

**Minutes of Meeting of Cavan County Council held in the Council Chamber, Courthouse,  
Cavan on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> July 2024 at 2.00p.m.**

Councillor T.P. O'Reilly, Cathaoirleach, presiding

**PRESENT:** Councillors W. Bennett, C. Brady, D. Brady, N. Brady, P. Brady, S. Conaty, N. Connell, B. Fay, J.P. Feeley, C. Kelly, S. O'Reilly, S.P. O'Reilly, Á. Smith, N. Smith, T. Smith, V. Smith, P. Walsh

**IN ATTENDANCE:** E. Doyle, Chief Executive  
B. Jennings, Director of Services  
L. McGavigan, A/Director of Services  
J. McKernan, Senior Engineer  
C. McEntee, Financial Accountant  
E. McGinn, Senior Staff Officer

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Councillor T.P. O'Reilly welcomed all to the meeting. Councillor O'Reilly welcomed the sixth-class pupils from Mullahoran National School to give a presentation to the members on their project titled "Into the Future: Innovations for GAA Park" aimed to enhance Mullahoran GAA Park and set a new standard for energy efficiency and inclusivity in athletic facilities. The pupils informed the meeting that they have been passionately working on making energy efficient changes to Mullahoran GAA Park as part of their STEM curriculum. They noted that utilising their developing coding skills, they showcased their project at Microsoft DreamSpace in June where they won the Department of Rural and Community Development Rural Innovation Award 2024. They stated that the judges at Microsoft DreamSpace encouraged the students to showcase their ideas to the GAA and County Council as a potential advancement for sustainable sports development within communities. They stated that the project has been a rewarding experience for their class, contributing to the enhancement of their local GAA park. The students informed the members that included in the model is a Neopixel lighting system, powered by eight solar panels on the clubhouse roof, an e-paper display scoreboard that only uses power to change the displayed values, conserving a substantial amount of energy. It includes a ViewCam Car which provides a virtual view of football matches, viewable from a sensory room and commentary box and a virtual football game coded by the students themselves. The students also designed a rainwater harvesting system with a super-slim tank to collect and store rainwater from the rooftop.

Councillor P. Brady thanked the students for making their presentation and School Principal Mrs. Shaughnessy and Class teach Ms. McKeon for encouraging and helping the students.

The members in turn thanked the students for their presentation and congratulated them on their achievement.

Councillor T.P. O'Reilly welcomed Councillors Barry McElduff, Glenn Campbell and Thomas O'Reilly from Fermanagh/Omagh District Council to the meeting.

## **1. To confirm Minutes of Monthly Meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> May 2024.**

### **Miontuaririsci cruinnithe 13 Bealtaine 2024 a dhearbhu.**

It was

Proposed by Councillor C. Brady

Seconded by Councillor C. Kelly

And

Resolved;

“that minutes of monthly meeting of Cavan County Council held on 13<sup>th</sup> May 2024 be hereby approved”

### **Votes of Sympathy**

- The Sheridan Family, Mullahoran on the tragic death of Adrian Sheridan.
- The Donohoe Family, Kilnaleck on the tragic death of Reece Donohoe.

### **Votes of Congratulations**

- Leona Maguire on becoming the first Irish girl to win the Ladies European Tour in golf.
- Cavan U-16 Camogie team on winning the All-Ireland Shield Final.
- Fiona Burke, Librarian, Bailieborough Library on her recent retirement.
- Derry Scanlon, who is retiring from Cavan County Council on Friday 19<sup>th</sup> July 2024.
- Cavan U-16 girls on winning the All-Ireland Platinum Final two years in a row.
- The Cavan U-14 girls on reaching the All-Ireland Platinum Final and unfortunately beaten in extra time.
- The Cavan U-18 girls on reaching the All-Ireland Final which is due to be played against Kerry on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> July.
- Britney Arendse from Mullagh on qualifying for the Paris 2024 Paralympics in powerlifting competition.
- Northern Sound and the Anglo Celt Newspaper for their excellent coverage of the recent Local and European elections.
- Council staff on the excellent running of the recent Local and European elections.
- Mr. Eoin Doyle on taking up his position as Chief Executive of Cavan County Council.

## **2. Disclosure of Interests (Section 177 Local Government Act 2001).**

Noted.

**3. To note Minutes of Corporate Policy Group meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> April 2024.**

Noted.

**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.(a) To note reply from the Office of the Minister for Health regarding access to GP services.**

Noted.

**(b) To note reply from the Office of the Minister for Transport in relation to ask dieback.**

Noted.

**(c) To note reply from the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine Regarding live sheep imported into Ireland.**

Councillor S. O'Reilly expressed her disappointment with the reply and asked that a further letter be sent.

