact has been made with Irish Water in relation to the issue. He stated that the people of Kingscourt should report the problem directly to Irish Water.

1. **That Cavan County Council fully endorses the contents of the Declaration of Independence Bill 2017.**

Councillor S. P. O’Reilly called on Cavan County Council to fully endorse the contents of the Declaration of Independence Bill 2017 which is currently going through the Seanad. He stated that the first meeting in Dáil Eireann took place on 21st January 1919 and it is important that the Local Authority recognises the importance of this date. He stated that the Local Authority played a huge part in the 1916 celebrations and we as a Council should support the 21st January 2019 to become a public holiday.

This proposal was seconded by Councillor P. Brady.

1. **That the NCT be deemed appropriate for vehicles of an age for insurance purposes.**

Councillor S.P. O’Reilly stated that he had been approached by motorists who had been refused insurance cover for 2002 vehicles, even though they hold a valid NCT proving that their car is roadworthy and safe to drive. He stated that it is unacceptable that insurance companies are refusing to cover cars over fifteen years that hold a valid NCT. He stated that this situation is particularly difficult for young people who are starting out and getting their first car. Councillor S. P. O’Reilly proposed that the Council write to the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport seeking clarity on why insurance companies are allowed to refuse policies for cars over fifteen years old.

Councillor P. Smith seconded the proposal stating that the NCT should make the age of the car irrelevant. He stated that the law dictates that there is a fifteen year age limit on vehicles associated with the standard taxi or hackney licence but this should not affect private cars.

1. **To request a full plan to alleviate the ongoing flooding of Crosskeys village.**

Councillor S.P. noted that there is a plan in place currently to alleviate the ongoing flooding of Crosskeys Village and asked that the full plan be given to the Municipal District area.

Councillor P. Smith supported the motion and noted that Cavan County Council has done some work over the years to alleviate flooding in the village.

Councillors P. Brady and N. Connell supported the motion.

Mr. Joe McLoughlin, Director of Services stated that substantial works had been carried out in the village of Crosskeys in 2016. He stated that the remainder 18m will be complete within the next three weeks. He stated that two new gates have been erected at the National School to prevent flooding to the school. He stated that he was confident that these construction works would alleviate the problem

but if not it could be examined further at Municipal District level.

1. **That Cavan County Council call on Simon Harris, T.D. Minister for Health to put in place adequate resources to recruit additional Resources Psychologists, Speech & Language Therapists and Occupational Therapists to HSE Cavan/Monaghan to address delays in the Autism Spectrum Disorder Diagnostic Process.**

Councillor J.P. Feeley stated that under the Disability Act 2005, children must be assessed within six months of a request, but many areas of the country have 18 month plus waiting times. He stated that specialist services are vital for children with autism to develop their speech and behaviour. He stated that 10% of speech and language therapists are on leave at any given time. He stated there is a huge financial burden placed on some families as they have to go privately to get help. Councillor J.P. Feeley proposed that the Council write to the Minister for Health asking him to put in place adequate resources to recruit additional Resources Psychologists, Speech & Language Therapists and Occupational Therapists to HSE Cavan/Monaghan to address delays in the Autism Spectrum Disorder Diagnostic Process.

This proposal was seconded by Councillor P. McVitty.

Councillors S.P. O’Reilly and W. Bennett supported the motion.

1. **That Cavan County Council supports the call from the Irish Natura and Hill Farmers’ Association that the current review of Areas of Natural Constraint (ANC) Scheme due to come into effect in 2018 be based on bio physical criteria in order to ensure that payments are targeted at farmers whose land justifies additional support based on the degree of natural handicap.**

Councillor J.P. Feeley proposed that Cavan County Council supports the call from the Irish Natura and Hill Farmers’ Association that the current review of Areas of Natural Constraint (ANC) Scheme due to come into effect in 2018 be based on bio physical criteria in order to ensure that payments are targeted at farmers whose land justifies additional support based on the degree of natural handicap. He stated that any possibility of cuts to the areas of natural constraint payment will cause serious problems for these farmers and must be avoided at all costs. He stated that all lands which were originally designated as areas of natural constraint must be protected under the new scheme. Councillor P. McVitty seconded the proposal.

Councillor S. Smith supported the motion.

**MEMBERS’ ITEMS – MAY**

1. **That this Council puts in place a panel of temporary general operatives to replace permanent general operatives when they are out on sick leave or on annual leave.**

Councillor S. Smith noted that in the last number of years outdoor staff while off on sick leave or annual leave for a significant period of time are not being replaced thus leaving a very small work force to look after our roads and other outdoor activities. Councillor S. Smith proposed that the Cavan County Council puts in place a panel of temporary general operatives to replace permanent general operatives when they are out on sick leave or on annual leave.

Councillor D. Brady supported the motion. He stated that the parish of Kildallon is now left with no general operative as the last general operative for the area recently retired. He stated that local people are needed to fill these jobs as they have knowledge of the area.

