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## Minutes of Leitrim County Council held in the Council Chamber, Áras an Chontae, Carrick on Shannon, Co. Leitrim on Monday, 2 March 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 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

**Apologies:** Councillor Felim Gurn

**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  
Samantha Healy, Senior Executive Officer Corporate Services and Housing  
Kieran Brett, Meetings Administrator  
Kathleen Ellis, Assistant Staff Officer  
Bernard Greene, Senior Planner  
Justin Fannon, Senior Executive Officer Housing Capital  
Francis Gaffney, A/Senior Engineer  
Terry McGovern, Senior Engineer  
Shay O'Connor, Senior Engineer  
Una Wynne, Financial Management Accountant

**MM.30.20** **Visit from Minister John Paul Phelan, Minister of State for Local Government and Electoral Reform to Leitrim County Council**

Cathaoirleach, Councillor Enda McGloin proposed the suspension of standing orders for 20

minutes to receive a presentation from Minister John Paul Phelan, Minister of State for Local Government and Electoral Reform to Leitrim County Council this was seconded by Cllr Frank Dolan.

Cathaoirleach, Councillor Enda McGloin welcomed Minister John Paul Phelan, Minister of State for Local Government and Electoral Reform to the Meeting.

Minister John Paul Phelan, Minister of State for Local Government and Electoral Reform thanked the Cathaoirleach, Elected Members and the Chief Executive for inviting him to address the full Council.

Minister Phelan acknowledged the issues in Leitrim with regard to flooding and he paid tribute to Leitrim County Council as one of the best run Local Authorities in Ireland.

Minister Phelan acknowledged the dependency of Local Authorities on commercial rates and he noted that Leitrim is a very rural county and in that regard has a low rates base. He noted that it is important for Leitrim to get as much business and activity in each town in Leitrim as possible.

He outlined that the Local Government Rates Bill was introduced last year which will allow local authorities to vary rates on areas within the county.

Minister Phelan referred to the Reform of the Electoral Register and outlined the need to having a real time register recognises and facilitates mobility in the population and he acknowledged the importance of maintaining an accurate register and he acknowledged that GDPR Requirements still have to be addressed.

Minister Phelan referred to the review of staffing levels across Local Authorities. He acknowledged that although the financial position of Leitrim County Council is good, staffing numbers have dropped drastically in recent years and he asked the Members to think about this issue going forward.

Minister Phelan acknowledged the success of the Joint Policing Committees and Local Enterprise Offices.

Minister Phelan referred to the issue of Elected Members pay. Talks are currently taking place in this regard and will be finalised before the budget.

Cathaoirleach, Councillor Enda McGloin thanked Minister Phelan for his address and he welcomed the Press, Deputy Frank Feighan and former Councillor John McTernan to the meeting.

He invited any questions/comments from Members.

The following items were raised by the Members:-

- One Off Rural housing
- Increase funding for roads
- Funding for Local Improvement Scheme
- Bye Pass for Carrick-on-Shannon
- Hedge Cutting Initiative – Period of extension to be extended due to weather
- Better Communication with State Bodes e.g. Social Protection in relation to Electoral Register
- Funding for lighting and footpaths in Towns and Villages
- Powers of Local Authorities diminishing
- Abandonment of the West of Ireland – closure of garda stations
- Online sales verses retailer
- Rural & Local Link services
- Funding for land drainage/minor drainage works
- Local Area Hackney licences
- Grant Aid for sports/playing facilities
- Impact of rates on smaller Towns and Villages
- Home Care packages
- High Dependency unit for Leitrim for people with special needs
- Keep power and decision making local in local Authorities to get things done much quicker
- Existing abandoned dwellings need engineering solution to be sorted in pockets in each county.
- Insurance Premiums
- Respite services in Ballinamore Hospital

Minister John Paul Phelan responded to the queries raised and he thanked the Cathaoirleach, Elected Members and the Executive for inviting him to Leitrim

Cathaoirleach, Councillor Enda McGloin thanked the Members and acknowledged their time and their input into the various issues raised. He thanked Minister John Paul Phelan and stated Leitrim County Council looked forward to working with him in the future.

The meeting was adjourned for 20 minutes at this point.

**MM.31.20 Minutes of Meeting of Leitrim County Council held in Aras An Chontae, Carrick-on-Shannon on Monday, 6th January 2020**

**Proposed by Councillor Mary Bohan, seconded by Councillor Sean McGowan and RESOLVED:**

“That the Minutes of Leitrim County Council Meeting held in Aras An Chontae, Carrick-on-Shannon, Co Leitrim on Monday, 6th January 2020 be adopted”.

Councillor Des Guckian requested the following amendment to the Minutes of 6th January

2020 Council Meeting:-

“Cllr Guckian opposed an extension of the N4 design proposals at Annaduff as the local people are very concerned about the loss of their rights along the N4”.

“Cllr Des Guckian called for the promotion of O’Carolan, venues for Irish Traditional Music and Dance to be promoted and also for the protection of ownership and rights to cut turf on their bogs”.

“Councillor Des Guckian referred to the map showing the huge gaps in the broadband provision. He also stated that many people are forced to pay large bills for the provision of broadband”.

Cllr Mary Bohan said that the Minutes are a record of the decisions made.

Councillor Enda McGloin proposed that the Corporate Policy Group look at webcasting for Council Meetings.

Councillor Des Guckian said there was no need for webcasting and he proposed tape recording be put in place at Council Meetings.

It was agreed that this would be discussed at the Corporate Policy Group Meeting.

The above amendments to the Minutes was agreed by the Members to be incorporated into the Minutes of 6th January 2020.

