

**Minutes of Meeting of Longford County Council**

**held via Microsoft Teams on**

**Wednesday, 14th April 2021 at 3.00 p.m.**

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**PRESIDING**: Councillor Paul Ross, Cathaoirleach.

**MEMBERS PRESENT**: Councillors – Paraic Brady, John Browne, Seamus Butler, Mick Cahill, Mark Casey, Colin Dalton, Gerard Farrell,

Gerard Hagan, Martin Monaghan,

Garry Murtagh, Turlough McGovern, Peggy Nolan,

Pat O’Toole, P.J. Reilly, Uruemu Adejinmi, Colm Murray and Gerry Warnock.

**IN ATTENDANCE:**  Mr. Paddy Mahon, Chief Executive.

Mr. John McKeon, Head of Finance/Director of Services.

Mr. John Brannigan, Director of Services.

Ms. Barbara Heslin, Director of Services.

Ms. Nora O’Farrell, Senior Executive Officer.

**MEETINGS**

**ADMINISTRATOR**: Ann Marie Mc Keon

**ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

On the proposal of Councillor Peggy Nolan seconded by Councillor Mick Cahill, the Minutes of Monthly Meeting of Longford County Council held on the 10th March 2021, as circulated, were confirmed and adopted.

**MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES.**

Land Development Bill

Councillor Gerry Warnock asked if his Notice of Motion from the March meeting had been submitted to the Department. Ann Marie Mc Keon confirmed that it had. Councillor Warnock voiced his concerns in relation to this bill and Councillor Mick Cahill informed the members that the AILG were preparing a professional report for submission and that the recognised that this was a very serious issue for Elected Members.

**DECLARATION OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS.**

None.

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE REPORT**

The Chief Executive Report, as circulated, was noted

Royal Canal Greenway

Councillor Peggy Nolan complemented the four local authorities on the Royal Canal Greenway and noted that Longford is the only local authority where the canal does not come down into its town. Councillor Nolan asked the Council to continue to work with Waterways Ireland to progress this. Signage is required on the canal way and the Council should be supporting any individuals who want to open small businesses along the route of the canal right throughout the county.

Councillor Nolan raised concerns regarding antisocial behaviour. She highlighted the need for a partnership approach to tackling the issue and the role of An Garda Siochana.

Councillor Warnock complemented Longford Tidy Towns on the work that they have done in cleaning up the canal area and Councillor Warnock informed the members that he is currently working on a CCTV proposal to put forward to the CCTV committee.

Councillor Butler, as chair of the JPC, agreed to raise the issues raised with Superintendent Delaney.

Boardwalk at Lanesboro

Councillor Mark Casey raised concerns that Roscommon County Council tendered for a feasibility study for a boardwalk on the Ballyleague side of the Shannon and that this excluded the Longford side of the Shannon. He stressed that this was a priority project for the community and proposed that Longford carry out their own feasibility study. Councillor Gerard Farrell seconded this proposal.

John Mc Keon clarified that in September 2020 Roscommon County Council received funding under Strand 1 of the Just Transition Fund for the preparation of a feasibility study for a boardwalk at Ballyleague. Roscommon County Council advertised on e-tenders for a service provider to develop this study. Longford County Council will await the outcome of this feasibility study as the output will inform the Council on any future plans for a boardwalk on the Longford side of the Shannon. John Mc Keon confirmed that Longford County Council is in constant contact with Roscommon County Council and will continue to communicate with them.

**MINUTES OF CORPORATE POLICY GROUP MEETING HELD ON THE**

**9TH FEBRUARY 2021 - CIRCULATED**

The adopted Minutes of Corporate Policy Group Meetings held on the 9th February 2021, as circulated, were noted.

**FINANCE & REGENERATION.**

**Disposal of Property at Forgney, Ballymahon, Co. Longford.**

On the proposal of Councillor Pat O’Toole seconded by Councillor Mick Cahill, it was unanimously agreed to dispose of property at Forgney, Ballymahon, County Longford in accordance with the terms of Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001 issued on the 25th March 2021, as circulated.

**Disposal of Property at 1 Farnagh Hill, Longford.**

On the proposal of Councillor Peggy Nolan seconded by Councillor John Browne, it was unanimously agreed to dispose of property at 1 Farnagh Hill, Longford in accordance with the terms of Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001 issued on the 25th March 2021, as circulated.

