

Minutes of Leitrim County Council meeting held Via MS Teams on Monday, 1 March 2021

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

Councillor Mary Bohan (Cathaoirleach) presiding

Apologies: Councillor Caillian Ellis

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 Emergency 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
Shay O'Connor, Senior Engineer
Terry McGovern, Senior Engineer
Bernard Greene, Senior Planner
Suzanne Duffy, Administrative Officer
Sinead NiThiarnain, Staff Officer
Francis Gaffney, A/Senior Engineer

MM.33.21 Votes of sympathy

The Members extended a vote of sympathy to the following:

- Terry McGovern on the death of his mother Nellie McGovern R.I.P and aunt

- to Mr Joseph Gilhooly.
- Carmel Doherty and Johanna Daly on the death of their mother Maureen Daly R.I.P
 - Sandra Rowley on the death of her mother Maureen Rowley R.I.P

MM.34.21 Votes of Congratulations

Councillor Des Guckian extended a vote of congratulations to Kathleen Geraghty & Family, Main Street, Carrick-on-Shannon on winning The Leitrim Observer competition, Leitrim's Favourite Building.

MM.35.21 Adoption of Minutes

MM.35.21a Minutes of Special NUI Meeting held on 11th January 2021

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Enda Stenson
SECONDED by Cllr. Frank Dolan

It was **AGREED** to adopt the minutes of Special NUI Meeting of 11th January 2021.

MM.35.21b Minutes of Meeting held on 11th January 2021

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Paddy Farrell
SECONDED by Cllr. Enda Stenson

It was **AGREED** to adopt the minutes of Meeting of 11th November 2021.

Councillor Brendan Barry expressed his disappointment that he did not receive the document from Leitrim County Council that he requested under his motion MM.26.21 in regard to the Winter Gritting Programme.

Councillor Des Guckian said that the allocation for flood relief was not correct, as just €10,000 was allocated to each Municipal District.

Mr Vincent Dwyer, Head of Finance, Water, Environment, Climate Action and Emergency Services advised that the comment referred to under MM 5.21 in regard to Capital Works was funding for period 2024-2026 in regard to flood relief under CFRAMS.

It was agreed to amend Minutes of the 11th January 2021 to include CFRAMS in this regard.

MM.36.21 Approve Section 85 Agreement with Mayo County Council as the Lead Authority for the Local Authority Public Lighting Energy Efficiency Retrofit Project

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Sean McGowan

SECONDED by Cllr. Enda Stenson

It was **AGREED** that Leitrim County Council approve Section 85 Agreement with Mayo County Council under Section 85 of the Local Government Act, 2001 as the Lead Authority for the Local Authority Public Lighting Energy Efficiency Retrofit Project.

Councillor Felim Gurn sought clarification on the life span of the LED lights.

Mr Gilhooly advised that there have been significant advances in LED units in terms of technology, efficiency, and life span, over the last decade. LED lighting units now can provide a high-quality lighting with energy efficiency savings of up to 65% when compared to existing sodium street lighting units.

Councillor Paddy O'Rourke queried what is becoming of the old-fashioned lighting heads when they are replaced.

Mr Terry McGovern, A/Senor Engineer advised the contract documents are not yet ready and once they become available, he will revert to the member in this regard.

MM.37.21 **To approve the raising of a loan of €2,000,000 from the Housing Finance Agency (HFA) in accordance with Section 106 of the LG Act 2001 for the purposes of Public Lighting Energy Efficiency Retrofit Project.**

Mr Vincent Dwyer outlined the Public Lighting Energy Efficiency Retrofit Project represents a significant initiative in meeting the Climate Action targets for Leitrim County Council, while also generating a financial payback in lower energy and maintenance costs over the lifetime of the project.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Des Guckian
SECONDED by Cllr. Sean MCDermott

It was **AGREED** that Leitrim County Council approve the raising of a loan €2,000,000 from the Housing Finance Agency in accordance with Section 106 of the Local Government Act 2001 for the purposes of Public Lighting Energy Efficiency Retrofit Project.

MM.38.21 **Disposals under Section 183(1) of the Local Government Act**

MM.38.21a **Consider for approval disposal of plot of land in the townland of Townparks, Carrick on Shannon, Co Leitrim**

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Finola Armstrong McGuire
SECONDED by Cllr. Enda Stenson

It was **AGREED** that Leitrim County Council consent to the disposal of plot of land pursuant to the provisions of Article 206 of the Planning & Development Regulations 2001, Section 211 of the Planning & Development Act 2000 (as amended) and Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001. Particulars of the property to which County Council proposes to

dispose:

The Property: Disposal of Plot of land circa 0.034 Acres in the Townland of Townparks, Carrick on Shannon, Co Leitrim i.e., **Plot A**

Leitrim County Council acquired 'Flynn's Field' as part of the Public Realm Improvement Project, Carrick on Shannon. Compulsory Purchase (No 1) Order 2019 included Plot C so as to construct a public carpark. This carpark's southern boundary borders land owned by Wealth Option Trustees Ltd where a Primary Care Centre is currently under construction.

The disposal of this Plot of land is dependent on and linked to the transfer of **Plot B** by Wealth Option Trustees Ltd to Leitrim County Council, to maximize the available space for both parties for pedestrian access and car parking at Townparks, Carrick on Shannon.

The Person(s) to whom the property is to be disposed of:

Plot A - Area of 0.034 and will be transferred from Leitrim County Council to Wealth Option Trustees Ltd

Plot B - Area of 0.057 and will be transferred from Wealth Option Trustees Ltd to Leitrim County Council

All Plots A/B/C - for Context purposes

The Consideration proposed in respect of the disposal: Transfer of Plots simultaneously and with no consideration to both parties.

Councillor Des Guckian said that he opposed this disposal and said the maps submitted were inadequate and unprofessional and should be much clearer. Upon his request a further map was provided which was somewhat of an improvement. He sought clarification as to who Wealth Option Trustees Ltd are.

Cathaoirleach, Councillor Mary Bohan outlined that this was a proposal for a land swap and no money was being exchanged.

Mr Joseph Gilhooly responded stating he would not accept that the maps in question were inadequate and unprofessional. The maps are to solely identify the property that is being disposed of by Leitrim County Council and the additional map prepared on the request of Councillor Des Guckian was circulated to assist members. The company involved in the land exchange, Wealth Option Trustees Ltd, are a valid, live company registered in the Companies Registration Office.

Cathaoirleach, Councillor Mary Bohan asked Councillor Des Guckian if he had alternative motion to propose in this regard. No alternative proposal was made.

MM.39.21 **Note the Annual Report 2020 from the Leitrim Joint Policing Committee**

Report dated 15th February 2021, as circulated to the Members, appears as **Appendix 1** to the Minutes of this meeting in the Minute Book.

The report was noted by the members.

