Minutes of Budget Meeting of Leitrim County Council held in the Council Chamber, Áras an Chontae, Carrick on Shannon, on Monday, 19th of December 2011 at 5.30pm

Members Present: Councillor Tony Ferguson
Councillor Sean McDermott
Councillor Sinead Guckian
Councillor Martin Kenny
Councillor Gerry Kilrane
Councillor Paddy O’Rourke
Councillor Sean McGowan
Councillor Frank Dolan
Councillor Thomas Mulligan
Councillor Gerry Reynolds
Councillor Enda Stenson
Councillor John Ward
Councillor Enda McGloin
Councillor John McCartin
Councillor Mary Bohan
Councillor Siobhan McGloin
Councillor Francis Gilmartin
Councillor Gordon Hughes
Councillor Caillian Ellis
Councillor Gerry Dolan

Apologies: Councillor Sean McSharry
And Councillor John McTernan, Cathaoirleach presiding

Officials Present: Ms. Jackie. Maguire, County Manager
Ms Katrina Murphy, Head of Finance
Mr Martin Dolan, Director of Services, Environment, Emergency and Cultural Services
Mr. Joseph Gilhooly, Director of Services, Planning, Community and Economic Development
Mr John McGuinness, Director of Services, Infrastructure
Ms Mary Quinn, Director of Services, Housing & Corporate Services
Mr Shay O’Connor, Senior Engineer
Mr Brian Kenny, Senior Engineer
Mr William Lowe, Senior Engineer
Ms Carmelita Caslin, Senior Executive Officer
Mr Vincent Dwyer, Senior Executive Officer
Mr John McKeon, Financial Management Accountant
Ms. Aideen McGovern, Meetings Administrator

11/549
19/12/2011 Votes of Sympathy

The members expressed a vote of sympathy to the following:
• The McLoughlin Family, Carrick Road, Manorhamilton on the death of Gerry McLoughlin.
• Mrs Gretta Rooney, Rocktown, Glencar, Manorhamilton, Co Leitrim on the death of Joe Rooney.
- Tess Cullen & Family, Molaghboy, Kilclare, Carrick-on-Shannon and Jimmy Nugent & Family, Hillcrest, Hilly Road, Drumshanbo, Co Leitrim on the death of Kathleen Cullen.
- Johnny Early & Family, Kilclare, Carrick-on-Shannon, Co Leitrim on the death of Theresa Early.
- Mrs Fitzgerald & Family, Church Street, Drumshanbo, Co Leitrim on the death of John Fitzgerald.
- Margaret Wynne & Family, Gortnalug, Mohill on the death of Noel Wynne.
- Guckian Family, Leitrim Village, Carrick-on-Shannon on the death of Gerry Guckian.
- Cllr Enda McGloin, 1 Gleann Ailinne, Drumshanbo on the death of his aunt.

11/550
19/12/2011 **Vote of Congratulations**

The members extended a vote of congratulations to Councillor Gordon Hughes on his recent engagement to Celine Charles.

11/551
19/12/11 **Consideration of Draft Budget for the financial year ending 31st December 2012**

The Cathaoirleach, Councillor John McTernan invited the County Manager to give an overview of the Draft Budget for 2012 as presented to the Members.

Ms. Jackie Maguire, County Manager referred to the Draft Budget for the Financial Year ending 31st December 2012 and to her report dated 9th December 2011 as circulated to each Member. A copy of the Budget as circulated to the Members appears as Appendix 1 to the Minutes of this Meeting in the Minute Book. She outlined that the preparation and balancing of the budget for 2012 had again proven extremely difficult. Ms. Maguire advised that the allocation from the Local Government Fund is €11,809,261 representing a 6.49% decrease on the 2011 actual allocation.

She advised that Katrina Murphy, Head of Finance would give a general presentation in relation to the Draft Budget, and would then go through the Budget document Division by Division.

Ms. Maguire outlined that a balanced budget has been presented to the Members and represents a revenue spend of €38.9 million in 2012 which equates to a 1.8% decrease on the 2011 adopted Budget, the lowest for a number of years. She stated that the Budget reflects the downward trend in all income sources highlighting the financial challenges facing the Council. She stated that a key issue is the capacity to continue to deliver services at the same level as heretofore and outlined that it is highly likely that services will be negatively impacted in 2012 through the reduced financial and human resources. She outlined that the workforce at the end of 2008, including contract staff, was 349. She advised that this had reduced by 50 to the end of September 2011 and is anticipated to reduce by a further 10 or 12 by the end of February 2012. She stated that this level of reduction in personnel inevitably impacts on front line services, which cannot be sustained to the same extent as heretofore, and that this trend is reflected through all Divisions in the Budget as presented.