#### **MM.32.20     Update on flooding**

Mr Joseph Gilhooly, Deputy Chief Executive, Director of Services, Economic Development, Planning and Infrastructural Services provided the following update:

- The Local Authority Response to Storms Protocol has been in operation since 19th Feb 2020 due to two storms in February.
- The Emergency Response Team met daily with relevant staff in attendance.
- The situation was reviewed and monitoring each day through direct contact between relevant staff and management
- By 19th Feb 2020 levels in Carrick-on-Shannon showed increase of approx of 1.1 metre from 8th Feb 2020. At this point key actions were identified to vulnerable households and businesses in both Carrick-on-Shannon and Leitrim Village
- The owners of vulnerable properties were contacted in person and later by letter, providing direct access details to key council staff
- Sandbags were deployed to key locations and supplied to those identified along with pumps at some locations
  - On Monday 24th February due to increasing water levels the over pumping system was activated
  - This process had the desired result of clearing all accumulated water from the areas in both Carrick-on-Shannon and Leitrim Village
  - Pumping was carried out on 24/7 basis since with ongoing monitoring by outdoor

- crews
- Scaffold pedestrian walkways were put into place at Park Lane Carrick-on-Shannon and Keadue Road Leitrim Village
- Also Civil Defence mobilised to support vulnerable households
- Some level recovery experienced through Thursday 27th and Friday 28th reduction of 37mm by lunchtime Saturday
- The emergency management process continued across this weekend
- However, storm arrival on Saturday brought level back up by 41mm by end of Saturday with some improvement into Sunday evening down 8mm by 6pm sun
- Lough Allen over recorded levels 400mm below 2015/16 floods and 570 below 2009 floods. Carrick-on-Shannon levels were 700m below 2009.
- Throughout the process endeavoured to keep the public informed and also maintained contact with the identified vulnerable properties
- He acknowledged the work of the staff, in managing the situation over this period.

Cathaoirleach, Councillor Enda McGloin and Members paid tribute to all staff for their excellent work in Carrick-on-Shannon and Leitrim Village in relation to their response to the recent flooding.

The Members raised the following concerns:-

- The negative effect felt by businesses
- Emergency meeting to be facilitated with the Flood Action Group
- Jamestown Weir
- Levels in Lough Allen to be lowered
- Damage to vehicles due to flooding – proposal to lower the bed of Cully River

In response to the concerns expressed, Mr Shay O'Connor, Senior Engineer outlined Ryan Hanley Consulting Engineers have been appointed as Design Consultants to the Carrick-on-Shannon Flood Relief Scheme and they have had a meeting with the Local Flood Action Committee. Discussions in regard to Jamestown Weir have taken place. Mr O'Connor outlined that design will take a long time and a Hydraulic Analysis has to be carried out followed by public consultations. Mr O'Connor advised that the Local Authority are in the process of appointing a consultant for the Leitrim Village scheme of works.

### **MM.33.20     Audit Committee Annual Report 2019**

The Annual Report, 2019 from the Audit Committee to Leitrim County Council, dated 12th February 2020 and submitted in accordance with the provisions of Section 122 of the Local Government Act, 2001, as amended by Section 5 of the Local Government (Business Improvement Districts) Act 2006, as circulated to each Member appears as **Appendix 1** to the Minutes of this Meeting in the Minute Book.

Councillor Des Guckian said the report was very formal and technical and he sought clarification when and how contracts have been awarded.

Cllr Paddy O'Rourke confirmed as a member of the Audit Committee, that Chartered

Accountants Gilroy and Gannon are contracted to do this service and they are very professional and do give examples of files that have been examined in the course of their audits.

Mr Vincent Dwyer, Head of Finance, Water, Environment, Climate Action and Emergency Services outlined that the Local Government Auditor spends 2 to 3 months each year carrying out a detailed Audit within each Department. Transport Infrastructure Ireland carry out very detailed audits particularly in relation to Road contracts.

Councillor Des Guckian said 2 or 3 months are excessive and he proposed that major contracts should be checked occasionally.

Mr Vincent Dwyer, Head of Finance, Water, Environment, Climate Action and Emergency Services outlined that this is what the Local Government Audit do in the tender process.

The report was noted by the Members.

**MM.34.20 Annual Report 2019 from the Leitrim Joint Policing Committee**

Report dated 27th January 2020 from Ms. Mary Quinn, Director of Services, Housing, Corporate Services, Community and Cultural Services as circulated to the Members, appears as **Appendix 2** to the Minutes of this meeting in the Minute Book.

Ms Mary Quinn, Director of Services, Housing, Corporate Services, Community and Cultural Services advised that a Public meeting of the Joint Policing Committee is scheduled to take place on Wednesday, 4th March 2020 at 7.00 pm in the Bush Hotel, Carrick-on-Shannon.

The report was noted by the Members.

**MM.35.20 Report on the operation of Litter Pollution Act 1997 in regard to measures taken during 2019 in relation to the prevention and control of litter**

Report from Sheila Guckian, A/Staff Officer, Environment dated 25th February 2020 in relation to the measures taken during 2019 in regard to the prevention and control of litter as circulated to each Member appears as **Appendix 3** to the Minutes of this Meeting in the Minute Book.

Mr Vincent Dwyer, Head of Finance, Water, Environment, Climate Action and Emergency Services gave a report to the Members in relation to the measures taken during 2019 in regard to Litter pollution.

Councillor Mary Bohan complimented the staff in this area, and noted t that most fines are as a result of CCTV. Cllr Bohan stated that it is a great pity that signs have to be put up about cameras. Councillor Mary Bohan condemned the disgraceful behaviour of dumping mattresses.

