

**Minutes of Leitrim County Council meeting held in the The Bush Hotel, Carrick on Shannon,
Co. Leitrim on Monday, 6 September 2021**

Members Present: Councillor Mary Bohan
Councillor Finola Armstrong McGuire
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 Thomas Mulligan
Councillor Ita Reynolds Flynn
Councillor Enda Stenson

Councillor Paddy O'Rourke (Cathaoirleach) presiding

Apologies: Councillor Felim Gurn
Councillor Justin Warnock

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
Shay O`Connor, Senior Engineer
Terry McGovern, Senior Engineer
Francis Gaffney, Senior Engineer
Kieran Brett, Meetings Administrator
Kathleen Ellis, Assistant Staff Officer

At the outset of the meeting Cathaoirleach, Councillor Paddy O'Rourke welcomed Lola Gonzalez Farrell who is participating in an internship programme through the Immigrant Council of Ireland and is working with Councillor Sean McGowan for a period of 3 months. Cathaoirleach, Councillor Paddy O'Rourke outlined that Ms Gonzalez Farrell will be attending council meetings and community engagements with Councillor McGowan.

MM.122.21 Votes of Sympathy

The Members extended a vote of sympathy to the following:

- Ciaran Dolan, Furnace, Dromod, Co Leitrim on the death of Myra Dolan R.I.P.
- Mary Jo Colreavy, Rathoath, Meath on the death of John Colreavy R.I.P.
- The Family of the Late Donnacha Ó'Dúlaing R.I.P.

MM.123.21 Adoption of Minutes 12th July 2021

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Caillian Ellis
SECONDED by Cllr. Brendan Barry

It was **AGREED** to adopt the minutes of 12th July 2021.

Councillor Des Guckian highlighted a typo in Item No 33 stating it should read Ballymurphy. It was agreed that the minutes would be rectified in this regard.

MM.124.21 Consider the adoption of the "Draft Bye-Laws to prevent the creation of and control litter within County Leitrim" pursuant to Section 57 (1) and (2) of the Protection of the Environment Act 2003 and Part 19 of the Local Government Act 2001 and Local Government Act, 2001 (Bye-laws) Regulations 2006

Mr Vincent Dwyer, Head of Finance, Water, Environment, Climate Action and Emergency Services outlined that the public consultation process in respect of the draft bye laws had taken place during the summer of 2021. The period prescribed for receipt of submissions has elapsed and no submissions have been received.

Mr Dwyer outlined that the owner, occupier, or person in charge of a mobile outlet must provide and maintain adequate litter bins in order to prevent the creation of litter at, or in the vicinity, of their outlet while it is in operation. They ensure that any litter caused by the operation of the outlet is removed from the vicinity within a reasonable distance not exceeding a distance of 100 metres from the location of the outlet and comply with conditions in relation to the location and operation of the outlet as the local authority deems necessary for the prevention or removal of litter at or in the vicinity of the outlet.

Mr Dwyer said the byelaws within County Leitrim will come into force on 11th October 2021 and the existing byelaws will be revoked from 10th October 2021.

Councillor Mary Bohan queried if the byelaws could facilitate the implementation of CCTV cameras to combat litter. Councillor Bohan paid tribute to the community volunteers who carry out local clean-ups, and she said people creating the problem need to take responsibility for their actions.

Councillor Brendan Barry supported the bye laws and thanked Leitrim County Council for their work on this issue. Councillor Barry referred to the high costs on businesses owners to

comply with waste management and he said there should be consequences for people who are dumping.

Councillor Barry referred to rubbish coming from fast food outlets and asked that measures be considered to link the packaging from such outlets to the person placing an order, i.e., telephone numbers/car registration printed on packaging from food outlets.

Councillor Des Guckian supported the byelaws and agreed that CCTV is a good idea at certain key locations.

Councillor Sean McGowan supported the introduction of the byelaws. Councillor Sean McGowan said over the summer the bins at Dromod Harbour were collected on a Wednesday and this is not enough during peak periods. This area is a very popular tourist destination, and the overflowing bins were unsightly and attracted a lot of negative comments. Councillor Sean McGowan proposed that the bins be emptied on a Monday and Friday during summer peak periods to avoid this problem.

Councillor Caillian Ellis said landowners should not have to bear the costs of getting rubbish, caused by fly tipping, cleared from their property and he asked if the Council could help in this regard.

Councillor Enda McGloin sought clarification on the obligations of the owner of the property under the byelaws. He also queried if the Council is checking households to see if they are registered with a waste collector or disposing of their waste correctly.

Councillor Pdraig Fallon supported the comments in relation to the use of CCTV, and he welcomed the section in the bye laws in relation to the occupier of fast-food / takeaway premises selling food for consumption off the premises.

Councillor Pdraig Fallon said people who bring their household waste to waste facilities should not be forced to register with a waste collection service provider. People who bring their waste to these facilities get a receipt as proof that they have disposed of their waste in a responsible manner.

Mr Vincent Dwyer outlined that there are privacy issues around the use of CCTV, these issues are being worked out nationally and the use of CCTV will be considered again.

The section in the byelaws in relation to business owners is designed to catch all who are operating the businesses and catch the person who is responsible.

Mr Dwyer said the proposal in relation to the fast-food outlets printing customer information on fast food packaging has been discussed by the SPC and it was felt it would be difficult to ensure compliance and there could be GDPR and privacy issues arising.