Ms. Maguire advised that it was not possible to facilitate a rate decrease but outlined that there is no provision for a commercial rate increase in the Budget as presented, in recognition of the extreme difficulties facing rate payers in the County and that rates continue to be maintained at 2008 levels.
Ms. Katrina Murphy, Head of Finance gave an overview of the Budget for 2012 and outlined the main provisions and assumptions underlying the Budget. The presentation as delivered, and as circulated to the Members, appears as Appendix 2 to the Minutes of this Meeting in the Minute Book.

Ms. Murphy outlined that Service Support Costs are included at every service throughout the Budget. She outlined that these costs relate to the costs of central services eg. ICT, Finance, Corporate Services, Human Resources etc, and are allocated/charged against each service in accordance with Department guidelines in this regard.

Councillor Gerard Reynolds sought clarification in relation to payroll costs and what percentage of the overall Budget is represented by salaries, pensions and payments to the elected members. Ms. Murphy advised that pensions represent approximately 4.6% of the overall Budget with a further 4.6% in VEC pensions fully recouped. She advised that payroll costs amount to almost 40% of the overall Budget which includes Wages, Salaries, Councillors and Fire Fighters. She advised that the overall costs associated with the Elected Members payments amounts to some 2.6% of the overall Budget.

It was agreed that Ms. Murphy would give an overview of each individual Division explaining what is provided and questions arising would then be addressed after each division.

**Division A - Housing and Building**

Ms. Katrina Murphy, Head of Finance gave an overview of the provisions in Division A – Housing & Building.

Councillor Mary Bohan paid tribute to the Clerks of Works and the Housing Maintenance Staff but expressed concern that there are inadequate personnel available to the Housing Maintenance function resulting in delays in responding to maintenance requests. Ms. Jackie Maguire, County Manager outlined that the staffing moratorium is impacting on services and will continue to impact with no option for replacing staff. Councillor Bohan suggested that options such as contracting out should be considered. Ms. Mary Quinn, Director of Services, Housing & Corporate Services outlined that there are a number of factors impacting on the Housing Maintenance function. She outlined that there had been 398 housing maintenance requests to 30th September 2011 and that there had also been a significant level of casual vacancies arising and requirements for disability-related adaptations to Council houses. She advised that the Tenant Handbook had been revised during the year, in consultation with the Residents Network and the Housing & Corporate Services SPC, in an effort to clarify Council and Tenant responsibilities, while still recognising the particular issues associated with particularly vulnerable households. She advised that resources had been pulled in from the Roads area during 2011 to assist where required. She outlined that the allocation of resources would be reviewed in 2012 in terms of the configuration of teams with a view to addressing the needs arising through a combination of own resources and, where appropriate, the contracting out of specified works.

Councillor Martin Kenny queried the provision in relation to the Housing Adaptation Grants Schemes. Ms. Mary Quinn, Director of Services confirmed that the provision of €0.5m is as was agreed by the Members at the September Council meeting in relation to the reopening of the Grant Schemes.

Councillor Francis Gilmartin highlighted the issue of discrepancies between local authority rents and the level of rent payable in the private market, even without the benefit of Rent Supplement,
and stated that the Department needed to address this issue. Ms. Quinn advised that Leitrim County Council rents are determined in accordance with the Council’s own Differential Rents Scheme as adopted by the Members. She advised that the possibility of a National Rents Scheme or a more standardised Rent Scheme is being discussed at national level and it is anticipated that Guidelines will issue in this regard in 2012.

Councillor Enda McGloin queried how many Local Authority houses have been sold in 2011 and where people are obtaining the finance to fund these purchases. Ms. Quinn advised that one house sale is currently being processed under the Tenant Purchase Scheme with no other sales completed in 2011. She advised that, while there has been a level of interest in the Tenant Purchase Scheme, and the special Enhanced Scheme introduced in 2011, difficulties are arising for tenants in relation to securing finance. Ms. Murphy, Head of Finance advised that the Council does provide finance but outlined that there are much more stringent requirements in relation to processing loan applications particularly in terms of an applicant’s ability to repay. Councillor Sean McDermott stated that purchase prices must be set at a reasonable level to encourage people to purchase. The County Manager advised that purchase prices are set in line with market values with substantial discounts applied based on the length of the tenancy and that generally prices are very attractive. Councillor Tony Ferguson proposed that the Minister be requested to extend the date for the Enhanced Tenant Purchase Scheme. This was supported by all the Members.

