

**Minutes of Leitrim County Council meeting held in the Council Chamber, Áras an Chontae,
Carrick on Shannon, Co. Leitrim on Monday, 3 July 2023**

Members Present: Councillor Mary Bohan
Councillor Finola Armstrong McGuire
Councillor Enda McGloin
Councillor Sean McGowan
Councillor Brendan Barry - Joined Online
Councillor Frank Dolan
Councillor Gerry Dolan
Councillor Caillian Ellis
Councillor Pádraig Fallon
Councillor Paddy Farrell
Councillor Des Guckian
Councillor Thomas Mulligan
Councillor Sean McDermott
Councillor Paddy O'Rourke
Councillor Ita Reynolds Flynn
Councillor Enda Stenson

Councillor Justin Warnock (Cathaoirleach) presiding

Apologies: Councillor Felim Gurn

Officials Present: Lar Power, Chief Executive
Joseph Gilhooly, Director of Services, Economic Development,
Planning and Infrastructural Services
Vincent Dwyer, Head of Finance, Water, Environment, Climate
Action and Emergency Services
Mary Quinn, Director of Services, Housing, Corporate Services,
Community and Cultural Services
Johanna Daly, Senior Executive Officer Economic Development
Marie Mulligan, Senior Executive Engineer
Michael Gallagher, Senior Executive Engineer
Kevin Geoghegan, Executive Engineer
Kathryne Bohan, Administrative Officer
Kieran Brett, Meetings Administrator
Kathleen Ellis, Assistant Staff Officer
Aideen Kelly, Assistant Staff Officer

At the outset of the meeting Cathaoirleach, Councillor Justin Warnock invited Councillor Enda Stenson to speak on a matter he had raised with him before the meeting. Councillor

Enda Stenson congratulated Carrick-on-Shannon Tidy Towns Committee, the Chamber of Commerce and Leitrim County Council on Carrick-on-Shannon winning the Best Kept Town in Ireland award in 2023. Councillor Enda Stenson proposed that a reception be held to mark this achievement.

Councillor Paddy Farrell seconded the proposal. Councillor Farrell congratulated all involved and said it was a great achievement for Carrick-on-Shannon.

Mr Lar Power, Chief Executive said this is a huge achievement and a great credit to all involved. Mr Power said the work being done is appreciated by Leitrim County Council and said this will be listed as an item for consideration at the Carrick-on-Shannon Municipal District Meeting on Monday next 10th July 2023.

Councillor Finola Armstrong McGuire acknowledged the work and attitude of the Tidy Towns Committee. Councillor Armstrong McGuire welcomed the Ukrainian people that have become Tidy Towns Volunteers. She also acknowledged the work of the Local Authority, in assisting the Tidy Towns Committee.

Councillor Sean McGowan also congratulated the Tidy Towns Committee, and all involved on winning the Best Kept Town in Ireland award. Councillor Des Guckian also praised the Tidy Towns Committee for their work and fine achievement in helping to win this award

MM.88.23 Votes of Sympathy

The Members extended a vote of sympathy to the following:

- Tommy Campbell, Clooncumber, Bornacoola on the death of Stephen Campbell R.I.P.
- Violet Taylor, Cloonboygher, Newtowngorre, Co Leitrim on the death of George William Taylor R.I.P.
- Mrs Mena Brennan, Cloone, Co Leitrim on the death of Kieran Brennan R.I.P.
- Mr Damian Brennan, Cloone, Co Leitrim on the death of Kieran Brennan R.I.P.
- Ms Marian Woods, Curraghill, Drumshanbo, Co Leitrim on the death of Veronica Woods R.I.P

MM.89.23 Adoption of Minutes 2nd May 2023

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

It was **AGREED** to adopt the Minutes of 2nd May 2023.

MM.90.23 Adopt Part 4 of the Public Health Acts Amendment Act, 1890, to confirm it is the will of the Council, that the courts have the power, to grant public music and singing licences pursuant to Section 51 (2) of the said Public Health Acts Amendment Act, 1890 (as amended by Section 14 of the Public Dance Halls Act, 1935)

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

It was **AGREED** to Adopt Part 4 of the Public Health Acts Amendment Act, 1890, to confirm it is the will of the Council, that the courts have the power, to grant public music and singing licences pursuant to Section 51 (2) of the said Public Health Acts Amendment Act, 1890 (as amended by Section 14 of the Public Dance Halls Act, 1935).

Councillor Des Guckian said he was opposed to this being considered by the Council and said this was an odd proposal. He considered it to be a matter for the Dáil and Seanad and proposed that a letter issue to the Minister for Justice as this was a matter for the Oireachtas to consider.

Cathaoirleach, Councillor Justin Warnock invited any other proposal in this regard, and as no other member seconded Councillor Guckian's counterproposal, Cathaoirleach, Councillor Justin Warnock deemed the motion to be resolved and moved to the next item on the agenda.

MM.91.23 Management Reports- April 2023 & May 2023

The Monthly Management Reports for April and May 2023 as circulated, were noted by Members.