**(d) To note reply from the Office of the Minister of State for Local Government and Planning regarding resolution requesting the introduction of the requirement of planning permission for all commercial afforestation.**

Councillor J.P. Feeley expressed his disappointment with the reply and asked that a letter be sent to the Minister for Agriculture in relation to the issue.

**(e) To note reply from the Office of the Minister for Education in relation to a school bus scheme.**

Councillor C. Kelly asked that the Council write again to the Department stating that the problem must be addressed.

**(f) To note reply from An Garda Síochána regarding CCTV Scheme for Belturbet, Ballyjamesduff and Ballyconnell.**

Councillor B. Fay expressed his disappointment with the reply and asked that a letter be sent to the Department to progress the scheme. Councillor Fay noted that funding had been allocated back in 2017 for the scheme but it never went ahead.

**(g) To note reply from Office of the Minister of State with special responsibility for Communications and Circular Economy regarding the Deposit Return Scheme**

Noted.

**(h) To note reply from the Office of the Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth regarding funding programme for childcare services.**

Noted.

**(i) To note reply from Minister for Mental Health and Older People regarding the provision of mental health supports in the Cavan/Monaghan Region.**

Noted.

**(j) To note reply from Data Protection Commission regarding the deployment of CCTV.**

Noted.

**(k) To note reply from Office of the Minister for Health in relation to the Irish Heart Foundation's campaign for additional resources.**

Noted.

**(l) To note reply from Office of the Minister for Health in relation to Medical Cards.**

Noted.

**6. To approve attendance of members at AILG Elected Member General Induction Training on 11<sup>th</sup> July – Mullingar Park Hotel / 13<sup>th</sup> July Radisson Blu Hotel, Cork (retrospective approval).**

It was

Proposed by Councillor C. Brady

Seconded by Councillor C. Kelly

And

Resolved;

“that the attendance of Councillors N. Smith, N. Brady, at the AILG Elected Member General Induction Training on 11<sup>th</sup> July in Mullingar Park Hotel and the attendance of Councillors S. O'Reilly, S.P. O'Reilly, J.P. Feeley, P. Walsh, C. Kelly, V. Smith, T. Smith and T.P. O'Reilly at the AILG Elected Member General Induction Training on 13<sup>th</sup> July in the Radisson Blu Hotel, Cork be hereby approved”

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

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

Noted.

**8. To note County Cavan Road Safety Plan 2024.**

Noted.

**9. To note Cavan County Council draft Noise Pollution Plan 2024-2028.**

Noted.

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

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

It was proposed by Councillor B. Fay and seconded by Councillor C. Kelly that Councillor B. Fay be nominated for the Cavan Drug and Alcohol Forum.

It was proposed by Councillor D. Brady and seconded by Councillor S. Conaty that Councillor N. Connell be nominated for the Cavan Drug and Alcohol Forum.

It was proposed by Councillor T. Smith and seconded by Councillor W. Bennett that Councillor T.P. O'Reilly be nominated for the Cavan Drug and Alcohol Forum.

It was agreed that Councillors N. Smith, B. Fay, N. Connell and T.P. O'Reilly be elected to the Cavan Drug and Alcohol Forum.

**Councillor C. Kelly – serial dumpers at Shercock Recycling Centre.**

Councillor C. Kelly stated that lorry loads of rubbish are being dumped on the green in Shercock every weekend for the last number of weeks. He stated that it was unfair to do this to the local Tidy Towns group who are doing a great job in keeping the area clean.

He stated that the first time this occurred he contacted Cavan County Council's Environment Section who dealt with the situation promptly. Councillor Kelly asked the Council to try and get cameras activated so that these illegal dumpers can be caught.

Councillor C. Brady stated that she had also been informed of the matter and noted that she made enquiries previously with regards to CCTV cameras in Cootehill to monitor fly-tipping in her locality. Councillor Brady stated that she was disappointed to learn the cameras were still not operational due to data protection legislation. Councillor Brady stated that these illegal dumpers need to be named and shamed.

Councillor B. Fay stated that regular incidents of bags of nappies are being thrown from a car onto the road between Belturbet and Ballyconnell every Wednesday for the last eight weeks and it is not fair on locals who have to clean the mess. Councillor Fay stated that illegal dumpers need to be caught and named and shamed.

Mr. John McKernan, Senior Engineer stated that he would bring the concerns of the members back to the Environmental Section and every effort would be made by the Council to secure resources to prevent situations like these happening again.

**MEMBER'S ITEM – JULY MEETING**

**11.1 That Cavan County Council provide an update on the North South Interconnector.**

Councillor C. Kelly asked the executive of Cavan County Council if there had been any recent updates on the North South Interconnector

Mr. Brendan Jennings, Director of Service stated that there had been no recent updates on the North South Interconnector since the last Council meeting.

