**Minutes of Virtual Meeting of Cavan County Council held on Microsoft Teams on Monday 12th April 2021 at 2.00p.m.**

Councillor S. O’Reilly, Cathaoirleach presiding

Present; Councillors M. Argue, W. Bennett, C. Brady, P. Brady, B. Fay,

A. Fitzpatrick, J.P. Feeley, C. Kelly, C. Lovett, P. McDonald, P. McVitty,

S.P. O’Reilly, T.P. O’Reilly, T. Smith, V. Smith, P. Walsh.

In Attendance; T. Ryan, Chief Executive

E. Doyle, Director of Service

P. Connaughton, Director of Service

B. Jennings, Director of Service

M. McNally, A/Head of Finance

L. McGavigan, Senior Executive Officer

E. McGinn, Senior Staff Officer

An Apology was received from Councillor S. Smith.

Cathaoirleach S. O’Reilly welcomed all to the meeting.

1. **To confirm Minutes of Monthly Meeting held on 8 March 2021.**

**Miontuaririsci cruinnithe 8 Marta a dhearbhu.**

It was

Proposed by Councillor P. McVitty

Seconded by Councillor S.P. O’Reilly

And

Resolved;

“that minutes of meeting of Cavan County Council held on 8 March 2021 be hereby approved”

1. **Disclosures of Interests (Section 177 Local Government Act 2001)**

Noted.

**Note Minutes of Committee Meetings**

1. **To note Minutes of Corporate Policy Group meeting held on 4 February 2021.**

Noted.

**Note Members’ Reports from Conferences / Training events**

**4. To note members’ reports from conferences and training events *(Section 142 and***

***Section 143 of the Local Government Act 2001; Local Government (Expenses of Local***

***Authority Members) Regulations 2014 Part V Section 5 (1)).***

Noted.

**Correspondence**

**5(i) To note reply from the Office of the Minister of State at the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage regarding fees accompanying submissions or observations in respect of applications for planning permission.**

Noted.

**(ii) To note reply from Office of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage regarding the grant funding of security measures under the Housing Adaptation Grants for Older People and People with a Disability Scheme.**

Noted.

**(iii) To note reply from Commission for Regulation of Utilities (CRU) regarding the current Irish Water connection charges and the appointment of contractors for this work.**

Noted.

**(iv) To note reply from Office of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform regarding CE Supervisor Pensions.**

Noted.

**6. Member’s Questions – Councillor P. McDonald**

To ask Cavan County Council how much land Cavan County Council has for the development of social housing and a break down for each town and village in the County.

An answer to the question posed by Councillor P. McDonald was circulated to him prior to the meeting.

**Business prescribed by Statute, Standing Orders or Resolutions of the Council.**

**7. To hear presentation from Mr. Eanna Rowe, Regional Manager, Waterways Ireland regarding the Shannon Masterplan.**

Mr. Eanna Rowe, Regional Manager, Waterways Ireland gave a detailed presentation to the members on the Shannon Masterplan. Mr. Rowe stated that the masterplan is a collaborative project led by Waterways Ireland with Fáilte Ireland and ten local authorities. He stated that the Shannon Tourism Masterplan is a framework for tourism development along the Shannon and Shannon Erne Waterway. Mr. Rowe stated that it is about repositioning the region as a key tourism destination within Ireland’s Hidden Heartlands. Mr. Rowe identified three key themes in the plan which are, “The Shannon, mighty river of Ireland”, “Shannon Journey’s and Adventures” and “The Natural Timeless Shannon”. He stated the plan will develop multiple ways to allow visitors and residents interact with the natural amenities the river system presents. He stated that the plan will develop remote moorings and tranquillity zones along the Shannon to allow boaters enjoy the wilderness of Ireland’s Hidden Heartlands. He stated that recreational infrastructure, including a network of walking and cycling trails will be included in the plan. He stated that the aim of the plan is to enhance the visitor experience of existing attractions and explore the potential for new visitor experiences. Mr. Rowe noted Cavan towns and villages will play a central and crucial role in the plan, referring to Ballyconnell, Belturbet, Castesaunderson and the Ulster Canal.

Councillor J.P. Feeley thanked Mr. Rowe for his presentation. He acknowledged the good work of Waterways Ireland to date and noted they always responded to Councillors when they had queries. Councillor Feely noted that none of the major funding projects were in his region such as at the Shannon Pot and Cuilcagh way. He stated that the development of Blueways is good for the region. Councillor Feeley noted the potential Lough Oughter has and stated that Waterways Ireland should examine how it can be extended to Killeshandra. He also stated that the village of Dowra should be linked with Lough Allen.