Councillors P. McVitty and S.P. O’Reilly supported the motion.

Mr. Joe McLoughlin, Director of Service concurred with the general sentiment of the discussion. Mr. McLoughlin stated that if general operatives are out on sick leave, the Council still has to pay them along with social welfare. He stated that it is unlikely the Council would have the capacity to address these issues until more resources become available from the Council’s own resources. He stated that payment in lieu no longer operates. He stated that it is a huge challenge at the beginning of the year to keep these in full time employment.

1. **That this Council should have a new approach regarding granting tenancy of existing vacant local authority houses.**

Councillor S. Smith noted that in some areas of County Cavan there are local authority houses where Cavan County Council have tried to get suitable tenants and failed. He stated that geographically some parts of Cavan are very close to Counties Leitrim and Fermanagh and maybe if there were tenants in those Counties looking of dwelling houses they could be offered a house in County Cavan. He stated that he is confident that there are applicants on the housing list in Leitrim and Fermanagh who would be more than willing to take up accommodation in County Cavan. Councillor S. Smith proposed that the Council write to the Minister for Housing, Planning, Community & Local Government asking that regulations be amended in order to allow people on housing lists take up residency in another County.

Councillor J. P. Feeley supported the motion. He stated that we should find some way of assisting people who emigrated from County Cavan many years ago to return to their native communities.

Councillor P. McVitty seconded the proposal.

Councillor P. O’Reilly questioned if a lot of these houses were built without a demand for them.

Mr. Joe McLoughlin, Director of Service informed the members that generally it is challenging to get tenants to occupy houses in West Cavan. He noted that a person or family can only be placed on one housing list. He stated that Cavan County Council previously made contact with Leitrim but unfortunately no interest was shown. He stated dealing with County Fermanagh would be more problematic as they are in a different jurisdiction. Mr. McLoughlin stated that there is a scheme known as the Choice based letting scheme where these dwellings will be advertised and people on the housing list can register their interest in them with the Council.

1. **That proposals for the use of any rebate from Irish Public Bodies Mutual Insurance be presented to the Council without delay.**

Councillor S.P. O’Reilly on behalf of the Fianna Fáil Party attended the Annual General Meeting of Irish Public Bodies Mutual Insurance on 28th April, 2017. He stated that at that meeting it was noted that a sizeable amount of money will be coming to local authorities and asked if the Executive is aware of same. He asked that any proposals for the use of any rebate from Irish Public Bodies Mutual Insurance be presented to the Council without delay.

Councillor P. O’Reilly stated that they were informed at the meeting that the Council would be directed to spend the money on preventative measures in the County and asked if this is the case.

Mr. Des Maguire, Head of Finance stated that the Council received no confirmation of what was passed by the Board at the meeting of Irish Public Bodies Mutual Insurance and stated that no proposals have been considered on what the money is to be spent on. He stated that if money does come to Cavan County Council then the Executive will come back to the members with the proposal.

Councillor S.P. O’Reilly asked that the matter be brought before the Corporate Policy Group when it happens.

1. **That Cavan County Council re-tenders all professional services.**

Councillor E. Greenan noted that the Annual Financial Statement shows that consultancy and professional fee payments had increase almost 50% from 2015 to 2016. Councillor Greenan stated that cost savings could be made be re-tendering for services. He stated that at a time of tightening budgets, it may be an opportunity for further cost savings of taxpayers money and delivering value for money.

Councillor P. McVitty noted that he had queried the tendering process previously stating that he had never signed a tender for professional services.

Councillor J.P. Feeley agreed that there is a need to always keep services re-tendered. Councillor Feeley stated that it is important to have an open tender process and acknowledged that the lowest tender is not always the best value. He stated that the requirement for tender processing needs to be simplified at a national level.

Mr. Eoin Doyle, Director of Service explained that the majority of professional services are job/project specific and are tendered for as and when required in accordance with National and EU procurement rules and regulations. He stated that contracts cannot just be terminated, they must have a proper reason for example some breach of the contract. Mr. Doyle stated that some professional services are procured from frameworks already put in place by National bodies such as OGP and TII and sometimes the Council has no option but to use them. He stated that in many cases, it would not be practical to re-tender, but it is something that could be examined within the policy framework.

Mr. Des Maguire, Head of Finance agreed with the trust of Councillor Greenan in relation to value for money. He stated that the Local Government Auditor is sent by the Department to every local authority and each local authority pays a fee on the basis of valuation.

Councillor D. Brady highlighted the issue of forest and gorse fires during the great spell of warm weather noting that the fire service was working around the clock. He congratulated and commended the work of the fire station.

Councillor J.P. Feeley agreed with Councillor D. Brady. He stated that there had been a huge fire in West Cavan during the hot spell of weather and complimented the fire service for their hard work. He stated that nationally suggestions were being made that farmers were lighting fires which is a very unfair slant being put on what is happening.

Items 11 and 12 were deferred.

The meeting concluded at 5.45p.m.

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

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