Mr Dwyer said bins are being put in place for small bona fide litter items. The bins have a small aperture so as to avoid being subject to abuse.

Mr Dwyer said the dumping of waste on land is mainly a waste management issue and with ownership of property comes responsibility. Mr Dwyer said checks on household registration with service providers, and receipts from waste facilities, have been suspended due to Covid-19 but will be reinstated as soon as possible.

Councillor Brendan Barry acknowledged that it is difficult to police fast food outlet waste. He said the dates and times could be printed on fast food packaging which could, in turn, be cross referenced with CCTV footage from fast food premises and this could be used to identify persistent litterers.

Mr Dwyer said the collection of waste from Dromod Harbour during peak times will be reviewed for next year.

Councillor Pdraig Fallon proposed that bins at Corry Strand should be put in place.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Mary Bohan
SECONDED by Cllr. Enda McGloin

It was **AGREED** to adopt byelaws to prevent the creation and control litter within County Leitrim pursuant to Section 57(1) and (2) of the Protection of the Environment Act 2003 and Part 19 of the Local Government Act 2001 and Local Government Act, 2001 (Byelaws) Regulations 2006.

MM.125.21 To consider having regard to the extraordinary circumstances arising from the risk to public health posed by the spread of COVID 19 and the disruption to the completion of the review of the Development Plan and the preparation of a new plan caused by restrictions introduced in response to the COVID 19 pandemic, whether a further period is necessary and appropriate to complete the review and to prepare and make a new Development Plan and the length of that period.

Referring to the report circulated to the members, Mr Joseph Gilhooly advised that the County Development Plan is under review and currently is due for conclusion in June 2022. Due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the review process has been hampered in a number of Local Authorities and legislation has been introduced to enable Planning Authorities to seek an extension of the Development Plan Review process. Leitrim County Council intend to extend the review process by a period of 9 months.

Cathaoirleach, Councillor Paddy O'Rourke said every opportunity should be given to complete the review of the County Development Plan and to prepare a new Development Plan for County Leitrim.

Councillor Enda McGloin proposed the extension of 9 months for the review of the County Development Plan based on the reasons as set out in the briefing note circulated to Elected Members. Councillor Pdraig Fallon supported the proposal.

Councillor Des Guckian said he opposed the extension of the review of the County Development Plan process. Councillor Guckian said that there is a large number of staff in the Planning Department, they are hiding behind the excuse of COVID-19 and the review has been side-tracked by projects from the Capital Projects Office that are of no benefit to the people of Leitrim. Councillor Guckian referred to the 3-month extension that was sought for the submissions on the Carrick-Dromod N4 Route Options public consultation, which was refused. He said he would see a big danger extending the review of the County Development Plan as it would give speculators and vulture funds time to buy land in Leitrim.

Councillor Mary Bohan disagreed with Councillor Des Guckian's comments outlining that due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the review of the County Development Plan process has been hampered and this extension will give citizens in Leitrim the opportunity to highlight their views and she supported the extension.

Councillor Sean McDermott agreed with the proposal and said it is important to get it right. Councillor Sean McDermott asked what the protocol is in relation to the submissions received on the Draft County Development Plan.

Mr Joseph Gilhooly said the submissions received will be published along with the Preliminary Draft Development Plan with Chief Executive's Report which will issue to the Members in Mid-October. Mr Joseph Gilhooly outlined that the Planning Department operating in a county of the scale of Leitrim, consists of a small permanent complement of planners augmented as necessary with temporary contract staff. Arising from the required work processes adjustments due to the Covid-19 restrictions along with direct and indirect Covid-19 related absences, the functionality of the Planning Department has been severely impacted over the past 12 months. During this time, the Planning Authority has had to prioritise the statutory deadlines as required in the Development Management and Enforcement functions over the course of 2021, with the resultant and unavoidable negative impact on the preparation of the draft County Development Plan. Mr Gilhooly said the County Development Plan is an important strategic plan for 6 years. Throughout the course of the preparation of the County Development Plan, the resources of the Planning Department are augmented by engaging external specialist consultants. This work involves the undertaking of surveys and attending to site visits as required. The consultants engaged were unable to undertake the required surveys and attend site visits for extensive periods of the past year due from Covid -19 restrictions, only completing these tasks since mid Q2 of this year. The consequence is that the preparation of the draft County Development Plan 2022-2028 is approximately 7 months behind schedule.

Mr Gilhooly noted that Leitrim County Council have a very ambitious Capital Investment Programme and all projects considered or undertaken are for the betterment of the County. Mr Gilhooly said the period for submissions on the N4 project had been more than adequate and this project will be going through further phases of public consultation.

Cathaoirleach, Councillor Paddy O'Rourke asked if there was a further proposal not to extend the review process by a period of 9 months. There was no further proposal and in the absence of no proposal the first proposal was carried.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Enda McGloin
SECONDED by Cllr. Pdraig Fallon

It was **AGREED** under Section 9A (2) of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, that a further period of 9 months is necessary and appropriate to complete the review and to prepare a new development plan for Co. Leitrim. The resolution is then submitted to the Chief Executive along with the reasons given for reaching this resolution (as outlined in the submitted Briefing Note).

MM.126.21 Fix the date of the Leitrim County Council Budget Meeting

Mr Vincent Dwyer advised Members that the Budget Meeting will take place on the Monday, 8th November 2021 at 11 am

This was noted and agreed by the Members.