Councillor Mary Bohan expressed her disappointment that bins in Drumkeeran have been

taken away as they were being used by householders.

Councillor Finola Armstrong McGuire queried about the operation of the Mechanical street sweeper and sought a breakdown of the amounts of glass and clothing recyclables that are collected at bring banks.

Councillor Pdraig Fallon expressed his disappointment with the removal of the bins from Drumkeerin and he stated that he can't condone using these bins for household waste.

Councillor Des Guckian paid tribute to the work of staff in the area of hazardous waste and noted that a solution to plastic packaging is necessary.

Mr Vincent Dwyer, Head of Finance, Water, Environment, Climate Action and Emergency Services confirmed that a breakdown of glass/clothing recycling for the last 12 months will be circulated and that electrical equipment is accepted at civic amenity sites. Mr Dwyer acknowledged that there is a huge cultural change needed in relation to plastic.

Mr Vincent Dwyer advised that under the National Litter Pollution Monitoring System, Leitrim County Council carried out a number of surveys. The findings of the surveys have been compiled and submitted to Tobin Consulting Engineers.

Mr Terry McGovern, A/Senior Engineer confirmed the reason for the bins being removed was due to household waste filling up the bins. He confirmed that he will consider the operation of the Mechanical Street Sweeper in towns and villages

The report was noted by the Members.

**MM.36.20     To approve Leitrim Heritage Plan 2020 - 2025**

Leitrim Heritage Plan 2020-2025 as circulated to the Members appears as **Appendix 4** to the Minutes of the this meeting in the Minutes Book.

The Members paid tribute to the Heritage Officer for her work in the development of Leitrim Heritage Plan for the whole of the county.

**Proposed by Councillor Sean McDermott seconded by Councillor Des Guckian     and UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED:**

“That the Heritage Plan 2020-2025 be approved”.

**MM.37.20     Rate Collection Report for 2019 and Schedule of Uncollected Rates**

Mr Vincent Dwyer, Head of Finance, Water, Environment, Climate Action and Emergency Services outlined that the target for the 2019 Rate Collection for Leitrim set by the National Oversight and Audit Committee is 85%. The end of year output for 2019 is 83%.

Mr Vincent Dwyer advised that the rates team actively engage with customers with

flexibility and reasonableness to ensure that where difficulties exist, payment plans can be put in place. This process allows rates to be paid on a basis that facilitates businesses to continue trading.

The report was noted by the Members.

#### **MM.38.20 Corporate Policy Group**

Ms Mary Quinn, Director of Services, Housing, Corporate Services, Community and Cultural Services outlined that the Corporate Policy Group considered the following:-

- **Update from Strategic Policy Committees**
  - **Update from the Housing Policy, Social & Cultural Development SPC**

Mary Quinn, Director of Services advised that the above SPC met on Wednesday, 26th February 2020 and the following items of business were discussed:

- Work Programme 2020.
- New Housing Adaptation Grant
- Update on “Love Where you Live Awards”

- **Update from the Economic Development, Planning and Infrastructure SPC**

CLlr Frank Dolan, Chairperson of the Planning, Economic Development and Infrastructure SPC outlined that the above SPC met on Wednesday 26th February 2020 and the following items of business were discussed:

- Work Programme 2020
- Presentation on Pre-Draft Consultation for the Leitrim County Development Plan 2022-2028
- Update on Draft County Heritage Plan 2020-2025
- Update on Leitrim Digital Strategy
- Parking Byelaws Carrick on Shannon 2020

- **Update from the Environment, Climate Action and Agriculture SPC**

CLlr Justin Warnock, Chairperson of the Environment, Climate Action & Agriculture SPC outlined that the above SPC met on 27th February 2020 and the following items of business were discussed:-

- Draft Work Programme 2020 and Schedule of Meetings for 2020
- New Section 26 Fire Service Plan.
- Update on Climate Change Adaptation Plan
- Update on Waste Management Planning.



- **Update from Leitrim Local Community Development Committee**
- **Consideration of Guidance for Compliance of Section 40 of Data Protection Act**

Ms Quinn advised members of the need to comply with the legislation by demonstrating authorisation from a member of the public to access their personal information. Ms Quinn advised the members that individuals seeking representation in relation to Job Opportunities should be informed to contact the Human Resources section directly. Ms Quinn advised information will be circulated to all Members and training for Members and staff will be made available in this regard.

- **Review of items listed on the agenda for the Council meeting.**
- **Attendance of Members at forthcoming Conferences/Seminars was agreed by the Corporate Policy Group.**

#### **MM.39.20     Monthly Management Reports by the Chief Executive**

Monthly Management Reports for the period 1st December 2020 to 31st December 2020 and 1st January 2020 to 31st January 2020 by Lar Power, Chief Executive, dated 16th January 2020 and 13th February 2020 respectively, prepared in accordance with Section 136 (2) of the Local Government Act, 2001 as inserted by Section 51 of the Local Government Reform Act, 2014, as circulated to the Members, appears as **Appendix 5** and **Appendix 6** to the Minutes of this meeting in the Minute Book.

These reports were noted by Members.

#### **MM.40.20     Section 138(1) of the Local Government Act 2001**

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.

Councillor Des Guckian queried as to why this item appears on the Agenda of each Council Meeting and there are no commitments to note under this Item.

Ms Quinn advised that in accordance with the above Section (1) before committing the local authority or joint body concerned to any expenditure in connection with proposed works (other than works of maintenance or repair).

(2) Subject to this section, an elected council or joint body may by resolution direct that, before the manager performs any specified executive function of the local authority or joint body, he or she shall inform the elected council or joint body, as the case may be, of the manner in which he or she proposes to perform that function, and the manager shall comply with the resolution.