Councillor Des Guckian raised the following:

- N4 Carrick on Shannon bypass
- Civil Defence
- Carrick-on-Shannon Wastewater Treatment Plant and the costs involved in resolving issues at the plant.
- He welcomed the road safety inspections.

Mr Joseph Gilhooly confirmed the N4 bypass will be discussed under Notice of Motion No 13 on today's agenda.

Mr Vincent Dwyer said Leitrim County Council has no direct role in the operations at Carrick-on-Shannon Wastewater Treatment Plant as this is under the control of Úisce Éireann\Irish Water. Mr Dwyer outlined that no issues had been raised with him regarding the plant.

MM.92.23 Presentation on Preparation of Leitrim's Climate Action Plan

The Cathaoirleach, Councillor Justin Warnock welcomed Marie Mulligan, Senior Executive Engineer to the meeting. Ms Mulligan gave a presentation to the Members on the preparation of Leitrim's Climate Action Plan as set out in **Appendix 1** to the minutes of the

meeting.

Ms Mulligan outlined that Leitrim County Council is required to put in place a 5 year Climate Action Plan for the period 2024-2029. The Action Plan will put County Leitrim on a trajectory towards achieving climate neutrality no later than the end of 2050. The plan must be action based with both adaptation and mitigation actions to be implemented over a 5-year period. The Plan must be adopted by Elected Members before 23rd February 2024.

Cathaoirleach, Councillor Justin Warnock and the members thanked Ms Mulligan for the presentation.

The following points/questions were raised:

- Members noted and welcomed that Leitrim County Council's emissions are < 1% of County Leitrim's emissions.
- Members queried if Leitrim's Action Plan will differ from the National Action Plan – is Leitrim not bound by the National Climate Action Plan?
- What was taken into consideration to determine that Leitrim is responsible for 1% of emissions?
- How is travel on National routes through county Leitrim reflected in the data?
- Are there any actions planned that would unduly affect farmers?
- Has sequestered carbon in the county being considered?
- It has got lost in debate that farmers have already a lot of work done in this area.

Mr. Vincent Dwyer informed the members that the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act, 2021 outlines the requirement for each Local Authority to prepare and adopt a Local Authority Climate Action Plan (LACAP). The Local Authority Climate Action Plan sets out achievable climate action targets within our own remit, and across the broader local authority area. Every Local Authority's Climate Action Plan is bespoke.

Ms Marie Mulligan outlined that in preparing the initial data, 2018 was baseline year and the following items were considered.

- Distribution and number of detached houses
- Transport
- Waste
- Agriculture
- Land use change to forestry
- Commercial/Industrial activity

Ms Mulligan said emissions must be cut by 50% by 2030 and this can be achieved by working with the community. Ms Mulligan confirmed through traffic is divided on a pro rata basis amongst all counties on a given national road route and inputs are from the Central Statistics Office.

Cathaoirleach, Councillor Justin Warnock welcomed Richard Deeney, Fehily Timoney Consultants to the meeting via MS Teams. Mr Deeney gave a presentation to the members on Leitrim's Baseline Emission Inventory Report as set out in **Appendix 2** to the minutes of the meeting.

Cathaoirleach, Councillor Justin Warnock thanked Mr Deeney for his presentation.

The members raised the following:

- How are the detached houses quantified in the report?
- Figures on emissions from ground peatland may need to be reviewed.
- How is it determined that farming is the biggest factor for emissions and secondly heavy traffic?
- How are wetlands deemed be a source of emissions?
- Has much of this data gathering exercise has been carried out on location, other than a desktop exercise?
- What are cattle numbers based on? Farmers could have stock on land rented in other counties.
- Members expressed concerns about forestry planted on peatlands.

In reply to the above Mr Richard Deeney said

- Figures in relation to residential detached houses are sourced from the CSO and BEI (Baseline Emissions Inventory) Data and they are married together.
- As new data is acquired it will be incorporated into GHG (Greenhouse Gases) emissions figures.
- The methodology on emissions is based on local data sets and relevant data on emissions and they are married together, the same methodology is carried out for each specific sector.
- Leaching of carbon from the land is occurs in wetlands.
- The figures in the presentation have been compiled by a desktop exercise only.
- Figures in relation to cattle numbers are received from the CSO and the Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine.

Cathaoirleach, Councillor Justin Warnock welcomed Mr. Morgan Crumlish, KPMG, to the meeting via MS Teams. Mr Crumlish gave a presentation to the Members on the Decarbonising Zone Baseline Emission Inventory Report as set out in **Appendix 3** to the minutes of the meeting.

Cathaoirleach, Councillor Justin Warnock thanked Mr Morgan Crumlish for his presentation.

The members raised the following:

- Will the burning of turf and timber by homeowners be allowed in 20 years?
- Livestock numbers have changed considerably since 2018 and this would not have been reflected in the baseline, how will this be reflected?

- Members expressed concern that EU law will allow for Compulsory Purchase Order of land for rewetting schemes.
- Members expressed their concerns in relation to air traffic and the emissions it is generating.