MM.127.21 Management Reports - June and July 2021

The Management Reports for June 2021 and July 2021 were circulated to Members in accordance with Section 136 (2) of the Local Government Act, 2001 as inserted by Section 51 of the Local Government Reform Act, 2014.

Councillor Des Guckian welcomed the provision of increased treatment capacity at Carrick Water Treatment Plan and the new watermain in Mohill.

Councillor Des Guckian expressed his disappointment with the Hartley Sewerage Scheme, and he asked that the Department and the Council put in place a proper Sewerage scheme. Mr Vincent Dwyer outlined that the Council acts on an agency basis for the Department. The matter has been escalated to the Department who have set out their views and these have been conveyed to the residents.

Mr Francis Gaffney, A/ Senior Engineer outlined that he has met with the Hartley Sewerage Scheme Committee, and explained the decisions made by the Department. He outlined that the group are entitled to recoup expenses for the planning costs - the grant is 75%.

The monthly management reports were noted by Members.

MM.128.21 Commitments

Mr Joseph Gilhooly informed members that under the CLÁR Scheme 2021 Leitrim County Council received funding with a cumulative value of €391,672.25 which has a potential match fund requirement for the local authority of up to €20,000.

The Members welcomed the allocation and noted the match fund requirement.

MM.129.21 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 online meeting held on the 3rd September 2021.

- Update on the Budgetary Process
- Arrangements for Council and Municipal District Meetings
- Control of Litter Bye Laws
- Extension of the review of the County Development Plan
- Items for Council Meeting 6th September 2021

This update was noted by Members.

MM.130.21 Attendance at conferences/training

It was noted that all training is taking place online and all notifications of training is being circulated to members.

MM.131.21 Meeting Correspondence

1. Resolution dated 6th July 2021 from Wicklow County Council calling on the Minister for Local Government & Planning that as part of the conditions for planning applications for new housing estates that developers must install Automated External Defibrillators.
2. Resolution dated 7th July 2021 from Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council regarding the purchase of goods or services, produced or provided in whole or in part (as practicable) from illegally occupied territories by illegal settlers and that such contracts should cease as soon as allowed.
3. Resolution dated 6th July 2021 from Fermanagh & Omagh District Council in relation to the legal and social movement globally for the “Rights of Nature” aimed to strengthen protections for people, place, and planet.
4. Letter from Senator Robbie Gallagher received on the 7th July 2021 regarding recent debate in the Seanad in relation to concerns of 3,500 local authority water services staff regarding the service level agreement with Irish Water.

5. Resolution dated 13th July 2021 from Limerick City & County Council calling on the Minister for Health, Minister for Social Protection, Minister for Education and Chair of the Oireachtas Committee on Disability matters for support to the campaign of Epilepsy Ireland to address long standing issues that continue to impact on people with epilepsy and their families in Limerick.
6. Email received 14th July 2021 from the Office of the Minister for Rural and Community Development regarding €15 million funding that is available under the 2021 Town & Village Renewal Scheme to renovate derelict and vacant buildings in our town centres by re-purposing buildings for remote working or cultural and community spaces.
7. Letter dated 6th July 2021 from the Office of the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister for Defence on foot of Resolution passed by Leitrim County Council regarding a global ban on fracking.
8. Email received 20th July 2021 from the Office of the Minister for Agriculture, Food and Marine acknowledging receipt of Resolution passed by Leitrim County Council regarding the CAP Programme.
9. Letter from the Office of the Minister of State for Transport dated 20th July 2021 on foot of Resolution passed by Leitrim County Council in relation to the Local Improvement Scheme.
10. Email received 22nd July 2021 from the Office of the Minister for Social Protection acknowledging receipt of Resolution passed by Leitrim County Council regarding working mothers and their partners being allowed to take paid leave after suffering a miscarriage or stillbirth.
11. Email received 22nd July 2021 from the Office of the Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth acknowledging receipt of Resolution passed by Leitrim County Council regarding Bereavement Leave.
12. Letter dated 20th July 2021 from the HSE acknowledging receipt of Resolution passed by Leitrim County Council regarding disability respite services in South Leitrim.
13. Email received 26th July 2021 from the Office of the Minister for Justice regarding the Drumkeerin Garda Station on foot of Resolution passed by Leitrim County Council in this regard.

14. Email received 28th July 2021 from the Minister for Transport acknowledging receipt of Resolution passed by Leitrim County Council regarding the Local Improvement Scheme.
15. Letter dated 30th July 2021 from the Office of the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine regarding the CAP Programme.
16. Letter dated 29th July 2021 from the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage in relation to the Tenant (Incremental) Purchase Scheme.
17. Letter from Assistant Commissioner from An Garda Siochana dated 11th August 2021 on foot of Resolution passed by Leitrim County Council regarding Drumkeeran Garda Station.
18. Letter from HSE dated 5th August 2021 in relation to the respite services for people with disabilities in the South of the County.

Councillor Ita Reynolds Flynn asked that if any further correspondence issues on this before the next full Council meeting, that it be circulated to Elected Members in advance of the meeting. Mr Kieran Brett, Meetings Administrator agreed to this request.

Councillor Des Guckian noted further respite provision is being provided but it does not indicate as to where in Leitrim.