**Disposal of Property at 17 Rathcronan, Granard, Co. Longford.**

On the proposal of Councillor Turlough Mc Govern seconded by Councillor Colin Dalton, it was unanimously agreed to dispose of property at 17 Rathcronan Granard, County Longford in accordance with the terms of Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001 issued on the 25th March 2021, as circulated.

**Disposal of Property at 2 The Meadows, Drumlish, Co. Longford.**

On the proposal of Councillor Paraic Brady seconded by Councillor Garry Murtagh, it was unanimously agreed to dispose of property at 2 The Meadows, Drumlish, Co. Longford in accordance with the terms of Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001 issued on the 25th March 2021, as circulated.

**Disposal of Property at Glebe, Colehill, Co. Longford.**

On the proposal of Councillor Mick Cahill seconded by Councillor Pat O’Toole, it was unanimously agreed to dispose of property at Glebe, Colehill, Co. Longford in accordance with the terms of Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001 issued on the 25th March 2021, as circulated.

**Disposal of Property at Parkside, Ballymahon, Co. Longford.**

On the proposal of Councillor Pat O’Toole seconded by Councillor Mick Cahill, it was unanimously agreed to dispose of property at Parkside, Ballymahon, Co. Longford in accordance with the terms of Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001 issued on the 25th March 2021, as circulated.

**Disposal of Property at 32 Ardnacassa Lawns, Longford.**

On the proposal of Councillor Peggy Nolan seconded by Councillor Seamus Butler, it was unanimously agreed to dispose of property at 32 Ardnacassa Lawns, Longford in accordance with the terms of Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001 issued on the 25th March 2021, as circulated.

**Disposal of Property at 1 Grian Ard, Ardnacassa, Longford.**

On the proposal of Councillor John Browne seconded by Councillor Uruemu Adejinmi, it was unanimously agreed to dispose of property at 1 Grian Ard, Ardnacassa, Longford in accordance with the terms of Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001 issued on the 25th March 2021, as circulated.

**Disposal of Property at 10 Legion Terrace, Longford.**

On the proposal of Councillor Peggy Nolan seconded by Councillor Seamus Butler, it was unanimously agreed to dispose of property at 10 Legion Terrace, Longford in accordance with the terms of Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001 issued on the 25th March 2021, as circulated.

**Disposal of Property at 12 BO Dearg, Drumlish Road, Longford.**

On the proposal of Councillor Paraic Brady seconded by Councillor Seamus Butler, it was unanimously agreed to dispose of property at 12 BO Dearg, Drumlish Road, Longford in accordance with the terms of Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001 issued on the 25th March 2021, as circulated.

**Disposal of Property at 30 Lisbrack, Longford.**

On the proposal of Councillor Peggy Nolan seconded by Councillor Uruemu Adejinmi, it was unanimously agreed to dispose of property at 30 Lisbrack, Longford in accordance with the terms of Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001 issued on the 25th March 2021, as circulated.

**Notices of Motions, submitted by Councillors, as listed hereunder –**

**Flag Poles**

The following Notice of Motion was proposed by Councillor Mark Casey and seconded by Councillor Mick Cahill -

That Longford County Council place flag poles on all their county buildings e.g. Libraries, offices and Fire stations.

Reply

Longford County Council are currently conducting an audit on all operational Council owned buildings, to determine where flagpole brackets have been attached.

Following this, where there is a deficiency on any Building, a flagpole bracket will be installed.

**Walkway from Moyne CS to the Latin School**

The following Notice of Motion was proposed by Councillor Garry Murtagh and seconded by Councillor Paraic Brady -

I am calling on Longford County Council through the Regeneration team to prioritise the walkway from Moyne CS to the Latin school via the Safe Routes to School €15million government initiative.

Students from Moyne CS walk to and use the Latin school on a regular basis. Both educational facilities are located on the R198 and it would be a huge benefit not only from a Health & Safety perspective but also in forming an integral part of the community’s development plan in linking the two villages of Moyne & Legga and indeed part of the County’s strategic North Longford Rebel Trail.

Reply

Minister for Transport Eamon Ryan TD, Minister for Education Norma Foley TD and Minister of State Hildegarde Naughton TD and have today launched a new initiative called Safe Routes to School which will support active travel infrastructure for selected schools around the country.

The programme, which is the next phase in the Government’s investment in active travel, will see funding provided from the €1.8 billion committed under the Programme for Government, to support walking/scooting and cycling to primary and post-primary schools.

The Safe Routes to School programme aims to create safer walking and cycling routes within communities, alleviate congestion at the school gates and increase the number of students who walk or cycle to school by providing walking and cycling facilities.