Councillor Paddy O’Rourke queried where the proceeds from the sale of houses and repayments on house loans go. Ms. Quinn advised that this money goes to Internal Capital Receipts and is used to part fund the Housing Grants and the Council’s Housing Improvement Works Programme.

Councillor Enda Stenson sought clarification on the provision for Homelessness. Ms. Quinn advised that this would relate predominantly to rental deposits which are 90% recoupable from the Department and associated staff costs.

Councillor Tony Ferguson sought clarification on applicants who have been approved for Rural Housing and what the standing of their applications is currently. Ms. Quinn advised that there is no Capital funding available for House construction other than for exceptional special needs cases. She advised that all provisionally approved rural house applicants had been notified of the position and placed on the Group Scheme Housing waiting List as appropriate.

**Division B – Road Transport & Safety**

Ms. Katrina Murphy, Head of Finance gave an overview of the provisions in Division B – Road Transport and Safety.

Councillor Gerard Reynolds stated that it is unacceptable that Local authorities are required to consider their Budget in advance of notification of their Roads Allocation. He proposed that a letter issue to the Ministers for Transport and Environment requesting a change of policy in this regard and that allocations would be notified in advance of local authorities considering their Budget. This was seconded by Councillor Gordon Hughes and supported by all the Members.

Councillor Tony Ferguson queried whether the Council has any flexibility in relation to the Local Improvement Scheme which has recently been withdrawn nationally. Ms. Murphy confirmed that Leitrim County Council has no flexibility in relation to the withdrawal of this Scheme. Councillor Ferguson stated that the withdrawal of the scheme is a particularly retrograde step and proposed that Leitrim County Council request, in the strongest terms, a review of the decision by the Minister. This was strongly supported by all the Members who highlighted the particular importance of the scheme in Leitrim, a predominantly rural County, and stated that, if necessary, an exceptional case should be made in relation to reinstating the Scheme for County Leitrim. It
was further agreed that a letter would issue to Deputy Tony McLoughlin and Deputy Frank Feighan requesting them to lobby the Minister for Transport to consider providing for the Local Improvement Scheme in the 2012 allocation for County Leitrim.

In response to questions in this regard the County Manager confirmed that applications on hands will hold their position for 2012 subject to review if and when the Local Improvement scheme reopens.

Councillor Caillian Ellis outlined dissatisfaction with the level of gritting of roads which had taken place over the past weekend and particularly on Saturday night/Sunday morning. He also queried whether there has been a ban placed on overtime for staff to grit roads. Mr. John McGuinness, Director of Services, Infrastructure advised that the roads are being treated in line with the Gritting Policy which was brought before and approved by the Members at the September Council meeting, and that the Priority 1 & 2 roads had been treated. He outlined that the weather conditions on Saturday night/Sunday morning had been particularly difficult with rain washing away the salt that had been spread and this then followed by further freezing conditions. The County Manager reiterated that treatment is taking place in line with the Gritting Policy and that the Council simply does not have the resources available to go beyond this.

Councillor Paddy O’Rourke outlined that members had expressed reservations in relation to the Priority Routes and particularly in relation to the non-gritting of the R201 Mohill-Carrigallen Road. This was supported by Councillor Gordon Hughes. Mr. John McGuinness outlined that this is not a Priority 1 or 2 route and as such will only be treated during normal hours. He stated that the funding is simply not available and it is a matter of either addressing maintenance issues or salting roads.

Councillor Martin Kenny stated that he understood that salt/grit was to be left at drop points around the county and asked that this be addressed. Councillor Hughes queried if members could be included on the text messaging system re forecast and gritting schedule as this would help them in dealing with calls from the public. The County Manager confirmed that this would be investigated.

**Division C - Water Services**

Ms. Katrina Murphy, Head of Finance gave an overview of the provisions in Division C – Water Services.