19. Resolution dated 5th August 2021 from Donegal County Council calling for support that the collection of the LPT is stopped from the victims of Mica, Pyrite and Pyrrhotite.
20. Resolution dated 28th July 2021 from Wicklow County Council calling on the Minister for Health for a new national maternity hospital to provide healthcare in the greater Dublin area including county Wicklow.
21. Letter dated 25th August 2021 from Office of the Minister for Justice acknowledging receipt of Resolution passed by Leitrim County Council in regard to introducing a distinct offence of stalking.
22. Email received 30th August 2021 from the Office of the Minister for Rural and Community Development regarding the Local Improvement Scheme.

Councillor Pdraig Fallon proposed that a further letter issue in this regard requesting the matter to be reconsidered. Councillor Sean McGowan acknowledged that Minister Humphrey allocated funding to Leitrim. However, Councillor Pdraig Fallon highlighted that it was not in the region of what was allocated in other counties including her own county.

Other matters raised under Meeting Correspondence

Councillor Mary Bohan queried if any reply has been received from Irish Water in relation to water charges. Mr Brett confirmed no reply had been received to date in this regard. Councillor Bohan proposed that a further issue to Irish Water in this regard.

Mr Dwyer confirmed that this matter has been raised with the Principal Officer in the Rural Water Scheme Department. This matter is being raised nationally and there has been no update to date.

MM.132.21 Motion from Councillor Enda Stenson- Outdoor Recreational Amenities

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

"After a wonderful summer/year of people out walking, jogging, cycling etc, may I compliment this Council on developing those amenities that facilitate these activities, and may I ask for a brief report, and timescale for the completion of walks, greenways, blueways and other such amenities throughout the county which will further greatly enhance tourism in the county."

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

"Outdoor activities have never been more important for people over the last two years. Leitrim County Council has and continues to develop trails etc in order to increase the outdoor recreational opportunities for residents and visitors. The Council's current capital investment programme makes provision for the development and delivery of a number of very significant projects. In addition, the Council either directly or working in partnership with other agencies and/or communities makes every effort to maximise the potential annually of funding opportunities through programmes such as the Outdoor Recreational Scheme to assist in the implementation of a variety of smaller local walks and trails. The Council is also an active participant in the County Recreation Forum led by Leitrim Development Company.

Specifically, the position regarding the major trails that the Council is developing in the county is as follows;

SLNCR Greenway

We have received tenders for the appointment of a design consultant. These tenders have been analysed and we are at present appointing the successful consultant. This appointment will need approval from the Department of Transport along with grant aid approval before we can proceed.

Carrick on Shannon to Battlebridge Blueway

Our design consultants, Jennings O'Donovan, are working on this project. We have completed a first public consultation for the project and the responses were positive with 94 submissions and over 90% in support of the project. We are at present looking at route options and we expect to publish these before November this year.

Cavan Leitrim Greenway

The section of greenway from Ballinamore to Corgar will be completed shortly. The next section from Corgar to Aghawillin is at Part 8 Planning consultation at the moment. We have applied for funding under the ORIS scheme for this section of the greenway.

There are a number of smaller trails and walks currently being developed in the county at Tullaghan, Sheemore and through the Active Travel project which are at design or planning stages."

Councillor Stenson paid tribute to Leitrim County Council for developing the outdoor recreational amenities, stating they will greatly enhance tourism in the county.

Mr Terry McGovern, A/Senior Engineer outlined that there are a number of projects going ahead right across the County and a list will be forwarded to the Elected Member in question.

MM.133.21 Motion from Councillor Des Guckian - River Drainage Boards reinstated

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

"That we write to the Taoiseach, the Tánaiste and the Minister for Agriculture seeking to have our river drainage boards reinstated, in this County, in order to alleviate the serious water-logging of agricultural land and very serious flooding in many areas. Also, that this motion be forwarded to the Councils of all neighbouring counties, as they, too, are in the same predicament."

Councillor Des Guckian gave the background to his motion and referred to the flooding which took place on the 5th August on the N4. Councillor Des Guckian proposed that the river drainage boards be reinstated to alleviate serious water logging of agricultural land and very serious flooding in many areas, and he made reference to the Pat Kenny Radio Show aired from the Landmark that shamed Leitrim before the nation in relation to flooding on our National Roadway.

Cathaoirleach, Councillor Paddy O'Rourke said he took exception to the statement that Leitrim was shamed before the nation. He stated that a freak storm took place causing flooding on the N4 which very few systems would be designed to cope with.

Councillor Sean McGowan supported the call for reinstatement of the Drainage boards. Referring to the flooding incident on the 5th August, Councillor McGowan paid tribute to Joe Banks, Leitrim County Council, the Gardai, Fire Service and the local people who all

assisted at the incident. Councillor Sean McGowan called for funding to be provided by the TII to ensure culverts are kept clean.

Councillor Brendan Barry outlined that he would not support the setting up of the Drainage Boards stating that more money should be put into the physical works and the cleaning of rivers. He also outlined that not all areas are covered under the Drainage Boards.

Cathaoirleach, Councillor Paddy O'Rourke said there is no cost involved in running Drainage Boards, no travel expenses are paid. Councillor O'Rourke said he felt the Drainage Boards were very beneficial as you need co-ordination in getting work done.

Councillor Enda McGloin said he would support Councillor Barry's comments stating if we don't have money to do the works, there is no need for the drainage committees.

Councillor Mary Bohan said she broadly supported the motion and noted that the farmers Association did have input into the Drainage Boards.

