**Minutes of Meeting of Cavan County Council held on Monday 9th April 2018 in the Council Chamber at 2.00p.m.**

Councillor P. McDonald, Cathaoirleach Presiding

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

N. Connell, F. Curtin, D. Downey, J.P. Feeley, C. Kelly, P. McVitty,

 P. O’Reilly, S. O’Reilly, P. Smith, S. Smith, V. Smith

In Attendance: T. Ryan, Chief Executive

 E. Doyle, Director of Service

 J. McLoughlin, Director of Service

 P. Connaughton, A/Director of Service

 E. McGinn, Meetings Administrator

An apology was received from Councillor S.P. O’Reilly.

**1. To confirm Minutes of Meetings held on 12 March, 2018. Miontuairiscí cruinnithe 12 Márta 2018 a dhearbhu.**

 It was:

 Proposed by Councillor S. Smith

 Seconded by Councillor D. Downey

 And

 Resolved:

“that minutes of meetings of Cavan County Council held on 12 March, 2018 be hereby approved”.

 Councillor J.P. Feeley noted that at the February meeting The Royal School and St. Mogue’s College along with Dun na Ri College were also congratulated on winning awards at the Schools Enterprise Awards held in the Slieve Russell Hotel, Ballyconnell.

**2. To note Minutes of Economic Development Strategic Policy Committee**

 **held on 22 February 2018.**

 Noted.

**3.** **To note minutes of Corporate Policy Group meeting held on 8 February 2018.**

 Noted.

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

 Noted.

Councillor J.P. Feeley noted the sale of a site at Barrack Lane, Belturbet known as the Palais on Chief Executive Orders for Housing and stated that when asked about this site at a Municipal District meeting, members could not be given a full report.

**5. To note Chief Executive’s Monthly Report.**

 Noted.

**6. To hear presentation from Grainne Ui Thuama and Eanna O’Conghaile, Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment regarding Prospecting Licences.**

Mr. Paddy Connaughton, A/Director of Services welcomed Dr. Eibhlin Doyle, Chief Geologist, Ms. Laurena Leacy, Geologist and Ms. Gráinne Ui Thuama, Assistant Principal from the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment to the meeting to give a presentation to the members on exploration and mining in Ireland.

 Dr. Eibhlin Doyle presented to the members a detailed presentation on the exploration, mining, monitoring, promotion and regulation of the minerals industry and related policy matters for the sector. Dr. Doyle, Chief Geologist informed the members that the issuing of a prospecting licence is governed by the Mineral Development Act of 2017, the latest in a series of regulations governing the sector. Dr. Doyle stated that since 1970 one hundred prospecting licences have been issued in County Cavan and that six thousand exploration licences had been issued since the 1940s. She stated that the company BMEx is exploring for lead, zinc and copper and explained that in the event of a mineral discovery, the company who held the exploration licence can apply for a mining licence. Dr. Doyle noted that the success rate is one in 10,000 for every mineral showing. She stated the allocation of a mining licence is subject to a public consultation process. Dr. Doyle informed the members that nationally there are over 3,000 people employed in the mining industry resulting in an economic spend of €1billion with €66m going to the exchequer.

 Councillor S. Smith welcomed the members from the Department to the meeting and thanked the Council for inviting the Department to the meeting. Councillor Smith welcomed members from Cavan Monaghan Opposition Group to the meeting noting that they have grave concerns over what is before them. On behalf of the group Councillor Smith asked Dr. Doyle what the process for screening was before granting the licence, do the Department screen SAC sites separately, can farmers refuse the mining company entry to their lands.

 Dr. Doyle stated that the Department looks at what the Company plans to do and they do look at SAC areas separately and consult with the NPWS. Dr. Doyle stated that farmers can refuse permission onto their lands and if permission is refused they company will not enter.

 Councillor D. Brady thanked the Dr. Doyle for her presentation and asked if the company had an address in this country.

 Dr. Doyle stated that the company usually hires a local consultancy group and use this as their base.

 Councillor P. McVitty asked if a farmer is compensated for what minerals are found on their lands.

 Dr. Doyle stated that in Ireland there is state owned minerals and privately owned minerals and if minerals are privately owned then the farmer would be compensated.

 Councillors D. Downey and J.P. Feeley thanked Dr. Doyle for her informative presentation.

**7. To hear presentation from Grainne O’Connor, A/Tourism Officer on County Cavan’s Angling Strategy 2018-2020.**

 It was:

 Proposed by Councillor J.P. Feeley

 Seconded by Councillor S. O’Reilly

 And

 Resolved:

“that County Cavan’s Angling Strategy 2018-2020 be hereby adopted”.

