**Minutes of Meeting of Cavan County Council held in The Hotel Kilmore on**

**Monday 12th July 2021 at 2.00p.m.**

Councillor C. Kelly, Cathaoirleach presiding

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

A. Fitzpatrick, J.P. Feeley, P. McDonald, P. McVitty, S. O’Reilly,

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 Administrative Officer

E. McGinn, Senior Staff Officer

Councillor C. Kelly welcomed all to the meeting. An apology was received from Councillor Sean Smith.

1. **To confirm Minutes of Monthly Meeting held on 14th June 2021.**

**Miontuaririsci cruinnithe 14 Meitheamh a dhearbhu.**

It was

Proposed by Councillor P. McVitty

Seconded by Councillor S. O’Reilly

And

Resolved;

“that minutes of meeting of Cavan County Council held on 14 June 2021 be hereby approved”

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

Noted.

1. **To hear presentation from NEPPC (North/South Interconnector Anti-pylon Group).**

Councillor C. Kelly welcomed Mr. O’Reilly to the meeting and thanked him and Ms. Aimee Treacy for the hard work and dedication to the project down through the years. Mr. Padraig O’Reilly from NEPPC made a presentation to the members via Microsoft teams. Mr. O’Reilly thanked the members for allowing him the opportunity to make the presentation stating that the NEPPC group have been working on this for years and always found the grass roots support from the Councils in Cavan, Meath and Monaghan to be very solid. He stated that here has been a recent challenge to the Northern Ireland decision to progress with a segment of the line north of the border and they are currently waiting on a decision which is due imminently. He stated that Eirgrid have made no contact with landowners since 2016 in relation to what access routes are to be employed to roll out the programme. He stated that there is a deadlock on the ground with regards to community engagement with the proposed pylons. He stated that the landowners are very resilient, particularly with the recent decision to install underground lines on the Kildare to Meath line. He stated that a statement by Eirgrid to an EU Committee that the costs of the project would be 50% higher than originally anticipated will bring it closer to the underground costings. Mr. O’Reilly called on the executive of Cavan County Council to ensure that the nine planning conditions of An Bord Pleanala’s planning decision are strictly complied with. Mr. O’Reilly also asked that the Councillors continue to highlight to their elected representatives the need for a political solution. He noted that the Government agreed to review the North South Interconnector in March but no progress has been made to date.

Councillor S. O’Reilly thanked Mr. O’Reilly for his presentation and the ongoing work that he and Ms. Treacy put into keeping the issue alive. Councillor O’Reilly asked that all T.D’s in the Constituency oppose the plan.

Councillor P. McDonald thanked Mr. O’Reilly for his presentation and thanked both Padraig and Aimee for their perseverance on the matter for the good of the community.

**Note Minutes of Committee Meetings**

**4. To note Minutes of Corporate Policy Group meeting held on 6 May 2021.**

Noted.

**5(a) To note Minutes of Strategic Policy Meeting on Housing, Social Inclusion and**

**Corporate Services held on 26 March 2021.**

Noted.

**5(b) To note Minutes of the Strategic Policy Committee on Cultural Development, Irish**

**Language and Sport held on 23 February 2021.**

Noted.

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

**6. 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**

**7(i) To note reply from the Office of the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications regarding the North-South Interconnector.**

Noted.

**(ii) To note reply from Eamon Ryan T.D., Minister for Transport in connection with funding of the road network in County Cavan.**

Noted. Councillor McVitty noted that Minister Ryan had still not replied to the letter in relation to funding for the local improvement scheme and asked that a further letter be sent.

**(iii) To note reply from Heather Humphreys, T.D., Minister for Rural and Community development and from the Office of the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine regarding the funding for the Local Improvement Scheme and the backlog issue of waiting lists for the scheme.**

Noted.

**(iv) To note reply from Office of the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine regarding EU Regulation 2019/6 on Veterinary Medicinal Products.**

For September Meeting.

**(v) To note reply from an Garda Siochana regarding investigation into the Belturbet Bombing.**

Noted.