(3) A resolution under subsection (2) may relate to any particular case or occasion or to every case or occasion of the performance of the specified executive function and may define what information is to be given and how and when it is to be given and the manager shall comply with the resolution.

(4) Nothing in this section prevents the manager from dealing immediately with any situation which he or she considers is an emergency situation calling for immediate action without regard to subsections (1) to (3).

(5) Without prejudice to the generality of subsection (4), an emergency situation for the purpose of that subsection shall be deemed to include a situation where, in the opinion of the manager, the works concerned are urgent and necessary (having regard to personal health, public health or safety considerations) in order to provide a reasonable standard of accommodation for any person.

#### **MM.41.20     Conferences/Training**

**Proposed by Councillor Padraig Fallon seconded by Councillor Sean McGowan AND UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED:**

“That the attendance of Cllr Enda McGloin, Councillor Thomas Mulligan, Councillor Mary Bohan, Councillor Sean McGowan and Councillor Ita Reynolds Flynn at the Tourism Technology & Competitive Strategies on the 27th March 2020 to 29th March 2020 in O’Donovan’s Hotel, Clonakilty, Co Cork be approved”.

“That the attendance of Cllr Enda McGloin, Cllr Caillian Ellis, Cllr Frank Dolan, Cllr Thomas Mulligan, Cllr Sean McGowan, Cllr Ita Reynolds Flynn, Cllr Finola Armstrong McGuire and Cllr Gerry Dolan at the AILG Training Conference 2020 on the 4th to 5th March 2020 in the Longford Arms Hotel, & Spa, Main Street, Longford be approved”.

“That the attendance of Cllr Sean McGowan at the Irish Planning Institute Awards in the Westin Hotel, Dublin on the 27th February 2020 be approved”.

“That the attendance of Cllr Caillian Ellis and Councillor Paddy O’Rourke at the Health & Safety Conference on the 21st to 23rd February 2020 in Clonakilty be retrospectively approved”.

“That the attendance of Cllr Enda Stenson, Councillor Caillian Ellis, Councillor Ita Reynolds Flynn and Councillor Enda McGloin at the St Patrick’s Day Celebrations in New York from 11th to 20th March 2020 be approved”.

#### **MM.42.20     Meeting Correspondence**

1. Letter dated 28th January 2020 from the Office of the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine acknowledging receipt of Resolution passed by Leitrim County Council concerning awareness campaign – roadside trees and hedges.
1. (a) Letter dated 17th February 2020 from the Office of the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport in relation to keeping hedges trimmed on roadsides.
2. Letter dated 28th January 2020 from the Office of the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine dated 28th January 2020 acknowledging receipt of Resolution passed by Leitrim County Council in relation to Carbon Footprint.

2. (B) Letter dated 30th January 2020 from the Office of the Taoiseach acknowledging receipt of Resolution passed by Leitrim County Council in regard to Carbon Footprint.
3. Letter dated 28th January 2020 from the Office of the Minister for Housing, Planning and Local Government acknowledging receipt of Resolution passed by Leitrim County Council in relation to a call for a review of the income criteria used for eligibility for social housing allocation.
4. Letter dated 28th January 2020 from the Office of the Minister for Housing, Planning & Local Government acknowledging receipt of Resolution passed by Leitrim County Council in regard to Call for the provision of Carbon Monoxide Alarms to householders.
5. Email received 29th January 2020 from the Office of the Minister of State at the Department of Finance acknowledging receipt of Resolution passed by Leitrim County Council in regard to Insurance.
6. Letter dated 29th January 2020 from the Office of the Minister for Health acknowledging receipt of Resolution passed by Leitrim County Council in regard to long term waiting times for children accessing outpatient appointments.
6. (a) Letter dated 29th January 2020 from the Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs in relation to waiting times for children accessing outpatient appointments.
6. (b) Letter dated 30th January 2020 from the Office of the Taoiseach in relation to long term waiting times for Children accessing outpatient appointments.
7. Letter dated 30th January 2020 from the Office of the Taoiseach in relation to Project Ireland 2040.

Councillor Des Guckian queried if his January Motion in this regard has been circulated to all Local Authorities and if acknowledgements has been received.

Mr Kieran Brett confirmed this had been circulated to all local authorities and no responses has been received for same to date.

8. Letter dated 31st January 2020 from the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht acknowledging Resolution passed by Leitrim County Council regarding the reintroduction of a scheme whereby small towns can achieve a heritage town designation or status.
8. (a) Letter dated 13th February 2020 from the Department of Rural and Community Development in relation to reintroducing a scheme for small towns with less than 1,500 to achieve a Heritage Town designation or status.
9. Resolution received 5th February 2020 from Kerry County Council regarding people

objecting to planning who are not from the area. They should be 10 km from the proposed development”.

10. Letter dated 18th February 2020 from the HSE in relation to Resolution passed by Leitrim County Council asking the HSE what extra funding, strategies and additional resources were put in place in 2019 to solve the trolley crises in hospitals and what it plans to do differently or additionally in 2020.

Councillor Brendan Barry said there is a lack of beds since 2009 and the population has increased.

11. Letter dated 26th February 2020 from the Office of the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine acknowledging receipt of Resolution passed by Leitrim County Council in regard to Ireland’s Carbon Footprint

#### **MM.43.20 Vote of Congratulations**

##### **The Members extended a vote of congratulations to the following**

- Vince Lacey, Greaghfarna, Drumshanbo on the launch of a new hygiene product.