Ms. Gráinne O’Connor, A/Tourism Officer made a presentation to the members on County Cavan Angling Strategy 2018-2020. Ms. O’Connor stated that the development of an Angling Strategy is also indentified as a key action in the Cavan Local Economic and Community Plan. Ms. O’Connor stated that the angling strategy forms part of the recently launched County Cavan Tourism Development Plan 2017-2022 with specific angling related actions identified under the strategic pillar of Destination Development. Ms. O’Connor stated that the purpose of the strategy is to review angling as an industry in County Cavan, examine the issues facing the sector, identify gaps in the product offering, identify potential new angling capital development projects and provide a vision for the development of angling for the future. Ms. O’Connor stated that the following objectives have been agreed:-

* to develop at least one new large-scale capital angling project in the County
* to increase investment in angling promotion by 100% over 3 years
* to focus on the promotion of game and pike angling to the Northern European market
* to build capacity and galvanise angling providers, local business and industry partners in delivering Cavan’s full potential as a leisure destination
* to provide strategic direction for the development and marketing of angling in Cavan, setting a framework for prioritising actions and initiatives to be taken in support of these aims, and
* to invest in and improve on Cavan’s angling experiences to set a standard of excellence across the county.

Ms. O’Connor stated that there are several key factors of particular relevance in the framing of a new angling development plan for County Cavan – the broader environment in which the angling development plan will be rolled out is a positive one, with good support from agencies at national and local level. Ms. O’Connor stated that there are a number of funding sources available from which Cavan tourism can hope to seek support, including national and cross-border initiatives, including Inland Fisheries Ireland and the new LEADER progamme. Ms. O’Connor noted that a total of five IFI funded projects were delivered in 2017 under the National Strategy for Angling Development Fund. Ms. O’Connor noted that there are a number of threats to the angling industry in the County such as perceived production in fish stocks, an aging angling market, invasive species in Cavan waters and a lack of support from the national tourism agencies for angling in general.

Councillor J.P. Feeley thanked Ms. O’Connor for her presentation. Councillor Feeley stated that angling is without doubt a traditional area of tourism in County Cavan which has declined in the last number of years. Councillor Feeley stated that we need to get young people involved in angling and provide a wider range of fun activities for families when they visit the County for an angling holiday.

Councillor D. Brady thanked Ms. O’Connor for her presentation. Councillor Brady noted that access to lakes in County Cavan have improved but stated that fish numbers are declining and wondered if there was any way our lakes could be restocked.

Ms. O’Connor informed Councillor D. Brady that Inland Fisheries Ireland are responsible for re-stocking the lakes and the Council will work closely with them in relation to same.

Councillor W. Bennett felt that fishing at Killykeen needs to be promoted better and people need to be informed of lakes where there is good access especially for elderly fishermen.

Councillor D. Downey was of the opinion that the creation of an online resource should come sooner in the strategy. He stated that security of invasive species is needed and this is becoming a large threat to our rivers and lakes. Councillor Downey stated that it was a good sign to see people coming back.

Councillor P. McVitty wondered what the main reasons are for people not coming back to the County.

Ms. Grainne O’Connor stated that the downturn in the economy stopped people coming as there was less money and low fish stocks in our rivers and lakes. Ms. O’Connor stated that this year so far has been as good as last year.

Councillor S. Smith stated that Cavan County Council should work with Leitrim County Council and Fermanagh District Council in relation to angling in our region.

Councillor P.O’Reilly was of the opinion that there is a shortfall of boats in the County for people to go fishing. He stated that there are boats available at the Lakeside Manor in Virginia but it is not marketed enough.

Councillor C. Brady stated that Cootehill holding an annual fishing competition which brings people from England, Northern Ireland and Scotland to it. She stated that the angling committee work closing with Cootehill tourist office and it seems to be a major success.

**8. To approve the disposal of a 15 year lease of the building known as Bailieborough Courthouse to Bailieborough Development Association for a nominal rent of €11.00 per annum, 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 S. O’Reilly

 Seconded by Councillor C. Brady

 And

 Resolved:

“that the disposal of a 15 year lease of the building known as Bailieborough Courthouse to Bailieborough Development Association for a nominal rent of €11.00 per annum, 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 adopt Standing Orders under Schedule 10 (16) of the Local Government Act 2001.**

Deferred to May meeting.

**10. To adopt Training & Development Plan for members.**

 It was:

 Proposed by Councillor J.P. Feeley

 Seconded by Councillor D. Downey

 And

 Resolved:

“that the Training & Development Plan for members be hereby approved”.

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

Noted.

**12. To approve LCDC 2017 Annual Report under Section 128(b) of the Local Government Reform Act 2014.**

It was:

 Proposed by Councillor S. Smith

 Seconded by Councillor M. Argue

 And

 Resolved:

“that the LCDC 2017 Annual Report under Section 128(b) of the Local Government Reform Act 2014 be hereby approved”.