Councillor John McCartin queried if the costs associated with the DBO Contracts are higher than employing our own staff. He outlined that these facilities were designed based on projected populations that have not and will not be achieved and queried whether there is any scope for manoeuvre in terms of costs given the populations actually served. Mr. John McGuinness, Director of Services, Infrastructure outlined that it is not a case of being able to compare like-with-like. He outlined that these plants are operating to a much higher standard than previously. He advised that there is a flow-measurement factor which applies but confirmed that there are significant fixed costs to which the Council are contractually bound. He outlined that the regulatory requirements under the EPA are now much more onerous and all of the plants are comfortably meeting these requirements. He pointed out that if discharge licences are not met Leitrim County Council is responsible. He confirmed that all of the contracts were tendered in open competition and the Council is tied into these contracts.

Councillor Martin Kenny raised a problem in Ballinamore whereby the pipe from the Canal to the Sewerage Plant is too small. He queried what can be done to bring this necessary project to
Mr. McGuinness confirmed that proposals have been prepared in this regard. He advised that the necessary works will cost in the region of €300,000 which is outside of the scope of the Small Works or Revenue Budget. He advised that the matter was being and would be further pursued under the Water Services Capital Programme.

Councillor Sean McDermott queried whether issues arising in a number of local authority housing estates last winter in relation to frozen pipes had been addressed. Ms. Mary Quinn, Director of Services, Housing and Corporate Services confirmed that pipes have been re-laid in a number of housing estates.

Councillor Gerard Reynolds queried whether planning conditions had been amended to include that pipes would be laid at a deeper level to avoid the problems of freezing as encountered in recent years. Mr. McGuinness advised that the requirement remains that pipes must be laid at 600mm deep and that the issue arises where construction was not carried out in accordance with these requirements.

Councillor John Ward queried the level of Unaccounted for Water for Leitrim and also raised the issue of a leak from the Water Reservoir at Summerhill in Carrick on Shannon. Mr. John McGuinness advised that the figure for Unaccounted for Water is approximately 36%. He confirmed that an estimate has been prepared for the repair of the problem with the Reservoir at Summerhill. He outlined however that the water loss at this location is quite small.

Councillor Enda Stenson queried whether the Council is amenable to taking over Group Water Schemes which have been metered and brought up to date. Mr. McGuinness advised that the Council was taking over strategically important Group Water Schemes in line with the policy as agreed by the Council. He pointed out that Group Water Schemes can avail of an 85% grant for refurbishment and an annual maintenance subsidy. He outlined that no such funding is available to the Local Authority.

**Division D - Development Management**
Ms. Katrina Murphy, Head of Finance gave an overview of the provisions in Division D – Development Management.

Councillor Enda McGloin welcomed that the provision for tourism promotion has been largely maintained in the Budget. He sought a breakdown of the Building Control and Enforcement costs for 2012. Ms. Murphy clarified that these figure relate to the allocation of staff resources to these work areas. Councillor McGloin queried the provision for legal fees in relation to Enforcement. Ms. Jackie Maguire, County Manager advised that it would be hoped that any legal costs incurred on cases taken would be recouped.

**Division E - Environmental Services**
Ms. Katrina Murphy, Head of Finance gave an overview of the provisions in Division E – Environmental Services.

Councillor Sean McGowan sought clarification in relation to the figure for landfill aftercare costs. Ms. Murphy clarified that this relates to loan charges associated with the 15 year loan drawn down in 2005 in respect of the landfill remediation costs.

Councillor Enda Stenson queried if Leitrim County Council has any input into the cost of bin collection and rates charged to householders. Mr. Martin Dolan, Director of Services,
Environment, Emergency and Cultural Services advised that waste collection companies must have a permit to collect. He outlined that competition in relation to the provision of the service keeps costs to households down. He advised that Leitrim County Council has no role/input in this regard.

Councillor Gerry Kilrane queried if there is a set fee for call out charges for Fire Services in the case of road accidents. He outlined that Insurance Companies are only paying a portion of the charge in relation to claims submitted. Mr. Dolan confirmed that there is a schedule of fees for such call outs with a per-hour charge applied. He outlined that members of the public should ensure that such charges are covered by their insurance Policy.

Councillor Enda McGloin highlighted that the requirement to make provision of €200k for Fire Services training is extraordinary and represents a significant financial burden on the Local Authority. The County Manager confirmed that this training provision, which she outlined may not be adequate, is provided to comply with Health & Safety requirements. Councillor Enda Stenson queried who directs health & safety requirements. Ms. Katrina Murphy, Head of Finance advised that the Health & Safety Authority is the Statutory Body in this regard. She outlined that policies and procedures are decided in agreement with the HSA and Local authorities and stated that ultimately we must comply with the Health & Safety legislation. Councillor Mary Bohan acknowledged that there is a significant cost associated with health & safety but stated that the local authority cannot compromise when it comes to the safety of employees or the people they serve.

