

Minutes of Meeting of Leitrim County Council held in the Council Chamber, Aras an Chontae, Carrick-on-Shannon on Monday, 6th July, 2015

Members Present: Councillor Armstrong–McGuire, Finola
Councillor Barry, Brendan
Councillor Bohan, Mary
Councillor Dolan, Frank
Councillor Fallon, Pádraig
Councillor Ellis, Caillán
Councillor Guckian, Des
Councillor Guckian, Sinead
Councillor Gurn, Felim
Councillor Kenny, Martin
Councillor Logan, Seadhna
Councillor McDermott, Sean
Councillor McGowan, Sean
Councillor O'Rourke, Paddy
Councillor Stenson, Enda
Councillor Warnock, Justin

And Councillor John McCartin, Cathaoirleach presiding

Apologies: Councillor Gerry Dolan

Officials Present: Mr. Frank Curran, Chief Executive
Mr. Joseph Gilhooly, Director of Services, Economic Development, Planning, Environment and Transportation
Mr. Shane Tiernan, A/Director of Services, Housing and Community, Corporate Services, Culture and Emergency Services
Mr. John McKeon, A/Head of Finance & Water Services
Mr. Shay O'Connor, Senior Engineer, Infrastructure
Ms. Vivienne Egan, Senior Executive Planner
Mr. Paul Kirkpatrick, Community & Enterprise Development Officer
Ms. Nollaig Whyte, Community & Enterprise Development Officer
Ms. Sinead Flynn, Meetings Administrator
Ms. Michelle Reynolds, Assistant Staff Officer
Ms. Kathleen McGovern Ellis, Assistant Staff Officer

15/102

06/07/2015 Votes of Sympathy

The Members extended a vote of sympathy to the following:

- Mr. Peter Creegan, Corduff, Cloone, Co Leitrim on the death of Ms. Eileen Creegan
- Mrs. Tess Monaghan, Drumlonan, Ballinamore, Co Leitrim on the death of Mr. Eddie Monaghan.
- Ms. Jacinta Molloy, Farnagh, Leitrim P.O., Carrick-on-Shannon on the death of Mrs. Margaret Molloy.
- Ms. Patricia Corrigan, Oak Drive, Carrick-on-Shannon on the death Mrs. Sarah Corrigan.
- Mr. Alan Horan, 12 Autumn View, Carrick-on-Shannon on the death of Mrs. Mary Horan.
- Mrs. Carmel Boles, Mount Temple, Carrick-on-Shannon on the death of Mr. Michael Boles.
- Councillor Finola Armstrong-McGuire, Main Street, Carrick-on-Shannon on the death of Ms. Marian McGuire.
- Mr. Paul Duffy, Cloonmorris, Bornacoola, Co Leitrim on the death of Ms. Annie Duffy.

- Mrs. Eileen Reynolds & Family, Foxfield, Ballinamore, Co Leitrim on the death of Mr. Anselm Reynolds.

15/103

06/07/2015 Deimhniu Miontuairisci

Proposed by Councillor Enda Stenson, seconded by Councillor Felim Gurn and UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED:

“That the Minutes of Meeting of Leitrim County Leitrim held in Bredagh Old School House, Carrigallen, Co Leitrim on Monday, 11th May, 2015 be adopted”.

Proposed by Councillor Frank Dolan, seconded by Councillor Enda Stenson and RESOLVED:

“That the Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Leitrim County Leitrim held in Aras An Chontae, Carrick-on-Shannon, Co Leitrim on Friday, 26th June, 2015 be adopted”.

Councillor Des Guckian outlined his dis-satisfaction with the Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Leitrim County Council held on Friday 26th June, 2015. He outlined that he did not consider that the Minutes were an accurate record of the meeting. Cathaoirleach John McCartin informed Councillor Guckian that the Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Leitrim County Council are a record of the decisions taken at the meeting.

15/104

06/07/2015 Economic Development Strategy for County Leitrim 2015-2021

Mr Frank Curran, Chief Executive welcomed Mr. Jim Devlin and Mr. Pat McCloughan Economic Consultants to the meeting. The draft Leitrim Economic Development Strategy 2015-2021 as circulated to the Members appears as **Appendix 1** to the Minutes of this meeting in the Minute Book. Mr. Curran outlined that a short promotional DVD of County Leitrim would precede the presentation on the Draft Economic Development Strategy 2015-2021.

Mr. Devlin and Mr. Cloughan presented a detailed overview on the Draft Economic Strategy 2015-2021 outlining the economic vision for Leitrim and the anticipated future growth opportunities for the county. A copy of the presentation on the Draft Economic Strategy appears as **Appendix 2** to the Minutes of this meeting in the Minute Book.

The Cathaoirleach, Councillor John McCartin, thanked Mr Devlin and Mr McCloughlan for their presentation and invited questions/comments from the Members.

Councillor Mary Bohan stated that if Leitrim County Council is proposing to adopt an Economic Strategy for Leitrim then it is essential to have services and infrastructure in place to attract more people to work, live and invest in the county. She acknowledged that the economic vision for the county provides for the creation of new jobs, however, she outlined that the delay in upgrading the broadband infrastructure is a matter of serious concern for existing and potential new business start-ups. Councillor Bohan noted that a commitment was given to upgrade the broadband infrastructure in the county by 2016, however, she stated that the lack of high speed broadband was a contributing factor to the loss of existing jobs.

Councillor Bohan also expressed concern in relation to the loss of services and facilities in many parts of the county and the impact that the removal of such services e.g. banking and medical

services is having on the local community. She was of the opinion that the Draft Economic Strategy include identify specific measures to address rural decline.

Councillor Martin Kenny supported Councillor Bohan's sentiments in relation to the requirement to upgrade the broadband infrastructure in the county. He stated that the provision of a proper broadband service is essential to stimulate job creation. Councillor Kenny was also of the opinion that additional supports should be put in place for new start-up companies.

Councillor Sean McGowan also supported the comments by the other Members and he expressed his disappointment that the recent visit to Leitrim by the Minister for Enterprise, Jobs & Employment Mr. Richard Bruton had not resulted in any new job announcements. He referred to the excellent business campus in Carrick-on-Shannon and he also commended Vista Med for their successful business operation in Rooskey and Carrick-on-Shannon which provides 300 jobs locally. Councillor McGowan also outlined the requirement to continue to promote Leitrim as a destination of choice for tourists.

