

## Minutes of Leitrim County Council meeting held via Zoom on Monday, 2 November 2020

**Members Present:** Councillor Enda McGloin  
Councillor Sean McGowan  
Councillor Brendan Barry  
Councillor Frank Dolan  
Councillor Gerry Dolan  
Councillor Caillian Ellis  
Councillor Pdraig Fallon  
Councillor Paddy Farrell  
Councillor Des Guckian  
Councillor Felim Gurn  
Councillor Sean McDermott  
Councillor Finola Armstrong McGuire  
Councillor Thomas Mulligan  
Councillor Paddy O'Rourke  
Councillor Ita Reynolds Flynn  
Councillor Enda Stenson  
Councillor Justin Warnock  
Councillor Mary Bohan (Cathaoirleach) presiding

**Officials Present:** Lar Power, Chief Executive  
Joseph Gilhooly, Director of Services, Economic Development, Planning and Infrastructural Services  
Vincent Dwyer, Head of Finance, Finance, Water, Environment, Climate Action and Cultural Services  
Mary Quinn, Director of Services, Housing, Corporate Services, Community and Cultural Services  
Bernard Greene, Senior Planner  
Terry McGovern, Senior Engineer  
Brendan McKenna, Senior Executive Engineer  
Shay O'Connor, Senior Engineer  
Kieran Brett, Meetings Administrator  
Ornaith O'Shannon, Assistant Staff Officer

### **MM.135.20 Vote of Sympathy**

The members extended a vote of sympathy to the following:  
Kathleen Ellis McGovern and Family on the death of Mr Owen McGovern R.I.P.

### **MM.136.20 Adoption of Minutes**

#### **MM.136.20a Minutes of Meeting held on Monday, 7th September 2020**

On **Proposal** of Cllr Enda Stenson  
**Seconded** by Cllr Sean McGowan

It was **AGREED** to adopt the minutes of the meeting of 7<sup>th</sup> September 2020

Cllr Brendan Barry requested the minutes of 7th September 2020 be amended to note his support of the Geraghty family.

Cllr Des Guckian requested the statement Mr Lar Power made in relation to the Geraghty property, on page 15, paragraph 2, of the minutes - *“Mr Power outlined that he was subsequently informed by this neighbour a number of days later that Mrs Geraghty, whilst possibly amenable to the use of the back garden was wholly opposed to the concept using her building.”* - be removed from the minutes.

Mr Power advised the minutes record what he had said at the meeting on the 7th September and are a true reflection.

Cathaoirleach, Cllr Mary Bohan advised Cllr Guckian that the minutes are accurate and cannot be amended in this regard.

Cllr Guckian requested his objection to this statement be noted in the minutes of this meeting.

**MM.137.20 Disposals under Section 183(1) of the Local Government Act, 2001**

**MM.137.20a Consider for approval disposal of Freehold interest in property at Acres Td, Drumshanbo. Co Leitrim**

Notice of intention dated 22nd October 2020 from Mr Vincent Dwyer, Head of Finance, Water, Environment, climate Action and Emergency Services in relation to the disposal of freehold interest in land comprising of 0.0289ha in the townland of Acres, Drumshanbo Folio 19158 in accordance with Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Brendan Barry  
**SECONDED** by Cllr. Enda Stenson

It was **AGREED** that the Council consent to the disposal of Freehold interest in property comprising of 0.0289ha in the townland of Acres, Drumshanbo Folio 19158 in accordance with Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001 and Notice of intention dated 22nd October 2020 as circulated to all members.

Conditions

1. All Legal Fees associated with same will be the responsibility of Leitrim County Council.
2. Enabling works have already been carried out in the context of amenity improvement works in late 2019.

**MM.138.20 To approve overdraft accommodation for the twelve month period ending**

**31st December 2021**

***Notice to approve overdraft accommodation in the sum of €1.5 million for the twelve month period ending 31st December 2021, subject to the sanction of the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government, in accordance with Section 106 (2) of the Local Government Act, 2001 as amended.***

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Pdraig Fallon  
**SECONDED** by Cllr. Des Guckian

It was **AGREED** that the overdraft accommodation in the sum of €1.5 million for the twelve month period ending 31st December 2021, subject to the sanction of the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government, in accordance with Section 106 (2) of the Local Government Act, 2001 as amended be approved”

**MM.139.20 To consider for approval draft Standing Orders**

Ms Mary Quinn, Director of Service, updated the members on the Draft Standing Orders that incorporate provisions that have been made under The Civil Law and Criminal Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2020 (Section 29) (Local Authorities) (Designation) Order 2020 (S.I. No. 445 of 2020) on 20 October 2020 which designates local authorities under Section 29 of the Civil Law and Criminal Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2020, allowing for Council meetings and meetings of local authority committees to be held remotely.