Councillor Enda McGloin proposed that notice of this launch be circulated to All Members in advance of the launch.

Kieran Brett, Meetings Administrator agreed to this request.

- Seamus Bohan on being chosen as Grand Marshal of the Greater New Haven St. Patrick’s Day Parade.
- County Leitrim Society of New York on celebrating their 125th Anniversary.

#### **MM.44.20 Motion from Councillor Sean McGowan:**

Cathaoirleach, Councillor Enda McGloin proposed that Motion No 13 in the name of Councillor Sean McGowan and Motion No 17 in the name of Councillor Sean McDermott and Motion No 23 in the name of Councillor Paddy O’Rourke be taken concurrently as they all relate to the increase in Waste Collection charges. This was agreed by the Members.

##### **Motion from Councillor Sean McGowan:**

"I seek the support of Members of Leitrim County Council in calling on the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment to immediately put in place a Regulator for the waste industry, there is no body to regulate the industry with the result that operators can increase the charges whenever they want. Homes and businesses would have received correspondence from Barna Recycling in the past couple of weeks informing them of an service Charge increase of €9 per quarter plus an increase per kg for General Waste as and from the beginning of this month. This increase I fear will lead to further illegal dumping along our local road’s and in our bogs."

**Motion from Councillor Sean McDermott:**

"I will ask Leitrim County Council to make contact with the relevant Minister regarding the rising costs of Waste Collection. There is no Economic Regulator in the waste Industry at the moment and this needs to be addressed."

**Motion from Councillor Paddy O'Rourke;**

"I ask that Leitrim County Council contact Barna Waste with a view to asking them to refrain from implementing the price hike of €9 in the quarterly charges which is now coming so quickly after the recent rise of €7. This is the last thing we need just as the public who were reluctant about the privatisation of waste collection were coming around to see it could work and will only lead to illegal dumping. A plague we don't want to see revisited in the county."

**Report by Head of Finance & Water Services**

"Leitrim County Council has already contacted Barna Waste regarding complaints received by the Local Authority relating to the proposed price increase. Barna informed that they have a team of people on phone lines dealing with queries and explaining the various waste collection packages available to customers which is on their web site. (four different packages available). Price and charging for waste collection is a matter for the Collectors and the Local Authority has no role in this regard.

Leitrim County Council will however write to Barna Waste and highlight the concerns raised by citizens and Elected Members regarding the amended charging policy."

Councillor Sean McGowan stated that €36 is a huge increase at one time. Cllr Sean McGowan proposed that Leitrim County Council call on the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment to immediately put in place a Regulator for the waste industry, as there is no body to regulate the industry with the result that operators can increase the charges whenever they want and this will lead to more littering along our roads and bogs.

Councillor Sean McDermott said that such increases will continue if there is no Regulator in place to regulate the waste industry. He complimented the good service operated by Barna Waste and acknowledged the costs involved and noted that these price increases will lead to further littering for which Leitrim County Council will have to foot the bill.

Councillor Paddy O'Rourke proposed that Leitrim County Council contact Barna Waste with a view to asking them to refrain from implementing the price hike stating that the increase in charges is going to inevitably lead to more dumping.

Councillor Pdraig Fallon said that there was a motion in Sligo County Council recently about local authorities taking back in charge refuse collections..

Councillor Mary Bohan outlined that many people are now being penalised for doing their best in relation to recycling. An increase of 30% in the standing charge is huge and she proposed that Leitrim County Council have discussions with Barna Waste so that they can

come to some agreement and this would be in their best interests. This is a big issue and if they continue to increase the prices no one will use the service.

Councillor Des Guckian stated Barna Waste has a monopoly in most of the county and thinks they can call the shots and the Local Authority should investigate putting the collections back under the control of County Council.

Councillor Brendan Barry supported the motions and acknowledged that Insurance premiums are resulting in increased waste collection charges.

Councillor Enda Stenson said the charges are unfair and he didn't understand the reason for the increased charges, as diesel costs or wages have not increased.

Councillor Enda McGloin sought clarification about competition in the county.

Mr Vincent Dwyer said waste providers are entitled under their permit to work in and around the county as they so chose. Barna Waste has the majority of the business on Leitrim in regard to waste collection. Mr Dwyer confirmed he has spoken with Barna Waste and will speak with them again and express the wishes expressed by the Elected Members and report the outcome to the members through the SPC. Mr Dwyer outlined that the €144 standing charge in operation Galway is now replicated in Leitrim, this is due to increase in capital costs, such as new lorry fit outs and technology. A new draft policy document has recently been issued by the Department in relation to waste into the future, the closing date for submissions was two weeks ago but all concerns expressed can be forwarded to the Department who are compiling the policy.

Councillor Des Guckian proposed that Mr Vincent Dwyer talk to Barna Waste and express that the Elected Representatives are totally opposed to this increase.

**Proposed by Councillor Sean McGowan seconded by Councillor Sean McDermott and UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED:**

"That Leitrim County Council call on the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment to immediately put in place a Regulator for the waste industry, there is no body to regulate the industry with the result that operators can increase the charges whenever they want. Homes and businesses would have received correspondence from Barna Recycling in the past couple of weeks informing them of an service Charge increase of €9 per quarter plus an increase per kg for General Waste as and from the beginning of this month. This increase I fear will lead to further illegal dumping along our local road's and in our bogs."

"That Leitrim County Council make contact with the relevant Minister regarding the rising costs of Waste Collection. There is no Economic Regulator in the waste Industry at the moment and this needs to be addressed."