MM.40.21 To consider report of Audit Committee on audited Financial Statement 2019 and LG Auditors report

Mr Vincent Dwyer outlined that the Audit Committee had reviewed the Audited Financial Statement and the Local Government Auditors report at its meeting on 23rd February 2021 in accordance with Section 60 of the Local Government Reform Act 2014 and were satisfied with the content of the Audit Report.

This update was noted by the Members.

MM.41.21 Receive report on the operation of Litter Pollution Act 1997 in regard to measures taken during 2020 in relation to the prevention and control of litter.

Report from Sinead Ni Thiarnain, Environmental Awareness Officer, dated 22nd February 2021 in relation to the measures taken during 2020 in the prevention and control of litter, as circulated to each Member, appears as **Appendix 2** to the Minutes of this Meeting in the Minute Book.

Councillor Sean McGowan expressed his disappointment with the amount of litter that is evident on Regional and County roads every year. Cllr McGowan paid tribute to the work of the Environment Department in their attempts to address this problem.

Councillor Brendan Barry noted that take-away packaging seems to be a particular litter problem and queried the possibility of having the customer's name printed on such packaging before it leaves the take-way, which would facilitate the identification of litter culprits. Councillor Barry thanked Tidy Town Committees and Community groups for all their efforts in this area and he appealed to members of the public to bring home their litter and dispose of it properly.

Councillor Finola Armstrong McGuire sought clarification as to the capacity of the 2 solar powered bins in Carrick-on-Shannon to take more rubbish and if a financial benefit has derived from them.

Councillor Paddy Farrell said that there appears to be a considerable delay in the Council responding to reported incidents of rubbish dumping. Councillor Paddy Farrell asked if there was any way this process could be accelerated.

Councillor Justin Warnock proposed that every household, private or rented, should have a bin. Councillor Warnock proposed that more Community Wardens should be employed as they have a lot of other work to do apart from the control of litter.

Councillor Felim Gurn said towns are also affected by litter and every household should be registered with a waste contractor and legislation around GDPR needs to be changed to accommodate verification of this information.

Councillor Sean McDermott supported the comments.

Councillor Pdraig Fallon acknowledged that many litter items are from takeaways and the vehicle registration number of the person picking up the order should be noted on the packaging. Cllr Fallon said this initiative should be piloted with the multi-national take-away companies.

Councillor Enda McGloin agreed with Councillor Justin Warnock and acknowledged the issues around GDPR. Councillor Enda McGloin noted that many people who order takeaway foods, do not have a car and this would not resolve the problem.

Councillor Enda McGloin said consideration should be given to the design of waste bins which would avoid bins being used for household waste. He stated that a meeting should be held on waste and litter this over the coming months and review waste byelaws.

Councillor Mary Bohan said that it is not just takeaways that are causing the litter and she referred to ashes and electrical appliances being dumped in secluded areas.

Councillor Mary Bohan proposed that CCTV cameras be provided at Bring Banks and she appealed to people to dispose of their waste in a responsible manner and refrain from the practise of dumping.

Mr Vincent Dwyer advised that this issue will be included for consideration at the next meeting of the Environment, Climate Action and Agriculture SPC and an update will be brought back to will be provided to a plenary council meeting thereafter.

Mr Vincent advised that employing additional Community Wardens will not put an end to the practise as they cannot be everywhere to stop littering. This is a cultural issue, and it has been occurring for years.

Mr Dwyer acknowledged since the start of the COVID pandemic, more people have identified littering as a problem and people are requesting bags to pick up litter and clean up litter spots.

Mr Dwyer advised that once COVID restrictions are lifted Leitrim County Council will continue to carry out door to door calls to ascertain how households are disposing of their waste. Mr Dwyer advised that there has been a number of successful prosecutions for illegal waste disposal, and he appealed for co-operation from the public to combat this issue.

Mr Terry McGovern informed the members that solar powered bins are 170 litre bins which cost over €4,000 each and they have proved to be very successful as they require emptying

less frequently than normal bins resulting in a reduction in labour costs.

MM.42.21 Note the Rate Collection Report for 2020 and Schedule of Uncollected Rates.

Mr Vincent Dwyer outlined that Rate Demands issued to a total of 1,090 customers in 2020. The total value of the 2020 Rate Demands was €6,395,576.44. The Local Government (Financial Procedures and Audit) Number 2 Regulations, 2014 provide that a Rating Authority on completion of the Schedules of Uncollected Rates at the end of each financial year submits a report to the members of the Local Authority.

The Rates team also administered the Rates Waiver Scheme which provided for a 9-month waiver of commercial rates in 2020 for eligible categories of ratepayers that have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. An amount of €1.7 million was provided by the Department of Housing, Planning & Local Government to Leitrim County Council under the 2020 Rates Waiver Scheme which was applied to 789 customer accounts.

Some businesses were not directly impacted by the pandemic and were able to discharge their annual rates liability.

Mr Dwyer advised the members that the Government had granted a rates waiver for the first quarter of 2021 which was extended last week for the 2nd Quarter of 2021 and is targeted at business that meet eligibility criteria.

Referring to the 75% Rates Write-off on Vacant premises, Councillor Enda McGloin said rate payers who have unoccupied premises and who pay their 25% rates liability every year find the process very cumbersome and there is a lot of bureaucracy in having to fill out the same forms every year to avail of the 75% write-off. Mr Vincent Dwyer outlined that the Finance Department are currently reviewing this, but a process is needed to be able to identify properties are available for rent.

Councillor Ita Reynolds Flynn acknowledged there is a lot of the paperwork involved for the owners of vacant premises when seeking the 75% Rates Write off . She paid tribute to the Head of Finance and the Finance team for all their work in assisting property owners in this regard.

Councillor Thomas Mulligan concurred with Councillors McGloin and Reynolds-Flynn remarks in this regard.

MM.43.21 Management Reports - December 2020 & January 2021

The Management Reports for December 2020 and January 2021 was 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.

Councillor Des Guckian raised the following observations on the following items in the

above reports;

- 45% of water unaccounted for
- Carrick Water Treatment Plant
- Civil Defence - How do you contact them.
- National Broadband Rollout Plan
- Carrick-on-Shannon By-Pass
- Mohill Library- small figure spent on archaeology.
- Low figure for National Road Grant Allocations
- Fence retrofitting contract
- Data presented in tabular format in relation to Housing.

In response to the above Mr Vincent Dwyer said unaccounted for water is primarily in the south of the county and the issues there are documented and Irish Water continues to work with householders and farmers in this regard.

Irish Water have included Carrick-on-Shannon Water Treatment Plan in a Needs and Resources Model to ensure it is extended to meet the growing future demand in the South Leitrim Regional Water Supply Scheme.

Contact details for the Civil Defence Officer are available on the website or by emailing customerservices@leitrimcoco.ie.