Ms Quinn advised that in so far as practicable the place for holding meetings of the Council shall be Áras an Chontae, however the new legislation makes provision for holding meetings remotely. She outlined the management of remote meetings as set out in the Draft Standing Orders.

Cllr Des Guckian advised he was not in agreement with point 12A no 6, that no other person should be present at a meeting who are not entitled to be and also that no recording of the proceedings is permitted. He added that he has previously requested that meetings be recorded as it could be useful if clarity of meeting proceedings is required at a later date.

Ms Mary Quinn advised that admittance to face to face meetings is controlled and the same should apply to meetings taking place online. There is provision for members of the public to attend meetings. In relation to recording of meetings, Ms Quinn advised item 58 is an existing provision of standing orders and states that that no recording equipment is authorised without prior approval.

Cllr Pdraig Fallon advised his preference is to meet in person however in the current climate, with level 5 restrictions in place, this is a welcome development.

Cathaoirleach, Cllr Mary Bohan advised that at all times it is a matter for the Members to decide if meetings will be held online or in person.

On **Proposal** of Cllr Enda Stenson  
**Seconded** by Cllr Sean McGowan  
It was **AGREED** to adopt the Standing Orders.

**MM.140.20 To note Leitrim County Council Winter Maintenance Service Plan 2020-2021**

The Leitrim County Council Winter Service Maintenance Plan 2020-2021 as circulated to the Members appears under minute item no 8 in the Minutes Book.

Mr. Terry McGovern, A/Senior Engineer provided an over-view of the contents of the report. The report was noted by the Members and the following items were raised:

- Cllr Caillian Ellis proposed the Keshcarrigan/Fenagh road be included in the winter maintenance service plan. Cllr Brendan Barry supported Cllr Ellis request. He added that Keshcarrigan is the only village in Leitrim that does not have any of its approach roads gritted in winter.

Mr Terry McGovern advised the rationale for prioritising and categorising roads for gritting. He added there is no capacity within current resources to expand on the routes outlined in the plan. He advised that in cases such as those outlined by Cllrs Ellis and Barry, the gritters are deployed to treat these roads the following morning.

- Cllr Des Guckian proposed that the plan be extended to include the steep downhill section of road near Annaduff National School and the Cut of Gort between Dromod and Mohill as it is a dangerous stretch of road and requires gritting.
- Cllr Paddy O'Rourke proposed the gritter continues 300m past St Mary's Church, Carrigallen, while the gritter is in the vicinity. He advised there is a sharp turn on the road near a bridge at this location which requires gritting in icy conditions.
- Cllr Sean McDermott proposed that roads at higher altitude should be given priority as they are more susceptible to snow and icy conditions. He noted the Manorhamilton to Kiltcogher road was not included in the plan.
- Cllr Sean McGowan proposed a salt bin be provided at Cloonturk Church.
- Cllr Brendan Barry proposed that salt bins be provided along the Keshcarrigan to Fenagh road. He enquired if there is sufficient stock level of salt and if there will be any disruption to supply.
- Cllr Felim Gurn proposed Sligo County Council are contacted to ensure the N16 is treated when required.

Mr Terry McGowan responded as follows:

- A grit bin can be provided at Annaduff National School, Cloonturk Church and at Letterfine on the Keshcarrigan Road.

- The spread rate can be increase at the Cut of Gort if required.
- The sharp turn 300m past St Mary's Church, Carrigallen will be examined, if it is possible for the lorry to turn at a junction nearby this will be treated.
- Due to route planning logistics it is not possible to treat the Manorhamilton to Kiltyclogher road.
- There is no issue with salt stocks.
- The Engineer in Sligo County Council will be contacted in relation to the N16.

#### **MM.141.20 Management Reports - August & September 2020**

The Management Reports for August and September 2020 were circulated to Members in accordance with Section 136 (2) of the Local Government Act, 2001 as inserted by Section 51 of the Local Government Reform Act, 2014.

Cllr De Guckian enquired if there was an archaeology survey carried out at the Library in Mohill. He commended the Library Service on providing a great service.

Cllr Guckian queried why the delays to the Carrick on Shannon regeneration works are not detailed in the report. He commended the overlay work that has been completed between Carrick on Shannon and Masonite and he requested that members be supplied with further information on the Housing Adaptation Grant.

Ms Mary Quinn advised an archaeological survey was carried out and the findings will be displayed on an information board at Mohill Library. She advised information on the Housing Adaptation Grant will be circulated to Members.

Mr Shay O'Connor advised the delays to the regeneration works in Carrick on Shannon were addressed at the Carrick on Shannon Municipal District meeting and works are currently progressing well.

