

MINUTES OF ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, 17TH FEBRUARY, 2020 AT 3.00 P.M.

Chair: Peter Cleere.

Cllrs: Eamon Aylward, Tomás Breathnach, John Brennan, Martin Brett, Mary Hilda Cavanagh, John Coonan, Deirdre Cullen, Michael Delaney, Fidelis Doherty, Matt Doran, Michael Doyle, Pat Dunphy, David Fitzgerald, Pat Fitzpatrick, Ger Frisby, Denis Hynes, Joe Lyons, Joe Malone, Michael McCarthy, Andrew McGuinness Eugene McGuinness and Patrick O'Neill.

Officials: Colette Byrne, Martin Prendiville, Mary J. Mulholland, Sean McKeown, Tim Butler, Tony Lauhoff, Frank Stafford, Eamonn Morrissey, Bernadette Moloney, Josephine Coyne, Annette Fitzpatrick and Anne Maria Walsh.

Invited Guest: Malcolm Noonan TD.

1. Confirmation of Minutes

(a) **Minutes of Ordinary Meeting of Kilkenny County Council held on Monday 20th January, 2020**

Proposed by Cllr. Andrew McGuinness, seconded by Cllr. John Coonan and agreed:
"That the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Kilkenny County Council held on Monday, 20th January, 2020 as circulated with the Agenda be and are hereby approved".

(b) **Minutes of SPC 3 Housing Meeting held on Thursday, 24th October, 2019**

Proposed by Cllr. Joe Malone, seconded by Cllr. Andrew McGuinness and agreed:
"That the Minutes of SPC3 Housing Meeting of Kilkenny County Council held on Monday, 24th October, 2020 as circulated with the Agenda be and are hereby approved".

Cllr. Peter Cleere extended votes of sympathy to:

- Mr. James Farrell on the death of his mother Teresa Farrell.
- Mr. Pat Fitzgerald on the death of his father Patsy Fitzgerald.
- Mr. Martin Egan on the death of his brother Sean Egan.
- The Family of the late Joe Millea, Cuffesgrange.
- The Family of the late Jack Fitzgerald, Glenmore.
- The Family of the late Michael Fitzgerald, Glenmore.
- The Family of the late Seamus Malone, Mullinavat.

Cllr. Cleere congratulated the staff on winning a Local Government Award on Saturday night for the Public Light Retrofit Project. He wished Cllr. Joe Malone well in his campaign for the forthcoming Seanad elections.

He also paid tribute to Cllr Patrick O'Neill and Cllr. Denis Hynes on their endeavours in the General Elections.

Cathaoirleach welcomed Malcolm Noonan to the Chamber as a TD. He congratulated him on his success in the recent General Election and wished him well in his new role. He spoke about his 15 years service as a Councillor in the former Borough Council and Kilkenny County Council. A presentation was made to Malcolm on behalf of all Council Members and staff.

Mr. Malcolm Noonan responded and stated that he has enjoyed his 15½ years in both Chambers and had a good working relationship with all. He will continue to work for Kilkenny and will support the work of the Elected Members and the Council. He thanked the Executive and staff. He also paid tribute to Cllr. Patrick O'Neill and Cllr. Denis Hynes.

Tributes were paid to Malcom Noonan TD by Cllrs. Mary Hilda Cavanagh, Andrew McGuinness, Tomás Breathnach and Eamon Aylward.

2. (a) **Housing & Other Disposal – Tithíocht & Díuscairt Eile**

- (i) It was proposed by Cllr. John Coonan seconded by Cllr. Martin Brett and agreed:

“That, in accordance with the provisions of Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001, Kilkenny County Council hereby approves of the disposal of its interest by way of lease in The Alms House at No 2 St. Mary’s Lane, Kilkenny – as identified on the attached map - to Kilkenny Civic Trust Limited, Butler House, Patrick Street, Kilkenny for a term of 5 years at an annual rent of €1,000. Each party to be responsible for their own legal costs associated with the lease.”
[Notice sent to Members on the 4th February, 2020]

(b) (i) **Part VIII Planning for St. Mary’s Alms House**

Mr. Tony Lauhoff presented the Chief Executive Report on Part 8 Planning for the refurbishment of Alms House, No. 2, St. Mary’s Lane for office use. He advised that public consultation was undertaken. No submissions were received during the public consultation. It is recommended that Kilkenny County Council proceed with the proposed development.