In reply to the above Mr Morgan Crumlish said the burning of turf and timber will be a policy issue for the Government to consider.

Mr Vincent Dwyer said Leitrim County Council have to prepare a Climate Action Plan and the Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine will also have to do their own and separate Climate Action Plan. Mr Dwyer acknowledged that people rent land in other counties, and this will be considered in the preparation of the Leitrim Climate Action Plan.

Ms Mulligan advised another baseline will be carried out in 2029 and this will determine progress against targets.

Cathaoirleach, Councillor Justin Warnock welcomed Dr. James Fitton, KPMG, to the meeting via MS Teams. Dr. Fitton gave a presentation to the Members on County Leitrim Climate Change Risk Assessment as set out in **Appendix 4** to the minutes of the meeting.

Ms Mulligan outlined targets are set by the Government and Leitrim County Council are obliged to carry out actions to assist in achievement of national targets. To ensure that local based information is included, a public consultation is currently under way on the preparation of the Leitrim Climate Cation Plan. Leitrim County Council are requesting the views, observations, and recommendations of the members and public. Submissions will be accepted between Wednesday 14th June 2023 and 4.30pm on Wednesday 16th August 2023 (both dates inclusive).

MM.93.23 Commitments

There were no commitments to be noted.

MM.94.23 Report from Corporate Policy Group

Ms. Mary Quinn, advised that the Corporate Policy Group had considered the following items at their meeting held on 30th June 2023:

- Updates from SPC's
- Items for Council meeting 3rd July 2023
- The National Day of Commemoration will take place on Sunday 9th July. Leitrim County Council will be holding a commemorative event in the Peace Garden in Manorhamilton on July 9th.
- Tully Meehan & Associates Ltd will hold a workshop with the elected members on

the Library Development Plan. The following dates July 18th and 19th are the proposed dates for the workshop.

On the **Proposal** of Councillor Sean McGowan
Seconded by Councillor Caillian Ellis

It was **AGREED** that the workshop will be held on Wednesday, 19th July 2023 at 11 am in the Council Chamber.

- LECP Plan will be listed on the Agenda of each Municipal District for July for consideration.
- Members attendance at upcoming conferences, training events and seminars.

This update was noted by the Members.

MM.95.23 Attendance at conferences/training

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Enda McGloin
SECONDED by Cllr. Caillian Ellis

It was **AGREED** that the attendance of Councillor Finola Armstrong McGuire at the AILG training on the 15th June 2023 in the Mullingar Park Hotel, Westmeath be retrospectively approved.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Thomas Mulligan
SECONDED by Cllr. Sean McDermott

It was **AGREED** that the attendance of Councillor Enda McGloin at the AILG training on the 15th June 2023 in the Mullingar Park Hotel, Westmeath be retrospectively approved.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr Enda McGloin
SECONDED by Cllr Caillian Ellis

It was **AGREED** that the attendance of Councillor Caillian Ellis and Councillor Paddy Farrell at the AILG Training on the 17th June 2023 in the Avalon House Hotel, Castlecomer, Kilkenny be retrospectively approved.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr Enda McGloin
SECONDED by Cllr Caillian Ellis

It was **AGREED** that the attendance of Councillor Paddy O'Rourke at the Remembrance Event on the 28th May 2023 in the Garden of Remembrance, Dublin be retrospectively

approved.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr Enda McGloin
SECONDED by Cllr Caillian Ellis

It was **AGREED** that the attendance of Councillor Thomas Mulligan, Cllr Finola Armstrong McGuire, Cllr Gerry Dolan, Councillor Paddy O'Rourke, Councillor Enda Stenson, Councillor Sean McGowan, Councillor Mary Bohan, Councillor Frank Dolan, Councillor Pdraig Fallon, Councillor Enda McGloin, Councillor Sean McDermott, Councillor Felim Gurn, Councillor Ita Reynolds Flynn, Councillor Caillian Ellis, Councillor Paddy Farrell and Councillor Justin Warnock at the Sean MacDiarmada Summer School, Kiltyclogher from 9th to 10th June 2023 be retrospectively approved.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr Enda McGloin
SECONDED by Cllr Caillian Ellis

It was **AGREED** that the attendance of Councillor Sean McGowan and Councillor Thomas Mulligan at the AILG Annual Training Conference on the 19th and 20th April 2023 in the Hotel Kilkenny be retrospectively approved.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr Sean McDermott
SECONDED by Cllr Caillian Ellis

It was **AGREED** that the attendance of Councillor Paddy Farrell, Councillor Ita Reynolds Flynn and Councillor Enda McGloin at the AILG Training on the 22nd July 2023 in the Radisson Blu Hotel, Sligo be approved.

MM.96.23 Meeting Correspondence

1. Resolution from Westmeath County Council dated 25th April 2023 calling on the Minister for Housing to support and encourage the immediate construction of affordable housing units.
2. Letter dated 28th April 2023 from the Head of Service Quality, Safety and Service Improvement on receipt of resolution passed by Leitrim County Council on products labelled dangerous.
3. Acknowledgement received 4th May 2023 from the Office of the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs on receipt of resolution passed by Leitrim County Council on voting rights for Irish Citizens abroad.