The monthly management reports were noted by Members.

#### **MM.142.20 Presentation on EPA Water Quality Report 2019**

Mr Vincent Dwyer provided an overview of the presentation in relation to Water Quality in Ireland as circulated to members. This presentation appears under minute item 10 in the minute book.

He advised the new Draft River Basin Management Plan will be released for public consultation early 2021. He added that this will be considered at the upcoming SPC meeting.

Cllr Enda McGloin noted that Domestic Wastewater is 6th on the pressures list, and

highlighted there are 5 other factors more harmful to our water courses than domestic waste water.

Cllr Des Guckian noted that Leitrim has a better water quality than the national average. He queried why Lough Rinn had received such a poor rating.

Cllr Pdraig Fallon advised of ongoing issues in North Leitrim in relation to river basin management, particularly in relation to the River Bonet. He advised that better future planning and more collaboration with the OPW is required in addressing these issues.

Cllr Felim Gurn enquired if there has been a reduction in water leakage over the last few years.

Cllr Justin Warnock noted that the figures do not provide a true reflection of the damage forestry is having on water quality, as the sampling was only taken from 12 lakes. He added the parameters need to be broadened to ensure results accurately reflect the impact of forestry activity on water quality in Leitrim.

Mr Vincent Dwyer replied as follows:

- The Local Authorities and Water Communities Office (LAWCO) in collaboration with the Local Authority and the EPA are active in the Mohill area at the moment and an update on works being carried out will be sought.
- There has been a collaborative approach with the OPW and all relevant agencies over the past number of years in relation to the River Basin Management Plans. Mr Dwyer advised the River Bonet will be raised with the OPW again.
- North Leitrim water supply was refurbished approx. 20 years ago and therefore leakage figures are low in that area. In South Leitrim, the water network needs refurbishment and therefore leakage is a major concern.

#### **MM.143.20 Commitments**

Ms Mary Quinn, Director of Services, Housing, Community, Corporate Services, Culture and Emergency Services outlined that there were no commitments to note under this item.

#### **MM.144.20 Report from Corporate Policy Group**

Ms Mary Quinn, Director of Services outlined that the Corporate Policy Group had considered the Draft Standing Orders, reviewed the SPC reports and reviewed issues in relation to the Council meeting. A date of 30th November was proposed for the Budget meeting.

Cllr Mary Bohan advised that following a discussion it was reluctantly agreed by all CPG Members that due to level 5 restrictions the Budget meeting should be held online.

Ms Mary Quinn advised that the agenda have been circulated for meetings on 4th November next to formally approve statutory business from recent Municipal District meetings and the November plenary meeting.

## Reports from SPC's

- Cllr Caillian Ellis gave an update from the Housing Policy, Social & Cultural Development SPC
- Joseph Gilhooly, Director of Services, gave an update from the Economic Development, Planning, and Infrastructure SPC

Reports were noted by Members.

## MM.145.20 Attendance at conferences/training

## MM.146.20 Meeting Correspondence

1. Resolution dated 14th September 2020 from Sligo County Council to write to the relevant Minister to address the issue of extending the timescales and conditions of employment of Tús and CE participants on various employment schemes.  
Cllr Des Guckian proposed this motion is supported by the members. All members supported this proposal.
2. Resolution dated 14th September 2020 from Sligo County Council regarding the proposed withdrawal of Court sittings from Sligo.
3. Resolution dated 16th September 2020 from Meath County Council regarding:
  - a. Bogus waste collectors advertising on Facebook.
  - b. Call on the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage to conclude the baseline review of Local Authority funding models.
  - c. Call on the Minister for Finance, the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform and the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage to immediately fund the LPT equalisation fund from the central exchequer.
4. Email dated 18th September 2020 from Mr Darragh O'Brien, Minister Housing, Local Government and Heritage regarding the Tenant Purchase Scheme.
5. Resolution dated 24th September 2020 from Kerry County Council calling on Minister for Defence and the Government to aware the medals which were recommended to those Irish Peacekeepers who participated in the Battle of Jadotville in 1961.  
Cllr Finola Armstrong McGuire advised that Leitrim County Council raised this issue with the Minister in September 2019.
6. Acknowledgement dated 22nd September 2020 from Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, regarding landslides in Leitrim.  
Cllr Pdraig Fallon requested this council write to the Minister again. He expressed concerns that the landowner affected by these landslides are being forgotten about.

All members support Cllr Fallon's proposal.

7. Letter dated 29th September 2020 from Louth County Council regarding concerns

around the impact of Covid-19 crisis will have on the financial position of the Council.