Mr Terry McGovern, A/Senior Engineer gave an overview of the road allocations for 2021. He also advised that road fencing schemes are designed once agreement has been reached with landowners.

Mr Francis Gaffney, A/Senior Engineer gave an overview of the Wastewater Treatment Plant and said it is currently running at 50% capacity. It has been designed to serve a population of approximately 11,500 and it currently is serving a population of 6,500.

Ms Gaffney said the Carrick-on-Shannon Water Treatment plant is near full capacity. It provides 10,000 cubic metres per day and there is no head room. Mr Gaffney said an upgrade to the existing water treatment plant will fit into an Irish Water Capital scheme.

Councillor Pádraig Fallon suggested that questions relating to specific matters in the Monthly Report should be referred to the relevant Municipal District for discussion.

Cathaoirleach, Cllr Mary Bohan said if any member has any queries in relation to any item, they can email the appropriate staff member who is dealing the matter and a reply will be issued.

Councillor Brendan Barry welcomed the reduction in the amount of unaccounted for water. He also welcomed the funding for the replacement of 2 sections of the AC watermain on the R209, Keshcarrigan to Fenagh road.

The monthly management reports were noted by Members.

MM.44.21 Commitments

Mr Joseph Gilhooly advised of the following:

- Notification of approved projects under the Town and Village Scheme was received on 12th February consisting of 6 projects with grant aid of €645,150, 5 of which will require match funding from Leitrim County Council.
- Notification of approved projects under the Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme was received on 5th February consisting of 7 projects with grant aid of €139,830, 5 of which will require match funding from Leitrim County Council.

Councillor Justin Warnock paid tribute to Mr. Terry McGovern, A/Senior Engineer for securing funding for Lennox bridge and said this project was greatly needed to improve access to Leitrim. He thanked his colleagues in the Municipal District for all their support in this regard.

The Members noted the above.

MM.45.21 Report from Corporate Policy Group

Ms Mary Quinn, Director of Services, Housing, Corporate Services, Community and Cultural Services outlined that the Corporate Policy Group had considered the following items at their meeting on the 25th February 2021

- Update from the SPC's
- Items for Council Meeting 1st March 2021
- Correspondence from Omagh and Fermanagh District Council seeking interest in the formation of a cross border committee to deal with issues arising from Brexit. The CPG agreed to present this to the plenary meeting for consideration. No further details are available to date and when they become available Members will be advised accordingly.
- A presentation by National Broadband Ireland (NBI) will be made at the May Council meeting to the Members.

Councillor Paddy O'Rourke suggested it may be more appropriate to route any Brexit related issues through ICBAN, as a cross border structure and committee is already in place, rather than creating another committee to deal with such issues.

Councillor Justin Warnock was not in agreement with Cllr O'Rourke and stated he would like to see a cross-border committee specifically to deal with issues arising from Brexit.

Cathaoirleach, Councillor Mary Bohan said when further information is available this will be made available to the Members at a full Council meeting for consideration.

Councillor Padraig Fallon said if COVID-19 restrictions allow it would be preferable if

members could meet in person to receive the presentation from NBI.

Councillor Felim Gurn sought clarification if Fibre Optic Broadband is available in Manorhamilton. Mr Joseph Gilhooly confirmed Fibre Optic Broadband is provided for in Manorhamilton and the cable is being managed by Enet.

Cathaoirleach, Councillor Mary Bohan asked that all questions/concerns in relation to broadband be submitted to Joseph Gilhooly and he will refer them to National Broadband Ireland in advance of the May Council meeting.

Councillor Pdraig Fallon asked that the issues he has already submitted to the Broadband Officer be forwarded to National Broadband Ireland in advance of the May meeting.

Councillor Des Guckian acknowledged that it is difficult to get information on Broadband availability and to wait until May is a long time.

Cathaoirleach, Cllr Mary Bohan concurred with Cllr Des Guckian's remark, and acknowledged that Leitrim has been waiting for reliable broadband for some time.

This update was noted by Members.

MM.46.21 Attendance at conferences/training

Ms Mary Quinn confirmed that all training was taking place online.

MM.47.21 Meeting Correspondence

1. Resolution dated 7th January 2022 from Wexford County Council calling on the Department of Education and the Higher Education Institutions/ Bodies to offer a rebate scheme to third level students who are charged full rate for on-campus accommodation but are afforded limited access due to Covid restrictions for the Academic Year 2020/2021.

Councillor Pdraig Fallon and Councillor Mary Bohan supported the motion.

2. Letter dated 13th January 2021 from the County Leitrim Society of New York.
3. Letter dated 20th January 2021 from Senator Robbie Gallagher in relation to Developer Provider Water Services Instructure Resolution Programme.
4. Acknowledgement dated 21st January 2021 from the Office of the Minister for Health in regard to Resolution passed by Leitrim County Council in

regard to Breast Check Screening.

5. Resolution dated 26th January 2021 from Galway County Council in regard to Farm safety and safety measures in council awareness programmes at a local level.
6. Presentation from Galway County Council on Agi Kids be Farm Safe.
7. Email of the 4th February 2021 from the Office of the Minister for Health in regard to Breast Check Screening.
8. Email of the 2nd February 2021 from the Office of the Taoiseach acknowledging Resolution passed by Leitrim County Council in regard to CETA.
9. Resolution from Limerick City and County Council dated 2nd February 2021 acknowledging the oversight role played by Councils in mother and baby homes and calling on all Councils to write to the Government to establish a National day of recognition for the women and their children and that the Council write to the Minister for Children asking that the survivors be given access to a written copy of the Final Report of the Commission of Investigation into Mother and Baby Homes.
10. Email of the 11th February 2021 from the Office of the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Justice acknowledging receipt of Resolution passed by Leitrim County Council in regard to CETA.
11. Letter dated 12th February 2021 from the County Leitrim Society of New York.
12. Resolution dated 16th February 2021 from Kerry County Council calling on the Government to utilise its seat to the United Nations Security Council to deliver statehood to the Palestinian people.
13. Resolution dated 15th February 2021 from Tipperary County Council calling on Minister Eamon Ryan, Minister for the Environment, Climate and Communications seeking a 75% rebate in the PSO levy on ESB bills for Community halls and facilities because of their inability to fundraise due to COVID 19.

Councillors Felim Gurn, Councillor Pádraig Fallon, Brendan Barry and Ita Reynolds Flynn supported this motion.

14. Resolution from Tipperary County Council dated 15th February 2021 calling on the Minister Catherine Martin, Minister for Tourism, Culture, Arts,

Gaeltacht, Sport and Media to consider providing extra supports to Regional Newspapers who provide an essential service to many communities including Co Tipperary during the pandemic.

Councillor Enda McGloin supported the motion and proposed that:
“Leitrim County Council call on Minister Catherin Martin to consider providing extra supports to *The Leitrim Observer*, the local newspaper in County Leitrim and other regional newspapers around Ireland who provide an essential service to many communities during the pandemic.”