Councillor Sean McDermott outlined that roads and houses in some cases need to be protected from flooding.

Councillor Pdraig Fallon said additional water courses need also to be looked at if drainage boards are to be reactivated.

Mr Joseph Gilhooly, Director of Services, paid tribute to Joe Banks, staff of Leitrim County Council and the Fire Service for getting the road re-opened following the flooding incident on the N4 on the 5th August.

Mr Terry McGovern, A/Senior Engineer outlined that he met the TII, and he is hopeful funding will be forthcoming for headwalls, twin pipes, manholes etc on the N4.

Mr Shay O'Connor, Senior Engineer advised Members that at an SPC meeting in 2016, it was outlined that €150,000 per year would need to be spent on land drainage as opposed to €20,000 per year.

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

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

It was **AGREED** that Leitrim County Council write to the Taoiseach, the Tánaiste and the Minister for Agriculture seeking to have our river drainage boards reinstated, in this County, in order to alleviate the serious water-logging of agricultural land and very serious flooding in many areas. Also, that this motion be forwarded to the Councils of all neighbouring counties, as they, too, are in the same predicament.

MM.134.21 Motions from Councillor Padraig Fallon, Councillor Sean McGowan, Councillor Paddy O'Rourke and Councillor Ita Reynolds Flynn - School Transport

It was agreed by the Members that Motion No 12 in the name of Councillor Padraig Fallon, Motion No 15 in the name of Councillor Sean McGowan, Motion No 16 in the name of Councillor Paddy O'Rourke and Motion No 22 in the name of Councillor Ita Reynolds Flynn be taken concurrently as they related to the same issue.

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

"I propose that this Local authority write to both the Minister of Education and the Minister for Transport expressing our dissatisfaction around the issue of school transport, where concessionary ticket holders are again being denied school transport and ask that every effort is made to ensure that these students have access to the transport required. It is simply not good enough to inform students and parents of the withdrawal of this service three days before they return to school."

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

"I seek the support of members in calling on the Department of Education & Minister Norma Foley to provide additional funding for the school transport scheme. As a result of the Covid restrictions there is only 50% capacity on schools' buses serving second-level schools, with the result that there is a shortage of buses & drivers to serve the national schools and children who were availing of the concessionary tickets now find themselves missing out as a result."

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

"I ask that Leitrim County Council support a call to the Department of Education to provide the additional resources to allow the schools transport section of Bus Eireann provide what is essential transport for students attending school. With reduced capacity in buses due to Covid-19 many with concession tickets are being left without transport at a very important time in their education with many families unable to meet the challenge of providing private transport."

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

"I ask that Leitrim County Council write to Department of Education regarding the issue of children with concessionary school transport tickets. Each year there is a problem with transport for pupils attending schools from primary to second level. In some cases, the bus has not enough seats and in other cases the larger bus seats are not filled. Each child is entitled to a bus to school within relevant guidelines. This seems to be country wide issue."

Councillor Padraig Fallon stated that this issue affects Leitrim as a very rural county,

outlining that some families only found out a few days before the school opened that they had no place on the bus. He stated he was aware of a situation where a parent will have to give up their job unless their starting and finishing times are staggered.

Councillor Sean McGowan said this is a regular issue every Autumn and he said there are not enough buses and drivers. Councillor McGowan referred to a particular family that had a concessionary ticket for the last 15 years and when their youngest daughter was due to avail of it, they were told there was no place.

Councillor Ita Reynolds Flynn said this was not a new problem. Parents have had enough they are expected to pay up front for a concessionary ticket and then are told at the last minute there is no seat for their child. This is completely unfair on families and especially on children who have been under stress with the pandemic and the Department of Education will have to look at things in this regard.

Cathaoirleach, Councillor Paddy O'Rourke said additional resources need to be put in place immediately as many children with concessionary tickets are left without transport at an important stage in their education and with their families unable to provide private transport.

Councillor Brendan Barry said this is a serious issue and Post Primary buses should go back to 100% capacity. National School Buses are currently at 100%. With so many people now vaccinated the Post Primary buses should go back to 100%.

Councillor Enda Stenson said this issue arises every year.

Councillor Mary Bohan supported the motions.

Councillor Enda McGloin said he got a response from the Minister's Secretary in this regard, and it was confirmed that the capacity of Post Primary School buses will be reviewed and addressed.

Councillor Des Guckian asked that each political party contact their spokesperson and get their views put across in the Dail in this regard.

Councillor Pdraig Fallon said he has spoken with the Sinn Fein Spokesperson in this regard and Minister Foley has confirmed that it is the next nearest school.

Councillor Caillian Ellis said that the Department of Education has the sole responsibility for this not Bus Eireann. Councillor Ellis said students choose schools that offer the subjects they want. Councillor Ellis said Bus Eireann have been advised that 50% capacity is to remain in place until 22nd December for Post Primary. He said that even with full capacity there are still insufficient places for concessionary ticket holders.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Pdraig Fallon
SECONDED by Cllr. Sean McGowan

It was **AGREED** that Leitrim County Council write to both the Minister of Education and the Minister for Transport expressing our dissatisfaction around the issue of school transport, where concessionary ticket holders are again being denied school transport and ask that every effort is made to ensure that these students have access to the transport required. It is simply not good enough to inform students and parents of the withdrawal of this service three days before they return to school."