"That Leitrim County Council contact Barna Waste with a view to asking them to refrain from implementing the price hike of €9 in the quarterly charges which is now coming so

quickly after the recent rise of €7. This is the last thing we need just as the public who were reluctant about the privatisation of waste collection were coming around to see it could work and will only lead to illegal dumping. A plague we don't want to see revisited in the county."

**MM.45.20 Motion from Councillor Des Guckian:**

"I am asking our CEO, Mr Lar Power, to explain to us, Cllrs, the very low mark recently achieved by Leitrim County Council, in terms of transparency, in the National Integrity Index (NII), published in December 2019. Also, I wish him to outline the steps he and his senior staff will be taking to get a much better mark in future."

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

"Leitrim County Council adheres to all legislative requirements in relation to ethics, disclosure and freedom of information.

Our offices are open to the public and Council and Municipal District meetings are publicly accessible. Extensive reporting is undertaken throughout the year, including every month to the Elected Members and all reports are publicly available. We have recently finalised a new five-year strategy, the Corporate Plan, which is developed after each new Council is elected. Every year, the Annual Service Delivery Plan is published to show progress in delivering on our Corporate Plan.

The staff of Leitrim County Council engage directly with the public and stakeholders every day in carrying out their public service duties. Many of our staff work in their local communities with our citizens and stakeholders, including through the Local Enterprise Office (LEO), community centres, public libraries, as well as the Civil Defence and Fire Services.

A complete picture of the performance of Leitrim County Council is available in the National Oversight and Audit Commission (NOAC) annual reports that are published and publicised. NOAC is a statutory body that oversees the local government sector including scrutinising performance against pre-determined indicators for customer service and financial performance every year. NOAC thus provides an independent mechanism to monitor and evaluate the local authorities' performance.

Notwithstanding concerns about how the Transparency Ireland report was compiled and presented, in the spirit of continuous improvement, Leitrim County Council has reviewed its contents and explored any constructive suggestions to help improve access to local authority information and services."

Councillor Des Guckian asked the CEO, Mr Lar Power, to explain, why the very low mark recently achieved by Leitrim County Council, in terms of transparency, in the National Integrity Index

Councillor Des Guckian said that the Local Authority were not transparent, some officials

were not giving straight answers and responses to letters he had submitted which seemed to muddy the waters and give him a wrong answer and he expressed his concern that this was incorrect and it shouldn't happen.

Cathaoirleach, Cllr Enda McGloin said that this comment was unfair.

Councillor Mary Bohan said that this remark should be removed and she said that if Councillor Guckian has an issue or grievance with a member of staff this should be taken up with them directly.

Councillor Des Guckian said he has followed up on this.

Ms Mary Quinn, Director of Services, Housing and Community, Corporate Services, Cultural and Emergency Services stated that Leitrim County Council adheres to all legislative requirements in relation to ethics, disclosure on freedom of information and she stated that there will be an improvement in our rating next year.

Councillor Des Guckian said that he has sent a letter to the Housing Department and has had no reply to date.

In response to Cllr Des Guckian, Ms Mary Quinn said that Housing Allocation Scheme is adopted by the Members and if Councillor Guckian feels the Housing Allocation Scheme needs to be changed this must come before the Housing SPC and if they agree on it, it will then be brought forward before the full Council for adoption.

Councillor Des Guckian said the question was addressed to the Chief Executive and he didn't answer it and he said he would like to see an improvement in the rating.

In response to Councillor Des Guckian's motion, Mr Lar Power, Chief Executive outlined why the Director of Services gave the response to the area they are responsible for. The Director has already discussed with him and he said he has taken great issue to the statement that Leitrim County Council are not transparent.

Mr Power said Leitrim County Council adheres to all legislative measures and this Local Authority is transparent.

Mr Power said that Local Authority have looked at the published report and the indicators used and Leitrim County Council will continue to improve and make Leitrim the best place to live, work , visit and invest in.

**MM.46.20     Motion from Councillor Padraig Fallon:**

"I propose that's this Local Authority call on the Minister and Department of Transport along with the RSA to rectify and amend as necessary legislation requiring Irish Citizens to prove citizenship in order to obtain driving licences."

Councillor Padraig Fallon said that this is a particular issue for people with a dual citizenship



and this will be an issue arising more in the future with people who are returning from the USA.

Councillor Mary Bohan supported the motion and outlined if someone comes back from Canada they can transfer their licence and they can't if they come back from USA.

Councillor Des Guckian said the RSA regulation in this regard is "over the top" and it is a case of the RSA "reflexing his muscles" as this is an "outlandish way of behaving".

**Proposed by Councillor Padraig Fallon seconded by Councillor Mary Bohan and UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED:**

"That Leitrim County Council call on the Minister and Department of Transport along with the RSA to rectify and amend as necessary legislation requiring Irish Citizens to prove citizenship in order to obtain driving licences."

**MM.47.20 Motion from Councillor Ita Reynolds Flynn:**

"I request information on the smart technology for older people and people with disabilities. How is it to be rolled out and where in the county? Is it county wide and under what stream of funding and amount is allocated? What Department within the Council will be overseeing this smart technology?"

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

"Leitrim County Council's Enterprise Development unit is currently at the scoping a pilot project involving the use of technology in the care of older people or persons with disabilities. Meetings have taken place with Sligo IT and the Leitrim Association of People with Disabilities (LAPWD) to discuss a potential project. By working with LAPWD, this project can have a county-wide reach. Potential projects could involve the following:

- Scoping needs of healthcare workers in adoption of technology in the care of older people and people with disabilities.
- Feasibility to investigate the potential to implement welfare and adaptive technologies. Discussions while at this early stage and are ongoing."