4. Acknowledgement received 9th May 2023 from the Office of the Minister for Health on receipt of resolution passed by Leitrim County Council on dentists.
5. Resolution from Mayo Council dated 8th May 2023 calling on the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage to double the maximum grants for the Croí Conaithe Scheme from €30,000 for a vacant property and €50,000 for a vacant property confirmed derelict of €60,000 and €1000,000 respectively.

Cathaoirelach, Councillor Justin Warnock and all members supported the proposal.

6. Letter from the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage dated 9th May 2023 concerning the Residential Zones Land Tax.

Councillor Enda McGloin complimented the planning staff for being very helpful on this matter and he proposed that a letter issue to the Minister on the Residential Zoned Land Tax as there is a difficulty in encouraging builders to build on zoned land in rural counties such as Leitrim, as there is not a demand in the market for property around many smaller towns and property developers do not foresee a profit margin on their investment of purchasing and building on these lands.

Councillor Enda McGloin acknowledged that IFA have been seeking to have this policy amended.

Councillor Sean McGowan seconded the proposal outlining that he didn't think this tax is relevant to Leitrim but it is relevant to bigger urban areas in Dublin, Cork, and Limerick.

7. Email of the 11th May 2023 from the Office of the Minister for Health on receipt of Resolution passed by Leitrim County Council in regard to dental services for medical card patients.

Councillor Brendan Barry expressed his disappointment with the reply received and said there is a lack of dentists in the county and there are a large number of people with health cards.

8. Acknowledgement of the 10th May 2023 from the Office of the Minister for Agriculture on receipt of Resolution passed by Leitrim County Council in regard to the deer population.

9. Letter dated 18th May 2023 from Iarnród Éireann on receipt of Resolution passed by Leitrim County Council in regard to fares.

Councillor Finola Armstrong McGuire acknowledged and noted the breakdown Iarnród Éireann furnished in relation to fares and she said early booking of fares is advisable.

10. Resolution from Kerry County Council dated 16th May 2023 calling on the Government to immediately initiate a National Pension Scheme for the State.
11. Resolution from Kerry County Council dated 16th May 2023 that Kerry County Council would lead by example and change correspondence with elected members to paperless.
12. Letter dated 24th May 2023 from the Office of the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage in regard to the deer population.
13. Email of the 26th May 2023 from the Occupational therapist Manager, HSE acknowledging receipt of Resolution passed by Leitrim County Council in regard to OT.

Councillor Des Guckian queried if a person is to be discharged from hospital will the Local Authority give a new house to them if the old one is unsuitable.

Ms Mary Quinn confirmed that this will depend on the assessment of their housing needs.
14. Email of the 8th June 2023 from the Office of the Minister for Health on receipt of Resolution passed by Leitrim County Council in regard to the national cancer screening test.
15. Resolution from Wicklow County Council dated 12th June 2023 from the Office of the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine in regard to declarations on the Climate and Biodiversity Emergency and commitment to youth and community groups and EU nature restoration law.

Other matters raised under Meeting Correspondence

Councillor Sean McDermott outlined that at a recent ICBAN Meeting it was recognised that broadband surveys and works are behind schedule in County Leitrim. Councillor Paddy O'Rourke acknowledged that Leitrim has a lot of catching up to do in this regard and he said if there is a will to catch up it will be done by the broadband provider.

Mr Joseph Gilhooly said ICBAN has been taking charge of this and are in communication with the Council's Broadband Officer. The rollout is on target, but Leitrim is behind schedule in delivery.

MM.97.23 Motions from Councillor Sean McGowan, Councillor Enda Stenson and Councillor Pdraig Fallon - Community Car Scheme

It was agreed by the Members that Motion No. 9 in the name of Councillor Sean McGowan, Motion No. 10 in the name of Councillor Enda Stenson and Motion No. 14 in the name of Councillor Padraig Fallon be taken concurrently as they relate to the same issue.

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

"I seek the support of the members in calling on the relevant Government Departments to provide annual funding to the Leitrim Volunteer Centre for the operation of the Community Car Scheme. This scheme was set up in March 2022 on a trial basis to assist vulnerable and isolated persons in the county to attend hospital appointments, pharmacy pick-ups, shopping and other transport needs. The uptake of the service far exceeds the resources which Leitrim Volunteer Centre can provide. The need for a flexible community car scheme to transport people who live in rural, isolated, areas in County Leitrim is of paramount importance."

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

"I seek the support of the members in calling on the HSE and the Department of Transport to provide ongoing financial assistance, for the continued use of the Community Car Scheme in operation by Leitrim Volunteer Centre since March 2022. This scheme assists with supporting vulnerable and isolated persons to attend hospital appointments, pharmacy pick-ups, shopping and other transport needs within the county and particularly in our rural areas, where we have no public transport."

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

"I propose that this Local Authority contact the HSE, the Minister for Health, and The Dept. of Rural & Community Development in an effort to seek funding from Government for the Leitrim Community Car Scheme."