It was proposed by Cllr. Andrew McGuinness, seconded by Cllr. Michael Delaney and agreed:

“We the Members of Kilkenny County Council approve the proposed Part 8 in accordance with Section 179 of the Planning & Development Act 2000 as amended and Part VIII of the Planning & Development Regulations 2001, as amended for the proposed refurbishment of the Alms House at No.2 St. Mary’s Lane for Office Use, as circulated.”

(c) (i) **Library**

Ms. Josephine Coyne gave a PowerPoint presentation on the Library Services. She also showed the promotional video on the services provided in Kilkenny. In her presentation she gave an overview on the following:

- Core Supports/Services
- Digital Library 24/7
- Current Capital Projects
- Various Library Programmes: Reading/Learning/Community.
- Statistics for 2019 – Age Profile etc.
- Sign Up Month – February 2020 – National Open Day on 29th February

She referred to the budget provided and in particular the allocation for the book fund. Kilkenny needs to increase the allocation over the next few years to reach the national target €4.00 per head of population. We are currently at €1.13 per head of population.

Cathaoirleach Peter Cleere thanked Josephine Coyne for the detailed overview of the service provided in Kilkenny and thanked all the Library Staff. He referred to the Book Fund and the need to increase this funding. He reminded all on the need to sign up as members and promote the use of the Libraries for all people both young and old.

(ii) **Draft Events Grant Scheme**

Ms. Mary Mulholland advised the Elected Members that in 2019, 120 applications were received for grant aid and the budget available was €19,000. Due to the demand for funding, it was agreed to review the Community

Events Grant Scheme for 2020. She outlined the purpose of the grant scheme and the proposed examples of eligible projects and ineligible projects. The Application Form has also been simplified. Assessment criteria has been prepared to assess the applications received. The proposed Event Grant Scheme was brought to SPC5 Community, Culture & Arts Services on Wednesday, 13th February and was approved by the Committee.

It was proposed by Cllr. Fidelis Doherty, seconded by Cllr. Michael McCarthy and agreed:

"That the draft Event Grant Scheme be implemented for the distribution of funding available from 2020."

(iii) **Creative Ireland Grant Scheme 2020**

Ms. Mary Mulholland advised Members that an allocation of €96,000 is available for grants under the Creative Ireland Programme. This is the second year of this grant scheme. Part of this funding will be used to implement strategies included in the Council's approved Cultural Strategy. Draft criteria and guidelines have been prepared for 2020. The criteria and guidelines set out the purposes of the Grants Scheme, aims and eligibility, eligible and ineligible projects, assessment criteria and marking scheme. The proposed guidelines were discussed at SPC 5 Community, Cultural & Fire Services on Wednesday, 13th February and were approved by the Committee. There is a separate allocation for Cruinniu na nOg in the sum of €15,000.

The proposed breakdown of the €96,000 for the year 2020 is as follows:

Cultural Programme	
<i>[specific projects e.g. Bookville, Heritage in schools etc.]</i>	€56,000
Grants	€25,000
Administration	€15,000

It was proposed by Cllr. Martin Brett, seconded by Cllr. John Coonan and agreed:

"That the draft Creative Ireland Kilkenny Grant Scheme be implemented for the distribution of funding available for 2020."

(d) (i) **Environment Review & Update**

Mr. Sean McKeown advised Members that a number of staff will give an overview on the main services of the Environment Department. He introduced Frank Stafford, Acting Senior Engineer, Eamonn Morrissey, Executive Engineer and Bernadette Moloney, Environmental Awareness Officer who will deliver a PowerPoint presentation.