Councillor Sinead Guckian queried whether the potential of selling on materials collected at the Civic Amenity Sites had been explored. She also queried whether the option of private entities taking over the landfills had been investigated. She outlined that ‘landfill mining’ has become a feature in many developed countries whereby landfills are opened to the public in a safe way. Councillor Guckian also queried whether there is a reduction in the street cleaning service proposed in the Budget. Mr. Martin Dolan, Director of Services confirmed that the Council receives income for materials at the Civic Amenity Sites but outlined that this only goes a small way towards the costs of operating the facilities. In relation to gas from the landfills he advised that the scale is so small that this would not be a viable option. He advised that Carrick and Mohill Landfills have been fully rehabilitated and would be considered to be returned to their original state. He stated that landfill mining is not really an option in the Leitrim context. He also confirmed that there is no reduction proposed in the street cleaning programme.

Councillor Thomas Mulligan queried what provision has been made in the Budget for the replacement of Fire equipment. Mr. Dolan confirmed that the replacement of such equipment would be under Capital and is not provided for in the Revenue Budget.

Councillor Martin Kenny queried if there was any provision in the Budget in relation to the inspection of septic tanks. The County Manager confirmed that the budget includes no provision in this regard.

**Division F - Recreation & Amenity**

Ms. Katrina Murphy, Head of Finance gave an overview of the provisions in Division F – Recreation & Amenity.

Councillor Sinéad Guckian expressed her extreme disappointment at the cutting of the Community, Voluntary and Arts Grants. She stated that these schemes supported small community festivals and events and was an important acknowledgement from the Council of the
invaluable efforts of local communities. Ms. Jackie Maguire, County Manager advised that she shared the views expressed. She outlined however that, unfortunately, in balancing the budget, all aspects of discretionary funding had to be examined. She outlined that there are other funding streams in the County which such groups can avail of and confirmed that other ‘soft’ supports could and would continue to be provided by the Council as required. She stated that the emphasis had to be on keeping the opening of The Dock at a sustainable level. Councillor Paddy O’Rourke also expressed his disappointment at the cut in the Community, Voluntary and Arts Grants and stated that the support of the Council added credence to these events in terms of their marketing and publicity. Councillor Enda McGloin stated that the Leitrim Development Company, of which he is a member, has a programme available to such groups and that this avenue is open to help community groups if financial support is required. The County Manager pointed out that the total budget of €40,000 was distributed across a whole range of groups. She stated that while the financial support provided was obviously of assistance it clearly was not the determining factor in relation to the viability of any particular event. She reiterated that significant funding is available through the Rural Development programme and outlined that the soft supports that can continue to be provided are often more advantageous than the financial support. She stated that nothing was done lightly in relation to balancing the budget but that if members wanted to reinstate these grants they would need to advise as to where the necessary cuts to facilitate this should be made.

**Division G - Agriculture, Education, Health & Welfare**

Ms. Katrina Murphy, Head of Finance gave an overview of the provisions in Division G – Agriculture, Education, Health & Welfare.

Councillor Caillian Ellis queried the contribution to the Joint Drainage Bodies and whether there is provision for the Cloone River. Ms. Murphy confirmed that €15,000 has been provided for the Statutory Drainage Bodies and this is all that is available.

Councillor Francis Gilmartin queried the costs associated with the Dog Warden Service. Ms. Murphy clarified that the provision includes for the cost of providing a Dog Pound which is based in Drumkeerin together with the associated costs relating to the Community Wardens and Dog Licence Administration. She confirmed that the cost of the Dog Pound is circa €40,000.

Councillor Gerard Reynolds queried the Veterinary Service provision of €115,987. Ms. Murphy confirmed that this covers the inspection of abattoirs etc and is fully funded by the Department of Agriculture.

Councillor Sean McGowan stated that the Eslin River is in a terrible state and requested that the provision for Maintenance of Land Drainage Areas be increased from €5,000 to €10,000. Ms. Murphy advised that Councillor McGowan would need to identify where this €5,000 would be taken from. Councillor Enda Stenson stated that extensive works are required on this river. Mr. John McGuinness, Director of Services, Infrastructure outlined that the real problem in relation to the Eslin and Headford rivers is the Shannon itself. The County Manager confirmed that funding would be sought from the OPW for this river.