Councillor Sean McGowan said the scheme was set up in March 2022 and the demand of the scheme far exceeded the resources which Leitrim Volunteer Centre can provide. He called on the members to lobby the HSE, Department of Transport and the Department of Rural and Community Development to provide financial assistance to enable an ongoing service. €30,000 was provided to operate the service for rural people who have no way of getting to hospital appointments or do shopping and the service would pick them up at their homes.

Councillor Sean McGowan moved Councillor Enda Stenson's motion which is in support of this as Councillor Stenson had to leave the meeting early.

Councillor Padraig Fallon said he has received a lot of representations on this topic, which is an excellent service. Councillor Fallon outlined, as a result of the service provided, 90% of hospital appointments were attended and this has a positive impact on the HSE's budget with regard to the reduction in Did Not Attend's (DNA's).

Councillor Mary Bohan fully supported the motions and said it is essential and a worthwhile service.

Councillor Paddy Farrell said he raised this issue at the Regional Health Forum and sent a letter to the HSE on this matter.

Councillors Finola Armstrong McGuire, Sean McDermott and Des Guckian also supported the motions.

Councillor Sean McGowan said 90% of hospital appointments are long journeys and the demand for the service was overwhelming and the scheme had to close. Councillor Sean McGowan said Leitrim Community Car scheme is seeking funding of €60,000 for the service, €30,000 to appoint a coordinator to run the service and €30,000 to cover expenses. Councillor McGowan said it is scandal that this is ignored by the HSE, and he stressed it is important that our volunteers are not lost.

Councillor Enda McGloin sought clarification on who funded the first money towards this scheme, and he said the HSE should be queried about this.

Councillor Pdraig Fallon said this issue has been raised with Deputy Martin Kenny TD and it is important that we all stand together on this issue.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Sean McGowan
SECONDED by Councillor Pdraig Fallon

It was **AGREED** Leitrim County Council call on the relevant Government Departments to provide annual funding to the Leitrim Volunteer Centre for the operation of the Community Car Scheme.

This scheme was set up in March 2022 on a trial basis to assist vulnerable and isolated persons in the county to attend hospital appointments, pharmacy pick-ups, shopping and other transport needs. The uptake of the service far exceeds the resources which Leitrim Volunteer Centre can provide. The need for a flexible community car scheme to transport people who live in rural, isolated, areas in County Leitrim is of paramount importance."

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Sean McGowan
SECONDED by Councillor Pdraig Fallon

It was **AGREED** Leitrim County Council call on the HSE and the Department of Transport to provide ongoing financial assistance, for the continued use of the Community Car Scheme in operation by Leitrim Volunteer Centre since March 2022. This scheme assists with supporting vulnerable and isolated persons to attend hospital appointments, pharmacy pick-ups, shopping and other transport needs within the county and particularly in our rural areas, where we have no public transport."

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Pdraig Fallon
SECONDED by Councillor Mary Bohan

It was **AGREED** that Leitrim County Council contact the HSE, the Minister for Health, and The Dept. of Rural & Community Development in an effort to seek funding from Government for the Leitrim Community Car Scheme."

MM.98.23 Motion from Councillor Caillian Ellis - Employ more School bus drivers

To consider the following Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Caillian Ellis;

"I propose that Leitrim County Council write to Bus Éireann to call on them to employ more school bus drivers, as the Bus Éireann system is full to capacity."

Councillor Caillian Ellis expressed his concerns that Bus Éireann are not recruiting new drivers. Councillor Ellis said it is a job that can be beneficial to someone who has a small farm or small business. Councillor Ellis expressed his concern that if more drivers are not recruited it will lead to the closure of the Bus Éireann garage in Longford and staff, many of whom live in Leitrim, may have to be redeployed to Athlone.

All members supported the motion, and it was agreed that it be circulated to all local authorities.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Caillian Ellis
SECONDED by Councillor Paddy O'Rourke

It was **AGREED** that Leitrim County Council write to Bus Éireann to call on them to employ more school bus drivers, as the Bus Éireann system is full to capacity.

MM.99.23 Motion from Councillor Paddy O'Rourke - Rewetting of lands

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

"I ask that Leitrim County Council urge the Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine to tread carefully with regard to plans to rewet any lands; be they public lands or Coillte lands. The rewetting of such lands could impact on adjoining farms, as well as posing a possible flood risk in some low-lying areas. Given the level of investment that has been directed towards the draining of farmland down through the years, we cannot have a situation where all of this would be undone by hasty decisions regarding the locations of rewetting."

Councillor Paddy O'Rourke gave the background to his motion and said farmers have made significant investment in draining their land, without any financial grants or incentives, and we cannot accept any recommendations forthcoming in relation to rewetting.

Councillor Caillian Ellis supported the motion, and he said there may be no choice in the matter if direction comes from the EU on this matter.