The improvements to the school commute could range from an upgraded footpath or new cycle lane to a complete reworking of a school’s entrance.

**STAGES**

Stage 1: Dissemination

An invitation for participation in the programme will be sent to principals by the Department of Education and Department of Transport.

Stage 2: Expression of Interest

Schools will be asked to complete and submit the Expression of Interest (EOI) to Green-Schools.

Stage 3: Selection

A selection process will take place based on a number of agreed criteria.

Stage 4: Communication & Liaison

Selected schools will be informed by Green-Schools.

Green-Schools will then liaise with selected schools and the relevant local authorities on infrastructural interventions for their schools.

Stage 5: Interventions

Green-Schools will produce an outline delivery plan for each school showing interventions at concept design stage.

Stage 6: Submission

This delivery plan will be submitted by Green-Schools to local authorities to take forward for further design and implementation.

Local authorities can then access dedicated funding from the NTA for the projects.

Stage 7: Community Support

The school involved will act as a local champion of the proposed measures to ensure community buy-in for the proposals.

Stage 8: Delivery

Local authorities will undertake proposed interventions in relation to the front of school environs and walking & cycling infrastructure around schools to be funded by the NTA.

Green-Schools will deliver cycle parking.

This fund will be primarily driven by EOI’s from the schools themselves, through the ‘Green-Schools’ initiative.

Once schools are selected through this initiative the relevant local authorities can then access funding from the NTA to deliver of any infrastructural interventions.

**STRATEGIC INFRASTRUCTURE AND CLIMATE CHANGE.**

**Planning Applications.**

The lists of Planning Applications received since the last meeting of the Council were noted.

**Disposal of Property at St Patrick’s Terrace, Edgeworthstown, Co. Longford.**

On the proposal of Councillor Paul Ross seconded by Councillor Paraic Brady, it was unanimously agreed to dispose of property at 17 St. Patricks Terrace, Edgeworthstown, County Longford in accordance with the terms of Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001 issued on the 23rd March 2021, as circulated.

**Disposal of Property at 98 The Corrib, Gleann Riada, Longford.**

On the proposal of Councillor Peggy Nolan seconded by Councillor Uruemu Adejinmi, it was unanimously agreed to dispose of property at 98 The Corrib, Gleann Riada, Longford in accordance with the terms of Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001 issued on the 23rd March 2021, as circulated.

**Disposal of Property at Briskill, County Longford.**

On the proposal of Councillor Martin Monaghan seconded by Councillor Seamus Butler, it was unanimously agreed to dispose of property at Briskill, County Longford N39KN88 in accordance with the terms of Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001 issued on the 23rd March 2021, as circulated.

**Notices of Motions, submitted by Councillors, as listed hereunder –**

**Amend the Social Housing Assessment Regulations 2011 (as amended)**

The following Notice of Motion was proposed by Councillor Gerry Warnock and seconded by Councillor Peggy Nolan -

I am calling on the Minister for Housing, Local Government & Heritage to amend the Social Housing Assessment Regulations 2011 (as amended) to make the following provision:

That in the event of a marital or relationship breakup where a legal agreement for child maintenance has been agreed through the courts, that the annual sum of this maintenance payment be deducted from the payor’s reckonable income in the event of making an application to the Local Authority for Housing Support.

Currently there are people in this position, usually working fathers, who do not qualify for housing supports as their reckonable income exceeds the statutory income thresholds. However, consideration of court ordered maintenance payments may help a significant portion of those affected to qualify. It should also be noted that in the event of such a person selling or agreeing to rescind their equity in the former family home, that they cannot qualify for a Rebuilding Ireland Home Loan under existing rules (not first-time buyers). This scenario is creating poverty traps in addition to anxiety and mental health issues that have the potential to negatively impact on relationships with children.”

Reply

Longford County Council will write to the Minister for Housing, Local Government & Heritage to seek an amendment to the Social Housing Assessment Regulations 2011 (as amended).

**Dog Fouling**

The following Notice of Motion was proposed by Councillor Uruemu Adejinmi and seconded by Councillor Paraic Brady-

“Dog fouling is still a major issue and there needs to be a shift in public attitudes so that it becomes socially unacceptable for dog owners and walkers not to clean up after their dog.

I am calling on Longford County Council to adopt a Green Dog Walker initiative to address the issue of dog fouling on our paths and walkways and provide GDW Toolkits to individuals, resident associations and Tidy Towns groups who want to roll out the initiative in their community.”