8. Resolution dated 2nd October 2020 from Galway City Council Calling on Debenhams to grant former employees additional redundancy pay.
9. Resolution dated 7th October 2020 from Meath County Council regarding:
  - a. Calling on the Minister for Health, the Department of Health and NPHE to make available weekly or bi-weekly details of confirmed Covid 19 cases on a townland basis.
  - b. Calling on the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment and Agriculture, Fisheries and Marine & Health to introduce a remunerated DUMP (dispose of unwanted medicines properly) scheme.
10. Letter dated 8th October 2020 from County Leitrim Society of New York
11. Resolution dated 9th October 2020 from Wexford County Council calling on Government to amend the remit of Irish Water to fund County Councils to them to deal with, increase capacity in and manage rural waste water systems.
12. Acknowledgement dated 15th October 2020 from Minister for Finance advising correspondence has been forwarded to Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport.
13. Acknowledgement dated 15th October 2020 from Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport advising correspondence has been forwarded to Minister of State.
14. Letter dated 15th October 2020 from Caroline McCusker HSE regarding podiatry Services in Co. Leitrim.

Cllr Brendan Barry welcomed that work in underway in providing podiatry services in Co. Leitrim.
15. Letter dated 6th October 2020 from Senator Robbie Gallagher regarding Restart Grant Scheme.
16. Resolution dated 23rd October 2020 from Cavan County Council regarding an all-Ireland approach to tackling the spread of Covid 19.

**MM.147.20 Motion from Councillor Des Guckian:**

"That our CEO be asked to set up a major enquiry into the entire Housing Estates Development, in Co Leitrim, that happened within the past 20 years or so. In general, such development has proved to be a disaster, with many unfinished estates, many abandoned estates and with still a large number waiting to be taken-in-charge, developers going bankrupt and bonds proving totally inadequate to help finish off the necessary work on estates. It should seek information about how dealing with this catastrophe has impinged upon Council finances to the detriment of other development works. If the Council is unable to hold such an enquiry, then it should seek assistance from the government."

**Report by Director of Services for Economic Development, Planning, Environment and Transportation.**

"Whilst it is correct that the County has experienced an issue with unfinished housing estates over recent years, particularly following the economic crises arising due to the crash of both the global and national economies in 2008 to 2011, the situation, though initially slow to recover, has vastly improved as the economy has recovered. It is not considered that any enquiry is warranted in respect of the commercial housing development sector within the county.

The multi-unit housing development growth in Leitrim was predominantly driven by the introduction of the Rural Renewal Tax Incentive with a steady growth in applications from 2000 to 2004, with the number of applicable planning applications increasing in each successive year. The various developments permitted subsequently commenced site activity from, generally, 2003 with the bulk commencing from late 2004 and into early 2006. The onset of the financial crises in 2008 effectively decimated the construction sector in Ireland with the resultant, practically overnight, cessation of construction activities. This was applicable to both the one-off housing and the multi-unit housing estate sectors. It also caused the practical cessation of the commercial and industrial construction sectors.

Therefore, the problematic multi-unit housing developments issue arose not only in Leitrim but across the country due to the greater global and national financial crises rather than due to the planning policy of this Council. This is borne out by the fact that housing units within these developments have since realised significant sales as they are completed on foot of an improving economic situation. As a consequence of this improved situation, the county now finds itself with almost no new houses available to the market in certain towns and a limited number that is below the market requirements in others.

The Council is incurring costs associated with the taking in charge of some estates due to having to undertake works where there are insufficient monies available through either the bond or cash deposit. However, the scope and purpose of a cash deposit or bond must be borne in mind as it is not to fund the Council to step in and take over the role of the Developer and finish an estate but essentially to assist a Council in tidying up an estate that has been completed. As such a bond is calculated at a fixed amount per housing unit. In the case of the historic developments this unit cost was €3,804. The current, national cost is €7,000 per unit.

While there are a number of estates not taken in charge at this time, the taking in charge process is, in and of itself, nothing to do with whether or not an estate is completed: it simply means to transfer the responsibility for the maintenance, not ownership, of the services within an estate to the relevant maintenance body. In this regard the Council is responsible for the maintenance of roads, road drainage and street lighting with Irish Water being responsible for water mains and sewers. The maintenance of open spaces and boundaries does not fall to the Council or Irish Water and it remains a matter for the home owners in an estate to do so either through a Residents Association or the hiring of some management agency or contractor.

Similarly, taking in charge is not obligatory. In order for the Council to consider taking an estate in charge it must first be asked to do so. The Council has no legal authority to itself decide to take an estate in charge in the absence of being asked to do so. The Developer, as owner, can request that the Council take an estate in charge but such a request requires that the estate be satisfactorily completed. The Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) also provides the means where the majority of homeowners within an estate, after a set period of time (currently 4 years after the expiration date of a permission), may request the Council take an estate in charge.