Councillor Enda McGloin said that the local radio stations have benefited from support during the pandemic and newspapers are providing an essential service.

Cathaoirleach Councillor Mary Bohan supported the motion.

Other items discussed under meeting Correspondence.

Bank of Ireland Closures

Councillor Enda McGloin expressed his disappointment with the announcement of the intention to close the Bank of Ireland branches in Drumshanbo and Manorhamilton. The closures will have a long term impact on the communities, and economic activity and this is a huge blow to rural Ireland.

Councillor Sean McGowan said that while there was some relief that more branches in the county are not closing there seems to be an assumption that everyone is able to do online banking.

Councillor Pdraig Fallon said this is a blow to people, particularly in Manorhamilton, where in the last two years, the community has already lost an Ulster Bank branch and now is losing a Bank of Ireland branch. He said this is a backward step and it is not good for business. The people in Drumkeerin would have used both the Drumshanbo and Manorhamilton banks.

Councillor Felim Gurn expressed his disappointment at the closure of the branches, stating that this action will have a negative impact on elderly people and the night-time economy.

Councillor Brendan Barry pointed out that the presence of a bank in Drumshanbo was not just about the provision of services, it was a vote of confidence in the town.

Councillor Sean McDermott said these closures are devastating for

Manorhamilton and Drumshanbo. This decision does not look good for the future of rural communities.

Councillor Des Guckian expressed his fear that more branches will follow and that this move is disastrous both locally and for the country. He said that nationalising the banks would resolve this problem.

Councillor Justin Warnock said that once these branches are gone there will be no personal connection between Bank of Ireland staff and customers in these communities. He noted that BOI customers in North Leitrim wish to visit a Bank of Ireland branch they must travel to Sligo.

Councillor Finola Armstrong McGuire said this is a huge loss to any community and it is not just about having a bank in a town, its about the personal service offered by staff to customers.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Enda McGloin
SECONDED by Cllr. Sean McGowan

It was **AGREED** Leitrim County Council call on the Bank of Ireland to engage and revisit plans not to close Drumshanbo and Manorhamilton branches as this will have a long-term impact on the communities and economic activity and this is a huge blow to rural Ireland.

Opening of Churches for Easter

Councillor Enda Stenson proposed that church organisations should open churches for Holy Week as it is important for the wellbeing of people. Cathaoirleach, Councillor Mary Bohan supported this and said current COVID-19 restriction guidelines must be kept in mind.

MM.48.21 Presentation from Comhairle na nOg

The Cathaoirleach, Councillor Mary Bohan welcomed Lilly Ferns, Grainne Reynolds, Grace Coles and Jonathan Casey on behalf of the Comhairle na nOg to the meeting. The Cathaoirleach also welcomed Valerie Moran, Co-Ordinator of Comhairle na nOg, to the meeting.

A copy of the presentation delivered by the Comhairle na nOg members appears as **Appendix 3** to the Minutes of this meeting in the Minute Book.

The Cathaoirleach, Councillor Mary Bohan and the Members unanimously paid tribute to

the students, their mentors and their previous co-ordinator Ms. Fiona Taylor for always promoting Comhairle na nÓg both in Leitrim and on a national stage. Members welcomed Ms. Valerie Moran to her new role as Co-Ordinator of Comhairle na nOg. Members wished students luck on their return to school following the lockdown and wished all Leaving Certificate Students success in their exams. The Members paid tribute to the youth for their ideas and honesty and offered to help them in any way they can.

Ms Suzanne Duffy paid tribute to Fiona Taylor for all her hard work and dedication to Comhairle na nOg and welcomed Valerie Moran to the role.

Ms Valerie Moran said she looked forward to working with Comhairle na nOg and it offered great opportunities to young people.

It was agreed that the meeting adjourn at this point for 20 minutes for a break and that the meeting would resume at 1.20 pm.

MM.49.21 Motion from Councillor Padraig Fallon - Partition

To consider the following Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Padraig Fallon;

"I propose that Leitrim County Council call on the Government, the Taoiseach, the Tánaiste, all Ministers and all TD's to not take part in any events celebrating the centenary of the partition our Country."

Councillor Padraig Fallon gave the background to his motion.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Padraig Fallon
SECONDED by Cllr. Brendan Barry

It was **AGREED** that Leitrim County Council call on the Government, the Taoiseach, the Tánaiste, all Ministers and all TD's to not take part in any events celebrating the centenary of the partition our Country.

MM.50.21 Motion from Councillor Thomas Mulligan - Dog Fouling

To consider the following Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Thomas Mulligan;

"With the significant and welcome increase in the number of people walking recently there has been a corresponding and unwelcome increase in incidents of dog fouling on walkways.

While many dog owners behave in an acceptable manner, all dog walkers should carry "Poop Scoops" and dispose of this litter appropriately from walkways. It is particularly objectionable and sociably unacceptable for people to leave this litter on the footpaths of our towns and villages. I don't wish to discourage outdoor activities and allowances can be made for dog owners who may find it fiscally difficult to clean up after their dogs."

Report by Head of Finance & Water Services

"Leitrim County Council make all reasonable efforts to ensure pathways and walkways are clear from dog fouling. This includes provision of Dog Waste Bins and Bag Dispensers at strategic locations within the county. There has been a huge increase in numbers of people walking, running and jogging in recent years. There has also been a large increase in numbers of dog-walkers.

The Council policy is to deploy dog waste bins, bag dispensers and signage on popular walking routes and paths where this is feasible. These bins are regularly serviced, cleaned and disinfected and the bag dispensers are regularly refilled. This work is carried out under contract by the Leitrim Dog Warden Service.

However, the responsibility for dog fouling issues lies firmly with dog owners who do not engage with picking up after their dogs and/or allow their dogs to roam freely unsupervised. The Council currently invests significant resources in the Dog Warden Service. It is our intention to continue to evolve the service in order to meet the demands of our changing society. Particular focus will be on reducing the number of stray dogs through promotion of Responsible Dog Ownership, micro-chipping, licensing, fines for non-compliance and seizure of dogs where necessary.

In addition the Council and Dog Warden Service engage in promotion of Responsible Dog Ownership in school and community group settings. The Council and Dog Warden Service undertake leaflet distribution and engage in media coverage on social media, radio and newspaper. Whilst some promotional activities were curtailed due to Covid-19 Restrictions in 2020, it is hoped to engage in more intensive promotion of responsible dog ownership including 'Picking up After Your Dog' campaigns in 2021."

Councillor Thomas Mulligan stated that is disgusting to see dog foul on a town street or footpath stating it is unacceptable behaviour.

Councillor Paddy O'Rourke said that measures have been taken by erecting signage and bins. Councillor Paddy O'Rourke said that DNA testing of dogs will have to be considered as this initiative is currently in place in areas of London and it is used to prosecute repeat offenders.