Mr. John Donohoe, Chief Officer stated that 2017 represented a productive year for Cavan LCDC with excellent engagement from members. Mr. Donohoe noted that the Local, Economic and Community Plan is progressing well with lead agencies demonstrating responsibility for their actions. Mr. Donohoe noted that under the LEADER programme a total of 15 projects were approved in 2017 to the amount of €827,390.54. Mr. Donohoe noted that the bulk of LEADER funding is still available for allocation and the Council are actively encouraging community groups to apply.

Councillor J.P. Feeley thanked Mr. Donohoe and acknowledged the work he is doing with communities throughout the County. Councillor Feeley asked that the LEADER money be spent in the County.

Councillor D. Downey thanked Mr. Donohoe for the report and noted that there are very positive relations between Cavan County Council and community groups.

**13. Proposed addition to Cavan County Council’s Record of Protected Structures for the inclusion of Rath Church, Portaliff or Townparks, Church Street, Killeshandra.**

 It was:

 Proposed by Councillor J.P. Feeley

 Seconded by Councillor D. Downey

 And

 Resolved:

“that the inclusion of Rath Church, Portaliff or Townparks, Church Street, Killeshanda to Cavan County Council’s Record of Protected Structure be hereby approved”.

**14. To approve attendance of members at Dundalk Chamber of Commerce Tourism Conference to be held in the Four Seasons Hotel, Carlingford on 11th April, 2018.**

No attendees.

**15.(a) To note replies from Minister Simon Harris T.D., and Minister Finian McGrath, T.D. in relation to Down Syndrome Centre, North East Committee.**

Noted. Councillor S. O’Reilly stated that the Chairman of the Committee had confirmed to her that the HSE had refused to give assistance due to budgetary constraints. Councillor S. O’Reilly proposed that the Council write again to the HSE seeking funding for the Down Syndrome Centre, North East Committee.

 **(b) To note reply from Minister Simon Harris, T.D. in relation to the Long Term Illness Scheme.**

Deferred to May meeting

 **(c) To note reply from Office of the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine in relation to the Fodder Transport Support measure.**

Noted. It was agreed to send a further letter to the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine asking that a voucher system for meal be put in place to support farmers. It was also agreed to send a letter to all Oireachtas Members.

 **(d) To note reply from Department of Health regarding Versatis Patches.**

Deferred to May meeting.

 **Votes of Congratulations:**

* Mr. Ciarán O’Reilly, brother of Councillor Paddy O’Reilly on being Guest of Honor at the recent 170th Annual Dinner Dance of the Cavan B&P Association of New York. Councillor McVitty asked the Council to contact the Cavan Association in New York and ask that they hold their Dinner Dance around St. Patrick’s Day when members of Cavan County Council are in New York.
* Ms. Andrea Corrigan on being appointed Senior Executive Officer of Cavan Local Enterprise Office.
* Colaiste Dun na Ri First Years on winning the regional finals in basketball.

 **Visit of former Senator George Mitchell to Peace Bridge.**

Councillor P. McVitty commended the work of Fr. Gerry Comiskey, P.P. Drumlane on bringing former Democratic Senator George Mitchell to the bridge named in his honour. He noted that Senator Mitchell chaired the Northern Ireland Peace Talks from 1995 to 1998 and was instrumental in the positive outcome. Councillor McVitty stated that Senator Mitchell was present for a beam-laying ceremony at Aghalane in September 1998 and twenty years later has returned for an interdenominational prayer service and tree planting ceremony at the Senator George Mitchell Peace bridge on the same site. Councillor McVitty stated that it was great to see so many people there to mark the historic occasion. Councillor P. McVitty proposed that the Council write to Senator George Mitchell and thank him for coming.

Councillor W. Bennett seconded Councillor McVitty’s proposal.

Councillors J.P. Feeley, D. Brady, S. Smith and P. McDonald acknowledged the contribution made to Irish Peace by Senator George Mitchell.

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

**1. That this Council honour members of staff who have over 30 years service.**

Councillor P. O’Reilly noted that when members of the Fire Service retire they are honoured nationally from Dublin. Councillor P. O’Reilly proposed that Cavan County Council honour members of staff who have over 30 years service working with the Council. Councillor O’Reilly stated that it would be a nice gesture by the Council to invite them in to the Council Chamber and give them recognition for their service.

Councillor D. Brady supported the motion and noted that outdoor staff would love the opportunity to be recognized for their service by the Council.

Councillors F. Curtin and S. Smith supported the motion.

Mr. Eoin Doyle, Director of Service commended Councillor O’Reilly for putting the motion on the agenda. Mr. Doyle stated that the Council will consider acknowledging members of staff with over 30 years service.