Arising from the economic downturn the Council established a dedicated unit to undertake the task of securing possible workouts for the unfinished estates. This work involved negotiations with financial institutions primarily along with appointed receivers and liquidators, and local resident associations within some estates. In recognition of the national issue facing the Country a number of financial backed initiatives were established by government. The Council maximised the potential of these national government supports namely the Public Safety Initiative, the Taking in Charge Initiative and Special Resolution Funds. Through this work funding in the region of €1.2m was secured which aided in addressing many of the more problematic locations.

Finally, whilst there are a number of estates that have not been taken in charge by the Council, it is incorrect to state that there remains a large number to be taken in charge and the Council has made significant inroads in taking on charge those estates that qualify.

The situation can be summarised as follows;

Total number of estates (2 or more units / includes apartments):	227
Total number not qualifying for Taking in Charge:	66
Active sites:	3
National Unfinished Housing Developments register: (remaining problematic)	9
Total number currently to be considered for Taking in Charge:	149
Total number In Charge:	102
Balance for Taking in Charge:	47
Application received:	23
No application received:	24"

Cllr Des Guckian advised in his opinion there is a need for a major enquiry. He added that Council officials failed to control the situation when developers from all over Ireland were undertaking developments in Leitrim. He added the Council failed to apply due diligence and should have insisted these developers had proper bonds or insurance to finish the projects. Cllr Guckian queried who is paying for the roads being taken in charge by the Council and is there a cover-up going on.

Cathaoirleach Cllr Mary Bohan stated the language used by Cllr Guckian regarding Council officials was inappropriate. Cllr Paddy O'Rourke advised that if Cllr Guckian worked in partnership with the Local Authority instead of looking for a scandal where there is none, he could achieve more satisfactory outcomes.

Mr Joseph Gilhooly, Director of Service advised a detailed response was provided to the motion and following the economic crisis there was an issue in relation to unfinished housing development throughout Ireland. This was not specific to Co. Leitrim. He added that an enquiry is not considered warranted.

Mr Lar Power, Chief Executive outlined that he shared the concerns of the members regarding Cllr Guckians comments which he described as scurrilous, defamatory, unfounded and he categorically stated that Leitrim County Council would not be holding an investigation into the matter and a detailed response has been supplied to the motion.

Cathaoirleach, Cllr Mary Bohan sought a seconder to Councillor Guckian's motion. There was no seconder to the motion.

**MM.148.20 Motion from Councillor Frank Dolan:**

"I propose that we as the Council put forward a strong submission to the Department of Rural and Community Development seeking a decent block grant to deal with the long waiting list in the LIS scheme."

**Report by Director of Services for Economic Development, Planning, Environment and Transportation.**

"The Council has and continues to put forward the case for significant additional funding to complete the current waiting list of LIS. This has taken the form of specific submissions but also is reflect in the correspondence with the Department each year in regard to the annual allocation. However, a further submission as requested will be arranged."

Cllr Frank Dolan said he spoke to a member of the public who advised him the public perception is the Councillors are not doing enough to secure the required funding to clear the LIS waiting list. He called for a meeting with the Minister to secure the required funding.

Cllr Justin Warnock supported the motion and advised something needs to be done for people on the waiting list. He enquired if the Leitrim County Council could at least fill potholes on these roads.

Cathaoirleach, Cllr Mary Bohan advised this issue has been discussed on several occasion and the Council are not in a position to repair potholes, as these roads are private.

Cllr Enda McGloin proposed that the Council write directly to the Minister for Transport. Cllr Brendan Barry supported the motion and enquired what is the amount of funding that would be required to clear the list.

All members supported the motion.

Mr Terry McGovern informed the meeting approx. 3.5million would be required to clear the current waiting list.

**MM.149.20 Motion from Councillor Enda McGloin:**

"I call on Leitrim County Council to prepare a County wide plan/study identifying suitable remote working hubs through our numerous enterprise and community based buildings. An audit of these would identify 'black spots' across the county for such facilities and a plan can then be developed through a feasibility study to identify where working hubs are required and need to be developed to ensure most communities can offer this service to people who can work locally without commuting to places like Dublin or other large cities. The recent budget identified this area for funding and Leitrim needs to respond positively with a plan."