**MM.48.20 Motion from Councillor Frank Dolan:**

"I ask that Leitrim County Council write to each of the four newly elected TD's in this constituency to highlight the disappointment of the many rural families in this county at the absence yet again of a proper LIS scheme in this years roads allocation. No matter what shape the next Government takes at least one of those TD's will be part of it, so I think it is important to highlight this now."

Councillor Frank Dolan stated that he pointed out earlier to Minister John Paul Phelan the waiting list in County Leitrim is currently at 124 for the Local Improvement Scheme, and he called for an amnesty or some form of derogation in regard to LIS in the county.

Councillor Mary Bohan supported this.

Councillor Enda Stenson said this is a huge issue locally and he outlined that people who are living on lanes are willing to pay whatever is needed.

Councillor Des Guckian said the list should be abolished and people living up rural lanes are being discriminated against and central funding is necessary to surface all lanes in rural areas.

The Members acknowledged the work of Joseph Gilhooly, Director of Services in regard to the LIS scheme.

**Proposed by Councillor Frank Dolan seconded by Councillor Mary Bohan UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED:**

“That Leitrim County Council write to each of the four newly elected TD's in this constituency to highlight the disappointment of the many rural families in this county at the absence yet again of a proper LIS scheme in this years roads allocation. No matter what shape the next Government takes at least one of those TD's will be part of it, so I think it is important to highlight this now”.

**MM.49.20 Motion from Councillor Enda McGloin:**

"I call on Leitrim County Council to invite Irish Water to attend at the next meeting of this local authority to outline a defence for their connection charges on commercial developments which seem overly expensive and bordering on extortionate coupled with the level of over the top engineering requirements for a simple connection. Members should have the opportunity to challenge Irish Water on these matters."

Councillor Enda McGloin said that Leitrim County Council should have the opportunity to be involved in discussions with Irish Water in regard to this issue.

**Proposed by Councillor Enda McGloin seconded by Councillor Mary Bohan UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED:**

“Leitrim County Council invite Irish Water to attend at the next meeting of this local authority to outline a defence for their connection charges on commercial developments which seem overly expensive and bordering on extortionate coupled with the level of over the top engineering requirements for a simple connection. Members should have the opportunity to challenge Irish Water on these matters."

**MM.50.20 Motion from Councillor Justin Warnock:**

Cathaoirleach, Councillor Enda McGloin proposed that Motion No 20 in the name of Councillor Justin Warnock and Motion No 22 in the name of Councillor Gerry Dolan would be taken concurrently as they all relate to the forestry This was agreed by the Members.

"As it is now accepted both Nationally and Internationally that we are in a Climate and Biodiversity Crisis, I will ask that an Environmental Officer visits the sites of all Afforestation Applications which are presented to the Council for comment."

**Report by Head of Finance & Water Services**

"Under the Forestry Regulations 2017 (SI No 191 of 2017) Licences for Forestry developments are issued by the Minister of Agriculture Food and the Marine (DAFM). As part of the Licencing process applications are referred to Local Authorities for comment. In 2019 the planning department in Leitrim County Council reported to DAFM on 131 tree felling applications and 78 tree planting applications. Our reports focus on criteria set out in the County Development Plan and impacts on Roads infrastructure etc.

DAFM as the consenting and competent Authority deal with matters relating to Biodiversity and will consult with Duchas The Heritage Service where a site adjoins a Special Area of Conservation or a proposed Natural Heritage Area. DAFM require as a condition on all approvals the compliance with their "Forest Biodiversity Guidelines". Any breach in compliance with the guidelines can result in forfeit of grant payments and withdrawal of a licence.

The environment Department in Leitrim County Council has no role in assessing applications for Biodiversity impacts or enforcing non compliance with the Biodiversity Guidelines applied by DAFM."

**MM.51.20 Motion from Councillor Gerry Dolan:**

"I will ask that Leitrim County Council take into consideration the serious concerns regarding the increase of afforestation as an additional cause of flooding."

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

"Through the process of the review of the County Development Plan all policy items in regard to forestry and separately flooding will be considered."

Councillor Justin Warnock said he was not happy with his reply received and outlined that nobody is monitoring on what is going on. Councillor Warnock said that 30,000 hectares of our County is under trees and the remainder of this county has to be protected for future generations. It is important that Members stand up and take account.

Councillor Gerry Dolan outlined that forestry is an additional cause of flooding in the county.

Councillor Justin Warnock referred to the studies being carried out by UCD and Trinity College Dublin showing there is 18% more water discharges into the system in areas where forestry has been planted. In 10-15 years in south of the county most areas will be effected flooding on the Shannon and forestry has to be considered as accountable for this.

Councillor Mary Bohan supported the motion.

**MM.52.20 Motion from Councillor Enda Stenson:**

"As I know, and have spoken to a number of Artists in Leitrim, they feel very Lucky to live and work in the most vibrant and creative Arts County in Ireland. With this in mind many Artists feel that a Creative Hub/Arts Hub, based on the format of the very successful Hive for Business, should be created for the Artists in Leitrim. The provision of such a Hive/Hub would bring great potential and opportunities to the Artists and entice even more Artists to our County."

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

"Leitrim is renowned for having one of highest proportion of artists of any county in Ireland. This is in part a consequence of the county's natural environment, quality of life and cost of living and in part a result of the efforts of many individuals throughout the county, and indeed the investment of Leitrim County Council over the years. Among these developments, Leitrim Sculpture Centre is now Ireland's largest facility for making art which provides studios and living accommodation for artists and caters for artists using stone, metal, glass as well as traditional and digital print, photography and now film. Supporting artists in their development is also core to the policies of both The Dock and The Glens Centre.