Councillor Sean McDermott said this is an issue all around the country and he noted that dog waste bins that were made available at some locations have been vandalised. Councillor McDermott said dog licence fees are not expensive enough.

Councillor Felim Gurn highlighted that when public realms and demonstration stretches are being developed dog foul bins should be included in such works.

Councillor Brendan Barry acknowledged Leitrim County Council are doing all they can in this regard and said it is up to the dog owners to act responsibly. He appealed to them to consider wheelchair and buggy users who come in contact with this and that this is brought

into homes and to consider that it may have an impact on young children's health.

Mr Vincent Dwyer said the ultimate responsibility is with the dog owners and the DNA tool may be a measure that will have to be considered in future.

Cathaoirleach, Councillor Mary Bohan appealed to people when they are out walking to take responsibility for their dogs.

MM.51.21 Motion from Councillor Justin Warnock - Pesticide Cypermethrin

To consider the following Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Justin Warnock;

"I ask that Leitrim County Council write to Ministers Charlie McConalogue TD, Eamon Ryan TD, Sen. Pippa Hackett and Malcom Noonan TD to desist from using the pesticide cypermethrin in controlling the pine weevil and instead deploy mechanical measures on tree stumps to control this pest when felling Sitka Spruce industrial plantations. We are in a national biodiversity crisis and this toxic chemical when used kills all insects and the runoff contaminates our water courses, all measures should be taken to progress towards the eradication of pesticides."

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Justin Warnock
SECONDED by Cllr. Gerry Dolan

It was **AGREED** that Leitrim County Council write to Ministers Charlie McConalogue TD, Eamon Ryan TD, Sen. Pippa Hackett and Malcom Noonan TD to desist from using the pesticide cypermethrin in controlling the pine weevil and instead deploy mechanical measures on tree stumps to control this pest when felling Sitka Spruce industrial plantations. We are in a national biodiversity crisis and this toxic chemical when used kills all insects and the runoff contaminates our water courses, all measures should be taken to progress towards the eradication of pesticides.

Councillor Des Guckian asked what are the alternatives to using the pesticide and if known people would gladly use them.

Councillor Justin Warnock said that a lot of people are adopting organic methods and are not using any pesticides. Councillor Justin Warnock requested that the motion be circulated to all Local Authorities.

MM.52.21 Motion from Councillor Des Guckian - Land Development Agency Bill 2021

Cathaoirleach, Councillor Mary Bohan proposed that Motion No 18 in the name of Councillor Des Guckian and Motion No 22 in the name of Councillor Sean McGowan be taken concurrently as they relate to the same issue. Councillor Des Guckian was not agreeable to this request.

To consider the following Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Des Guckian;

"I call on Leitrim County Council to make a formal submission to the Minister for Housing, Local Government & Heritage outlining our complete opposition to the proposed provisions of the Land Development Agency Bill 2021. The proposed removal of the Section 183 reserved function of Elected Members in relation to the disposal of Local Authority held land to the LDA as provided for in Part 7 Section 56 of the bill is unacceptable and an affront to local democracy. As advocates for the empowerment of local government, we can never support or accept any diminution in our reserved functions and powers."

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

"The Land Development Agency (LDA) Bill 2021 proposes to establish the Land Development Agency (LDA) on a statutory basis and sets out the core goals of the LDA to undertake strategic land assembly and fully utilise state lands to build affordable homes and sustainable communities. The LDA have indicated that the LDA Bill will provide a legislative grounding for one of its key strategies of partnering and collaborating with local authorities. The LDA will focus initially on public lands in towns of over 10,000 people. The Bill provides that the LDA will periodically report to Government on public lands which could be suitable for housing or urban development and the Government may direct that such lands be transferred to the LDA. The Bill also provides that the LDA will have first refusal to purchase public lands being put up for sale.

Under the LDA Bill the Minister for Housing will specify an affordability requirement for the delivery of affordable homes for sale or rent on public lands. This affordability requirement can be varied on sites in different areas depending on local housing needs. The LDA can provide services to local authorities for the development of large scale multi-tenure sites for housing and urban development in urban centres over 30,000. This will assist with the construction of increased social housing on local authority owned sites. The benefits are that the LDA may in the future bring forward land within County Leitrim for the development of Social and Affordable Housing from public bodies that may not have been utilised.

The Bill contains a provision relating to local authority land. Under Part 7, Section 56 provides that Section 211(2) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 and Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001 shall not apply to the disposal of land owned by a local authority to the Agency.

The bill is currently before Dail Eireann - 2nd stage."

Councillor Des Guckian gave the background to his motion and said Section 56 of the bill is unacceptable and an affront to local democracy and appealed to Local Government to hold onto this reserved function.

Cathaoirleach, Councillor Mary Bohan said that she was in contact with Elected Members from other Local Authorities on this issue and they are all agreeable to holding on to their reserved functions and powers.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr.Des Guckian
SECONDED by Cllr. Mary Bohan

It was **AGREED** Leitrim County Council to make a formal submission to the Minister for Housing, Local Government & Heritage outlining our complete opposition to the proposed provisions of the Land Development Agency Bill 2021.

The proposed removal of the Section 183 reserved function of Elected Members in relation to the disposal of Local Authority held land to the LDA as provided for in Part 7 Section 56 of the bill is unacceptable and an affront to local democracy. As advocates for the empowerment of local government, we can never support or accept any diminution in our reserved functions and powers."

Councillor Des Guckian thanked the Members for their support in this regard.

MM.53.21 Motion from Councillor Enda McGloin - County Development Plan

To consider the following Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Enda McGloin;

"I ask the Director of Services and Planning Department for a report to members as to what implications for the County Development Plan and in particular around our policy on 'one off housing' the recently published Climate Action Bill will have in the future if it becomes law."

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

"On 17 June 2019, the Government published the Climate Action Plan which committed to bring forward a new Climate Action (Amendment) Bill for publication in 2020. The Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Bill was published last year and if passed, will commit the country to move to a climate resilient and climate neutral economy by 2050.

The current Programme for Government commits to a 7% average yearly reduction in overall greenhouse gas emissions over the next decade, and to achieving net zero emissions by 2050. This Bill will drive implementation of a suite of policies to help the country achieve this goal.

The Bill proposes to introduce a system of 5-year economy-wide carbon budgets, which will outline a ceiling for total greenhouse gas emissions. These will be prepared by the Climate Change Advisory Council and presented to Government to consider and approve, with input from the Oireachtas.

The Bill includes the following key elements:

- Establishes a 2050 emissions target.
- Introduces a system of successive 5-year, economy-wide carbon budgets starting in 2021.
- Strengthens the role of the Climate Change Advisory Council in proposing carbon budgets.