Councillor Des Guckian expressed his disappointment in relation to the Draft Economic Strategy 2015-2021. He also raised concerns in relation to the broadband infrastructure and stated that he did not consider that the upgrading of broadband would be achieved for some time. He called for the establishment of a special Western Development Region and referred to the significant loss of jobs at the former MBNA Facility in Carrick-on-Shannon and to a recent announcement of redundancies at Liberty Insurance, Cavan. He outlined that the Draft Economic Strategy references the importance of the N4, however, he outlined his opinion that the Dromod-Rooskey By-Pass is of poor design. He also expressed dis-satisfaction that there is no reference to fracking contained in the Draft Economic Strategy. He concluded by stating that the majority of third level students from the county are emigrating to access job opportunities abroad and he requested that consideration be give to providing additional financial support to local enterprises.

Councillor Sean McDermott also supported the other Members in relation to the points raised particularly in relation to broadband. He also stressed the importance of the tourism sector as a means to generate income and employment opportunities for the local economy.

Councillor Felim Gurn also concurred with Councillor Bohan's comments in relation to the removal of services and the closure of businesses in the county and he referred to the recent closure of a bank in Manorhamilton. Councillor Gurn stated that Manorhamilton is the gate-way of North Leitrim and that greater efforts on behalf of the IDA are necessary in order to attract industry and create employment opportunities in the area. He outlined that there has been no inward investment to create new employment opportunities in Manorhamilton in over 40 years.

Councillor Paddy O'Rourke stated that if the economic vision of the Draft Strategy is to be achieved that all the key stakeholders and agencies will have to work together to deliver the objectives contained in the Draft Strategy.

Councillor Justin Warnock expressed his disappointed with the Draft Strategy, he acknowledged that the Draft Strategy will generate additional employment opportunities but stated that the numbers indicated are not sufficient to enable young people return to Leitrim after completing their third-level education. Councillor Warnock also referenced the existing high levels of unemployment in the county as per the figures on the Live Register.

Councillor Pdraig Fallon also supported the sentiments expressed by the other Members particularly in relation to supporting local people to remain living and working in Leitrim. He expressed concern in relation to rural de-population and stated that forestry will be replacing people in the North Leitrim area. Councillor Fallon outlined that he considered that significant supports were being made available by State Agencies to promote the forestry industry yet the same level of support is not provided to local people wishing to pursue new business opportunities.

Mr. Curran pointed out that Leitrim has a vibrant economy making a significant contribution to the well-being, skills and aspirations of those working and living in Leitrim, and the wider North West region. He stressed the importance of achieving the vision of the Draft Strategy to provide, sustainable employment and business opportunities in the traditional and emerging knowledge-orientated sectors.

Mr. Curran also stated that the Draft Economic Strategy provides for a significant increase in the employment figures for Leitrim, particularly in key targeted sectors including agriculture and food, manufacturing, financial and ICT, creative and arts, energy supply and green economy, retail town centre and services and tourism. He advised that in fulfilling this Economic Vision, Leitrim County Council will work with and support all stakeholders to contribute to employment growth and sustainable economic development in the county and its wider region, including on a cross-border basis.

Mr. Curran acknowledged the Members comments and concerns on the Draft Strategy, however, he recommended that the Members adopt the Draft Strategy as presented. He also outlined that a separate Tourism Strategy to promote tourism within the county is in place.

Mr. Curran invited Mr. Shane Tiernan, A/Director of Services to give an update in relation to the upgrading of the Broadband infrastructure in the county as provided for under the National Broadband Plan. Mr. Tiernan outlined the main provisions of the Plan and this update was noted by the Members.

Councillor Sinead Guckian stated that the Members had not been given sufficient time to consider the Draft Strategy and could not be expected to adopt the Draft Strategy which will determine the future economic development of the county without a further opportunity to review the document. Councillor Sinead Guckian acknowledged that the Draft Strategy makes provision for the creation of 1,000 jobs in the county, however, she stated that it was not clear how competitiveness will be achieved and if the projected increase in jobs is sustainable. She also expressed her disappointment that the Arts and the Creative Sector are not accurately reflected in the Draft Strategy. Councillor Sinead Guckian sought clarification in relation to the level of consultation that had taken place with this sector. She stated that she considered that the Members would not be in a position to adopt the Draft Strategy without the opportunity for further discussion and review. Councillor Sinead Guckian recommended that Members be afforded the opportunity to forward their comments/submissions on the Draft Strategy and that the Members be facilitated with a Workshop on the Draft Strategy.

Mr. McCloughan outlined that in addition to the Draft Economic Strategy that local authorities are also required to submit a LECP (Local Economic & Community Plan) to the Department of the Environment, Community & Local Government by year-end which will have a greater focus on the community sector. He also outlined that it is proposed to develop an Events Calendar for the creative/arts/cultural sector and main stream businesses and that efforts will continue to promote Leitrim within its regional context with a particular emphasis on the promotion of the Carrick-on-Shannon Business Campus. Mr. McCloughan accepted that the rollout of high speed fibre based broadband networks is essential to assist business and enterprise in the county. In his concluding remarks, Mr McCloughan referred to the High Level Advisory Group that have been involved in the preparation of the Draft Economic Strategy and outlined their commitment to developing Leitrim. He also acknowledged the commitment of Mr. Curran, and his staff in relation to their role in the preparation of the Draft Strategy. He advised that following the adoption of the Draft Strategy that the key performance indicators will be subject to ongoing and regular review to ensure that they be achieved.

Councillor Sinead Guckian proposed that the adoption of the Draft Strategy be deferred and that a Workshop for the Members be facilitated to facilitate further review of the Draft Strategy. This proposal was supported by Councillor Sean McGowan.

Councillor Des Guckian supported Councillor Sinead Guckian's comments, however, he did not support the recommendation to arrange a Workshop for the Members.

Councillor Enda Stenson queried if a public consultation process would delay the proposed adoption of the Draft Economic Strategy by a number of months. Mr. Joseph Gilhooly, Director of Services confirmed that the public consultation process would have to be completed within a prescribed time-frame.