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Sean McGowan
SECONDED by Cllr. Paddy O'Rourke

It was **AGREED** that Leitrim County Council call on the Department of Education & Minister Norma Foley to provide additional funding for the school transport scheme. As a result of the Covid restrictions there is only 50% capacity on schools' buses serving second-level schools, with the result that there is a shortage of buses & drivers to serve the national schools and children who were availing of the concessionary tickets now find themselves missing out as a result."

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Paddy O'Rourke
SECONDED by Cllr Ita Reynolds Flynn

It was **AGREED** that Leitrim County Council call on the Department of Education to provide the additional resources to allow the schools transport section of Bus Eireann provide what is essential transport for students attending school. With reduced capacity in buses due to Covid-19 many with concession tickets are being left without transport at a very important time in their education with many families unable to meet the challenge of providing private transport."

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Ita Reynolds Flynn
SECONDED by Cllr Brendan Barry

It was **AGREED** that Leitrim County Council write to Department of Education regarding the issue of children with concessionary school transport tickets. Each year there is a problem with transport for pupils attending schools from primary to second level. In some cases, the bus has not enough seats and in other cases the larger bus seats are not filled. Each child is entitled to a bus to school within relevant guidelines. This seems to be country wide issue.

MM.135.21 Motion from Councillor Enda McGloin - Review PR and Development Strategy

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

"I call on Leitrim County Council to review their PR and development strategy in relation to electric car charging points across our county. In particular, that we publish on our website a clear map with charge points, both public and private, and to develop furthermore points

where they are badly needed, so that visitors to this county who drive electric vehicles are accommodated."

Report by Head of Finance & Water Services

"Leitrim County Council are currently involved with two projects regarding electric car charging points. The Faster project is an EU Interreg cross border project to provide high speed electric charge points across the border counties to cater for the drivers that are making cross country journeys. We have applied for charge points at 10 locations along the national routes under this project. We expect to know within the next few months how many of these charge points will be provided.

We are also involved with Longford County Council under a Leader project to assess the provision of one electric charge points in each municipal district. This project will provide exact details on costs for installation for the local authority and recommendations for the operation of the charge points going forward.

In 2018 the ESB were awarded approx. €10m from the Climate Action Fund to develop the EV network nationally. This project is currently on going.

Regarding publication of charge points there are a number of apps available for drivers which provide details of charge points in the country and also provides information on the status of the charge points. This appears to be the preferred method of drivers to get knowledge of these points."

Councillor Enda McGloin welcomed the reply and acknowledged that there are a number of apps available to drivers and he asked that the charging points be published on the Leitrim County Council and Leitrim Tourism websites. Councillor McGloin queried as to how many charging points will there be put in place over the next 2 years.

Mr Vincent Dwyer said there are a number of working groups preparing a plan for Local Authorities and Leitrim County Council are awaiting to see how a policy develops on this.

Councillor McGloin proposed that this motion be forwarded to the Minister for Transport.

Councillor Finola Armstrong McGuire queried if there are charging points in the new carpark in Carrick and can slow charging points be changed to faster charging points.

Mr Joseph Gilhooly said the charging points have not been installed yet.

MM.136.21 Motions from Councillor Sean McDermott and Councillor Brendan Barry - Homelessness

It was agreed by the Members that Motion No 14 in the name of Councillor Sean McDermott and Motion No 20 in the name of Councillor Brendan Barry be taken

concurrently as they relate to the same issue.

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

"With regard to homelessness in the county, I ask what procedures are in place to deal with this issue when it happens, especially when it happens at short notice."

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

"A person who finds themselves homeless or at risk of homelessness should present themselves to the Housing Section in Leitrim County Council.

The HAP Place Finder works closely with the homeless presentation in terms of carrying out a homeless assessment to identify their housing needs which includes the completion and submission of a Social Housing Application form.

Leitrim County Council may assist the homeless person/household in the provision of temporary emergency accommodation until alternative private rented accommodation is sourced.

The homeless person/household may be eligible to receive the Homeless HAP Scheme which consists of Leitrim County Council paying the deposit and/or two months' rent at HAP rate upfront to the landlord for the private rented accommodation that has been sourced.

The Housing Department works closely with other agencies and North West Simon in Leitrim and Sligo to provide a responsive service to persons/households presenting as homeless at all times."

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

"I ask Leitrim County Council how many people have presented as being homeless in County Leitrim in the last 12 months and what was done for these people? e.g. Were they offered a council property? Were they offered emergency accommodation? Were they given a sleeping bag and advised to find a rental property?"

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

"Leitrim County Council plays a significant role in the prevention of homelessness and in resolving matters before the person/household actually become homeless. The Housing Department works closely with people who are issued with a Notice to Quit and/or are at risk of becoming homeless for a number of different reasons. The HAP Place Finder service was introduced into the Housing Department in January 2021 and has provides significant support in the sourcing of private rented accommodation and in securing temporary emergency accommodation when no other option exists. Homeless presentation figures for the past 12 months are as follows:

No. Presented as Homeless to LCC from Sept 2020 to August 2021 – 46 Homeless Presentations

Outcomes:

2020

- 2 secured social housing accommodation support including HAP and Homeless HAP
- 8 persons staying with family/friends/caravan
- 3 provided with temporary emergency accommodation
- 2 others

2021

- 6 provided with temporary emergency accommodation
- 10 staying with family/friends/caravan.
- 7 secured social housing accommodation support including HAP and Homeless HAP
- 2 secured private rented and are awaiting assessment for SHS
- 6 other"

Councillor Sean McDermott said that all Stakeholders need to come together and develop a strategy for each Municipal District as there should be no people homeless.