**Report by Director of Services for Economic Development, Planning, Environment and Transportation.**

"The opportunities for remote working within the County is receiving attention in a number of ways. The Council is in the latter stages of preparing a Digital Strategy and the activation of the economy and opportunities for increasing jobs and remote working will form part of this strategy. In the meantime important steps are being taken to improve the options offered by the various enterprise centres/hubs in the County. The Leitrim Enterprise Fund will be tendering soon for the expansion of the HIVE in Carrick on Shannon. As part of the Atlantic Economic Corridor (AEC), Leitrim has contributed to an Enterprise Hubs Strategy for the region. This includes an audit of Leitrim hubs, a classification of the hubs and a review of their development needs.

Leitrim County Council's Atlantic Economic Corridor Officer will focus on supporting the hubs development through collaborative marketing, the hubs outreach scheme (grant funding), investment in technology (online booking system) and developing the supports that the hubs offer to clients. Remote workers are a key opportunity for hubs and the planned marketing campaign will target this client segment. The Hubs involved are as follows:

- Kinlough Business Hub
- Drumkeerin Enterprise Centre
- Ballinamore Area Community Enterprise Units
- Ballinamore Enterprise Centre
- Drumshanbo Enterprise Centre
- Drumshanbo Food hub
- Manor Hub
- Mohill Enterprise Centre
- The Hive, Carrick on Shannon
- W8 Centre, Manorhamilton

Leitrim County Council is also progressing the Broadband Connection Points initiative throughout the county and many of these centres will facilitate remote working. To further enhance the offering of the BCP's the Council successfully secured Town and Village funding to help provide the necessary IT equipment and infrastructure for some of these facilities. The locations to be supported are Aghanlish, Askill, Aughavas, Aughawillan , Drumeela, Gortlettragh, Killanummery and Killargue. Town and Village money has recently assisted with investment in Drumkeeran hub through the active work of the local voluntary group.

Separately, the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation has conducted a public

consultation to inform the delivery of guidance on remote working for both employers and employees. The consultation closed in August and it is expected the findings will be published soon."

Cllr Enda McGloin welcomed the reply. He outlined that with the correct office space and broadband infrastructure in place we can actively market our County and entice people to move to Leitrim to be able to work remotely in business hubs and enterprise centres. He acknowledged the work being done by the Local Authority in this regard.

Cllr Mary Bohan supported the motion. She advised there is work ongoing in relation to the provision of a hub in the enterprise centre in Drumkeeran. She suggested the new Library in Dromahair would also be an ideal location for a hub.

Cllr Pdraig Fallon supported the motion, he advised it is very important that the Local Authority continue to progress these initiatives.

Cllr Felim Gurn supported the motion and informed the meeting that there is office space available in the credit union building in Manorhamilton, which would be another possible hub.

Cllr Sean McGowan supported the motion highlighting the attractiveness of Leitrim as a place to live and work.

Cllr Justin Warnock supported the motion and thanked Leitrim County Council for their work in facilitating the community hub in Kinlough.

Cllr Enda Stenson commended the work that has been done in the Enterprise Centre in Mohill and advised there needs to be a collaborative approach to achieve quality broadband across the County.

Cllr Des Guckian stated that hubs and community points are inadequate and do not serve the needs of people who want to work from home.

Cllr Ita Reynolds Flynn complemented the Local Authority on the provision of Broadband in the Community Hall in Gortletteragh, which is now being used as a classroom.

Mr Joseph Gilhooly said that available facilities will be promoted so people are aware of the facilities. He added that blended working arrangements where people can work from home or from a hub nearby is to the fore front with employers now. There will be 18 locations across the County that will be able to facilitate remote working.

**MM.150.20 Motion from Councillor Sean McDermott:**

"With regard to the ongoing inspections of Domestic Wastewater Treatments Systems in County Leitrim, I have been contacted by several homeowners about the costs of €12,000 to €15,000 which have been quoted to upgrade their systems. The maximum grant available at the moment is €5,000 which leaves a substantial shortfall. I am asking the Council to make

contact with Minister of State Peter Burke to increase this grant."

Cllr Sean McDermott outlined his concerns and advised the grant is not sufficient.

On the proposal of Cllr. Sean McDermott, seconded Cllr. Padraig Fallon and supported by all members it was unanimously resolved to issue correspondence to Minister Peter Burke on this matter.

**MM.151.20 Motion from Councillor Sean McGowan:**

"I ask if there has being any update from the Dept. of Health in relation to their plans to introduce an "Electronic Health Record" (EHR) which they outlined in correspondence to this Council dated the 22nd August '19, signed by the then Minister for Health Simon Harris? This was as a result of a motion I had on the agenda for our July'19 meeting to call on the Department of Health to introduce a Patient Health Record Card."

**Report by Director of Services, Housing and Community, Corporate Services, Cultural and Emergency Services**

"No other correspondence has been received from the Department of Health since that received in August 2019."