Councillor P. McVitty noted the importance of public buy in to the project. Councillor McVitty welcomed the greenways but appealed to Waterways Ireland to work with the farmers and landowners along the line.

Councillor B. Fay stated that it was great to see the support Waterways Ireland has given to projects in the County.

Mr. Rowe thanked the members for their positive comments.

**8. To hear presentation from Mr. Niall Beirne, Head of Strategic Communications & Stakeholder Engagement, National Broadband Ireland regarding the rollout of high speed broadband.**

Mr. Niall Beirne, Head of Strategic Communications and Stakeholder Engagement, National Broadband Ireland made a detailed presentation to the members on the rollout of high speed broadband especially within County Cavan. Mr. Beirne stated that nationally NBI have surveyed over 200,000 properties. He stated that Cavan along with Carrigaline in Co. Cork are two of the first areas that went live this year. He stated that the home of a family in Drumard outside Cavan town was the first rural Ireland home to have high speed broadband delivered under the Government’s National Broadband Plan. He stated that in Cavan there are 16,242 premises in the area targeted by NBI under the plan. He stated that eight of the twelve broadband connection points planned for in the County are now connected and providing high speed broadband. Mr. Beirne noted that community centres in Templeport, Drumavaddy, Castlerahan, Mullahoran and Cornafean are live along with Castlesaunderson Scout Centre, Glangevlin Community Hall and Gallonray house. He stated that work is under way at Kill GFC and Killinkere Leisure Centre, Bunnoe Community Centre and Kildallan Parish Hall are in the planning stage. He stated that nineteen schools are also to be connected under an accelerated programme. He stated that NBI are responsible for the design, build and operation of the infrastructure but are not a broadband provider. He stated that local providers such as Arden broadband in Cavan play a vital role in bringing broadband to communities.

Councillor J.P. Feeley thanked Mr. Beirne for his presentation and noted that seven years is a long time for some people to be waiting on broadband particularly in the current climate with many people working from home due to Covid 19. He stated that he would like to see the rollout fast tracked to the greatest extent possible. He noted that many of the elderly are having difficulty with their personal safety devices that require landline connection.

Councillor S.P. O’Reilly thanked Mr. Beirne for his presentation and stated that there is a massive influx of people moving from Dublin to the Mullagh area and providers are not providing speeds that are needed in the area. He stated that NBI could make a huge difference to the area if they looked into it.

Councillor B. Fay stated that there are quite a number of black spots in his area with poor coverage.

Councillor T.P. O’Reilly asked what the provision of service was for new builds.

Councillor S. O’Reilly asked if NBI were in communication with local authorities to avoid the situation where resurfaced roads or footpaths would be dug up to install ducting.

Mr. Beirne stated that given the size and scale of the project, a seven year time frame was appropriate as they were scheduled to make provision for 544,000 properties, addressing 96%of the landmass of the country. He stated that acceleration could theoretically be possible in consultation with the State.

**9. To note Chief Executive’s monthly report (Section 51 Local Government Reform**

**Act 2014).**

Noted.

**10. To approve the Roadworks Programme 2021.**

It was

Proposed by Councillor C. Kelly

Seconded by Councillor P. McVitty

and

Resolved

“that the Roadworks Programme 2021 be hereby approved”.

**11. To note Decarbonisation Zone Cavan.**

Noted.

**12. To approve Cavan Local Authority Audit Committee Annual Report 2020 – (Local Government (Audit Committee) Regulations 2014).**

It was

Proposed by Councillor S.P. O’Reilly

Seconded by Councillor P. McVitty

and

Resolved

“that the Cavan Local Authority Audit Committee Annual Report 2020 – (Local Government (Audit Committee) Regulations 2014 be hereby approved”.

**13. To note Audit Committee Report pursuant to Section 121 of the Local Government Act, as amended by Section 60 of the Local Government Act 2014.**

Noted.

**14. To approve Cavan Local Authority Audit Committee Charter in accordance with the Local Government (Audit Committee) Regulations 2014.**

It was

Proposed by Councillor S.P. O’Reilly

Seconded by Councillor J.P. Feeley

and

Resolved

“that the Cavan Local Authority Audit Committee Charter in accordance with the Local Government (Audit Committee) Regulations 2014 be hereby approved”.