### **11.2 That Cavan County Council call on the Oireachtas to bring forward legislation to regulate BESS.**

Councillor J.P. Feeley proposed that Cavan County Council call on the Oireachtas to bring forward legislation to regulate Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS). Councillor Feeley stated that having multiple bodies regulating one thing is not helping the scenario and called for one single body to oversee these systems. He stated that the main issue is the lack of clarity around how these are regulated. Councillor Feeley noted that they are large batteries, they may be safe but like everything there is a certain element of risk. He stated that these questions need to be clarified and the fact that the Minister stated that there are a few bodies regulating, is a concern. Councillor Feeley noted that there are currently some applications for large scale storage systems under appeal with An Bord Pleanála.

Councillor P. Walsh seconded Councillor J.P. Feeley's proposal and noted that residents are concerned with the impact these developments would have on their local area.

Councillor V. Smith supported the motion and noted that regulations are needed in relation to where these containers can be placed.

Councillors N. Connell, W. Bennett, C. Kelly, P. Brady and T.P. O'Reilly supported the motion.

### **11.3 Need for more funding for implementation of National Cancer Strategy.**

Councillor Á. Smith proposed that Cavan County Council write to the Minister for Health ahead of Budget 2025 asking for more funding for the implementation of the National Cancer Strategy. She stated that more funding needs to be secured to assist cancer patients with faster turnaround times in relation to scans, starting therapy and operations. Councillor Smith noted that on average 42,000 Irish people are diagnosed with Cancer every year and as a result developing new services nationally is a challenge. Councillor Smith stated that after the diagnosis it can be a very unknown and worrying time for the patient and their family and friends and unfortunately lengthy waiting times for operations, scans and treatment are common across the country. She stated that for people with cancer these gaps are too long. Councillor Smith emphasised the importance of digital records with the health system, which she stated can improve efficiency and patient care. Councillor Smith noted that we are way behind the rest of Europe in maintaining health records. Councillor Smith noted that the Irish Cancer Society are urging the Government to address the cost of cancer for patients in Budget 2025, which requires action from several government departments. She stated that their recommendations include, the abolition of hospital carparking fees, an automatic entitlement to a medical card and enhanced access to the domiciliary care allowance. Councillor N. Connell supported the motion.

#### **11.4 Capitation grants for primary schools.**

Councillor Á. Smith stated that capitation grants are crucial for primary schools and noted that the current rates are not sufficient. She stated capitation funding is intended to contribute to the day-to-day running costs of schools and should be used to meet the cost of items such as heating, lighting, cleaning, insurance and general upkeep in schools. She stated that ancillary services grants were given to cater for the cost secretarial and caretaking services, and since in some cases School Secretaries are being paid by the Department of Education, they do not get they ancillary grant which means they cannot afford to pay cleaners to clean the school. Councillor Smith also noted that the rise in the cost of living has also impacted on schools. Councillor Smith proposed that Cavan County Council write to the Minister for Education asking for increased funding to be made under the capitation grants to ensure the sustainability and quality of education in our primary schools.

#### **11.5 Need for bus shelters throughout the County.**

Councillor Á Smith proposed that Cavan County Council provide more bus shelters in County Cavan. Councillor Smith stated that she had seen people standing out in the rain waiting for their bus with nowhere to stand for shelter.

Mr. John McKernan, Senior Engineer stated that €500,000 had been allocated by the National Transport Authority for the upgrading of bus shelters in the County. He stated that out of fifty-five locations surveyed in Cavan as possible locations for bus shelters thirty-four were deemed unsuitable due to lack of physical room. He stated that currently three shelters are in the design process with the National Transport Authority with hopes for six more by the end of the year. Mr. McKernan asked the members if they had locations in mind to bring them to the attention of the Council executive and they would then survey the site for suitability.

#### **11.6 Ambulance response times in our County.**

Councillor D. Brady proposed that Cavan County Council write to the Minister for Health. Mr. Stephen Donnelly and the HSE over the unacceptable waiting times for an ambulance in County Cavan. Councillor Brady stated that sooner rather than later someone in the County is going to lose their life because of the slow wait for an ambulance. Councillor Brady noted that a few weeks ago he was alerted to a workplace accident in a local factory in which a young woman was crushed in a mixer, and it took seventy-two minutes for an ambulance to arrive which came from Donegal town to the accident. Councillor Brady stated that the crisis within the service is not a reflection of the men and women who operate the service and they do so in a very professional manner, it is because of poor staffing levels and burnout among workers. He noted that

ambulance personnel are working long hours and have to make decisions about attending the most serious of incidents because they simply cannot do everything. He stated that private ambulances are available in County Cavan but are not being alerted to incidents when they happen.

