**Minutes of Meeting of Cavan County Council held on 9 December 2016 in Aughadreena National School at 3.30p.m.**

Councillor F. Curtin, Cathaoirleach Presiding

Present: Councillors M. Argue, W. Bennett, C. Brady, D. Brady, P. Brady, N. Connell, J.P. Feeley, E. Greenan, C. Kelly, P. McDonald, P. McVitty, P. O’Reilly, S. O’Reilly, S. P. O’Reilly, P. Smith, S. Smith, V. Smith.

In Attendance: T. Ryan, Chief Executive

D. Maguire, Head of Finance

 E. Doyle, Director of Service

 J. McLoughlin, Director of Service

 G. Finn, Director of Service

 E. McGinn, Meetings Administrator

 N. Kane, Senior Planner

Councillor F. Curtin welcomed all to Aughadreena N.S. for the December Meeting and thanked Ms. Fran Reilly, Principal for giving him the opportunity to host the meeting in his former National School.Ms. Fran Reilly, Principal welcomed the elected members and executive of Cavan County Council to Aughadreena N.S. and stated that she was delighted that the meeting is being held in the school. She thanked the Council for their help over the years and the work they are doing in promoting County Cavan.

1. **To confirm Minutes of Meeting of Cavan County Council held on 14th November 2016. Miontuairiscĺ cruinnithe 14 Samhain 2016 a dhearbhu.**

 It was:

 Proposed by Councillor P. McVitty

 Seconded by Councillor J.P. Feeley

 And

 Resolved:

“that minutes of monthly meeting of Cavan County Council held on 14 November 2016 be hereby approved”.

**2. To note minutes of Strategic Policy Committee meeting on Housing, Community, Social & Cultural Development held on 27 July 2016.**

Noted.

**3. To note Minutes of Corporate Policy Group meetings held on 10 November 2016.**

Noted.

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

Noted.

**5. To note Chief Executive’s monthly report.**

Noted.

**6. Submission to Constituency Commission re “Respecting the integrity of Cavan’s county boundary for electoral purposes”.**

The Elected Members complimented Dr. Emer Coveney on creating an excellent submission to the Constituency Commission in relation to re-uniting Cavan/Monaghan. The members also congratulated the Anglo Celt for their campaign in getting people to sign a petition on the re-unification of Cavan/Monaghan.

 Mr. Eoin Doyle, Director of Service thanked the members for unanimously supporting the submission and stated that the Cathaoirleach will submit the submission to the Constituency Commission. He noted that individuals may also make submissions prior to 10th January 2017.

**7. Report on the Progress achieved in securing the objectives of the Cavan County Development Plan 2014-2020 and the Cavan Town & Environs Development Plan 2014-2020 (previously noted at November meeting).**

Noted.

**8. Proposed amendment to draft Development Contribution Scheme 2017-2020 – exceptional rebate and approval of the draft scheme.**

Mr. Ger Finn, Director of Services stated that in relation to Councillor J.P. Feeley’s proposal regarding exceptional rebate, the following had been agreed:- Areas where soil tests require the provision of elaborate treatment works costing in excess of €8000 and the works proposed are required by the Environment Section of Cavan County Council, the applicant shall qualify for a rebate of 75% of expenditure incurred above this sum subject to certain conditions. The applicant must notify the Planning Authority of the proposed costs when submitting the Planning Application and shall supply 3 no. quotations for the treatment system.

 It was:

 Proposed by Councillor J.P. Feeley

 Seconded by Councillor S. Smith

 And

 Resolved:

“that the draft development contribution scheme 2017-2020 be hereby approved”.

**9. To note Cavan County Council’s Annual Report for 2015.**

Noted.

 Councillor J.P. Feeley noted that some sections of the Council compare statistics from previous years and suggested that this be done by all sections.

**10. To note Finance Report for the quarter ending 30th September 2016.**

Noted.

**11(a) To note reply from Financial Services Union (FSU) regarding provision of ATM services in the town on Kilnaleck.**

Noted.

**(b) To note reply from Deputy Heather Humphreys regarding the proposed acquisition by Independent News and Media plc (INM) of CNML Limited, including the Anglo Celt.**

Noted.