Councillor Caillian Ellis queried if members of the public will be given an opportunity to make submissions on the Draft Strategy. Mr. Curran advised that the public will have an opportunity to make submissions, if the Members agreed to the Draft Strategy going on public consultation. Mr. Joseph Gilhooly, Director of Services outlined that consultation on the Draft Strategy had been brought through the Economic Development, Enterprise and Planning SPC.

Following the discussion the Cathaoirleach, Councillor John McCartin summarised the position and noted that the consensus of the Members was that the adoption of the Draft Economic Strategy 2015-2021 be deferred pending the outcome of the public consultation process, that the Members will also have the opportunity to make their own submissions on the Draft Strategy and that a Workshop for the Members be facilitated in September, 2015 to review the Draft Economic Plan 2015-2021 in advance of the matter being considered for adoption by the Members.

Mr. Frank Curran, Chief Executive and Mr. Joseph Gilhooly, Director of Services agreed to this proposal.

Proposed by Councillor Sinead Guckian, seconded by Councillor Sean McGowan and RESOLVED:

“That the adoption of the Draft Economic Strategy 2015-2021 be deferred pending the outcome of a public consultation process, that the Members will have the opportunity to make their own submissions on the Draft Strategy and that a Workshop for the Members be facilitated in September, 2015 to review the Draft Economic Plan 2015-2021 in advance of the matter being considered for adoption by the Members’.

15/105

06/07/2015 Incentivised Scheme for Business Start-ups in Town Centres

Report dated 30th June, 2015 from Mr Joseph Gilhooly, Director of Services, Economic Development, Planning, Environment & Transportation on the Draft Incentivised Scheme for Business Start-ups in Town Centres as circulated to the Members appears as **Appendix 3** to the Minutes of this meeting in the Minute Book.

Mr Joseph Gilhooly, Director of Services, took the Members through his report and outlined that the purpose of the scheme is to encourage Business Start-ups in Town Centres to revitalise town-centres and reduce the level of vacant business premises.

Councillor Mary Bohan welcomed the Incentivised Scheme for Business Start-ups in Town Centres. She outlined her concerns for existing businesses currently struggling with the rates levied on their businesses and referred to significant variances in the rates paid by individual businesses.

Mr. Gilhooly outlined that the Draft Incentivised Scheme for Business Start-ups in Town Centres is specifically designed to assist the revitalisation of town centres. He outlined that there is no provision within the scheme to assist existing businesses and stated that the valuation of commercial rates is a separate matter entirely.

Councillor Des Guckian queried why the Draft Incentivised Scheme cannot be extended to all businesses and not just those located in town centres. Mr. Gilhooly responded by stating that the purpose of the Draft Scheme is to attract business into town centres to rejuvenate them particularly where many business have re-located to out-of-town developments.

Mr. Frank Curran outlined there is provision for a business to apply for a re-evaluation of rates in circumstances where there is a reduction in the operating hours of a business.

Councillor Sinead Guckian welcomed the Draft Incentivised Scheme for Business Start-ups in Town Centres and she also referred to a possible introduction of a VAT Rebate Scheme to incentivise rejuvenation of town centres.

Mr. Joseph Gilhooly, outlined that the priority is the revitalisation of the town-centres and that in assessing applications that the local authority must have regard to the existing businesses in order that any new business enterprise does not displace an existing business. He also outlined that all applications will be assessed in accordance with the provisions of the scheme on a case-by-case basis.

Mr. Frank Curran advised that all applications under the Incentivised Scheme for Business Start-ups in Town Centres will be considered on a case by case basis, including those located outside of the officially mapped area for the scheme.

Councillor Finola Armstrong McGuire welcomed the Draft Incentivised Scheme for Business Start-up's in Town Centres, however, she expressed her concern in relation to the future of the town centre in Carrick-on-Shannon. She outlined that 'bed-nights' are becoming the new retail in the town centre with former business premises being refurbished to provide residential accommodation for groups of visitors visiting the town at weekends. Councillor Armstrong McGuire called upon the Council to develop proposals to assist in the revitalisation of Carrick-on-Shannon town-centre to support new business enterprises and she called for regulation of the accommodation sector. She also outlined that the proprietors of the local B&B's and hotels had invested significantly in their facilities to provide accommodation for visitors and they were now having to compete with alternative accommodation providers that are only catering for a certain aspect of the tourist market at weekends.

Proposed by Councillor Caillian Ellis, seconded by Councillor Finola Armstrong McGuire and RESOLVED:

"That Leitrim County Council's Incentivised Scheme for Business Start-ups in Town Centres be adopted".

15/106

6/07/2015

Leitrim County Council's Budgetary Process

Mr. John McKeon, A/Head of Finance and Water Services presented a report to the Members on Leitrim County Council's Budgetary Process. A copy of the presentation appears as **Appendix 4** to the Minutes of this meeting in the Minute Book.

This update was noted by the Members.

15/107

6/07/2015

Establishment and Nomination of Members to the Leitrim Joint Policing Committee

Report dated 30th June, 2015 from Ms. Mary Quinn, Director of Services, Housing, Corporate, Community Cultural & Emergency Services in relation to the establishment of the Leitrim Joint Policing Committee as circulated to the Members appears as **Appendix 5** to the Minutes of this meeting in the Minute Book.

Proposed by Councillor Mary Bohan, seconded by Councillor Sinead Guckian and unanimously RESOLVED:

“That Leitrim County Council approve the establishment and nomination of the Members to the Leitrim Joint Policing Committee’

Elected Members (13):

Carrick-on-Shannon Municipal District:

Councillor Des Guckian, Councillor Sinead Guckian, Councillor Finola Armstrong- McGuire, Councillor Enda Stenson

Ballinamore Municipal District:

Councillor Caillian Ellis, Councillor Brendan Barry, Councillor Gerry Dolan, Councillor John McCartin,

Manorhamilton Municipal District:

Councillor Mary Bohan, Councillor Pdraig Fallon, Councillor Justin Warnock, Councillor Sean McDermott, Councillor Felim Gurn

Oireachtas Members (5):

Mr. Frank Feighan T.D, Mr. Michael Colreavy T.D, Senator Marc McSharry, Senator Pascal Mooney, Senator Michael Comiskey,

Officials from Leitrim County Council (2):

Mr. Frank Curran (Chief Executive) and Ms. Mary Quinn (Director of Services).