Ms Samantha Healy, Senior Executive Officer, Housing and Corporate Services outlined that the Housing Department works closely with people who are issued with a Notice to Quit and/or are at risk of becoming homeless for a number of different reasons. The HAP Place Finder service was introduced into the Housing Department in January 2021 and has provided significant support in the sourcing of private rented accommodation and in securing temporary emergency accommodation when no other option exists.

The homeless person/household may be eligible to receive the Homeless HAP Scheme which consists of Leitrim County Council paying the deposit and/or two months' rent at HAP rate upfront to the landlord for the private rented accommodation that has been sourced.

The Housing Department works closely with other agencies and North West Simon in Leitrim and Sligo to provide a responsive service to persons/households presenting as homeless at all times.

Councillor Brendan Barry acknowledged the reply received in this regard, that property has got very expensive, and that people are in emergency accommodation for a number of months. Councillor Barry sought clarification on how many people are issued with sleeping bags.

Councillor Sean McDermott said all stakeholders should be coming together and Leitrim County Council have to do better than providing a sleeping bag. Councillor Sean McDermott acknowledged that there is a housing list and he proposed that this issue be discussed at the

next Housing SPC meeting.

Ms Samantha Healy said in January 2021 a Housing Action Team was setup which includes various agencies in Leitrim, and they meet regularly.

Councillor Mary Bohan acknowledged that some people have complex needs and she agreed that the matter be discussed at the next SPC meeting.

Councillor Des Guckian said he would like to receive the replies to Motions No 14 and 20 and paid tribute to the comprehensive reply received from Ms Healy.

Councillor Guckian also asked that the Housing Out of Office Emergency Number be forwarded to him.

Ms Samantha Healy agreed to circulate the number to all Members.

MM.137.21 Motion from Councillor Frank Dolan - LIS

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

"I ask how many LIS schemes are expected to be completed by the end of this year, and what sort of waiting list will remain after that?"

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

"Leitrim County Council expect to complete approx. 17 Local Improvement Schemes in 2021 leaving approx. 85 applicants on the remaining list."

Councillor Frank Dolan said the level of funding is not sufficient to deal with number on the list. If the scheme was opened up the number would double and even treble. Councillor Dolan said all local authorities were asked to supply an estimated list for a year and if we have not got the capacity to do this work, it should be tendered out.

In reply, Mr Gilhooly, Director of Services informed the meeting that there are 85 on the list, 17 to be completed this year. The number to be completed this year is within the capacity that can be mobilised, and the allocation must be spent this year.

Councillor Mary Bohan asked how much money Leitrim County Council sought in this regard.

Mr Terry McGovern, A/Senior Engineer outlined that €332,000 was sought and €237,000 was allocated

Councillor Frank Dolan asked that the Local Improvement list be circulated to the members.

Mr Gilhooly outlined the request would be considered in the context of GDPR.

Councillor Sean McDermott asked if Leitrim County Council would be in a position to take on temporary staff. Mr Gilhooly outlined that Leitrim County Council has limited capacity at this stage to recruit additional staff.

Councillor Brendan Barry outlined the need for the local authority to be prepared for next year.

MM.138.21 Motion from Councillor Finola Armstrong McGuire - CO2 Emissions

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

"May I ask for outline of plans within LCC to ensure that CO2 emissions are kept to a minimum going forward. What proposals are in place in refurbishment of Council properties? I include public buildings, heritage sites and buildings, rented accommodation and public spaces in my query."

Report by Head of Finance & Water Services

"In line with the provisions of the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2021, each Local Authority will be required to prepare a Climate Action plan to commence in early 2022. National guidelines in this regard are being prepared at present.

Leitrim, Cavan and Monaghan County Councils have come together to promote a project for the energy retrofitting of buildings to meet our 2030 and 2050 energy / carbon reduction targets. This collaborative approach is being trialled in conjunction with SEAI and the Climate Action Regional Office (CARO). It is hoped that by bundling up similar buildings in three Counties for energy upgrade works that the larger scope will deliver more competitive tendering and better value for money and also reduce the management of grant applications.

Consultants have been contracted to carry out Energy Audits on 5 buildings in each Local Authority including the two main offices, Library, fire station and a leisure centre in each. The final reports, which are due in September, will make recommendations on necessary works to bring all fifteen buildings to a BER rating of B2 or better. These reports will form the basis of applications to SEAI for grant funding to carry out the recommended works which we hope will be approved to allow for works to commence in 2022.

It is intended that this will be extended to include for the retrofitting of all other buildings to meet the 2030 targets for the council. Obviously, all of these works are dependent on available funding and grant aid."

Councillor Finola Armstrong McGuire gave the background to her motion and said the more of this that is seen in our communities the more householders will adapt to it.

Councillor Finola Armstrong McGuire queried if all the new local authority houses in Carrick are updated with modern heating equipment. It was confirmed that this is the case.

Mr Vincent Dwyer outlined that each Local Authority will be required to prepare a Climate Action plan to commence in early 2022. National guidelines in this regard are being prepared at present.