Councillor Gordon Hughes queried the provision in relation to the Administration of Higher Education Grants. The Head of Finance confirmed that this relates to the allocation of staff resources to this work area.

**Division H - Miscellaneous Services**

Ms. Katrina Murphy, Head of Finance gave an overview of the provisions in Division H – Miscellaneous Services.
Councillor Sean McDermott queried whether there had been any progress in relation to the One Stop Shop proposed for Manorhamilton. The County Manager confirmed that this matter is tied up with the unfinished development at the proposed location. She outlined that the Council’s financial position had deteriorated in the intervening period in any event and that the Council would not have the financial capacity to proceed with this proposal.

11/552
19/12/11 Adoption of Draft Budget for the financial year ending 31st December 2012

The Cathaoirlech, Councillor John McTernan stated that he was proposing the adoption of the Budget as presented. Councillor Enda Stenson stated that he was prepared to second the proposal. He stated that the Council is operating in a very challenging environment but he stated that he considered that the Budget as presented is the best use of the available resources.

Councillor Martin Kenny sought clarification in relation to whether additional provision is to be made in relation to land drainage. The County Manager advised that funding is to be sought from the OPW. Councillor Kenny stated that he was not happy but would be prepared to go with the Budget as presented.

Councillor Gerry Kilrane stated that it is important to acknowledge the difficulties being experienced by the business community, as outlined by the Carrick on Shannon Chamber of Commerce at the December Council meeting. He acknowledged that their call for a 15% reduction in rates could not be facilitated and that the Council is not in a position to reduce the rates but stated that a fairer system of rates, based on turnover, is urgently required and must be introduced. This was supported by all the Members.

Proposed by Councillor John McTernan, seconded by Councillor Enda Stenson AND UNANIMOUSLY AGREED;

“That Leitrim County Council adopts for the financial year ending 31st December 2012, the Budget set out in Tables A - F, and further resolves to determine in accordance with the said Budget the rates set out in Table A to be the annual rate on valuation to be levied for 2012 for the purposes set out in those Tables’.

Councillor Sinéad Guckian proposed that a letter issue to Mr. Colm Lavery, Principal Officer, Local Government Finance Section outlining the very difficult situation that the Council finds itself in and pointing out that we have had to drop some very worthwhile, minimal cost projects in the County due to the reduction in the Local Government Fund. This was seconded by Councillor Francis Gilmartin and agreed by all the Members.
11/553
19/12/11 Determination of Annual Rate on Valuation

Proposed by Councillor John McTernan seconded by Councillor Enda Stenson AND UNANIMOUSLY AGREED;

“That Leitrim County Council hereby determine in accordance with the Budget as proposed and adopted by the members, the Annual Rate on Valuation to be levied for the several purposes specified in the Budget for the financial year ending 31st December 2012.”

11/554
19/12/11 Certification

The Cathaoirleach and the County Manager then signed the Statutory Certificate to the effect that at the Budget Meeting of Leitrim County Council held this 19th Day of December 2011, the Council by resolution adopted for the financial year ending 31st December 2012, the Budget set out in Tables (A to F) and by resolution determined in accordance with the said budget the Rates set out in Tables (B and C) to be the annual rate on valuation to be levied for that year for the purposes set out in those tables.

The Cathaoirleach thanked the County Manager and the Head of Finance for the Budget Book as presented. He also thanked the members for their contribution. The Members in turn thanked the Cathaoirleach and staff for the manner in which the meeting had been presented and conducted. Ms. Jackie Maguire, County Manager thanked all involved in the preparation of the Budget and in particular Katrina Murphy, Head of Finance. She also thanked the Chairperson and the members. She acknowledged that it was a difficult Budget and stated that the Executive would continue to do their best but reiterated that it was inevitable that service levels would be affected in the coming year. She stated that it is important to manage expectations. She stated that 2011 was a difficult year but a lot had been achieved and she stated that she was hopeful for 2012.

In concluding she reminded the Members that the closing date for submissions to the Constituency Commission is Tuesday 10th January 2012. She advised that a short submission has been drafted by Leitrim County Council which is being circulated to the Members for their consideration and comments.

This concluded the business of the meeting at 8.00pm.

SIGNED:  Cllr John McTernan  CATHAOIRLEACH

SIGNED:  Aideen McGovern  MEETINGS ADMINISTRATOR

DATE:  9th January 2012