The Members of An Gardaí Siochana have been approved by the Garda Commissioner and are as follows:

- Chief Superintendent Michael P. Clancy (Sligo Garda Station)
- Superintendent Kevin English (Carrick-on-Shannon Garda Station).

Community Representatives (6)

- Ms. Sheila Mollaghan – Carrigallen
- Ms. Kathleen Flanagan – Carrick-on-Shannon
- Ms. Fiona Taylor – Mohill
- Ms. Hayle Fox Roberts – Drumcong
- Mr. Neville Pattersoon – Carrigallen
- Ms. Janice Raince Conick – Killargue

15/108

06/07/2015

Monthly Management Reports by the Chief Executive

Monthly Management Reports for the period 1st April, 2015 to 30th April, 2015 and 1st May, 2015 to 31st May, 2015 by Mr. Frank Curran, Chief Executive, dated 14th May, 2015 and 12th June, 2015 respectively, prepared in accordance with Section 136(2) of the Local Government Act, 2001 as inserted by Section 51 of the Local Government Reform, Act 2014, as circulated to the Members, appears as **Appendix 6** and **Appendix 7** to the Minutes of this meeting in the Minute Book.

The reports as circulated were noted by the Members.

Councillor Sinead Guckian noted and welcomed the update on Water Services as outlined in the Chief Executive Report's for April and May, 2015 which confirmed that plans will be progressed to complete an Assets Brief on the AC from Mong to Drumsna. She stated that the main is 30 years old and is in need of upgrading and queried if funding for the project will be approved by Irish Water.

Mr. Frank Curran noted Councillor Sinead Guckian's comments and stated that the position will be reviewed by Irish Water after the Assets Brief has been completed.

15/109

06/07/2015

Section 138 (1) of the Local Government Act 2001

Report from Mr. Joseph Gilhooly, Director of Services, Economic Development, Planning, Environment & Transportation as circulated to the Members in relation to the Rural Water Programme, appears as **Appendix 8** to the Minutes of this meeting in the Minute Book.

This update was noted by the Members.

15/110

06/07/2015

Corporate Policy Group Report

Ms. Sinead Flynn, Meetings Administrator gave an overview of the items considered by the Corporate Policy Group at their meeting held prior to the Council meeting. Ms. Flynn advised that updates from the three Strategic Policy Committees were provided to the CPG as follows:

Economic Development, Enterprise and Planning SPC

Ms. Flynn outlined that the Economic, Development, Enterprise & Planning Strategic Policy Committee had a meeting on 28th May, 2015 and considered the following items:-

- **Business Start up Initiative for Town Centres**
This scheme was reviewed by the SPC and following discussion on the Draft Scheme it was recommended for approval by the Council and the item is listed as an agenda item at today's Council Meeting.
- **Draft Economic Element of the Leitrim Local Economic & Community Plan (LECP)**
Following a presentation in relation to the Draft Economic Element of the Leitrim Local Economic & Community Plan, it was approved for the process of integration with the community element being prepared by the LCDC through the Advisory Committee.
- **Centralised Procurement**

The matter of centralised procurement was discussed and it was agreed that the Leitrim Enterprise Office would continue to support and advise local businesses on accessing procurement opportunities.

Housing Policy, Social & Cultural Development SPC

Ms. Flynn outlined that the Housing Policy, Social & Cultural Development SPC had a meeting on 19th May, 2015 and considered the following items:-

- **Social Housing Strategy 2020**

The Members noted the indicative targets to be achieved in 2015 to meet the Social Housing Need in the county. Targets will be met through a range of delivery mechanisms including the upgrading of existing social housing stock, direct build by the expansion of the existing local authority estate at Taobh Tire, Manorhamilton to provide an additional 7 units and by providing additional units under the Rental Accommodation Scheme and the Long-Term Leasing Scheme.

- **The Housing & Disability Strategy**

The Members noted that the Housing & Disability Strategy is currently being prepared by the Housing Department in consultation with the HSE to facilitate access, for people with disabilities, to the appropriate range of housing and related support services, delivered in an integrated and sustainable manner, to promote equality of opportunity, individual choice and independent living.

- **The Housing Grants**

The Members noted that details in relation to the Housing Grant Scheme Allocation for 2015 were awaited and that it was anticipated that a similar level of funding would be provided in 2015 as in previous years. It was also noted that the housing grants remain open to applicants and that activity levels in relation to commitments etc will be kept under regular review.

- **Leitrim Arts Strategy**

The Arts Officer, Mr. Philip Delamere gave a presentation on the Leitrim Arts Strategy 2012-2017.

Environment, Transportation & Infrastructural Policy SPC

Ms. Flynn informed the Members that the Environmental, Transportation and Infrastructural Policy SPC held a meeting on 2nd July, 2015. The members received an update in relation to the following:-

- **Transport Co Ordination Unit**

The SPC received a detailed presentation from Ms. Camilla Kelly, Manager, Local Link Sligo, Leitrim and Roscommon as part of the Transport Co-Ordination Units consultation process with the SPC. Ms Kelly agreed to revert to the SPC later in the year when the first draft of the plan is finalised.

- **Irish Water**

Mr Billy Lowe, Senior Engineer, made a presentation on the activities of Irish Water to the SPC Members. The SPC Members noted that Irish Water is required to develop an investment plan and Members expect to have an input in the development of same.

- **Waste Presentation Bye Laws – Registration Process**

The Members received a report from Mr. Sean Scott, Environmental Enforcement Officer, regarding the management of household waste. The registration process contained within the above was referred to the SPC by the Council for review. A workshop had been held in May with the SPC members which outlined details in relation to the positive progression of the waste management agenda in the County over the last decade and other details on the development of the Pay by Weight System.

