**Minutes of Meeting of Cavan County Council held on Monday 12th October 2020 in Hotel Kilmore, Cavan at 2.00p.m.**

Councillor S. O’Reilly, Cathaoirleach presiding

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

J. P. Feeley, C. Kelly, C. Lovett, P. McDonald, P. McVitty, S.P. O’Reilly, T.P. O’Reilly, S. Smith, T. 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

 E. McGinn, Senior Staff Officer

An apology was received from Councillor P. Brady,

1. **To confirm Minutes of Monthly Meeting held on 14 September 2020.**

**Miontuaririsci cruinnithe 14 Mean Fomhair 2020 a dhearbhu.**

It was

Proposed by Councillor J.P. Feeley

Seconded by Councillor P. McVitty

And

Resolved;

“that minutes of meeting of Cavan County Council held on 14 September 2020 be hereby approved”

Councillor S.P. O’Reilly queried the minutes in relation to Local Property Tax.

Mr. Eoin Doyle, Director of Services stated that the minutes were a true and accurate account of what decision was made in relation to Local Property Tax. He stated that it was proposed by Councillor S.P. O’Reilly and seconded by Councillor B. Fay that the Local Adjustment Factor in respect of Local Property Tax be increased by 15% for 2021. Mr. Doyle noted that there was no counter proposal and therefore no vote was taken.

**Cavan Day**

Councillor J.P. Feeley congratulated Cavan County Council and in particular Cavan County Librarian, Emma Clancy for the effort and work put into organising Cavan Day on 26th September 2020. He stated that it was very strange witnessing so much interaction online. He stated that he hoped this could be the foundation to bigger and better things in the future.

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

Noted.

Councillor S. O’Reilly read out a statement agreed by the AILG, LAMA and the LGMS in relation to the standard operating guidance for attendance at Council Meetings by Elected Members and Council Officials/Others (Media & Public). Councillor S. O’Reilly stated that all attendees must adhere to the following:-

* Be aware of the response plan in place in the event that someone at the meeting becomes ill with COVID-19 symptoms.
* It is recommended that a face covering is worn on entering and leaving the building and until attendee enters seat.
* No congregation in the building before or after the meeting.
* Meeting of members in venue before or after meeting to be actively discouraged.
* Strictly **no** Hand Shaking (or any physical contact).
* Aim to keep hardcopy document handling to the absolute minimum, use of electronic means as an alternative, where possible.
* Reflecting best practice, time of attendance at meeting to be kept to a minimum and within a recommended maximum of 1 hour 55 minutes.
* Only the Proposer and the Seconder to speak to a Notice of Motion.
* If the Proposer is happy with the written reply, the matter is then concluded and move on.

**Note Minutes of Committee Meetings**

1. **To note Minutes of Corporate Policy Group meetings held on 9 July 2020.**

 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(a) To note correspondence from the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government regarding a call for funding to support gender balance and diversity in Local Government.**

Noted. Councillor S. O’Reilly proposed that office accommodation be made available to Councillors in Cavan Town. This proposal was seconded by Councillor S.P. O’Reilly.

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

Noted. Councillor C. Kelly proposed that the Council write again to the Minister informing him of the state of our roads in County Cavan and requesting extra funding.

**6. MEMBER’S QUESTIONS – Councillor John Paul Feeley**

 **Local Improvement Scheme**

 **The number of LIS applications completed in 2018, 2019 and 2020; the total money spend on these applications in each of those years; the total number of applications on hand and the year of receipt of those applications; the estimated cost to complete applications on hand; the allocations received in the years 2018, 2019 and 2020.**

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

**7. MEMBERS QUESTIONS – Councillor John Paul Feeley**

 **Development Contributions**

 **The total contributions levied in Grants of Planning in the years 2018, 2019, 2020; the total received in those years; the total monies outstanding to Cavan County Council; a breakdown in the amount of contributions levied and received by Cavan County Council for the various categories for which contributions are payable and in particular (i) Development of one off houses (ii) Renovations and/or extension of existing houses (iii) development of one or more units (iv) Agricultural development (v) other development. What, if any, exemptions or reductions were provided in each category and the amount foregone by the Council in respect of same.**

Answer to be supplied by Director of Service at November meeting.

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

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

Noted.