Cllr Sean McGowan advised of the benefits of an Electronic Health Record Card. He called on the Council to write to the HSE in this regard again.

All members supported the motion.

**MM.152.20 Motion from Councillor Justin Warnock:**

"I ask Leitrim County Council to write to the Minister for Justice, Helen McEntee TD to ask if there is currently a provision in law that requires people travelling on business or holidays to this country to produce their passports in hotels, airbnb's, hostels or guesthouses and if not can it be legislated for?"

Cllr Justin Warnock outlined his concerns in relation to travel without the requirement of showing a passport to accommodation providers. He advised this is not the practice in other EU countries. He advised now would be a good opportunity to implement these changes before travel restrictions are lifted.

All members supported the motion.

**MM.153.20 Motion from Councillor Paddy Farrell**

"I ask the local authority to call on the Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, Roderick O'Gorman, T.D. to carry out a new review of the cost of providing quality early learning and childcare in Ireland.

An urgent review of the sector needs to take place immediately with various reports of low wages and underinvestment destroying the industry."

Cllr Paddy Farrell advised that individuals working in this sector who have earned a degree are poorly paid. He added people working in childcare should be paid a suitable wage.

On the proposal of Cllr. Paddy Farrell, seconded Cllr. Paddy O'Rourke it was unanimously resolved to issue correspondence to Minister Roderick O'Gorman seeking a review of the cost of providing quality early learning and childcare in Ireland.

**MM.154.20 Motion from Councillor Pdraig Fallon:**

"I propose that Leitrim County Council call on Minister Donnelly his Dept and the HSE to automatically award medical cards to persons who receive a cancer diagnosis."

Cllr Pdraig Fallon advised he feels strongly that a person who receives a cancer diagnosis should automatically receive a medical card, as the stress associated with the financially burden of health care can hamper the treatment and recovery. He advised the Minister needs to do the right thing in this regard.

All members supported the motion.

**MM.155.20 Motion from Councillor Finola Armstrong McGuire:**

"I ask for an update on the Cycle Network Plan in Leitrim."

**Report by Corporate Services Department**

"Some years ago, a Cycle Network was developed for Carrick on Shannon and its hinterland. This included a detailed layout of cycle routes for the area and different detailed design options for different routes. At the time this was accepted as a cycling strategy for the area by the department and used as a template for other counties. Many of these routes have since been developed and we have also developed additional cycling & walking routes at other locations throughout the county, and also other routes were developed in conjunction with other agencies such as Waterways Ireland particularly through the roll out of the Blueway. We continue to source funding under Active Travel Measures to extend walkways and cycleways throughout the county. In addition funding under the ORIS is assisting many projects are local and community level while the Council continues to pursue strategic projects such as the Blueway connection from Carrick on Shannon to Leitrim Village and the SLNCR while also completing phases of the Cavan Leitrim project alongside Cavan County Council."

Cllr Finola Armstrong McGuire called on Leitrim County Council to lead out on a cycling friendly lifestyle. She advised a good overall plan would encourage our citizens to use our cycle paths for commuting and pleasure and for County Leitrim to be a destination for cyclists to visit. She asked for engagement with the public, engineers and Councillors on development of further cycle route plans.

Cllr Pdraig Fallon, Cllr Felim Gurn and Cllr Enda Stenson supported the motion.

**MM.156.20 Motion from Councillor Brendan Barry & Councillor Mary Bohan:**

As motions 21 from Councillor Brendan Barry and motion 25 from Councillor Mary Bohan are of a similar nature it was agreed they would be taken together.

**Motion from Councillor Brendan Barry:**

"I request that Leitrim County Council call on Government to prioritise a much quicker rollout of the National Broadband Plan as one measure to prepare Ireland for living with Covid19. One off investment in broadband infrastructure to enable businesses and people to work remotely would reduce contacts in sectors where remote working is possible and thereby give capacity to reopen businesses currently closed under lockdown restrictions. The Government needs to deliver a long term strategy which protects people and our economy."

**Motions from Councillor Mary Bohan:**

"I propose that Leitrim County Council request the Minister for the Environment, Climate Action and Communications Mr. Eamonn Ryan to carry out a comprehensive report immediately regarding the provision of high speed broadband in the County. Following this and as a matter of urgency that this service be provided without delay to all areas."

Cllr Brendan Barry advised broadband is extremely important for people living in rural areas who are working from home. He expressed concern in relation to the length of time it will take to roll out the National Broadband Plan.

Cllr Mary Bohan supported Cllr Barry's remarks and advised we have had many disappointments in relation to the delivery of broadband in County Leitrim. She emphasised the need for high speed broadband to be rolled out to every house in the county.