Councillor Sean McGowan said all stakeholders from Teagasc to the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine have to produce a worthwhile plan, marginalized lands could be used and incentivized for farmers.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Paddy O'Rourke
SECONDED by Councillor Caillian Ellis

It was **AGREED** that Leitrim County Council urge the Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine to tread carefully with regard to plans to rewet any lands; be they public lands or Coillte lands. The rewetting of such lands could impact on adjoining farms, as well as posing a possible flood risk in some low-lying areas. Given the level of investment that has been directed towards the draining of farmland down through the years, we cannot have a situation where all of this would be undone by hasty decisions regarding the locations of rewetting.

MM.100.23 Motion from Councillor Des Guckian - Extension of the Dromod/Rooskey Bypass

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

"That we request our Council officials to immediately publish all information about the extension of the Dromod / Rooskey Bypass to Carrick-on-Shannon and into Co Roscommon. This to include the design, the route to be taken and the likely impact on the communities affected and on the owners of property along the route."

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

"The Options Selection Report prepared during the Phase 2 Options Selection stage is published on the project website at <https://carrickdromod.ie/option-selection-report/> which provides information regarding the Preferred Transport Solution. TII has given approval to proceed to the Phase 3 Design and Environmental evaluation stage in accordance with the TII Project Management Guidelines.

Furthermore, the 2023 Grant Allocations to Local Authorities for National Roads, Active Travel and Greenways are made by Transport Infrastructure (TII) having regard to the priorities set out in the National Development Plan 2021-2030, the objectives of the Climate Action Plan 2023, other national policies, and the terms and conditions set by the Minister for Transport pursuant to the Roads Acts 1993 to 2015. It is important to note that the appendix to this document clearly states in relation to the N4 Carrick to Dromod Road Project that "The Minister wishes to see prioritisation afforded to the provision of the bypass and the provision of a concurrent traffic management plan for the Town Centre".

Considering the Ministers wishes and taking other considerations into account such as the uncertainty surrounding the European TENT-T regulations, the bypass element of the N4 Carrick to Dromod Road Project is being prioritized for the Design and Environmental

evaluation stage of the project which will include a new urban street, a demand management component, an active travel component and a public transport component."

Councillor Des Guckian gave the background to his motion, and he called for all information about the extension of the Dromod / Rooskey Bypass to Carrick-on-Shannon and into Co Roscommon to be published.

Mr Joseph Gilhooly advised that all information on the CarrickDromod.ie website is up to date. The Options Selection Report prepared during the Phase 2 Options Selection stage is published on the website which provides information regarding the Preferred Transport Solution. TII has given approval to proceed to the Phase 3, Design and Environmental Evaluation stage, in accordance with the TII Project Management Guidelines.

Mr Michael Gallagher advised that the Carrick on Shannon bypass element of the N4 Carrick to Dromod Road Project is being prioritized for the Design and Environmental evaluation stage of the project which will include a new urban street, a demand management component, an active travel component and a public transport component. The Annaduff to Carrick-on- Shannon section of the road is not being prioritised for further work under Phase 2 at this time.

Councillor Sean McGowan said Carrick by pass should be progressed as soon as possible to alleviate the pinch points that exist on the N4 route.

Councillor Finola Armstrong McGuire queried if there is much discussion with Roscommon County Council on this project.

Councillor Brendan Barry queried as to how many more phases are there in the project and the timeline for construction.

Mr. Gilhooly advised that discussions with Roscommon County Council happen on an ongoing basis.

Mr Kevin Geoghegan, Executive Engineer said the current stage that has been entered is Phase 3 - Design and Environmental Evaluation stage. This is as per the TII Project Management Guidelines. It will take approximately 18 months to get to Phase 4 where detailed discussions with landowners will take place.

Councillor Des Guckian said it is like a "slow march", he is not happy with it and it is quite disingenuous.

Mr Joseph Gilhooly said this project is a slow detailed process, quite a considerable amount of work goes into each stage and everything that people need to know is published on the project website and he said he was not aware of anyone being disingenuous.

MM.101.23 Motion from Councillor Sean McDermott - Rural Housing Guidelines

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

"I am asking the Council to communicate with the relevant Minister on the delay in publishing the promised Rural Housing Guidelines which was due to be published in 2022. Many young people are leaving rural Ireland because of the difficulties to build a house in their rural communities."

Councillor Sean McDermott expressed his concern about 3 rural schools in his area where pupil numbers are down on prior years due to depopulation. This problem is affecting all of county Leitrim and he called on the Minister to publish the Rural Housing Guidelines without delay.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Sean McDermott
SECONDED by Councillor Mary Bohan

It was **AGREED** that Leitrim County Council communicate with the relevant Minister on the delay in publishing the promised Rural Housing Guidelines which was due to be published in 2022. Many young people are leaving rural Ireland because of the difficulties to build a house in their rural communities."

MM.102.23 Motion from Councillor Enda McGloin - Route Selection for the Greenway from Kilcare to Ballinamore along the Shannon Erne waterway.

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

"I call on Leitrim Co Council to seek the support of the TII to engage with consultants and identify a route selection for the Greenway from Kilclare to Ballinamore along the Shannon Erne waterway. This is a strategic route connecting South Leitrim from Carrick-on-Shannon all the way to the Cavan border and in my view merits funding as a National Strategic Walk and Cycle way."