**9.**  **That Cavan County Council enter into an agreement with Mayo County Council in**

**accordance with Section 85 of the Local Government Act 2001 (as amended). The purpose of the agreement is to give Mayo County Council all the powers, duties and functions of Cavan County Council in relation to the Public Lighting Energy Project. These powers, duties and functions will extend to the procurement of a regional contractor to carry out the design and construction of the project, including the supervision and administration of the project. The Agreement will also enable Mayo County Council to carry out the statutory functions of Cavan County Council in connection with the preparation of any statutory documents for the Project as relating to Cavan County Council.**

It was

Proposed by Councillor J.P. Feeley

Seconded by Councillor W. Bennett

And

Resolved;

“that Cavan County Council enter into an agreement with Mayo County Council giving Mayo County Council all powers, duties and functions of Cavan County Council in relation to Public Lighting Energy Project be hereby approved”.

Mr. Paddy Connaughton, Director of Services informed the members that the Public Lighting Energy Project dovetails with Ireland’s ambition to reduce carbon emissions by 33% by 2020 and 50% by 2030. He stated that much of the lighting to be installed involves LED replacement with dimming and re-assessment of lighting levels. He stated that the Country is divided into three regions with Cavan included in the Western portion. Mr. Connaughton informed the members that Cavan is in no way tied into an agreement longterm. He stated that the purpose of entering the agreement was solely to explore whether there were savings to be made, and if not, that Cavan would revert back to how it had operated before.

**10. To approve** **the sale of derelict demountable at Gubaveeney, Blacklion to Mr.**

**Charles Dolan, Gubaveeney, Blacklion, Co. Cavan for the sum of €1,000 pursuant to Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001, Section 90 of the Housing 1966 and Section 26 of the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1992, and notices circulated.**

It was

Proposed by Councillor J.P. Feeley

Seconded by Councillor P. Mc vitty

And

Resolved;

“that the sale of derelict demountable at Gubaveeney, Blacklion to Mr. Charles Dolan, Gubaveeney, Blacklion, Co. Cavan for the sum of €1,000 pursuant to Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001, Section 90 of the Housing 1966 and Section 26 of the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1992 be hereby approved

**11. 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 C. Kelly

And

Resolved;

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

**12. To fix date and time of Budget 2021 Meeting (Section 103 Local Government Act 2001).**

It was

 Proposed by Councillor T.P. O’Reilly

 Seconded by Councillor A. Fitzpatrick

And

Resolved;

“that the Budget 2021 Meeting be held on Friday 27th November at 10.30 a.m”

**Votes of Sympathy**

* The Donohoe Family Cavan on the sudden death of Dessie Donohoe. Dessie was very much part of the “Taste of Cavan” over the last number of years.
* Mr. Joe Smith, County Registrar and all the Smith Family on the death of their brother Dr. Paul Smith, Cootehill. Dr. Paul was a retired Consultant Physician from Cavan General Hospital.
* The Gaffney Family, Banahoe, Crosskeys on the tragic death of Matthew Gaffney.

**Vote of Congratulations**

* Mullahoran St, Joseph’s on winning the County hurling final.
* Ballinagh GFC on winning the Intermediate Football County Final
* Crosserlough GFC on winning the Senior Football County Final after 48 years.
* Ms. Mairead McGuinness on becoming Ireland’s EU Commissioner for Financial Stability.
* Senator Joe O’Reilly on being elected Leas Cathaoirleach of the Seanad
* Caroline Brady, Cavan County Council on her recent promotion to Programme Manager for North East Regional Enterprise Plan.
* Angela Reilly, Community & Enterprise on her retirement from Cavan County Council
* Pauline McKiernan, Planning Department on her retirement from Cavan County Council.
* Ned Brunton and Craig Mullen, Mountnugent together with Harry Ryan, Pearse Sheridan, James McCluskey, Ronan Peyton and Sean Guirke who organized “A Day for Darren”, a fundraiser in memory of their dear friend Darren Connell and raised €30,000 for Jigsaw.

**Social Media:**

Councillor B. Fay stated that more needs to be done in order to stop online bullying and harassment. Councillor Fay stated that there is a nasty minority of people out there who make the internet and social media a horrible place. Mr. Fay stated that comments made online can have a major impact on a person’s wellbeing. Councillor Fay proposed that Cavan County Council write to the Minister for Communications and the Minister for Justice highlighting these problems and the effect it has on people which in turn can lead to suicide.