Connectivity and access to high speed broadband is as vital to the creative sector as it is to any other sector and many creative practitioners already use the Hive for that reason. This could be further encouraged. However, while Leitrim County Council remains open to providing whatever advice and support it can to collectives of artists wishing to develop new facilities for themselves, in the interim, Leitrim County Council will in the first instance seek to ensure that facilities already operating or in planning across the county can be supported to reach their full potential."

Councillor Enda Stenson welcomed the reply received and looked forward to a meeting being arranged in the not too distant future..

Councillor Justin Warnock and Councillor Sean McGowan supported this motion.

**MM.53.20 Motion from Councillor Brendan Barry:**

"I request that Leitrim County Council call on the Irish Government's Department of Health, Dept. of Justice and Equality and Dept. of Children and Youth Affairs to recognise Parental Alienation and provide expert professional structures and services to intervene wherever it is a problem. Parental Alienation is recognised by the World Health Organisation and is a crime in a growing number of nations. However in Ireland the Courts, HSE and Tusla ignore its existence, meanwhile, it is destroying children and parent's lives. Ireland needs to address this abuse and to enact legislation and to implement recommendation 36 of the Report of the Reform of the Family Law System October 2019."

Councillor Brendan Barry gave the background to his motion and said that people in all counties are affected by this motion.

All members supported the motion.

**Proposed by Councillor Brendan Barry seconded by Councillor Pdraig Fallon and UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED:**

"That Leitrim County Council call on the Irish Government's Department of Health, Dept. of Justice and Equality and Dept. of Children and Youth Affairs to recognise Parental Alienation and provide expert professional structures and services to intervene wherever it is a problem. Parental Alienation is recognised by the World Health Organisation and is a crime in a growing number of nations. However in Ireland the Courts, HSE and Tulsa ignore its existence, meanwhile, it is destroying children and parent's lives. Ireland needs to address this abuse and to enact legislation and to implement recommendation 36 of the Report of the Reform of the Family Law System October 2019.

**MM.54.20 Motion from Councillor Paddy Farrell:**

"I propose that Leitrim County Council call on the OPW and the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform to providing a funding scheme for drainage of rivers, such as the Shannon, that will help resolve the problems associated with the recent flooding."

Councillor Paddy Farrell called for more funding to be provided for drainage to help resolve problems associated with flooding.

Councillor Pdraig Fallon supported the motion and he referred to staff that are working with the OPW that are being laid off and they know the date when they will be taken back to work again. Cllr Fallon said that these contracts should be full time contracts as there is plenty of work for them to do.

Councillor Sean McGowan acknowledged the funding received from Minister Boxer Moran in this regard and he fully supported the motion.

Councillor Warnock queried if it was possible to raise the road at Kiltoghert.

Mr Terry McGovern, A/Senior Engineer advised that the situation at Kiltoghert is being looked at and advised that the road at this location has previously been raised.

Councillor Paddy Farrell pointed out that the river at the back of Aurivo Co-op should be cleaned and this would be a good help to reduce flooding.

Councillor Des Guckian said that various Government Departments have sat on the problem for far too long. Lough Allen is the key and dredging at Tarmonbarry, cutting through rock and speeding up the river will help to reduce flooding. Cllr Des Guckian paid tribute to Minister Boxer Moran for his work in relation to flooding.

**Proposed by Councillor Paddy Farrell seconded by Councillor Pdraig Fallon and UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED:**

“That Leitrim County Council call on the OPW and the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform to providing a funding scheme for drainage of rivers, such as the Shannon, that will help resolve the problems associated with the recent flooding.”

**MM.55.20     Motion from Councillor Mary Bohan:**

"I propose that Leitrim County Council call on the HSE to take steps immediately to reduce the long waiting time for chiropody services in Leitrim."

Councillor Mary Bohan called on the HSE to immediately put measures in place to deal with the waiting list for Chiropody services in Leitrim.

Councillor Des Guckian sought clarification if this is a free service.

Councillor Mary Bohan said that this is to force people to go to private chiropody services.

**Proposed by Councillor Mary Bohan seconded by Councillor Pdraig Fallon and UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED:**

“Leitrim County Council call on the HSE to take steps immediately to reduce the long waiting time for chiropody services in Leitrim”.

**MM.56.20     Vote of Sympathy**

Councillor Sean McGowan requested the opportunity to pay tribute to the late Farrell McElgunn, former Elected Member of Leitrim County Council whom he had just heard the news of his death. Councillor McGowan and the Members commended the late Farrell McElgunn for his outstanding contribution to public office as an Elected Member of Leitrim County Council, Seanad Eireann and European Parliament for 32 years and extended their sympathy to his family.

The Chief Executive on his own behalf, and on behalf of the staff, also extended his sympathy to the McElgunn family.

The Members extended a vote of sympathy to the following:

- Mrs Margaret Kieran, 1 Shannon Lodge, Carrick-on-Shannon on the death of Brendan C. Kieran R.I.P
- Liam McGirl & Family, Main Street, Ballinamore on the death of Brigid (Bridie) McGirl R.I.P.
- Brian Mostyn, Sroankeeragh, Carrick-on-Shannon, Roscommon on the death of Mary Mostyn.
- Julie Wray, Barrack Square, Drumshanbo. Co Leitrim on the death of Keith Hunter.

Cathaoirleach Cllr Enda McGloin advised Members that the next full Council meeting will take place on the 5th May 2020 in Drumshanbo and the Members will be advised on the venue in due course.

**Signed:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Councillor Mary Bohan**  
**Cathaoirleach**

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

**Dated: Tuesday, 5 May 2020**

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