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

"The County has a recently agreed County Recreation Strategy and established Recreation Forum to oversee its implementation. A key strategic project contained in the new strategy is the delivery of a comprehensive greenway for South Leitrim Area. Such a greenway would be taking into account existing walks and aspirations including the Cavan Leitrim Railway from Dromod to the Cavan County boundary and the further development of the Shannon Erne Blueway from Leitrim Village to Ballinamore.

In collaboration with the Recreation Forum, it is expected that an initial project scoping

exercise can be commissioned later this year, subject to funding, in order to carry out preliminary assessments and analysis of what would be an adequately strategic but yet feasible greenway taking the above objectives into account including the area identified in this notice of motion. It is felt that this approach will best serve the County in securing future TII assistance through their national and regional greenway programme."

Councillor Enda McGloin welcomed that preliminary assessments will be conducted, and he strongly urged for further co-operation with Waterways Ireland to bring this to the TII for funding. Councillor Enda McGloin said this should be part of the National Strategic Greenway.

Councillor Caillian Ellis supported the motion and he said it would really open up that area of the county for Tourism.

All members supported this.

MM.103.23 Motion from Councillor Justin Warnock - Workshop on Croí Cónaithe

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

"I ask the Executive to facilitate a workshop on the Croí Cónaithe Refurbishment Grant, between the elected members and the Local Authority's Housing, Planning and Economic Development departments at their earliest convenience.

Following a motion I submitted for the June meeting of Manorhamilton MD, the Director of Services for Housing, Community & Culture, Ms Mary Quinn, advised that the uptake on the Croí Cónaithe grant, to date, is 51 applications and 22 approvals. These figures are too low for County Leitrim which has seen a 10% growth in population in the recent census."

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

"This request for a workshop will be facilitated with the relevant sections providing necessary information for the members."

Cathaoirleach, Councillor Justin Warnock said he is seeking this workshop on foot of a reply he received for a motion at the Manorhamilton Municipal District.

Councillor Pádraig Fallon proposed that the workshop be held on the same day as the Library Plan workshop. This was agreed to by the members.

Ms Quinn advised members to forward any queries on the Croí Cónaithe grant to her in advance of the workshop as it will help to form the basis for discussion at the workshop. This was agreed to by the members.

Councillor Des Guckian asked that a short summary of the Croí Cónaithe grant scheme be issued to members.

Councillor Sean McDermott asked if more application forms can be issued to members.

Ms Quinn confirmed that a summary of the scheme has already been issued to members and it will be re-issued with a supply of application forms.

It was agreed that the workshop would take place on the 19th July (the same day as the workshop on the Library Plan).

MM.104.23 Motion from Councillor Paddy Farrell - Universal Social Charge

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

"I seek the support of members to call on the Minister for Finance Michael McGrath TD, to abolish the Universal Social Charge, introduced as a temporary measure at the height of the economic crisis. This tax is very unfair on low to medium income workers."

Councillor Paddy Farrell called on the support of the members to write to Minister Paschal Donohoe and Minister Michael McGrath to abolish the Universal Social Charge as this tax is very unfair on low to medium workers.

Councillor Gerry Dolan supported the motion.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Paddy Farrell
SECONDED by Councillor Gerry Dolan

It was **AGREED** that Leitrim County Council call on the Minister for Finance Michael McGrath TD, to abolish the Universal Social Charge, introduced as a temporary measure at the height of the economic crisis. This tax is very unfair on low to medium income workers."

MM.105.23 Motion from Councillor Felim Gurn - Taxi Drivers

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

"I ask the members to call on the Minister for Transport, Eamon Ryan TD, to recognise that the trial to recruit taxi drivers in rural Ireland has failed and therefore call on the Minister to put more resources into Rural Link services, and in particular, in support of the nighttime economy and to trial these additional resources, which will support the night time economy, in County Leitrim."

Councillor Frank Dolan moved the motion on behalf of Councillor Felim Gurn.

MM.106.23 Motion from Councillor Finola Armstrong McGuire - Violence against women

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

"Violence against women in their own homes and involving persons known to them is increasing and too often fatal. I ask this council to write to the Minister for Justice asking that urgent action is taken to reverse this worrying trend. I further ask that we are furnished with a report summarising studies of recent years and any recommendations to be shared so that such tragic incidents can be avoided."

Councillor Finola Armstrong McGuire acknowledged that there are safe homes both in Leitrim and Sligo and she said more wrap around services are needed. Councillor Armstrong McGuire said a better type of refugee service is required. Councillor Armstrong McGuire paid tribute to the Housing staff of Leitrim County Council, and she proposed that training should be provided to further upskill staff in dealing with these situations.

Councillor Mary Bohan supported the motion, and she said violence against women is increasing.

All Members supported this.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Finola Armstrong McGuire
SECONDED by Councillor Mary Bohan

It was **AGREED** that Leitrim County Council write to the Minister for Justice asking that urgent action is taken to reverse this worrying trend and further ask that we are furnished with a report summarising studies of recent years and any recommendations to be shared so that such tragic incidents can be avoided. Violence against women in their own homes and involving persons known to them is increasing and too often fatal.