**15. Consideration of the Annual Financial Statement 2020 under Section 108 of Local**

**Government Act 2001.**

Ms. Margaret McNally, A/Head of Finance gave a detailed presentation to the members on the annual financial statement 2020. Ms. McNally noted that the revenue expenditure for 2020 amounts to €87,361,912, transfers to reserves amounts to €5,795,456 giving total expenditure of €93,157,368. She noted that the revenue income amounts to €66,497,967, income from rates amounts to €16,480,680, income from local property tax €9,480,498 and transfers from reserves amounts to €698,315 resulting in total income of €93,157,460. She stated that the net position on revenue account for 2020 is surplus of €92 increasing general reserve at 31/12/2020 to €1,743,352. She stated that this represents a satisfactory outcome for 2020 on revenue account and reflects the ongoing prudent management of the Council’s finances in challenging conditions.

The members in turn complimented Ms. McNally and her team in finance for the detailed annual financial statement presented to them. The members also acknowledged the good work done by the rate collectors and rates section of Cavan County Council.

It was:

Proposed by Councillor C. Kelly

Seconded by Councillor M. Argue

and

Resolved

“that the Annual Financial Statement 2020 under Section 108 of Local Government Act 2001 be hereby considered”.

**16. Approval of Additional Revenue Expenditure 2020.**

It was

Proposed by Councillor C. Kelly

Seconded by Councillor M. Argue

and

Resolved

“that the additional revenue expenditure 2020 be hereby approved”.

**17. Approval of Transfers to Capital 2020.**

It was

Proposed by Councillor J.P. Feeley

Seconded by Councillor T.P. O’Reilly

and

Resolved

“that transfers to capital 2020 be hereby approved”.

**18. Statement of Rate Collection 2020.**

Noted.

**19. To seek 3 nominations for the Cavan Drug and Alcohol Forum.**

Councillor S. O’Reilly informed the members that as the forum is not prescribed by law, the elected members can nominate five members onto the forum.

It was proposed by Councillor J.P. Feeley and seconded by Councillor A. Fitzpatrick that Councillor P. Walsh be nominated for the Cavan Drug and Alcohol Forum.

It was proposed by Councillor S.P. O’Reilly and seconded by Councillor S. O’Reilly that Councillor B. Fay be nominated for the Cavan Drug and Alcohol Forum.

It was proposed by Councillor B. Fay and seconded by Councillor S.P O’Reilly that Councillor S. O’Reilly be nominated for the Cavan Drug and Alcohol Forum.

It was proposed by Councillor S. O’Reilly and seconded by Councillor S.P. O’Reilly that Councillor P. McDonald be nominated for the Cavan Drug and Alcohol Forum

It was proposed by Councillor M. Argue and seconded by Councillor P. McVitty that Councillor T.P. O’Reilly be nominated for the Cavan Drug and Alcohol Forum.

**The 5 elected members nominated for the Cavan Drug and Alcohol Forum are Councillors P. Walsh, B. Fay, S. O’Reilly, P. McDonald and T.P. O’Reilly.**

**Votes of Sympathy**

* The Halton Family, Kilnaleck on the death of Pauline Halton. Councillor S. O’Reilly read a statement on behalf of Cavan County Council in relation to the death of artist Pauline Halton, Rose Cottage, Kilnaleck. Ms. Halton painted the world as she saw it and as she wanted it to be. She loved to travel, explore new places and meet people. Ms. Halton was the first solo show in the Courthouse, Cavan in 1989, she went on to exhibit at Cavan County Museum, the Jo Rain Gallery, The Mansion House, The American Embassy, Dublin, January Clan, France and countless other galleries. Ms. Halton contributed a poem and painting to the Christmas edition of the Anglo Celt annually. She stated that Pauline Halton is the Patrick Kavanagh of Kilnaleck. She stated that for those who knew Pauline Halton as a person and an artist it was a privilege and a joy to have shared part of her journey.
* The Coote Family, Bailieborough on the death of Bert Coote.
* The Stafford Family, Waterloo, Bailieborough on the death of Jimmy Stafford, former Vice-Chairman of Cavan County Enterprise Board and member of Cavan Football Team of 1962.
* The Cooney Family, Waterloo, Bailieborough on the death of Minnie Cooney
* The Hetherton Family, Lurganboy, Virginia on the death of Mattie Hetherton. Mattie was a member of the Cavan Football Team in the late seventies.
* The Land Family, Castlerahan on the death of Philip Land. Philip was founder of Virginia Rural Hub.
* The Donagh Family, Kingscourt on the death of Matt Donagh.
* The McPhillips Family Bailieborough on the death of Mary McPhillips, cousin of Deputy Niamh Smyth and Councillor A. Fitzpatrick.