**(vi) To note reply from Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage regarding the publication of the review of the Tenant (Incremental) Purchase Scheme 2016.**

Deferred to September meeting.

**8. Members’ Question**

**To ask Cavan County Council for an update on the appointment of an Irish Language Officer.**

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.**

**9. To note Chief Executive’s monthly report (Section 51 Local Government Reform Act 2014).**

Noted.

**10. To approve the Local Property Rate Adjustment for 2022.**

Ms. Margaret McNally, A/Head of Finance made a detailed presentation to the members on Local Property Tax Rate Adjustment for 2022. Ms. McNally noted that the revenue raised by LPT is used to fund services within the local authority. She stated that funds from LPT are matched with funds from central government. Ms. McNally noted that the Council have been notified by the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government of a provisional LPT allocation of €9,480,501 for 2022, the same baseline allocations as 2021 and the Council has received no increase in this baseline balance since 2014. She stated that it is important to note that if Cavan County Council decides to reduce the base rate of LPT it will lose 100% of any such variation, i.e. no additional funding will be provided from the equalisation fund in the event of a Council decision to vary the basic rate of LPT downward. She stated that the Council will retain 100% of the additional income which would arise from a decision to maintain the rate, as was the case in 2021. Ms. McNally informed the members that Cavan County Council sought submissions from the public on 16th June by way of an advertisement in the Anglo Celt and on the Council’s website. The latest date for receipt of submissions was Friday 2nd July 2021 and no submissions were received before this deadline. Ms. McNally informed the members that there were challenging times ahead and the impact of not maintaining the local adjustment factor in respect of LPT in 2022 would be significant and represent for an immediate loss of revenue income of €682,435 to Cavan County Council. She stated by maintaining the 15% increase agreed by the members last year would see the Council benefit to the tune of €682,435. Ms. McNally recommended that the Local Property Tax for 2022 be the same as that approved in 2021, being a 15% increase in the property tax adjustment factor.

It was

Proposed by Councillor J.P. Feeley

Seconded by Councillor T.P. O’Reilly

and

Resolved

“that the Local Property Tax for 2022 be the same as that approved in 2021”.

**11. To approve disposal of 3.60 acres or 1.456 hectares of land at Cornacarrow,**

**Cootehill to Alpha Storage Ltd., Cavanarainy, Drung, Co. Cavan for the sum of**

**€90,000, 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 A. Fitzpatrick

Seconded by Councillor C. Brady

and

Resolved

“that the disposal of 3.60 acres or 1.456 hectares of land at Cornacarrow, Cootehill to Alpha Storage Ltd., Cavanarainy, Drung, Co. Cavan for the sum of €90,000, pursuant to Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001 and Section 211 of the Local Government (Planning & Development) Act 2000 be hereby approved”.

**12. To hear preparations on Cavan Day 2021 – Ms. Emma Clancy, County Librarian.**

Ms. Emma Clancy, County Librarian noted that amidst the challenging context of a global pandemic, the first ever Cavan Day took place on 26th September 2020, in lieu of the postponed Cavan Calling Festival. She stated that it was a huge success with the #CavanDay hashtag going viral for two days. She stated that it is planned to engage virtually once again with the global Cavan family. Ms. Clancy stated that this year’s Cavan Day celebrations will take place on 25th September 2021 and will comprise of a special high-quality live concert, supported by an extensive social media and traditional media campaign. She stated that the concert will adopt a format reminiscent of Sunday Night at the Gaiety, featuring a mix of contemporary and traditional music performances by the cream of Cavan talent, punctuated by dramatic interludes by award winning actors alone with some comic intermission. She stated that the media campaign will be managed by the Communications Officer with support from the broader Culture and Creativity team. Ms. Clancy stated that the ongoing support of the elected members for this initiative is greatly appreciated.

The members in turn thanked Emma for her presentation.