Councillor T. Smith supported the motion and stated that there are issues with ambulance times especially when it comes to cardiac cases. Councillor Smith stated that the local fire crew are trained in CPR and should be employed in these incidents.

**11.7 To ask Cavan County Council what the total income from motor tax is in the year and what percentage of this money comes back to invest in repairing of our roads network in the County.**

Councillor N. Smith asked Cavan County Council what the total income from motor tax is in the year and what percentage of this money comes back to invest in repairing of our roads network in the County. Councillor Smith stated that during his canvass campaign he canvassed houses where there were two and three cars parked outside with people living at home and commuting to work and complaining about the cost of taxing cars and the deteriorating state of the local roads.

Mr. John McKernan, Senior Engineer informed the members that motor tax receipts at Cavan County Council came to €3m which is allocated to a central government fund.

Mr. McKernan stated that €39m was allocated back to the local authority from the local government fund and it together with €3m from the Council's own resources means that €42m has been spent on roads infrastructure in Co. Cavan in the last calendar year.

**11.8 To ask Cavan County Council to write to the Minister for Health about the number of dentists leaving the Medical Card Scheme which has left patients in need in the lurch and what his plans are to address the matter.**

Councillor N. Smith stated that while on his canvass trail for the recent local election parents brought to his attention that in some cases children are not getting to see a dentist through schools until they are twelve years which is far too long to wait.

Councillor Smith proposed that Cavan County Council write to the Minister for Health, Mr. Stephen Donnelly in relation to the number of dentists leaving the Medical Card Scheme which has left patients in need in the lurch and ask what plans are in place to address this matter.

Councillor S.P. O'Reilly seconded Councillor N. Smith's proposal and noted that the real problem is that the HSE need to negotiate with dentists in relation to the Scheme. He stated that the base rate dentists get with Medical Card patients is lower than what they get from private patients. Councillor O'Reilly stated that people need to be educated as to what they are entitled to through PRSI when it comes to dental care.

**11.9 That Cavan County Council call on the Minister for Children, Equality & Disability to review the operation of the Decision Support Service and in particular introduce amendments to the manner in which Enduring Powers of Attorney are created so as to encourage more people to put arrangements in place.**

Councillor J.P. Feeley proposed that Cavan County Council write to the Minister for Children, Equality & Disability to review the operation of the Decision Support Service and in particular introduce amendments to the manner in which Enduring Powers of Attorney are created so as to encourage more people to put arrangements in place. Councillor Feeley stated that there should be a proper system in place to allow people make wills and put their affairs in order. Councillor Feeley noted that the Enduring Powers of Attorney is a legal device that allows a person to nominate someone else to look after their financial or personal affairs if they can no longer do so. Councillor Feeley stated that his request should be relatively simple to put in place given that the 2015 Act in respect of the matter was finally implemented earlier in the year.

Councillor C. Kelly seconded Councillor J.P. Feeley's proposal.

Councillors C. Brady and T.P. O'Reilly supported the motion.

**11.10 To ask Cavan County Council to seek more funding for the upkeep of the roads in County Cavan.**

Councillor N. Connell proposed that Cavan County Council write to the Minister for Transport to seek more funding for the upkeep of the roads in County Cavan. Councillor Connell stated that lack of funding from Central Government has led to the serious deterioration of our roads. He stated that bus drivers and carers are now refusing to go to houses where the routes have deteriorated because of damage being done to their vehicles. Councillor Connell thanked the staff of Cavan County Council for the great job they do on our roads with limited resources.

Councillor S.P. O'Reilly seconded Councillor N. Connell's proposal and noted that the condition of roads has worsened since the county grant was taken away a few years ago. He stated that the Council need to get road funding at the start of each year so that the people who are paying their taxes can get value for money.

Councillor W. Bennett supported the motion and noted that funding should be made at a timely part of the year so that a plan can be put in place to use the funding allocated.

Councillor C. Kelly supported the motion and thanked Council staff for the fantastic work being done on our roads with limited budgets. Councillor Kelly stated that the County will soon be back to where it was in the mid eighties when it was known as the pothole County.

Councillor C. Brady supported the motion and noted that extra pressure should now be put on our TDs with a general election around the corner. Councillor Brady stated that the Department of Agriculture should also have responsibility for part funding our roads. Councillor J.P. Feeley supported the motion and endorsed all that was said. Councillor Feeley noted that there is still a huge backlog in the County under the Local Improvement Scheme and the Department of Transport should be asked to fund this scheme and not the Department of Rural and Community Development.

Councillor T. Smith and T.P. O'Reilly supported the motion.

Mr. John McKernan, Senior Engineer informed the members that after the May Council meeting a copy of the Council's Roadworks Programme was sent to the Minister and the Council are currently awaiting a response.

The meeting concluded at 4.20p.m.