Ms. Flynn outlined that following consideration the SPC Members agreed to recommend the following to the Council:

1. Given that a number of pieces of legislation and regulations are currently being progressed at national level that it is not proposed to proceed with any amendment to the Waste Presentation Bye-Law amendments until the details of the new regulatory regime is available.
2. However, the Council should renew its commitment not to pursue any householder in relation to the registration process in the interim as it is expected that this process will not be pursued in the long-term.
3. In order to assist both the householders in being able to provide clarity around how they are dealing with their waste disposal (if not availing of a kerbside collection service) and to assist the Local Authority in developing a greater knowledge on the approximately 4,000 householders disposing of waste outside the kerbside system that a process of voluntary declaration for householders on how they are compiling with the legislative requirements could be put in place online on a pilot basis. However, it was also considered that this concept should not be progressed at this time so as not to confuse the issue with the non pursuit of the registration process.

Ms. Flynn also informed the Members that the CPG also noted the change in membership of the Economic Development, Enterprise and Planning SPC and a change in membership of the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) as follows:

- Mr. Scott Coombs, Gortnalibbert, Manorhamilton, Co. Leitrim will replace Ms. Aedin McLoughlin as a member of to the Economic Development, Enterprise & Planning SPC.
- Ms. Aedin McLoughlin will replace Mr. Scott Coombs as a member of the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC).

Ms. Flynn concluded by stating that the CPG also considered agenda items for the Council meeting and approved the attendance of members at forthcoming conferences and training seminars. She also informed the Members that a Questionnaire from the Association of Irish Local Government (AILG) was circulated to each Member and she requested that the completed questionnaires be returned to Councillor Sinead Guckian for submission to the AILG.

This update was noted by the Members.

15/111
06/07/2015

Conferences/Training

Proposed by Councillor Mary Bohan, seconded by Councillor Enda Stenson AND UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED:

“That the attendance of Councillor Sean McDermott, Councillor Finola Armstrong McGuire, Councillor Enda Stenson, Councillor Gerry Dolan and Councillor Martin Kenny at the McGill Summer School, Glenties, Co Donegal from 19th July to 24th July, 2015 be approved”.

“That the attendance of Councillor Finola Armstrong McGuire at the Conference on “Housing Debate: What Role for Local Government in Rebuilding our Communities?” on the 10th September, 2015 in Maynooth University Campus be approved”.

“That the attendance of Councillor Sean McDermott at the Oughterard Courthouse Conference in Oughterard, Co Galway on 29th May, 2015 be retrospectively approved”.

“That the attendance of Councillor Paddy O’Rourke at the Age Friendly Ireland Declaration in the Mansion House, Dublin on 27th January, 2015 be retrospectively approved”.

“That the attendance of Councillor Paddy O’Rourke at the Water Conservation Awards in the College of Surgeons, Dublin on 7th May, 2015 be retrospectively approved”.

“That the attendance of Councillor Paddy O’Rourke at the Co. Leitrim Society of New York Dinner Dance and St. Patrick’s Day Parade in New York from the 11th March to 19th March, 2015 be retrospectively approved”.

15/112
06/07/2015

Meeting Correspondence

The following items were considered under Meeting Correspondence:

1. Letter dated 11th May, 2015 from HSE on receipt of Resolution passed by Leitrim County Council with regard to the recent HIQA Registration Inspection at Aras Carolan Community Nursing Home, Mohill.

Councillor Sean McGowan welcomed the reply of Mr. Frank Morrison, HSE and he also commended the staff of Aras Carolan, Mohill for their excellent work at the facility.

2. Letter dated 29th May, 2015 from the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government in relation to the 2015 Allocation for the Housing Adaptation Grant Schemes for Older People and People with a Disability.

Councillor Martin Kenny welcomed the allocation of funding in relation to the Housing Grant Schemes. He queried if the allocation provided is sufficient to cater for the demand for the scheme.

Ms. Sinead Flynn, Meetings Administrator outlined that the funding allocation is deemed sufficient to meet the demand for the Housing Grant Schemes. She outlined that commitments and activity in relation to the housing grant scheme is kept under ongoing and regular review and that an updated report will be provided at the next meeting of the Housing Policy, Social & Cultural Development Strategic Policy Committee.

3. Letter from the Office of the Minister for Health dated 3rd June, 2015 acknowledging receipt of a Resolution passed by Leitrim County Council regarding a Research Programme in relation to fracking.
- 3 (a). Letter from the Office of the Taoiseach dated 4th June, 2015 acknowledging receipt of a Resolution passed by Leitrim County Council with regard to the Fracking Research Programme.
- 3 (b). Letter from the Office of the Minister for Health dated 8th June, 2015 acknowledging receipt of a Resolution passed by Leitrim County Council with regard to the Fracking Research Programme.
- 3©. Letter from the Office of the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government acknowledging receipt of a Resolution passed by Leitrim County Council with regard to the Fracking Research Programme.
- 3(d). Letter from the Minister of State for Natural Resources dated 15th June, 2015 acknowledging receipt of a Resolution passed by Leitrim County Council with regard to the Fracking Research Programme.
4. Letter from An Taoiseach dated 4th June, 2015 acknowledging receipt of a Resolution passed by Leitrim County Council with regard to a request for funding to be provided to upgrade Local Road L6196 that leads to the homestead of Sean MacDiarmada.
- 4(a). Letter dated 4th June, 2015 from the Office of Public Works (OPW) acknowledging receipt of a Resolution passed by Leitrim County Council with regard to the homestead of Sean MacDiarmada.
5. Letter dated 5th June, 2015 from the Office of the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation acknowledging receipt of a Resolution passed by Leitrim County Council regarding the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership negotiations.
- 5(a). Letter dated 5th June, 2015 from the Office of the Taoiseach acknowledging receipt of Resolution passed by Leitrim County Council with regard to the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership negotiations.
6. Letter dated 5th June, 2015 from the Office of the Taoiseach acknowledging receipt of a Resolution passed by Leitrim County Council with regard to a state apology for Mr. James Galton.
- 6(a). Letter dated 11th June, 2015 from the Office of the Minister for Justice and Equality acknowledging receipt of a Resolution passed by Leitrim County Council with regard to a State apology for Mr. James Galton, Efferagh, Co Leitrim.
7. Letter dated 11th June, 2015 from the Office of the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government acknowledging receipt of a resolution passed by Leitrim County Council in relation to grant aid for septic tanks.
- 7(a). Letter dated 15th June, 2015 from the Office of the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government with regard to grant aid for septic tanks.