Cllr Felim Gurn highlighted the mapping broadband is not accurate and people are being promised a service that is not available.

Cllr Justin Warnock advised the service should be rolled out through fibre optic cables, it is not satisfactory to only offer a wireless solution.

Cllr Brendan Barry requested that updates received by the Council on the National Broadband Plan be circulated to members.

All members supported the motions.

**MM.157.20 Motion from Councillor Ita Reynolds Flynn:**

"I request that LCC call on the HSE to provide an additional Ambulance base to service south Leitrim. There are serious delays with Ambulance call out times in large areas of south County Leitrim."

Cllr Ita Reynolds Flynn outlined her concerns in relation to ambulance response times and the distances the ambulance needs to travel to reach the Ballinamore area. She advised if

the Carrick on Shannon ambulance is unavailable people may have to wait on an ambulance to be dispatched from Longford, Cavan or Monaghan. She called for an Ambulance base to be located in Ballinamore.

Cllr Sean McGowan supported the motion. He expressed his concerns in relation to the availability of an ambulance in emergency situations. He added he understood there were plans previously for an additional base in South Leitrim.

Cllr Brendan Barry supported the motion and advised that a base in Ballinamore would serve a large geographical area very well.

All members supported the motion.

**MM.158.20 Motion from Councillor Felim Gurn:**

"I ask what future plans are there to upgrade the R280 from Carrick-on-Shannon to Kinlough as this is the main arterial route through the county."

**Report by Director of Services for Economic Development, Planning, Environment and Transportation.**

"We have applications made for funding in 2021 for four different Specific Improvements Grants for upgrading and Improvement of sections of the Regional Road, R280. These funding applications are with the department for consideration at present."

Cllr Felim Gurn acknowledged the response. He advised that the R280 is a main route through the County and primarily for safety reasons, needs to be upgraded.

Cllr Justin Warnock supported the motion and agreed the entire route needs to be upgraded.

All members supported the motion.

Mr Terry McGovern advised that detailed applications have been submitted to the TII under the Specific Improvements Grants funding scheme for improvements on the R280.

**MM.159.20 Motion from Councillor Paddy O'Rourke**

"I ask Leitrim County Council what progress has been made in relation to the provision of charging docks for electric cars. Due to the increased number of people working from home, rather than making long commutes, many of these people find themselves in a position to consider converting to electric cars. In order to do so they need to be assured that there is a plan drawn up to provide the necessary charging docks. If we want to make a change for the better we need us, those who live in rural Ireland, to get involved too."

**Report by Director of Services for Economic Development, Planning, Environment and**

### **Transportation.**

"The Council is arranging for charging points to be installed in new carparks in Manorhamilton and Carrick on Shannon. In addition the Council is part of an Interreg Project that will deliver 70 fast charging units across the border/northern Ireland region. The Council is also pursuing opportunities under the Leader Programme working collectively with Longford to secure the delivery of further points in the County."

Cllr Paddy O'Rourke asked for further clarification on the response to his motion and enquired where they 70 charging units will be installed. He added the availability of charging points could have an impact on the tourism trade for Leitrim.

Cllr Padraig Fallon supported the motion and advised he was aware of gaps in availability of charging points in north Leitrim.

Cllr Enda McGloin supported the motion and advised that the provision of charging points should be incorporated in funding applications where applicable.

Cllr Des Guckian stated that grants to assist people in purchasing electric cars is required as they are currently very expensive.

Cllr Felim Gurn enquired as to the cost of providing a charging point.

Mr Joseph Gilhooly, Director of Services advised the Council is dependent on external grant aid to be able to expand charging point facilities. An expansion to the network will result in increased maintenance and management cost. Therefore, planning of the rollout of this service is very important.

Mr Shay O'Connor, Senior Engineer advised there is a tender process underway through the LEADER programme for consultancy services to advise on cost and infrastructure. If this project is successful the members will be updated as the project moves forward.

Cllr Paddy O'Rourke enquired if there is any provision for charging points set out in the County Development Plan.

Mr Bernard Greene advised there is a draft Renewable Energy Strategy which includes provision for electric charging points, however, this does not outline site locations.

### **MM.160.20 AOB**

Ms Mary Quinn, Director of Service, informed the Members the Budget Meeting will be held online on 30th November at 11:00am.

Cathaoirleach, Cllr Mary Bohan advised that the budget book will be circulated to members in advance of the meeting and Mr Vincent Dwyer will be available if members have any questions.

This concluded the business of the meeting at 1.35 pm

**Signed:**

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**Councillor Mary Bohan**  
**Cathaoirleach**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Kieran Brett**  
**Meetings Administrator**

**Dated: Monday, 11 January 2021**