**Votes of Congratulations:**

* Mr. Manfred Ländner, MP on being awarded the Bavarian Order of Merit which is the highest civilian honour in the Bavarian Province.
* Italy on winning the Euro 2020 cup.
* Savina Donohoe, Curator of Cavan County Museum on her recent announcement to retire from her post at the end of July. The members in turn praised Savina for her hard work and dedication in bringing Cavan County Museum to one of the finest museums in Ireland. The members wished her many years of happiness and good health in her retirement.
* Séamus Enright, Anglo Celt on his recent marriage to Ms. Léan Brady.
* Minister Heather Humphreys T.D. on her recent visit to County Cavan to open rural development projects worth over €8 million.

**Votes of Sympathy**

* The Brodie Family, Virginia on the death of Mr. John Brodie.
* The Baxter and Prior Families, Corlough on the death of Ms. Elizabeth Baxter, former Civil Defence instructor.
* The Boylan Family, Kilnaleck on the death of Fr. Noel Boylan.
* The Gilliland Family, Cavan on the death of Mr. David Gilliland, former employee of Cavan County Council.
* The families of the three people killed in a terrorist attack in Würzburg, Germany.

**MEMBERS’ ITEMS – DEFERRED FROM JUNE MEETING**

1. **That Cavan County Council provide an update on the 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 Eirgrid or ESB in relation to the North South Interconnector.

**7. That Cavan County Council ask the Minister for State, Hildegarde Naughton, T.D.,**

**to urgently intervene to deal with the unacceptable delay in accessing Theory Tests and Driving Tests so that young people can get on with their lives.**

Councillor J.P. Feeley proposed that Cavan County Council write to the Minister for State, Hildegarde Naughton, T.D., asking that her Department urgently intervenes to deal with the unacceptable delay in accessing Theory Tests and Driving Tests so that young people can get on with their lives. Councillor Feeley stated that the massive waiting times is unacceptable and he knew of a young person who had their theory test cancelled four times. Councillor Feeley stated that young people are unable to take up apprenticeships because they cannot access a vehicle without a full licence. He stated that these people need to be facilitated immediately.

Councillor P. McDonald supported the motion and stated that this backlog needs to be addressed immediately so that young people can get to work.

Councillors T.P. O’Reilly and B. Fay supported the motion.

**3. That Cavan County Council press the Government to put structures and financial assistance in place to save our Post Offices – otherwise it will be like banks and there will be no Post Office in our towns and villages in the coming years.**

Councillor B. Fay proposed that Cavan County Council call on the Government to put structures and financial assistance in place to save out Post Offices or otherwise it will be like the banks and there will be no Post Offices in our towns and villages in the coming years. Councillor B. Fay stated that we need Post Offices in our local communities to serve the people of rural Ireland. He stated that the Government need to stop forcing people to do their business online as most older people still like to visit their local post office if only for a chat. He stated that we need to save our Post Offices to ensure business is kept locally throughout our small towns.

Councillor J.P. Feeley supported the motion. He stated that sadly at a National Level there is no desire to engage or provide services in our post offices. He stated that the Minister needs to intervene to ensure that services are being divided and provided for in our local Post Offices.

Councillor P. Walsh supported the motion and appealed to people to use their local Post Office as they provide an excellent service to our communities.

Councillor T.P. O’Reilly supported the motion.

**4. That Cavan County Council discuss repairs to demountable dwellings.**

Councillor P. McVitty called on Cavan County Council to look at doing a proper job on demountable dwellings in order the extend the life span of them for up to twenty years. Councillor P. McVitty asked what the position is in relation to installing oil heating in demountable dwellings. He also asked the executive how many vacant houses are in the County.

Mr. Eoin Doyle, Director of Service stated that in recent time the housing maintenance budget has been increased which will allow the Council to put in place a planned maintenance programme for demountable dwellings. He stated that in relation to vacant houses, he did not have the exact figure but would come back to Councillor McVitty with this figure at a later stage.

**MEMBERS’ ITEMS – JULY MEETING**

**6. To discuss the shortage of HGV Drivers.**

Councillor P. McVitty stated that over regulation is creating a shortage of HGV drivers with the average age of HGV or coach drivers in Ireland being 55 years old. Councillor P. McVitty stated that the Department of Transport need to do something to make the sector more attractive for young people. Councillor McVitty noted that the shortage of drivers will impact on domestic and international distribution. Councillor McVitty stated that the regulations are in place for a reason, but there are cases where it is restrictive on the company and putting younger people off the job. Councillor McVitty proposed that the Council write to the Minister of State for Transport, Hildegarde Naughton, T.D. to highlight the acute shortage of HGV drivers in Ireland and its potential consequences.