**Votes of Congratulations:**

* Councillor J.P. Feeley on his recent engagement to Ms. Niamh Gavin. The members in turn wished Councillor Feeley and Niamh every success and happiness in the future.
* Rachael Blackmore on winning the Mares Hurdle at Cheltenham and also being the first lady to win the Aintree Grand National. Rachael’s grandmother comes from Bailieborough and her grand uncle Peter Shaffrey owned the Percy French Hotel in Ballyjamesduff.
* Leona Maguire, Ballyconnell on her achievement at her first Ladies Professional Golf Association (LGPA) major of the year in California.
* Britney Arendse, Mullagh on breaking her own junior world record at the World Cup Powerlifting event in Eger, Hungary. Britney is now aiming for Tokyo Paralympic Games.
* Aishling Sheridan, Mullahoran and former Cavan footballer on her fine scoring for Collingwood Australian Rules against Brisbane Lions
* On Sunday April 11th, Cavan Senior County Camogie girls took part in a 120km round trip from Kingspan Breffni to all the clubs and back to Kingspan to raise fund for Cavan Camogie and Cuan Cavan Cancer Support.

**MEMBERS’ ITEMS – MARCH MEETING**

1. **North South Interconnector**

Councillor C. Kelly asked the Director of Service, Mr. Brendan Jennings if there had been any communication or discussions between Cavan County Council and Eirgrid or ESB in relation to the North South Interconnector.

Mr. Brendan Jennings, Director of Service informed the members that since the last Council meeting there had been no correspondence from anyone in relation to the North South Interconnector.

Councillor Kelly noted that a presentation had been made to the members earlier by Eirgrid and wondered why the press were not in attendance. Councillor C. Kelly also proposed that the Council invite NEPS to a meeting to make a presentation to the members. This was seconded by Councillor S. O’Reilly.

1. **That Cavan County Council call on the Minister for Education and the FÓRSA trade union to return to the Workplace Relations Commission to get a resolution to the issue of pay and conditions of school secretarial staff.**

Councillor J.P. Feeley proposed that Cavan County Council call on the Minister for Education and the FÓRSA trade union to return to the Workplace Relations Commission to get a resolution to the issue of pay and conditions of school secretarial staff. Councillor Feeley noted that there is a two tier system under which school secretaries are employed, some are directly employed by and paid by the Department of Education and have public service employment status while the majority have their pay and conditions determined by Boards of Management of Schools, where they receive grants from the State. Councillor Feeley noted that while significant progress has been made since October, the matter needs to be further progressed and allow school secretaries receive sick pay and holiday pay.

Councillor S.P. O’Reilly seconded Councillor Feeley’s proposal. He stated that it is very disheartening for secretaries of schools who during Covid went over and beyond the call of duty in communicating with parents of school children.

Councillor C. Kelly supported the motion and noted that this is mainly a problem for secretaries in primary schools.

Councillors P. Walsh and T.P. O’Reilly supported the motion.

1. **That this Council records its support for the World Health Organisation’s plea for the equitable global distribution of all vaccines, treatments and therapies developed to combat the coronavirus scourge.**

Councillor P. McDonald asked that Cavan County Council record its support for the World Health Organisation’s plea for the equitable global distribution of all vaccines, treatments and therapies developed to combat the coronavirus scourge. Councillor McDonald stated that there are still one hundred and thirty poorer countries without the vaccine. He stated that there are still approximately 130 countries to receive a single vaccine and the cost of the vaccine to some of the poorest countries can be multiples of its cost to the more developed and economically strong countries. He stated that the poorest of countries will continue to die in disproportionate numbers while they wait for the vaccines to arrive. He stated that the Chief Executive of Trócaire, who are the sole providers of healthcare in the Gedo district of Somalia has stated that they do not anticipate receiving any vaccines until well into 2022. He stated that the death rate from coronavirus on the African continent is known to be at least 0.3% higher than the global average. Councillor McDonald stated that no one is safe until everyone is safe and appealed to everyone to sign the petition online.