8. Letter dated 11th June, 2015 from the National Roads Authority (NRA) acknowledging receipt of a Resolution passed by Leitrim County Council with regard to road signage in Leitrim.
9. Letter dated 12th June, 2015 from the Office of the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine acknowledging receipt of a Resolution passed by Leitrim County Council with regard to Leitrim Farmers participation in the GLAS scheme.
10. Letter dated 16th June, 2015 from the Office of the Minister for Finance acknowledging receipt of a Resolution passed by Leitrim County Council with regard to the proposed introduction of a VAT Rebate Scheme for Local Authorities to incentivise rejuvenation of town centres.
11. Letter dated 25th June, 2015 from Northwest Regional Drug and Alcohol Task Force with regard to the participation of Public Representatives on the North West Regional Drug and Alcohol Task Force.
12. Memo dated 30th June, 2015 to the Cathaoirleach and the Elected Members with regard to the Student Grant Scheme 2015/2016.

**15/113
6/7/2015**

Vote of Congratulations

The Members extended a vote of Congratulations to Mr. Breifne Earley on the occasion of him completing a 'Pedal the Planet Cycle' around the world. It was agreed by all Members that consideration would be given to host a Civic Reception later on in the year for him.

Part I - Notices of Motion.

Cathaoirleach, Councillor John McCartin proposed that Motions No. 11 submitted by Councillor Sean McGowan and Motion No. 23 submitted by Councillor Seadhna Logan would be taken concurrently as they relate to the same issue. This was agreed by the Members.

**15/114
6/7/2015**

Additional Nursing and Attendant Staff at St Patrick's Hospital

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

"At the July meeting of the Leitrim County Council, I will seek the support of the Members in calling on Mr Frank Morrison, Acting Area Manager, Sligo/Leitrim & West Cavan, HSE West and the Department of Health to immediately provide additional nursing and care attendant staff in St. Patrick's Hospital, Carrick-on-Shannon. The present situation cannot be tolerated any longer, I have received a large number of complaints from relatives of patients over the past number of months complaining about the shortage of nurses in the Hospital, and the pressure that they are under trying to maintain a proper standard of care for the patients. The staff are doing excellent work under the circumstances but they appear to working under duress all the time."

To consider the following Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Seadhna Logan;

"This Council supports the recent protest action of the INMO and staff and calls on the Government and the HSE to deal with the under staffing and provision of Nurses and Health Care Assistants at St Patrick's Hospital, Carrick on Shannon as a priority."

Councillor Sean McGowan outlined that he had submitted this Notice of Motion to highlight the current situation at St. Patrick's Hospital, Carrick-on-Shannon. He commended the staff working in this facility and outlined that the ratio of patients to staff was placing a huge burden on the nursing staff to manage and maintain adequate levels of patient care. Councillor McGowan acknowledged that the HSE had given a commitment to commence the provision of a new hospital at this location, however, he outlined that the project will not commence until 2018.

Councillor Caillan Ellis outlined that he had contacted Mr. Frank Morrison, Acting Area Manager, HSE in relation to this matter previously and that the HSE had failed to respond to his correspondence.

Councillor Seadhna Logan also outlined that he had submitted his Notice of Motion to support the staff working in St. Patrick's Hospital, Carrick-on-Shannon and he also outlined that he supported to the INMO for organising a recent protest at the facility to raise awareness of the concerns of the staff.

Councillor Enda Stenson supported the Notices of Motion and called upon the HSE and the Government to ensure that the facility is properly resourced to comply with all of the relevant regulations governing the operation of the facility. He also referred to the difficulties that the staff working in the hospital are experiencing due to a reduction in the appropriate staffing levels.

Councillor Martin Kenny supported the Notices of Motion and referred to the concerns of relatives with family members in the facility. He outlined that they have concerns to ensure that the residents are receiving the appropriate levels of care.

Councillor Des Guckian supported the Notices of Motion, he also commended the staff for their hard work and dedication and he proposed that the matter be referred to the Department of Health for a response.

Councillor Sinead Guckian and Councillor Finola Armstrong-McGuire supported the Notices of Motion. Councillor Armstrong-McGuire complemented the staff for their work and outlined that the provision of additional staff resources must be provided by the HSE.

Councillor Brendan Barry supported the Notices of Motion and also complemented the staff of St Patrick's hospital for the excellent care they deliver to the residents. He outlined that the hospital requires additional staff resources to maintain appropriate standards of patient care.

The Notices of Motion submitted by Councillor Sean McGowan and Councillor Seadhna Logan received the unanimous support of all the Members.

Proposed by Councillor Sean McGowan, seconded by Councillor Seadhna Logan AND UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED

"That Leitrim County Council, seek the support of the Members in calling on Mr Frank Morrison, Acting Area Manager, Sligo/Leitrim & West Cavan, HSE West and the Department of Health to immediately provide additional nursing and care attendant staff in St. Patrick's Hospital, Carrick-on-Shannon. The present situation cannot be tolerated any longer, I have received a large number of complaints from relatives of patients over the past number of months complaining about the shortage of nurses in the Hospital, and the pressure that they are under trying to maintain a proper standard of care for the patients. The staff are doing excellent work under the circumstances but they appear to working under duress all the time."

"That Leitrim County Council supports the recent protest action of the INMO and staff and calls on

the Government and the HSE to deal with the under staffing and provision of Nurses and Health Care Assistants at St Patrick's Hospital, Carrick on Shannon as a priority."

15/115
06/07/2015

Housing Allocation Scheme

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

"That Leitrim Housing introduce a point's rating system for all who are seeking housing from the County Council."