**(c) To note reply from Office of the Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht regarding the deer population in Ireland.**

Noted. Councillor S. Smith stated that the deer population has grown significantly and damage being done to farms is becoming a great concern to farmers. Councillor P. McVitty proposed that a letter be sent to the Minister for Agriculture asking if he has concerns for the spread of TB by the deer herd. This proposal was seconded by Councillor S. Smith.

**(d) To note reply from the Health Service Executive regarding the children on Waiting List for Therapy Services in Cavan and Monaghan.**

 Noted. Councillor N. Connell proposed that a letter be sent to the HSE asking for a monthly update on what improvements are being made in relation to physiotherapy services and occupational therapist services for children. This proposal was seconded by Councillor P. McDonald.

**(e) To note reply from Office of the Tanaiste and Minister for Justice and Equality regarding the regulation of online and underage gambling.**

Noted.

 **Votes of Sympathy:**

* The Brady Family, Arva on the death of Phil Brady.
* Seamus McLoughlin, Staff Member, Cavan County Council on the death of his father Sean McLoughlin, Leitrim.
* The Burns Family, Billis, Ballyjamesduff on the death of Eamon Burns.
* The Dalton Family, Mullagh on the death of Matt Dalton.
* The McInerney Family, Ballyjamesduff on the death of Paddy McInerney.

 **Vote of Congratulations:**

* Deputy Niamh Smyth and her husband James on the birth of their baby girl Juliet.

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

**1. Health Centre for Killeshandra**

**2. To request a progress report on a Health Centre for Killeshandra.**

It was proposed by Councillor S. Smith and seconded by Councillor P. McVitty that the Council write to the HSE asking for an update on the Health Centre for Killeshandra.

**3. East/West Link**

Councillor C. Kelly noted that the East/West Link road is now ongoing since 2001. He stated that this road needs to be put back on the Government’s agenda for delivery as it is a key part of infrastructure in inviting tourists to Cavan. He noted that a feasibility study was carried out in 2010, a route impact strategy in 2011 along with a preliminary design and to date no works have commenced. He stated there is a great need to have this road developed.

Councillor F. Curtin stated that the Municipal District in Carrickmacross intend hosting a meeting with Transport Infrastructure Ireland and the Minister for Transport and maybe Mr. McLoughlin would make contact to include representatives from Cavan at the meeting.

Councillor C. Kelly proposed that Mr. McLoughlin arrange a meeting with a joint delegation from Cavan, Monaghan and Louth to meet with Minister Ross. This proposal was seconded by Councillor S. O’Reilly.

Mr. Joe McLoughlin, Director of Service concurred with the views of the members. He stated that if the scheme moves ahead it will be on a phased basis. Mr. McLoughlin stated that funding is currently a problem and once money is allocated the works can commence.

**4. That Cavan County Council supports calls and writes to the Minister for Health in support of the retention of an A & E Department and Services at Our Lady’s Hospital, Navan.**

Councillor S.P. O’Reilly stated that it is proposed to close the accident and emergency department in Our Lady’s Hospital, Navan in January 2017. Councillor S.P. O’Reilly stated that Our Lady’s Hospital, Navan has a fully functional accident and emergency department which is used by quite a number of residents in East Cavan. He stated that if this accident and emergency department closes in Our Lady’s Hospital it will put increasing pressure on the accident and emergency department in Cavan General Hospital which is already full to capacity. He stated that a substantial amount of money was spent upgrading Navan Hospital and it would be a shame to see it lose its accident and emergency department. Councillor S.P. O’Reilly proposed that the Council write to the Minister for Health offering the support of Cavan County Council to retain the accident and emergency department at our Lady’s Hospital, Navan. This proposal was seconded by Councillor C. Kelly. It was proposed by Councillor P. O’Reilly and seconded by Councillor P. McVitty that the Council writes to the Minister asking that the fracture clinic be re-opened in Cavan General Hospital.

**5. Asking Cavan County Council if they have drawn down and spent the Traveller Accommodation Capital Funding allocation for 2016.**

Councillor E. Greenan, Chairperson of the Traveller Housing Committee asked the executive if Cavan County Council have drawn down and spent the Traveller Accommodation Capital Funding allocation for 2016.

 Mr. Joe McLoughlin, Director of Service stated that so far in 2016, eight traveller families have been housed, seven in standard accommodation and one under the RAS scheme. He noted that the Council is up to date on the Traveller Programme for 2014-2018. He stated that four units have been built in Cavan Town and the total money of €8,600 has been recouped from the Department.