Councillor W. Bennett supported the motion and noted that roadside facilities need to be made available for lorry drivers.

Councillor S. O’Reilly supported the motion noting that driving a lorry is an extremely important job with gruelling regulations in place.

**8. To discuss skills shortage within the construction sector.**

Councillor T.P. O’Reilly stated that measures need to be put in place to address a skills shortage and age imbalance in the construction sector. He stated that the average age in the construction sector is over 50 years of age and unless a cohesive education programme is put in place the situation will get worse. He stated that a training academy needs to be established to encourage young people into the construction field. Councillor O’Reilly proposed that the Council write to the Cavan Monaghan Education and Training Board to see if a dedicated course could be established to address the issue.

Councillor C. Kelly supported the motion.

**9. That Cavan County Council make a submission to the newly formed Housing Commission and Ministers O’Brien and Burke proposing an extension to the Repair and Lease Scheme to include rural houses.**

Councillor T. Smith stated that he will resubmit this motion with different wording at a future meeting of Cavan County Council.

**10. To ask the Minister for Health, Stephen Donnelly, T.D. to increase the capacity in Cavan/Monaghan for assessment for Autism and to ask the reason why the waiting time is 2/3 years in CHO1.**

Councillor S. O’Reilly proposed that Cavan County Council write to the Minister for Health, Mr. Stephen Donnelly, T.D. asking him to increase the capacity in Cavan/Monaghan for assessment for autism and to ask the reason why the waiting time is two to three years in CHO1. She stated that a waiting time of two to three years is unacceptable to the families of children awaiting diagnoses and it is not fair to the children themselves. She stated that it a huge financial burden on families to go through private assessment leaving families in some cases having to borrow money to pay for private assessment. Councillor O’Reilly stated that early intervention is the key to successful outcomes for children.

**11. To ask the Minister for Social Protection, Heather Humphreys T.D. that children with Autistic spectrum disorder applying for the Domiciliary Care Allowance Scheme be treated in the same manner as children with a visible disability or condition.**

Councillor S. O’Reilly proposed that Cavan County Council write to the Minister for Social Protection, Heather Humphreys T.D. asking that children with Autistic spectrum disorder applying for the domiciliary care allowance scheme be treated in the same manner as children with a visible disability or condition. She stated that this situation had been brought to her attention by parents who have young children with autism that they are routinely being refused for domiciliary care allowance and that the refusal rate towards them is much higher than for children who have a visible disability. She stated that eligibility for the allowance is not based on disability diagnosis, but on the level of additional care required by the child because of the disability. She stated that parents of autistic children are being asked to go over and above the accepted level of testing criteria when applying for domiciliary care allowance. She stated that the impact of filling out family impact statements, which are a day to day diary explaining the impact their child is having on the family is very stressful of parents. She stated that many parents find this extremely hard, they feel they are baring their soul and intimate details of their family life for strangers to judge.

Councillor P. McDonald supported the motion stated that there is a lost generation of young people out there who have not been assessed.

Councillor C. Kelly supported the motion stating that it is of utmost importance that provisions are made for early assessment and intervention to ensure positive outcomes.

Councillor P. Walsh supported the motion and noted that these children are the lost children and need to be looked after at an early stage.

Councillor C. Brady supported the motion and noted that there are currently eighteen schools in Cavan with autism units and while progress is being made, we still have a long way to go.

Councillors P. McVitty, W. Bennett, A. Fitzpatrick, B. Fay and M. Argue supported the motion.

Councillor C. Kelly wished Councillor J.P. Feeley and his wife to be Niamh every good health and happiness on their marriage on the 23rd July 2021.

Items 2 and 5 were deferred to the September meeting.

The meeting concluded at 16.15p.m

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

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