- Introduces a requirement to annually revise the Climate Action Plan and prepare a National Long Term Climate Action Strategy at least every decade.
- Introduces a requirement for all Local Authorities to prepare individual Climate Action Plans which will include both mitigation and adaptation measures.
- Gives a stronger oversight role for the Oireachtas through an Oireachtas Committee.

There is no guidance contained in the Bill in relation to one off housing or indeed to spatial planning generally. The Bill requires that each Local Authority shall have regard to its Local Authority Climate Action Plan when making a development plan within the meaning of the Planning and Development Act 2000. The preparation of the National Planning Framework and Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy both predated the publication of the Bill. The preparation of the development plan must be consistent with the higher-level strategic planning frameworks but also with any policy or objectives of the Government or of any Minister of the Government. This would include the approved Government Action Plan on Climate.

The Action Plan on Climate indicates the need for actions to address the spatial pattern and urban form of development. Similarly, actions that integrate land use and transport planning i.e., consideration of spatial pattern, urban form, and mobility, are required, in addition to actions that focus on individual transport measures or modes. These cross-cutting considerations are necessary because the spatial pattern of development and related urban structure directly influence the need to travel in the first instance. They also determine the pattern of movement, in terms of the frequency and duration of trips and ultimately, behavioural choices regarding modes of transport that may be used. There is also a need to combine measures to influence the spatial pattern of development, urban structure, and overall mobility, with low carbon technology measures, such as a significant increase in the EV fleet.

It is respectfully considered that the publication of the anticipated replacement Section 28 Rural Housing Guidelines by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage scheduled for March will provide more detail on the manner in which transitioning to a climate and climate neutral economy will impact on the rural housing policies to be pursued in development plans."

Councillor Enda McGloin expressed his concern regarding the implications for the County Development Plan and in particular the policy on 'one off housing' under the recently published Climate Action Bill. He welcomed the comprehensive reply received in this regard.

Mr Bernard Greene, Senior Planner, gave the members an update on the response as circulated and on the preparation of the County Development Plan and in particular how the recently published Climate Action Bill will be reflected in the Plan.

Councillor Sean McDermott supported the motion and said he was fearful of what is coming down the line in March when the Section 28 Rural Housing Guidelines are published.

Councillor Felim Gurn said this is another piece of legislation that will stop one off housing. Councillor Des Guckian also expressed his concerns in this regard.

Cathaoirleach, Councillor Mary Bohan said this is very timely and until the publication of Section 28 Rural Housing Guidelines, great care must be taken when preparing the County Development Plan and all the issues and concerns expressed by the Members are taken into account.

MM.54.21 Motion from Councillor Brendan Barry and motion from Councillor Paddy Farrell - Beef Prices

It was agreed that Motion No 20 in the name of Councillor Brendan Barry and Motion No 24 in the name of Councillor Paddy Farrell be taken concurrently as they relate to the same issue.

To consider the following Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Brendan Barry;

"I request that Leitrim County Council call on the Minister for Agriculture, Charlie McConalogue TD, to establish an Independent Meat Regulator with statutory powers. The purpose of such an independent regulator will be to have legislative powers to investigate anti-competitive behaviour by meat processors, meat traders, retailers and other bodies, who operate along the meat supply chain and to protect primary producers. A regulator with real powers is required to get a fair share of the retail price for farmers."

To consider the following Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Paddy Farrell;

"I ask Leitrim County Council to call on Minister for Agriculture, Charlie McConalogue TD, to pay attention to movement in beef prices. Factories are reducing their prices now without justification for same. Experts reckon beef prices should be €4.50/kg to break even. We now see quotes at €3.70/kg for top quality animals. We hear a lot about frontline workers nowadays. Suckler and sheep farmers in Leitrim are on the front line continuously caring for their stock. These farmers never know what their income is going to be week in, week out. This conduct by factories cannot continue."

Councillor Brendan Barry gave the background to his motion noting that the National Beef Kill had remained at the same level for the last 7 weeks with an increase last week.

Councillor Enda Stenson and Councillor Justin Warnock supported the motion,

Councillor Paddy Farrell gave the background to his motion said he has seen a lot of committees and task forces setup in this regard and feels nothing has been done and there is a lot of bureaucracy.

Councillor Farrell highlighted that from the 1st March, just 6 people can attend a premises where Pedigree Sales are taking place at any one time, this includes an auctioneer and clerk.

Councillor Justin Warnock asked if Councillor Farrell would amend his motion to remove the line regarding frontline workers. Councillor Farrell agreed to this.

Councillor Des Guckian, Felim Gurn, Councillor Sean McGowan, Councillor Sean McDermott and Councillor Gerry Dolan supported the motions.

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

It was **AGREED** Leitrim County Council call on the Minister for Agriculture, Charlie McConalogue TD, to establish an Independent Meat Regulator with statutory powers. The purpose of such an independent regulator will be to have legislative powers to investigate anti-competitive behaviour by meat processors, meat traders, retailers and other bodies, who operate along the meat supply chain and to protect primary producers. A regulator with real powers is required to get a fair share of the retail price for farmers.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Paddy Farrell
SECONDED by Cllr. Des Guckian

It was **AGREED** Leitrim County Council call on Minister for Agriculture, Charlie McConalogue TD, to pay attention to movement in beef prices. Factories are reducing their prices now without justification for same. Experts reckon beef prices should be €4.50/kg to break even. We now see quotes at €3.70/kg for top quality animals. Suckler and sheep farmers in Leitrim are on the front line continuously caring for their stock. These farmers never know what their income is going to be week in, week out. This conduct by factories cannot continue.

MM.55.21 Motion from Councillor Sean McDermott - Staycation Holiday Market

To consider the following Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Sean McDermott;

"I ask if Leitrim is in a good position to take advantage of the staycation holiday market that has developed since the onset Covid-19?"

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

"It is anticipated that the majority of the hospitality and tourism businesses will reopen when government guidelines allow. 2021 will be a challenging year for tourism as businesses rebuild after a year of reduced income and financial loss. The tourism team are in regular contact with all of the businesses to ensure that they are being supported and availing of the many schemes applicable to them. Leitrim Tourism CLG has been successful in securing a grant of €75,000 from the Rural development LEADER programme towards a total campaign of €150,000 which has been matched funded at 50% by Leitrim County Council and Leitrim Tourism CLG .The campaign is in response to COVID 19 pandemic to assist the industry in their recovery and to increase visitor numbers from the domestic and

northern Irish market.

The project will deliver a destination marketing campaign for the promotion of all relevant tourism attributes of County Leitrim, aimed at attracting visitors to Leitrim in challenging times and consisting of a national campaign targeting domestic and Northern Ireland markets on which the county is highly dependent. The campaign will be delivered through digital media, social media and radio advertising elements and delivered in accordance with the government guidelines and restrictions.

When the staycation market opens it will be a very competitive space with each county looking for a share of the same market, therefore Leitrim needs to stand out from the rest and factors such as availability, good outdoor product and offering excellent value will be key to attracting tourist to Leitrim."