**2. That Cavan County Council:-**

 **(i) Invite officials from the Forestry Service in the Department of Agriculture to attend a meeting of the Council and,**

 **(ii) Call on Michael Creed T.D., Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine to introduce a comprehensive reform of the Forestry Programme, and**

 **(iii)Call on Eoghan Murphy, T.D. Minister for Housing, Planning and Local Government to bring the afforestation of land for commercial purposes within the scope of the Planning and Development Act.**

Councillor J.P. Feeley proposed that the Council invite officials from the Forestry Service in the Department of Agriculture to attend a meeting of the Council and proposed that the Council call on Minister Michael Creed to introduce a comprehensive reform of the Forestry Programme. Councillor Feeley proposed that the Council call on Minister Eoghan Murphy to bring the afforestation of land for commercial purposes within the scope of the Planning and Development Act. Councillor Feeley noted that forestry has a part to play but not at the expense of rural communities and stated that the State is using rural communities as a carbon sink for the rest of the Country, Councillor Feeley stated that existing planning laws do not serve in regard to forestry and the views of the wider community are being ignored. Councillor Feeley stated that he had no difficulty with a property regulated sector where the change of use of land to forestry was regulated and adjoining landowners or home owners would have an input into the process.

 Councillor F. Curtin stated that there that afforestation is of no benefit to anyone but to the farmer who plants it. Councillor F. Curtin seconded Councillor J.P. Feeleys proposal.

 Councillor D. Downey stated that he is against unregulated afforestation but believes that there is a beauty to forestry.

 Councillor S. Smith noted that the regulation of forestry is non-existent. Councillor S. Smith noted that families have to apply for planning permission to build small extensions and yet you can plant any amount of forestry.

**3. “That Cavan County Council develop plans in conjunction with Leitrim and Sligo County Councils and Fermanagh and Omagh District Councils for the**

 **development of a greenway taking the route of the Sligo/Leitrim and Northern**

 **Counties Railway from Sligo to Enniskillen”.**

Councillor J.P. Feeley acknowledged the work done by Mr. Brendan Jennings, Senior Engineer, Mr. Oliver Mulligan, Road Design and Mr. Paul Mulligan, A/Senior Executive Engineer in relation to the above greenway, noting that a planning application was made but was unsuccessful. Councillor J.P. Feeley stated that the Council needs to look at ways of developing the g reenway and noted that many sections of the railway are in public ownership. Councillor J.P. Feeley noted that the Great Western Greenway is bringing €7.2m to the local economy in Co. Mayo per year with over 211,000 visitors in 2016. Councillor Feeley called on the Council to work with the landowners and stated that serving a compulsory purchase order is a negative approach to take. Councillor Feeley proposed that Cavan County Council develop plans in conjunction with Leitrim and Sligo County Councils and Fermanagh and Omagh District Councils for the development of a greenway taking the route of the Sligo/Leitrim and Northern Counties Railway from Sligo to Enniskillen.

 Councillors D. Downey, S. Smith and P. McVitty supported the motion.

**4. “That Cavan County Council calls on Eoghan Murphy, T.D. Minister for Housing, Planning and Local Government and Denis Naughten T.D., Minister for Communications, Climate Change and Environment to deal with the EPA**

 **Regulations which have prevented the construction of homes in many parts of**

 **County Cavan and insist that these regulations now have regard to the methods of dealing with household effluent now available.**

Councillor J.P. Feeley stated that the western part of County Cavan is sterilized from a development point of view due to EPA regulations preventing the Council to grant planning permission. Councillor Feeley stated that communities should be allowed to exist and be able to build houses on family plots. Councillor Feeley stated that at this stage the EPA need to recognize that houses are not being built in west Cavan due to their strict regulations. Councillor J.P Feeley proposed that Cavan County Council calls on Minister Eoghan Murphy, Minister for Housing, Planning and Local Government and Minister Denis Naughten, Minister for Communications, Climate Change and Environment to deal with the EPA Regulations which have prevented the construction of homes in many parts of County Cavan in insist that these regulations now have regard to the methods of dealing with household effluent now available.

 Councillor P. McVitty supported the motion and suggested that Cavan County Council make contact with Leitrim County Council in relation to their recent project on the problems of septic tanks.

 Councillor S. Smith supported the motion. Councillor S. Smith stated that it is very disheartening to see planning permission being granted in Co, Fermanagh only a few miles down the road and yet families cannot get permission to build on their own land because of EPA regulations. Councillor S. Smith asked that the Council make contact with Fermangh District Council to see what regulations they have.

 Councillor F. Curtin supported the motion.

 Mr. Paddy Connaughton, A/Director of Service stated that the existing EPA code of practice is up for review and it is expected to have a draft document in the next couple of months. He stated that the Council will make contact with Fermanagh District Council to see their regulations and stated that Cavan County Council have to work with the regulations they are given.

**Items 5, 6, and 7 were deferred to May Meeting.**

**Meeting concluded at 5.15 p.m.**

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

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