Mr. Stafford gave an overview on the following:

- CRM: Customer Relations Management System – complaints received etc.
- Recycling Bring Centres.
- Climate Action Regional Offices.
- Energy usage - 2020 and 2030 targets.
- Control of Horses – Bye Laws 2020.
- Dog Shelter/Dog Licence Inspection Centre.
- Proposed Dunmore National Amenity and Bio-diversity Park.

Mr. Morrissey gave an overview on the following:

- RMCEI – Recommended Minimum Criteria for Environmental Inspections.

- Enforcement Unit.
- Anti-Dumping Funding Initiative,
- ADI -Bikes for Africa Scheme and Council Bike Scheme 2020.

Ms. Bernadette Moloney gave an overview on the following:

- Education and Awareness Programme.
- Litter Management Plan 2018 – 2020.
- Tidy Towns Forum / Supports / Workshops.
- Dog Friendly Initiative.
- Green Charter for Festivals and Community Events.
- One Day County Clean 2020 Initiative.

Cathaoirleach thanked all the staff for the detailed presentation on the wide and varied services provided.

Queries were raised by Cllrs. Andrew McGuinness, Fidelis Doherty, David Fitzgerald, Joe Lyons, Pat Fitzpatrick, Michael Doyle, Eugene McGuinness, John Coonan, Deirdre Cullen, Tomás Breathnach and Martin Brett in relation to:

- Animal Welfare,
- Control of Horses Bye Laws / Exclusion Zones / Seized horses.
- Dog Fouling, Dog Licencing, provision of bins etc.
- End of life vehicles – Commercial/Agriculture.
- Dunmore Amenity Park.
- Develop a North Kilkenny Greenway Route.
- Removal of illegally dumped waste, cost etc.
- Illegal burning of waste, cost of callout for Emergency Services.
- Issue of fines, collection of penalties.
- Regular recycling of larger items/bulky items.
- National Bike Week.
- Increase in number of Recycling Centres.
- Smokey coal ban to be extended to other areas.
- Commend work being done with all Tidy Towns Groups.
- Continued educational/awareness programmes needed.

It was proposed by Cllr. Andrew McGuinness, seconded by Cllr. Tomás Breathnach and agreed that the Animal Welfare Charter Committee be re-established. This will be considered at the next monthly meeting.

Messrs. McKeown, Stafford, Morrissey and Ms. Moloney responded to all the issues/queries raised by the Elected Members.

Ms. Colette Byrne thanked the staff for the presentation. The purpose was to demonstrate the breadth of services provided. She thanked all staff involved in the services, street cleaning, parks etc. Education and awareness is important and if every person complied, less money would be used on enforcement and prosecution and could be diverted to more positive initiatives.

(e) (i) **Chief Executive's Monthly Report**

Ms. Colette Byrne presented her monthly Chief Executive report.

Ms. Mary Mulholland advises Members that the Planning for the 21 houses at Ladyswell, Thomastown will be sent to An Bord Pleanala for a decision as a Nature Impact Statement is required for the proposed development.

Mr. Butler advised that there is an Open Day in Evans Home on Saturday, 14th March. Members are welcome to attend. Anyone who wishes to go needs to book a place.

Queries arose from Cllrs. Deirdre Cullen, Pat Fitzpatrick and John Brennan in relation to the following:

- Traffic Management Plan for the Irish Open.
- Water and Waste Water capacity in scheduled towns to allow development to proceed.

Mr. Butler responded to the issues raised. Ms. Colette Byrne advised that we are currently reviewing the capacity in all areas with Irish Water. A report will be prepared and we will bring it to a future Council Meeting.