MM.107.23 Motion from Councillor Brendan Barry - LIS Improvement Scheme

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

"I request that Leitrim County Council amend the conditions of the LIS local improvement scheme to allow medical letters signed by HSE employees or medical consultants to be added to files, and lanes to be scored accordingly based on the lanes occupants' medical needs throughout the duration of this scheme rather than what their condition at January 2023."

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

"The current LIS Policy was agreed and adopted by Leitrim County Council members in October 2022 following a number of workshops held with members regarding LIS Policy. In accordance with this adopted LIS Policy, Leitrim County Council reopened the LIS Scheme to new applicants for a period from 1st November 2022 to 27th January 2023. In order to ensure that all applications received in this period, and assessed to be valid and eligible in

accordance with the LIS Terms and Conditions, were delivered in accordance with their ranking in line with the scheme, it was agreed and adopted by the Council that the scheme would not be rolling in nature and hence no further applications for the scheme would be accepted until all LIS roads on the List were completed. It was also determined that when applications have been assessed and the Priority List produced, no further information received would be taken into account that could raise the priority of a scheme on the LIS Waiting List (e.g. Special Medical Circumstances which may occur after the closing date). A total of 208 new LIS applications were received of which 30 have been deemed as invalid to date. Therefore, there is currently a list of 178 new applications which have now been marked and prioritised in accordance with their initial assessment based on the application submitted on our LIS Waiting List. In accordance with the Policy as adopted by the members of Leitrim County Council in October 2022, once the prioritized list is in place, no new information which would raise the priority of any application can be accepted. There is a provision in the adopted Policy that the Policy will be reviewed by the members after a period of 12 months which is likely to be in the second half of 2024 based on the volume of applications received."

Councillor Brendan Barry asked that Leitrim County Council amend the conditions to allow medical letters signed by the HSE to be added to files and lanes to be scored based on medical needs throughout the duration of the scheme.

Councillor Barry said it is too long to leave until the middle of next year to review the scheme.

Councillor Paddy O'Rourke supported the motion and he said he raised this at the time the LIS was discussed. Councillor O'Rourke said we are essentially ignoring this issue, if someone with medical needs has to make frequent journeys on a lane badly in need of repair, their application should be reviewed on medical grounds.

All members supported this.

Mr Joseph Gilhooly said there was collective agreement by the members in adopting the scheme in October 2022 that it was not to be a rolling scheme and until a detailed review is completed. It is not possible to contemplate changing the rules at this point and until the review process is completed. Mr Gilhooly said the scheme closed in January and it would not be feasible to change the scheme now.

Councillor Sean McDermott queried as to how many applicants have submitted letters from medical professionals in support of their application.

Ms Kathryne Bohan confirmed it was of the order of 10-12 applicants.

MM.108.23 Motion from Councillor Mary Bohan - Respite Services

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 and the HSE to address

the urgent need for the provision of additional respite places for families in need. The current system is inadequate."

Councillor Mary Bohan said respite services are very important and, in some areas, there is an over reliance on some agencies. Councillor Bohan said when we need to find money, such as during the COVID pandemic, we could get it. Councillor Bohan called on the support of the members to call on the Minister for Health and the HSE to address the urgent need.

Councillor Finola Armstrong McGuire and Councillor Paddy O'Rourke supported the motion.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Mary Bohan
SECONDED by Councillor Finola Armstrong McGuire

It was **AGREED** that Leitrim County Council call on the Minister for Health and the HSE to address the urgent need for the provision of additional respite places for families in need. The current system is inadequate."

MM.109.23 Motion from Councillor Gerry Dolan - Deadline for Acres Scoring

Cathaoirleach, Councillor Justin Warnock asked the approval of Members in accepting a motion not listed on the agenda from Councillor Gerry Dolan. Cllr Dolan outlined that this was an urgent motion that will be too late to raise at the next Council meeting.

The Members agreed to this.

"I call on the Council to ask the Minister for Agriculture to extend the deadline for acres scoring - currently the 31st of August. All farms in the scheme are assessed with the aid of an app called Agrisnap. This app is giving numerous issues and is not fit for purpose. The Department needs to give more time for Planners to submit the scorecards."

Councillor Gerry Dolan gave the background to his motion and said the app is giving a lot of problems and the deadline for submitting scorecards needs to be extended.

Councillors Paddy O'Rourke, Paddy Farrell and Des Guckian supported the motion.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Gerry Dolan
SECONDED by Councillor Paddy O'Rourke

It was **AGREED** that Leitrim County Council call on the Minister for Agriculture to extend the deadline for acres scoring - currently the 31st of August. All farms in the scheme are assessed with the aid of an app called Agrisnap. This app is giving numerous issues and is not fit for purpose. The Department needs to give more time for Planners to submit the scorecards."

This concluded the business of the meeting at 2.14 pm

Signed:

Councillor Justin Warnock
Cathaoirleach

Kieran Brett
Meetings Administrator

Dated: Monday, 4 September 2023