**COVID 19**

Councillor P. McVitty called for an all-Island approach to stop the spread of COVID-19. He stated that the numbers are rising in border Counties and in Northern Ireland and action needs to be taken to stop the spread of the virus. Councillor McVitty stated that the Country’s ports and airports should be policed at all times. Councillor P. McVitty noted that people are careless due to the fact that there are different regulations north and south of the border. Councillor P. McVitty proposed that Cavan County Council write to the First Minister and Deputy First Minister asking for an all-Island approach to be implemented. Councillor P. McVitty also asked that the motion be sent to all border local authorities asking for their support.

Councillor P. McDonald supported the motion stating that an all-Island approach is the only way to deal with COVID-19.

Councillor S.P. O’Reilly extended his thanks and gratitude to Professors Ronan Glynn and Tony Holohan for the great work they are doing and felt that Dr. Michael McBride is not getting the same support in the North. Councillor S.P. O’Reilly stated that we must work together in order to fight the virus and the onus is on each individual to do this.

Councillor T.P. O’Reilly supported the motion stating that everybody needs to restrict their movements and take responsibility for their actions.

Councillor J.P. Feeley supported the motion and stated that people are ignoring the regulations and operating on the basis it has nothing to do with them.

Councillors W. Bennett, B. Fay, M. Argue and P. Walsh also supported the motion.

**MEMBERS’ ITEMS – OCTOBER**

**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.

**2. Request a response from the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine regarding Felling Licensing of trees for forestry.**

Councillor T.P. O’Reilly proposed that Cavan County Council write to the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine with regards to Felling Licensing of trees for forestry. Councillor T.P. O’Reilly stated that planning laws are allowing objectors to halt felling by the forestry industry which in turn has a knock-on effect on industries including construction. Councillor T.P. O’Reilly stated that the objections have caused a serious backlog in the system for processing applications for harvesting. Councillor T.P. O’Reilly noted that there is almost eighteen months of a wait to process an application. Councillor T.P. O’Reilly stated that builders are currently importing timber from Finland for housing.

 Councillor W. Bennett seconded Councillor T.P. O’Reilly’s proposal. Councillor W. Bennett stated that foresters had invested significant money in harvesting machinery where they are now lying idle due to the hold up on felling licences.

 Councillor S.P. O’Reilly supported the motion stated that it is ridiculous that one person could make up to eighty-four objections and he not even living in the State.

Councillors P. McVitty, M. Argue, S. O’Reilly and P. McDonald supported the motion.

1. **Feasibility study on the use of sheep’s wool.**

Councillor T.P. O’Reilly proposed that Cavan County Council write to the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine asking that a feasibility study be carried out on the use of sheep’s wool. Councillor T.P. O’Reilly noted that currently in Ireland the value of wool has dropped and is considered worthless at present. He stated wool is seen as a waste product which it clearly is not as wool is natural and renewable and many products can be produced from wool such as clothes, fabrics, insulation and many more. He stated that we need to take control of this industry and develop a scouring plant in Ireland as currently we export wool to the United Kingdom for this process.

Councillor W. Bennett seconded Councillor T.P. O’Reilly’s proposal.

1. **Clarify Cavan County Council’s role in group water schemes in County Cavan.**

Councillor T.P. O’Reilly asked the executive of Cavan County Council for clarity on Cavan County Council’s role in group water schemes in County Cavan. He asked what role Cavan County Council play in private water schemes if any.

Mr. Paddy Connaughton, Director of Services informed the members that there are several group water schemes in County Cavan, He stated that these are private entities who manage and maintain a scheme comprising of a water treatment plant or a water distribution network or both. He stated that the majority of schemes in Cavan were subject to significant upgrades in and around 2006. He stated that Cavan County Council has no direct involvement in the day to day management of the schemes other that through the two areas of administration of government funding through two avenues, capital works under the Department of Housing, Planning & Local Government’s Multi-Annual Rural Water Programme and the administration of and processing of funding towards operational costs of the group water schemes under the Subsidy Scheme. He stated that Cavan County Council is the Water Supervisory Authority for the group water scheme sector.

1. **Illegal dumping in Cavan and the cost to Cavan County Council because this fly tipping and waste dumping needs to be tackled nationally.**

Councillor B. Fay called for stricter penalties to be imposed on those who dump waste in County Cavan. He stated that illegal dumping needs to be tackled nationally as it is putting increased costs on Local Authorities. Councillor B. Fay stated that we need to educate people better.

Councillor S. O’Reilly supported the motion stating that every year we have the same problem with illegal dumping.