(ii) **Draft Service Delivery Plan 2020**

Mr. Tim Butler presented the Draft Service Delivery Plan for all service areas for the Year 2020. The Service Delivery Plans outlines the actions to be taken to implement the strategic objectives approved by the Members in the new Corporate Plan for 2019 – 2024.

It was proposed by Cllr. Pat Fitzpatrick, seconded by Cllr. Michael McCarthy and agreed:

"That the Draft Service Delivery Plan for 2020 is hereby approved by the Members of Kilkenny County Council."

3. **Correspondence**

None.

4. **Business Adjourned from a Previous Meeting**

None.

5. **Schedule of Meetings**

(i) **Schedule of Meetings**

It was proposed by Cllr. Pat Fitzpatrick, seconded by Cllr. Deirdre Cullen and agreed.

(ii) **Special Meeting**

Cathaoirleach advised that a Special Meeting will be required to facilitate the co-option of a person to fill the casual vacancy caused by the election of Malcolm Noonan as TD. The proposed date is Tuesday, 25th February, 2020 at 5.00 p.m.

It was proposed by Cllr. Matt Doran, seconded by Cllr. Denis Hynes and agreed:

"That a Special Meeting be held on Tuesday, 25th February, 2020 at 5.00 p.m. for the filling of vacancy on Kilkenny County Council."

6. **Consideration of Reports and Recommendations of Committees of the Council**

It was proposed by Cllr. Joe Malone, seconded by Cllr. Andrew McGuinness that report taken as read and noted:

"That Chairman's Report of SPC 3: Housing held on 24th October, 2019 as circulated with the Agenda be noted and hereby approved".

7. **Other Business set forth in the Notice convening the Meeting–**

None.

8. **Conferences – Request for approval to Attend**

It was proposed by Cllr. Martin Brett, seconded by Cllr. Fidelis Doherty and agreed.

9. **Matters Arising from Minutes**

None

10. **Any Other Business**

Mr. Martin Prendiville advised the Members that an urgent request has been received from Castlecomer Discovery Park for financial assistance by way of a repayable grant to ensure that the facility can continue to operate.

Mr. Prendiville advised that a number of meetings have been held with the Board of the Discovery Park to review their current position and to consider their plan to put the facility on a sustainable operating footing. New Chairman has been appointed over the last year. Significant cut backs have been undertaken. Assistance has been provided with external expertise to review the operation and make recommendations for the future viability of the facility.

There are 25 fulltime equivalent employees. Staff numbers fluctuate between 15 in low season to 65 in the height of the summer. The annual wage bill is approx €800,000. Income of €1.24m is generated from the use of the facility. Activities are weather dependent. Following serious consideration and review, the proposal is to provide €150,000 to Castlecomer Discover Park by way of a repayable gran subject to members' approval. It is noted that Elected Members have been briefed by the Chair of Board of Castlecomer Discovery Park.

Contributions were received form Cllrs. Pat Fitzpatrick, John Brennan, Martin Brett, Denis Hynes, Tomás Breathnach, Andrew McGuinness, Peter Cleere and Joe Malone in relation to the request for financial issues.

A number of queries arose in relation to:

- Public amenity for people in Castlecomer.
- Potential for loss of employment.
- Investment already in hotel, shops as a result of visitors to the Park.
- Social enterprise for Castlecomer, tourist amenity.
- Change in Board of Directors.
- Governance of the company
- Request appointment of Elected Members to Board.
- Regular reporting from the Board to the Council.
- Include as part of County Tourism Strategy.

Mr. Prendiville responded to the queries raised. Members considered the request for financial assistance.

It was proposed by Cllr. Pat Fitzpatrick, seconded by Cllr. John Brennan and agreed by all:

"That Kilkenny County Council advance €150,000 by way of a repayable grant to Castlecomer Discover Park."

11. **Notices of Motion**

None.

12. **Notices of Motion from other local authorities seeking support of Kilkenny County Council**

None.

That concluded the business of the meeting.

CATHAOIRLEACH

DATE