Councillor Sean McDermott welcomed the reply.

MM.56.21 Motion from Councillor Sean McGowan - Land Development Agency

To consider the following Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Sean McGowan;

"I ask the Chief Executive, if the establishment of the Land Development Agency (LDA) may override our own policies & decision making here in Leitrim in chartering our own way forward for the benefit of those on our housing list. What benefits / risks are there with the establishment of this body for counties like Leitrim?"

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

"The Land Development Agency (LDA) Bill 2021 proposes to establish the Land Development Agency (LDA) on a statutory basis and sets out the core goals of the LDA to undertake strategic land assembly and fully utilise state lands to build affordable homes and sustainable communities. The LDA have indicated that the LDA Bill will provide a legislative grounding for one of its key strategies of partnering and collaborating with local authorities. The LDA will focus initially on public lands in towns of over 10,000 people. The Bill provides that the LDA will periodically report to Government on public lands which could be suitable for housing or urban development and the Government may direct that such lands be transferred to the LDA. The Bill also provides that the LDA will have first refusal to purchase public lands being put up for sale.

Under the LDA Bill the Minister for Housing will specify an affordability requirement for the delivery of affordable homes for sale or rent on public lands. This affordability requirement can be varied on sites in different areas depending on local housing needs.

The LDA can provide services to local authorities for the development of large-scale multi-tenure sites for housing and urban development in urban centres over 30,000. This will assist with the construction of increased social housing on local authority owned sites.

The benefits are that the LDA may in the future bring forward land within County Leitrim for the development of Social and Affordable Housing from public bodies that may not have been utilised.

The Bill contains a provision relating to local authority land. Under Part 7, Section 56

provides that Section 211(2) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 and Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001 shall not apply to the disposal of land owned by a local authority to the Agency.

The bill is currently before Dail Eireann - 2nd stage."

Councillor Sean McGowan said the initial focus of the Land Development Agency is on public lands in towns over 10,000 people and he said this is an erosion of powers of Elected Members. Councillor Sean McGowan said he opposed Section 49 and Section 56 of the Bill and proposed that these two sections be deleted. Councillor Sean McGowan said the Local Authority Members Association are opposed to this.

Councillor Pdraig Fallon supported the motion and said it initially may not have much of an impact for Leitrim but may have at a later date.

Councillor Paddy O'Rourke supported the motion.

Councillor Thomas Mulligan said that the Association of Irish Local Government of which he is a member of are very much opposed to this.

MM.57.21 Motion from Councillor Finola Armstrong McGuire - Central Registration for registering for a GP

To consider the following Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Finola Armstrong-McGuire;

"I call on our Executive to ask the Department of Health for clarity regarding those living and working in Ireland and not registered with a GP, in seeking out COVID-19 vaccines when rollout applies to them. I have heard 2 bulletins; one advises people to register at central registration, and the other says your GP will call you.

Many people in the country have had no illness and have not registered with any GP. Surgery lists are full, and a waiting list is in place in our region. Hence, there needs to be clarity and consistency."

Councillor Finola Armstrong McGuire said that clarity regarding those living and working among us that are not registered with a GP need to know where they can register in advance of the COVID 19 vaccine rollout when it applies to them.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr.Finola Armstrong McGuire
SECONDED by Cllr. Enda McGloin

It was **AGREED** that Leitrim County Council contact the Department of Health for clarity regarding those living and working in Ireland and not registered with a GP, in seeking out COVID-19 vaccines when rollout applies to them. one bulletin advises people to register at central registration, and the other bulletin says your GP will call you. Many people in the

country have had no illness and have not registered with any GP. Surgery lists are full, and a waiting list is in place in our region. Hence, there needs to be clarity and consistency.

Councillor Enda McGloin paid tribute to all our local GP's and encouraged all citizens to take the vaccine, when the their time comes and get this pandemic dealt with as soon as possible.

Councillor Enda Stenson supported the motion.

MM.58.21 Motion from Councillor Paddy O'Rourke - Shannon Navigation North of Lough Allen towards Dowra

To consider the following Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Paddy O'Rourke;

"I call upon Leitrim County Council to use their influence with Waterways Ireland to include extending the Shannon navigation North of Lough Allen towards Dowra in their plans. This necessary development supported by the appropriate infrastructure would open up the tourist potential in an unspoilt scenic part of our county."

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

"Planning permission was refused to Waterways Ireland following an appeal to An Bord Pleanála in 2008 to extend the navigation channel Lough Allen to Annagh Upper, Dowra. The reasons for refusal were both detailed and extensive relating to environmental considerations, removal of proposed public marina from the village of Dowra and traffic safety concerns. An objective is being suggested for inclusion in the draft County Development Plan 2022-2028 to explore with Waterways Ireland the extension of the navigation channel from Lough Allen to Dowra as part of an overall strategy for the further development of water-based leisure activities on Lough Allen. The Economic Development Section assisted by the Planning Department can commence discussions with Waterways Ireland."

Councillor Paddy O'Rourke said Waterways Ireland are currently compiling a plan for the waterway and he sought clarification if representations have been made by Waterways Ireland to Leitrim County Council in this regard. Councillor Paddy O'Rourke said this would greatly enhance tourism in the county.

Councillor Enda McGloin supported the motion and outlined that traffic into Lough Allen is small and it is important to make a connection with the village of Dowra.

Councillor Sean Mc Dermot said this issue was raised at the Recreational Forum.

Councillor Brendan Barry said he had similar motions and this project would be a great benefit to Dowra and County Leitrim.

Cathaoirleach, Councillor Mary Bohan acknowledged that many motions have been raised

on this and she said it would be great for Dowra, Drumkeerin and Drumshanbo.

Mr Joseph Gilhooly advised an objective is being considered for inclusion in the Draft County Development Plan 2022-2028 to explore with Waterways Ireland the extension of the navigation channel from Lough Allen to Dowra as part of an overall strategy for the further development of water-based leisure activities on Lough Allen. The Economic Development Section assisted by the Planning Department can commence discussions with Waterways Ireland.

MM.59.21 Motion from Councillor Mary Bohan - Medical Cards

To consider the following Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Cllr Mary Bohan;

"I propose that Leitrim County Council call on the Minister for Health to increase the income threshold for medical card applicants. The current system is causing hardship for many people."

Cathaoirleach, Councillor Mary Bohan said that she has received representations from a number of people who can't pay private medical insurance and she proposed the income threshold for medical card applicants be reviewed and increased.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr.Mary Bohan
SECONDED by Cllr.Paddy Farrell

It was **AGREED** that Leitrim County Council call on the Minister for Health to increase the income threshold for medical card applicants. The current system is causing hardship for many people.

Councillor Des Guckian supported the motion and proposed that the motion include an income threshold increase of 10%.