Report by A/Director of Services, Housing, Community, Corporate, Culture & Emergency Services

"Following the enactment of Section 22 of the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 2009 in June 2010, Housing Authorities were required to make an Allocation Scheme in accordance with the terms of the Act by 30th June 2011. The Allocation Scheme is required to determine the order of priority to be given in the allocation of dwellings to persons assessed as being qualified for social housing support and for persons transferring from one dwelling (including from a dwelling provided under the Social Housing Leasing Initiative or the Rental Accommodation Scheme) to another. Leitrim County Council's Allocation Scheme was adopted by the Elected Members on 13th June, 2011 and a copy of the Scheme was subsequently provided to the Department of the Environment, Community & Local Government. Currently there are no proposals to amend the Scheme other than where a directive is issued by the Minister. Section 22 (17) A of the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 2009 provides that the Minister may issue a directive to a housing authority regarding the operation of an allocation scheme and the housing authority shall comply with any such directive in operating the scheme. A copy of the Allocation Scheme is available on our website and included with the reply to this Notice of Motion.

A copy of Leitrim County Council's Housing Allocation Scheme appears as **Appendix 9** to the Minutes of this meeting in the Minute Book.

Councillor Des Guckian expressed his disappointment with the response received to his Notice of Motion. He referred to the administration of a points based Allocation Scheme in other local authority areas e.g. Sligo and he requested that consideration be given to introducing a similar scheme in Leitrim to ensure that decisions in relation to the allocation of dwellings are conducted in a fair and transparent manner.

Mr. Shane Tiernan, A/Director of Services, Housing, Community, Corporate Services, Culture and Emergency Services responded by stating that all aspects of Councillor Des Guckian's concerns had been responded to in the reply to the Notice of Motion. He stated that the current Allocation Scheme is a fair and transparent means of allocating local authority dwellings and that there is no proposal at this time to consider amending the Scheme. He outlined that the Allocation Scheme has regard to the basis of need and to the length of time on the Housing Waiting List to determine the priority to be afforded to housing applicants for local authority accommodation. Mr. Tiernan outlined that any amendment to the Allocation Scheme would have to be approved by the Housing Policy, Social & Cultural Development SPC, the Corporate Policy Group and be adopted by the full Council.

Councillor Enda Stenson in his capacity as Chairperson of the Housing Policy, Social & Cultural Development Strategic Policy Committee stated that he considered that the current Allocation Scheme is operating well and that he would not be in favour of amending the Allocation Scheme.

Councillor Mary Bohan also supported the comments of Councillor Stenson and agreed that the existing Allocation Scheme is working well. She paid tribute to the staff of the Housing Department having regard to their role in the allocation of local authority tenancies and she referred to the positive working relationship that exists between the housing staff and the Members.

Councillor Seadhna Logan also paid tribute to the Housing Staff in delivering a range of housing functions. He outlined that direct comparisons with other local authority areas is not necessarily relevant given the differences in the demand for social housing support and the availability/supply of accommodation in the different administrative areas.

Councillor Martin Kenny expressed his concern in relation to amending the existing Allocation Scheme and to replace it with a points-based system which may pose its own difficulties.

Councillor Felim Gurn proposed that housing applicants be afforded the opportunity to view a property in advance of accepting or refusing an offer of local authority accommodation. He also requested that the housing need of households with a disability be addressed and that consideration be given to retaining a percentage of local authority dwellings specifically to meet the housing need of persons with a disability.

The Cathaoirleach, Councillor John McCartin concurred with the Members that the current Housing Allocation Scheme is working well and that there is no requirement to consider amending the scheme.

Councillor Des Guckian again re-stated his proposal calling upon the Members to amend the existing Allocation Scheme and to introduce a points based system for the allocation of local authority accommodation. He also stated that his proposal was not in any way a criticism of the Housing Department but that he considered a points based system to be a fairer method of allocating accommodation.

Councillor Padraig Fallon also raised an issue in relation to the length of time between a local authority dwelling being allocated and available for letting. He queried if there is sufficient staffing levels to complete pre-letting repairs to vacant dwellings. Mr. Shane Tiernan outlined that the staffing levels are appropriate to return vacant dwellings to have them available for re-allocation.

After further discussion the Members concurred that an amendment to the Allocation Scheme will have no impact on the length of time persons are on the Housing Waiting List if the supply issues in certain locations in the County e.g. Carrick-on-Shannon are not addressed.

Cathaoirleach, Councillor John McCartin proposed that a similar housing related Notice of Motion No. 18 submitted by Councillor Felim Gurn be considered at this point. This proposal was agreed by the Members.

15/116

06/07/2015

Drumlease Estate, Dromahaire, Co. Leitrim

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

"On a recent visit to the Local Authority Housing Estate at Drumlease, Dromahair I was surprised to see that there were a number of vacant dwellings in a very poor state of repair. There is evidence of flood damage to a number of the gardens and unauthorised dumping with the attendant rodent infestation problems. From speaking with colleagues I am concerned that there are other estates under the Council's control where there are similar problems. To this end I propose that the Housing Officer report back to the next meeting of the Council with the following

information:

the number of dwellings under the council's control;

the number of vacant housing units;

the number of vacant houses which are deemed uninhabitable;

the frequency of inspection and the level of monitoring of estates under the council's control."

Report by A/Director of Services, Housing, Community, Corporate, Culture & Emergency Services

"Leitrim County Council currently has a total housing stock of 937 units inclusive of Demountable Dwellings and Traveller Group Housing Schemes. There is a significant ongoing level of turnover of Housing Stock (25 vacancies arising to date in 2015), and refusals of allocations of accommodation (47% year to date) remains an issue as detailed in the Monthly Management Reports to the Members, both of which contribute significantly to the vacancy level within the housing stock. There are currently 72 vacant housing units which are suitable for reletting:

- 14 number of these units have been allocated to persons on the Housing List
- A further 10 are ready for re-letting with multiple offers having issued on the majority of these but no tenants yet appointed,
- A further 4 are being held for various reasons (1 No. is a specially adapted house, a further 3 No. are part of Scheduled Contract Works (2 No. SEAI Scheme & 1. NO. Proposed Extension)
- 25 units are awaiting completion of standard pre-letting repairs by the Housing Maintenance Staff.

The necessary works are scheduled and prioritised having regard to the available resources and the level of demand in the particular area. The position is however that there are a number of areas where vacancies exist, including Dromahaire, and there is little or no associated housing demand.