Councillor S.P. O’Reilly supported the motion and stated that Local Authorities should be given the power to name and shame those who dump rubbish illegally. Councillor S.P. O’Reilly stated that GDPR issues hamper Local Authorities from trying to prosecute people. Councillor S.P. O’Reilly stated that every householder should be asked what they do with their waste. Councillor S.P. O’Reilly proposed that the Cavan County Council write to the Minister for Justice, Minister Helen McEntee asking that legislation be changed in order to allow local authorities name and shame those who are dumping illegally.

Councillor P. Walsh supported the motion. Councillor Walsh stated that dumping rubbish illegally in vacant houses was also a problem in the County. Councillor P. Walsh suggested that more cameras be placed throughout the County.

Councillor P. McDonald supported the motion and noted that since waste collection was removed from local authorities and given to private companies there is far more illegal dumping. Councillor P. McDonald asked how many litter wardens are employed by Cavan County Council.

Councillors C. Lovett, T. Smith and C. Kelly supported the motion.

Mr. Colm O’Callaghan, Senior Engineer, Waste Management gave a detailed presentation to the members on illegal dumping within the County. Mr. O’Callaghan noted that over 280 tonnes of rubbish has been cleared by Cavan County Council from 15 of the worst hit litter black spots in the County since 2017. He stated that the Council currently operates with the legislative support provided by the Litter Pollution Act 1997, Waste Management Act 1996, and the recently adopted County Cavan Bye Laws 2019. He stated that the Council currently have installed CCTV cameras at three known dumping blackspots. He stated that it is estimated that over the period 2017-2019 the Council had spent almost €3m on anti-litter activity. Mr. O’Callaghan stated that public awareness plays an integral part in the Council’s approach to tackling litter. He stated that almost 92% of schools in Cavan have registered with the An Taisce Green Schools programme and Cavan County Council with 75% of those rewarded with at least one Green Flag. He stated that the waste management section has recently designed a twenty page booklet for householders to raise awareness on the negative impact improper management household waste is having on the environment. Mr. O’Callaghan also stated that under a new contract agreed, those emptying the recycling banks are now obligated to lift them and power wash beneath them. Mr. O’Callaghan noted that while Covid-19 has delayed court proceedings, four cases are pending before the courts under the Litter Pollution Act with eleven more instigated under the Waste Management Act.

1. **That we call on the Department of Social Welfare to reinstate payments that are fortnightly back to weekly. Going to cost 17 million to the State in 2021. Otherwise we are going to once again see our rural post offices closing.**

Councillor B. Fay noted that the Department had agreed on the morning of Council meeting to reinstate payments that are fortnightly back to weekly.

1. **Tenant Purchase Scheme**

Councillor S. Smith proposed that Cavan County Council write to the Minister for Housing, Local Government & Heritage asking that amendments be made to the terms and conditions of the Tenant Purchase Scheme to make it easier for those renting Council houses especially those in rural areas to buy out their dwellings. Councillor S. Smith stated that there are many people of retired age who lived in their Council rented property all their lives and have the money to purchase their dwelling but are excluded from doing so under the current qualifying criteria.

Councillor J.P. Feeley seconded the proposal stating that there are people who have the means to purchase their home but due to the restrictions of the scheme are unable to. He stated that occupancy of these dwellings played an important part in rural communities. Councillor Feeley also noted that the issue had been raised recently in the Dáil by Deputy Brendan Smith and Deputy Eamon O Cuív.

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

1. **That Cavan County Council appoint an Irish Language Officer.**

Councillor P. McDonald called on Cavan County Council to acknowledge that under Section 15 of the Official Languages Act 2003, public bodies have a duty to prepare a statutory scheme specifying the services they provide through the medium of both Irish and English. He stated that there is a duty on public bodies including Cavan County Council to promote the Irish language. Councillor P. McDonald proposed that Cavan County Council advertise for the position of an Irish Language Officer.

Councillor J.P. Feeley seconded Councillor P. McDonald’s proposal. Councillor J.P. Feeley stated that he understood the Council are already in the process of exploring options with a view to making such an appointment early next year. Councillor J.P. Feeley acknowledged the good work being done by Cavan County Council in the past promoting the Irish Cavan particularly through the library section of the Council.

Councillor C. Kelly supported the motion.

Mr. Eoin Doyle, Director of Services stated that the Council is involved in an ongoing process exploring the appointment of an Irish Language Officer on a part time basis which would fall under the remit of the library service. Mr. Doyle stated that the Council hope to have the role filled in 2021.

**Item Nos 9 and 10 were deferred to November meeting.**

**The meeting concluded at 3.55p.m.**