MM.139.21 Motion from Councillor Felim Gurn - SLNCR Greenway

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

"The timescale for consultants to be put in place for the SLNCR greenway has taken over 3 months with the reason for the delay being the interaction of European and UK law. A timescale is needed for this greenway to be completed. It has been named in the recent North-South government agreement and yet we see other greenways starting ahead of it. With costs for construction increasing and a shortage of construction materials worldwide, the costs for the SLNCR, estimated at €450k per km, will increase greatly if the greenway is not completed as soon as possible."

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

"Leitrim County Council has received tenders for the appointment of a design consultant for the SLNCR Greenway. These tenders have been analysed and we are at present appointing the successful consultant. This appointment will need approval along with funding commitments from the Department of Transport before we can proceed."

Councillor Sean McDermott moved the motion for Councillor Felim Gurn as he was not in attendance at the meeting.

Councillor Padraig Fallon seconded the motion.

MM.140.21 Motion from Councillor Justin Warnock - Hospital Care

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

"With almost 1 million people on waiting lists for hospital care and at a time when we see a chronic haemorrhaging of our young trained doctors, nurses and other health care professionals from our country, I ask the elected members to support this motion in calling on An Taoiseach, Michael Martin and the Minister for Health, Stephen Donnelly to improve training conditions for our trainees, especially nurses and in return get a 2-3 year commitment from them to stay in Ireland when trained."

Councillor Mary Bohan moved the Motion for Councillor Justin Warnock as Cllr Justin Warnock was not in attendance at the meeting.

MM.141.21 Motion from Councillor Mary Bohan - Housing Grant Scheme

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

"I propose that Leitrim County Council call on the Government to introduce a comprehensive housing grant scheme for the renovation or reconstruction of old and derelict houses in rural areas and in towns and villages."

Councillor Mary Bohan said she raised this issue previously and referred to a successful reconstruction scheme that had been in place but was abolished.

Councillor Mary Bohan proposed that the Government introduce a housing grant scheme to restore houses which would rejuvenate our towns and villages.

Councillor Mary Bohan proposed that this motion be circulated to all Local Authorities.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Mary Bohan
SECONDED by Cllr. Brendan Barry

It was **AGREED** that Leitrim County Council call on the Government to introduce a comprehensive housing grant scheme for the renovation or reconstruction of old and derelict houses in rural areas and in towns and villages.

MM.142.21 Motion from Councillor Paddy Farrell - Housing Adaptation Grants

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

"Due to the high cost of building materials, is there any fund available to cover those new costs for older people and people with a disability, who have been approved for housing adaptation grants? If not, the council should look for a higher maximum grant from government. Applicants that have got quotation earlier from builders find when they are approved for a grant and want to proceed with the work, the price has gone up considerably."

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

"There is no additional fund to cover the impact of increasing construction costs associated with private housing grants and the maximum threshold for grants for adaptation works on private properties remains unchanged at €30,000 and is fixed by the Department for Housing, Planning and Local Government. Grants for works approved are awarded based on the applicants means and different rates of grant apply from 30% to 95% of the costs of works assessed. Where a significant discrepancy exists between a contractors quote and Leitrim County Council's assessment of the cost of works the Housing Department will liaise with the contractor to understand the difference and grant amounts awarded may be adjusted accordingly if a clear basis for the quoted costs are demonstrated by the

contractor."

Councillor Paddy Farrell gave the background to his motion and said that applicants that have got quotations earlier from builders find when they are approved for a grant and want to proceed with the work, the price has gone up considerably and that a 90% grant could go into a 45% grant and he said this is way out of date and it needs to be addressed.

Ms Samantha Healy, Senior Executive Officer outlined that when a significant discrepancy exists between a contractors quote and Leitrim County Council's assessment of the cost of works the Housing Department will liaise with the contractor to understand the difference and grant amounts awarded may be adjusted accordingly if a clear basis for the quoted costs is demonstrated by the contractor.

Cathaoirleach, Councillor Paddy O'Rourke proposed that this issue be brought before the Housing SPC for discussion.

MM.143.21 Motion from Councillor Gerry Dolan - Beef Industry

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

"The suckler farmer is the primary producer of calves for our beef industry. They need to be protected with a proper scheme rather than the current talk of cutting cow numbers to combat climate change. I ask this council to call on the minister of Agriculture, Food and the Marine to have a scheme to bring in changes to make suckler farm's more carbon efficient rather than cutting numbers to the national herd. This would protect our national herd and the backbone of the beef industry."

Councillor Gerry Dolan gave the background to his motion and proposed that the Minister of Agriculture, Food and the Marine put in place a scheme that will bring in changes to make suckler farm's more carbon efficient rather than cutting numbers to the national herd.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Gerry Dolan
SECONDED by Cllr. Paddy Farrell

It was **AGREED** that Leitrim County Council call on the Minister of Agriculture, Food and the Marine to have a scheme to bring in changes to make suckler farm's more carbon efficient rather than cutting numbers to the national herd. This would protect our national herd and the backbone of the beef industry. The suckler farmer is the primary producer of calves for our beef industry. They need to be protected with a proper scheme rather than the current talk of cutting cow numbers to combat climate change.

MM.144.21 Any Other Business

Councillor Brendan Barry asked that a workshop be held with the Members in relation to the gritting programme for 2021/2022.

This concluded the business of the meeting at 1.28 pm

Signed:

Councillor Paddy O'Rourke
Cathaoirleach

Kieran Brett
Meetings Administrator

Dated: Monday, 1 November 2021