Councillor J.P. Feeley stated that he had concerns about the WHO and felt their handling of Coronavirus and what went on in China was very poor. He stated that he was not an expert in immunology or public health but realises that the experts have good reasons to do what they are doing in relation to Covid. Councillor Feeley acknowledged the merits of Councillor McDonald’s motion but stated that he had his reservations. He stated that everyone would like to see the vaccine rolled out yesterday but if this is to happen, who do we propose to take the vaccines from in this country.

Councillor B. Fay agreed with both views on the motion and stated that we need to look after the poor as well as the rich in the world.

Councillor C. Kelly stated that no one in Ireland should miss out on a vaccination in order to spread the vaccine fairly.

Councillor T.P. O’Reilly stated that this was a big issue and not one for the Councillors of Cavan County Council to get involved with.

Councillor P. McDonald clarified his motion by stating that he was not saying to leave anyone behind. He stated that pharmaceutical companies are making lots of money out of this, and the poor people in Africa are suffering because of it. Councillor McDonald stated that other counties had already passed the motion on humanitarian grounds.

Councillor S.P. O’Reilly stated that although the motion is worthy, charity begins at home and noted that he was not sure the WHO would listen to a motion from Cavan County Council.

Councillor J.P. Feeley reiterated that he did not object to the idea of the motion but wanted clarity on who should not get the vaccine in Ireland or what drug should not be produced to make up the additional vaccines needed.

**Extend meeting finishing time**

It was proposed by Councillor T.P. O’Reilly and seconded by Councillor P. McDonald to extend the meeting from 5pm to 5.30p.m.

1. **To ask Cavan County Council what its position is with regard to the proposed new Land Development Agency Bill.**

Councillor P. McDonald noted that the proposed new Land Development Agency Bill will not solve the housing crisis in Ireland. He stated that local authorities cannot allow public land to fall into the hands of large property owners. Councillor McDonald felt that the new Land Development Agency would be NAMA mark two with more powers, a bigger mandate and control over a more significant budget. He stated that the LDA should be split into two functions, one dealing with land management and the other, located to the City and County Managers Association which assists local authorities to deliver their regional five year public housing plans. He asked Cavan County Council not to support the new Land Development Agency Bill.

Councillor C. Kelly supported the motion stating that local authorities are mandated to provide social and affordable housing.

Councillor J.P. Feeley asked if Councillor McDonald was opposing the legislation in entirety or just in the part in relation to the Land Development Agency having the power to acquire lands owned by the local authority, Councillor Feely stated that the local authority should be providing the bulk of social housing.

Councillor S.P. O’Reilly stated that local councillors will have their powers further diminished if the Land Development Agency is allowed purchased land for social and affordable housing.

Councillor P. McDonald clarified that he was not opposed to the Land Development Agency in general. He stated that he was opposing the Land Development Agency taking control of land owned by local authorities to sell to bigger developers.

Councillor J.P. Feely suggested that the wording of the motion be amended to just deal with local authority lands.

Mr. Eoin Doyle, Director of Service stated that the work of the Land Development Agency is just one of a number of initiatives the government is employing to deal with the housing crisis. He stated that their role is to deal with the strategic management of the lands that are in the ownership of the State. He stated that they are looking to bring together land banks that are in the ownership of local authorities and other State agencies and are currently not being used to the maximum. He stated that the affordability requirement can be varied on sites in different areas depending on local housing needs. Mr. Doyle noted that local authorities will be able to transfer land to the Land Development Authority without requiring a Council vote which is the current Section 183 that the members approve in relation to the disposal of land. He stated that Cavan County Council will still have power as this only affects towns with over 30,000 of a population.

Councillor J.P. Feeley proposed that the motion be amended to read, “Cavan County Council members request the Government to retain the right of elected members in their role to approve all disposals of Council lands”.

The amended motion was seconded by Councillor C. Kelly.

P. Walsh supported the amended motion.

Councillor P. McDonald thanked the members for their support.

Councillor C. Kelly welcomed the €70m funding announced by Minister Heather Humphries for LEADER to the end of 2022 as part of the extended Rural Development Programme. He noted that over €2.51 million is being provided for County Cavan and wondered what it was going to be used for.

Mr. B. Jennings, Director of Service stated that he would check it out and clarify same with Councillor Kelly.

Item No’s 4,6,7,8,9,10 and 11 were deferred to the next meeting.

The meeting concluded at 5.40p.m.

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

Cathaoirleach: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_