**MEMBERS’ ITEMS – DECEMBER MEETING**

**6. Income limits for Council housing eligibility**

**7. To request that the maximum net income limit for social housing be increased.**

Councillor S. Smith proposed that the Council write to the Minister for Housing asking the Government to raise the income limits for applicants to qualify for social housing in recognition of the fact that applicants above the limits cannot secure finance to provide for their own housing needs. Councillor Smith stated that family income supplement is adding to the fact that applicants are over the income limit and this should not be considered as part of their income.

Councillor C. Kelly seconded the motion. Councillor Kelly stated that the income limit is far too low and discretion should be used where somebody is just marginally over the limit.

Mr. Joe McLoughlin, Director of Services concurred with the members and noted that the Social Housing Assessment Regulations 2011 introduced a new standard procedure for assessing applicants for social housing in every housing authority. He noted that the regulations include maximum net income bands for each housing authority, in different bands according to the area, with income being assessed according to a standard household means policy. He noted that County Cavan is placed in band three.

**8. That housing loans from the local authority be reviewed.**

Councillor C. Kelly stated that currently applicants are finding it as difficult to get a local authority loan. Councillor Kelly proposed that Mr. Joe McLoughlin, Director of Service talk to the Credit Committee and the Housing Agency asking them to allow for flexibility when applying for a Council loan.

Councillor P. Smith supported the motion. He stated that local authority loans should not be restricted to first time buyers.

Councillor S.P. O’Reilly stated that it is ridiculous to think that it is as hard to get a local authority loan as a loan from the Bank. He stated that the local authority should be there to help those who cannot help themselves.

Mr. Joe McLoughlin, Director of Service noted that the local authority never had to be bailed out by the taxpayer like the banks. He stated that applicants must provide evidence that they were refused a loan from two other lending agencies before applying for a Council loan. He stated that the maximum loan is €220,000 over a maximum term of 20 years. He stated that the applicant must show a statement of savings over a 12 month period as there is no point in lending money to people who cannot save. He stated that these details are then forwarded by the Local Authority to the Housing Agency and on their recommendations a loan is granted or refused. He stated that the local authority encourage those who may be refused initially to come back after six months when they have savings and re-apply.

Mr. Des Maguire, Head of Finance concurred with Mr. McLoughlin stating that the Council has to look at a person’s ability to repay a loan. He noted that the Council borrows money from the Housing Agency. He stated that the Council is mandated to have a credit committee in place. Mr. Maguire stated that the Council has to comply with the regulations in place and the files are inspected by the Local Government Auditor.

Councillor C. Kelly thanked the members and executive for their input and stated that if people have a good track record of paying rent over a period of years then it should be taken into consideration when applying for a Council loan.

**9. To discuss issues with planning permission in rural areas.**

Councillor P. McVitty stated that under Environmental Protection Agency regulations many sites in County Cavan cannot obtain planning permission for a rural dwelling on family land due to the type of soil failing the “T-Test”. Councillor P. McVitty proposed that Cavan County Council write to the EPA asking that the regulations be revised as a matter of urgency to take account of the soil types in County Cavan.

Councillor J.P. Feeley supported the motion and acknowledged the work of the Planning Office of Cavan County Council and their willingness to co-operate with applicants. He stated that in this age of modern technology there must be systems, reasonably priced, that can work on the soil in West Cavan. He stated that the Environmental Protection Agency are looking at this for quite some time and still nothing has been achieved. He noted that there are lots of rural areas where community facilities will have to close because people will not be there to use them.

Councillor S. Smith seconded the motion stating that there are different rules and laws for different parts of the country. He noted that people in Co. Fermanagh have no problem building houses with the old septic tank treatment systems.

Mr. Ger Finn, Director of Services stated that the Council is doing its best to make progress with the EPA in relation to treatment systems.

**10. That Cavan County Council request Minister for Health Simon Harris T.D., to ensure that Orkambi the drug for Cystic Fibrosis sufferers be included in the GMS and LTI Scheme.**

It was proposed by Councillor S.P. O’Reilly and seconded by Councillor P. Brady that the Council write to Minister Harris asking that he ensure that Orkambi the drug for Cystic Fibrosis sufferers is included in the GMS and LTI Scheme.

The meeting concluded at 6.20p.m. and all were invited to the Lavey Inn afterwards.