Cathaoirleach, Councillor Mary Bohan said 10% might still not be enough to qualify and said she would prefer to ask that it be increased.

MM.60.21 Motion from Councillor Enda Stenson - Work Schedules

To consider the following Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Enda Stenson;

"As a result of Covid restrictions and lockdown, are we facing a much more difficult, time ahead to complete work schedules, and financially are we able to complete our full program of works, Housing, Roads etc."

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

"The Council is very conscious of the impact on work programmes of the required cessation

of all non-essential construction due to the level 5 restrictions. With tremendous effort by all staff in 2020, practically all the programmes were delivered despite the cessation of construction in the first lockdown. However, the duration of non-essential construction is now expected to last well beyond that of 2020 and as a consequence, while every effort will be made to maximise programme delivery, it is difficult to forecast what the actual outturn will be at this time."

Councillor Enda Stenson acknowledged the reply received and sought clarification, if Capital works in Leitrim will be affected due to the ongoing COVID restrictions and lockdown. Councillor Enda Stenson said he would welcome a report on the works programme after Easter.

Councillor Enda McGloin supported the motion.

MM.61.21 Motion from Councillor Ita Reynolds Flynn - Unfinished Housing Estates

To consider the following Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Ita Reynolds Flynn;

"I ask Leitrim County Council to provide a brief report to members with regard to how many unfinished estates have been taken in charge since this term of the Local Authority commenced in June 2019 and how many it expects will be taken in charge by June 2021. Furthermore if the relevant estates can be categorised by MA."

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

"The term 'unfinished housing estates' is misleading. The taking in charge of a housing estate has no relevance to whether an estate is finished or unfinished and, rather, relates solely to the transfer of responsibility for the maintenance of the roads and services in an estate to the Council and Irish Water. With regard to the estates taken in charge by this Council, the majority were finished and so taking in charge has simply transferred the maintenance responsibility to the Council/Irish Water from whatever management arrangement had been put in place between the vendor and purchasers at the time the original contracts for sale were entered into. A small number of the estates taken in charge require works to complete and the Council is currently procuring contractors to undertake the necessary works that can be funded through the various bond settlements realised in respect of such estates.

Since June 2019 this Council has taken charge of 50 estates: these are broken down below.

September 2019 – 36 estates (16 in Carrick on Shannon MD; 15 in Manorhamilton MD; 5 in Ballinamore MD)

October 2019 – 1 estate in Drumshanbo (Ballinamore Municipal District)

October 2020 – 13 estates (5 in Carrick on Shannon MD; 4 in Manorhamilton MD; 4 in Ballinamore MD)

The Council will not be in a position to take any additional estates into charge prior to June 2021. The taking in charge process involves the undertaking of various condition surveys on the part of the Council and Irish Water and, unfortunately, at present, due to the COVID restrictions on travel and other activities, these surveys are not considered essential and cannot be undertaken. Following the completion of these surveys the Council and Irish Water will first have to enter discussions concerning the apportionment of any monies available through bond settlements and only once these are concluded will the Council be in a position to commence the statutory public consultation period to declare the roads in such estates as being public roads. The statutory process itself will take approximately 3 months. Whilst the Council had hoped to progress an additional number of estates through the taking in charge process in 2021, unfortunately, the uncertainty and delays in all process due to the impact of COVID, will delay progress and it is likely that the next tranche of estates to be taken in charge cannot be concluded until 2022."

Councillor Ita Reynolds Flynn welcomed the reply received in this regard.

MM.62.21 Motion from Councillor Felim Gurn - Power outages

To consider the following Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Felim Gurn;

"Under the new Climate Change Bill there are no chimneys allowed on new houses. In the future, if there are power outages, how are people supposed to heat their homes, because power is needed to heat their houses. Lessons need to be learnt from Texas where there was no insulation in the houses and people were let down by regulations. I call on Leitrim Council to write to the Minister for Environment Climate & Communications Mr Eamonn Ryan TD to outline what alternates are available to people in the future to mitigate against power outages which may affect everyday society."

Councillor Felim Gurn gave the background to his motion and proposed that a letter issue to Minister Ryan asking him when utilities go down what alternatives are available to people in the future to mitigate against power outages which may affect everyday society e.g., heating homes.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr.Felim Gurn

SECONDED by Cllr.Justin Warnock

It was **AGREED** that Leitrim Council write to the Minister for Environment Climate & Communications Mr Eamonn Ryan TD to outline what alternates are available to people in the future to mitigate against power outages which may affect everyday society. Under the new Climate Change Bill there are no chimneys allowed on new houses. In the future, if there are power outages, how are people supposed to heat their homes, because power is needed to heat their houses. Lessons need to be learnt from Texas where there was no insulation in the houses and people were let down by regulations.

Councillor Enda McGloin, Councillor Pdraig Fallon and Councillor Sean McGowan supported the motion.

MM.63.21 Motion from Councillor Gerry Dolan - REPS 2

To consider the following Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Gerry Dolan;

"The current Minister of Agriculture's party has in the past promised to deliver a "Reps 2" type environmental scheme based on the old Reps Scheme.

Details are emerging of the new proposed environmental scheme and it is nothing like the old Reps Scheme. These schemes are of grave importance to farmers in this county, if done right.

I am calling on this Council to put forward a motion to the Minister's Department, that they deliver on what they promised and scrap the proposed Environmental scheme in favour of a scheme based on the principles of the old Reps Scheme."

Councillor Gerry Dolan outlined that details of a new proposed environmental scheme being proposed is nothing like the old Reps Scheme. Councillor Dolan proposed that a letter issue to the Minister for Agriculture to deliver on a Reps 2 Scheme which was promised based on the old Reps Scheme.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr.Gerry Dolan
SECONDED by Cllr.Justin Warnock

It was **AGREED** Leitrim County Council call on the Minister of Agriculture, that they deliver on what they promised and scrap the proposed Environmental scheme in favour of a scheme based on the principles of the old Reps Scheme.

The current Minister of Agriculture's party has in the past promised to deliver a "Reps 2" type environmental scheme based on the old Reps Scheme.

Details are emerging of the new proposed environmental scheme and it is nothing like the old Reps Scheme. These schemes are of grave importance to farmers in this county, if done right.

Councillor Paddy O'Rourke outlined that things have moved a lot since the introduction of the REPS Scheme in 1993 & 1994 and farmers need to know what they are signing up to. Councillor O'Rourke said he would like to see that landowners who are in the scheme take responsibility for the maintenance of their hedges.

Councillor Brendan Barry hoped the new scheme will be like the original scheme and that it will be delivered and he paid tribute to farmers for all the good work they do.

This concluded the business of the meeting at 2.59 pm

Signed:

**Councillor Mary Bohan
Cathaoirleach**

**Kieran Brett
Meetings Administrator**

Dated:

Tuesday, 4 May 2021