Reply

Longford County Council is currently putting together a dog fouling campaign together with eight other local authorities to target dog owners and walkers.

**COMMUNITY, CORPORATE AND ENTERPRISE.**

**2021 INTER-CULTURAL GRANTS SCHEME – CIRCULATED**

On the proposal of Councillor John Browne Seconded by Councillor Mick Cahill the 2021 Inter-Cultural Grants as outlined at the meeting were approved.

**DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT 2020 PREPARED IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 221 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT, 2001 AS AMENDED – CIRCULATED**

The Draft Annual Report 2020 as circulated was noted. The Members complemented the report.

Barbara Heslin informed the members that after all the submissions/comments are made they will be incorporated into the report. Once the document is finalised it will be brought back before the members in June. Once approved it will be published and translated into Irish.

Councillor Gerry Warnock asked that the membership of Boards, included in the report, be reviewed.

**Notices of Motions, submitted by Councillors, as listed hereunder –**

**Floating Jetty**

The following Notice of Motion was proposed by Councillor Mark Casey and seconded by Councillor Gerard Farrell -

That this council places a floating jetty, angling Stands and a picnic area on the council owned island Inchmcdermott.  This development would replace the loss of the fishing grounds, which the hot water stretch use to provide. It also would provide a safe landing area for disabled people to fish from, utilising the new the assess for all boat. The council can work with inland Fisheries using funding from (SAP) the Angling Development Fund.

The Floating Jetty can be portable and moved to shore during the winter months (off-season)

Reply

The Council’s Regeneration Team will explore possible funding opportunities and project delivery in collaboration with Inland Fisheries

**Vaccination Centre**

The following Notice of Motion was proposed by Councillor Paul Ross and seconded by Councillor Peggy Nolan -

That Longford County Council call on the Minister for Health Stephen Donnelly and the HSE to open the Vaccination centre in Longford as soon as possible to deal with the fact that we have had the highest cases per head of population in the country, to protect our citizens from this virus and to get our county back to work.

Cathaoirleach Paul Ross confirmed that he had received confirmation that the vaccination centre in Newtownforbes will open on 6 May. He thanked the Executive for their work in assisting the HSE in identifying a location for the centre. He also thanked the Elected Members for their continued support in pushing for a venue in Longford.

The Members complemented the Executive and community in Newtownforbes for their support and work on the centre.

**Bridle Path**

The following Notice of Motion was proposed by Councillor Uruemu Adejinmi and seconded by Councillor Seamus Butler -

“Longford has had great success in equestrianism: Mosstown Riding Club are the current Horse ware Team Champions and in recent years Longford Pony Club has also won many national competitions including best club in the country; there are many show jumpers from Longford and the Longford Harriers have gone on to represent Longford in the RDS on many occasions.

Recent years has seen the network of Irish bridle paths reduced significantly leaving very few places safe for equestrian use. People that do not have riding facilities at home are forced to use roads which are either busy or narrow to keep up the horse’s fitness and for their welfare. It is very dangerous for riders and horses as most drivers are uneducated about road sharing with equestrians.

Adding a bridle path element to greenways will create jobs during its construction as well as support members of the community working in the leisure and equine tourism sectors of the midlands and west, directly positively influencing Project Ireland 2040 National Planning Framework and the National Development Plan 2018-2027. Equine holidays would bring more tourists to the midlands with the chance to explore the scenery on horseback for a fabulous and memorable holiday.

It will also help reverse the decline in this sporting activity. A safe riding network will see more active participation of people in horse riding, a sport that contributes to positive mental health and physical well-being.

I am calling on Longford County Council to seek national funding to provide new bridle trails for horse riders to have a safe space to practice their sport and exercise their horses.”

Reply

Unlike other countries, Ireland does not have a well-developed network of dedicated bridle path infrastructure. The Council looks forward to receiving proposals from communities and groups regarding possible locations for the development of bridle trails and agreement with landowners regarding access. The Council’s Regeneration Team will then explore possible funding opportunities and project delivery in collaboration with the communities and groups.

**Votes of sympathy**.

To be forwarded to the Meetings Administrator

This concluded the business of the meeting.

**Ann Marie Mc Keon**

**Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Ann Marie Mc Keon,**

**Meetings Administrator.**

**Confirmed and adopted at Meeting of Longford County Council held on the**

**12th May 2021.**

**Paul Ross**

**Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Cathaoirleach.**