The remaining 19 vacant units require significant refurbishment works prior to reletting, having regard primarily to the age and general condition of the properties. Specific funding in the sum of €163,000 has been secured under the Department's Voids Programme, introduced in 2014, to carry out significant improvement works to 7 No. of these properties and these works are currently at procurement stage. It is also proposed to complete significant refurbishment works to the remaining 12 units from Leitrim County Council own resources (Internal Capital Receipts) in 2015.

In relation specifically to the Drumlease Estate there are currently 7 vacant units, 3 of which require significant refurbishment. The position is that there is limited demand for accommodation in this estate and one unit which was substantially refurbished in 2014 has been the subject of 4 refusals of allocations to date. Funding has been secured under the Voids Programme for the refurbishment of No. 58 Drumlease, which requires significant works, and it is anticipated that a contract will issue in the coming weeks. 2 further houses within the estate (Nos. 13 & 46) are also proposed for significant refurbishment works in 2015. Any waste/refuse dumped at vacant properties will be removed as part of the refurbishment/pre-letting repair works to these properties. In the meantime the matter of any potential rodent infestation will be investigated and appropriate action taken as necessary.

Our Clerks of Works (2 No.) have responsibility for the ongoing monitoring and maintenance of our Housing Stock and they call regularly to all of our Estates in connection with general maintenance

issues as they arise. The Council also supports the voluntary work of active Residents Associations in Local Authority Estates under our Annual Estate Management Grant Scheme in addition to co-funding an Estates Community Employment Scheme, in conjunction with Leitrim Development Company, which carries out significant general estate/green area maintenance work within our estates throughout the County. In terms of unauthorised dumping the position is that isolated incidents which have arisen have been addressed once they come to our attention.

In addition to we have also actively sought and secured funding under various initiatives including the SEAI Better Energy Communities Scheme (42 units in Mohill upgraded in 2014 and funding secured for a project involving 41 units in Carrick on Shannon in 2015), and the Department's Voids Programme (15 units in 2014 and funding secured for 7 units in 2015). We have also completed significant refurbishment and estate improvement projects in a number of Estates including Bredagh Estate, Carrigallen (10 units), Treanmore Estate, Mohill (20 units) and Dristernan Estate, Drumshanbo (22 units) - having previously completed a number of similar schemes in North Leitrim."

Councillor Felim Gurn acknowledged the detailed reply to his Notice of Motion and outlined that he would review the response in detail. He stated that a number of dwellings in the Drumlease Estate, Dromahaire, Co. Leitrim are in a poor state externally, with over-grown gardens and others need external painting. Councillor Gurn advised that a number of the tenants are elderly and are unable to attend to these maintenance issues. He outlined that there is evidence of flood damage to a number of the gardens and a number of vacant dwellings have become a location for unauthorised dumping with the attendant rodent infestation problems. Councillor Gurn expressed his concerns that there are other estates under the Council's control where there are similar problems.

Mr Shane Tiernan informed the Members that Leitrim County Council currently has a total housing stock of 937 units with 72 vacant dwellings. He advised that the Council employ two Clerk of Works who have responsibility for the ongoing monitoring and maintenance of the Council's Housing Stock. Mr. Tiernan outlined that the Clerk of Works regularly calls to and inspects the estates when attending to general housing maintenance issues. He also outlined that the Council operates an ongoing routine maintenance programme and the casual vacancy programme to maintain local authority dwellings. He also informed the Members that that significant investment has been made in recent years to upgrade the social housing stock including works completed under the energy efficiency programme, kitchen upgrades, fascia and soffit replacement and window and door replacement programme. Mr. Tiernan also outlined that tenants also have responsibility for a number of maintenance issues e.g. the maintenance of their gardens in a clean and tidy state as provided for in the letting agreement and tenant handbook.

Councillor Paddy O'Rourke queried if there is sufficient staffing levels in place to deal with housing related maintenance issues.

Mr. Shane Tiernan informed the Members that the existing staffing levels are sufficient to respond to housing maintenance issues. Mr. Frank Curran also outlined that additional technical staff have been assigned to the Housing Department. He advised that they will be involved in progressing a number of housing projects which will improve the social housing stock and render a number of vacant dwellings available for re-letting.

Councillor Frank Dolan supported Councillor Gurn's Notice of Motion and he referred to a previous Notice of Motion he had submitted in relation to the condition of the Drumlease Estate. He outlined that the response to his Notice of Motion had indicated that an inspection of the estate would be completed and a report prepared and that he had received a copy of this report.

Councillor Felim Gurn queried what provisions apply in assessing the housing need of applicants

with a disability.

Ms Sinead Flynn, Meetings Administrator advised that the Housing & Disability Strategy is currently being prepared by the Council in consultation with the HSE to facilitate access for people with disabilities, to the appropriate range of housing and related support services, delivered in an integrated and sustainable manner, to promote equality of opportunity, individual choice and independent living. She further outlined that an application for social housing support can be submitted by an applicant or on behalf of an applicant with a disability to the Housing Department. Ms. Flynn outlined that the local authority cannot assess or make provision to meet the housing need of housing applicants with a disability if they are not assessed and approved for inclusion on the Housing Waiting List. She advised that any person wishing to be considered for social housing support by the local authority must submit the standard application form together with all of the relevant supporting documentation. Ms. Flynn stated that an assessment of housing need can then be progressed and a recommendation on the most appropriate form of social housing support to meet the applicants housing need can then be determined.

15/117

06/7/2015

Primary School Transport Scheme

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

"I ask that Leitrim County Council call on the Department of Education and Skills to carry out a review regarding the Primary School Transport Scheme and ensure that any family in receipt of Back to School Clothing and Footwear allowance or with medical cards are afforded Free School transport.

It does not make sense that you can receive back to school allowance have a medical card – all means assessed and still be expected to pay for a bus ticket."

Councillor Padraig Fallon outlined his concern in relation to the eligibility criteria for the Primary School Transport Scheme. He referred to the unfairness of the present system and requested the support of his colleagues in raising the issue with the Department of Education and Skills. Councillor Fallon noted that the current model is more appropriate to urban areas than locations in rural Ireland and he stated that families are being unduly penalised and struggling to pay the school transport costs if they do not meet the criteria for free school transport.

The Members unanimously supported Councillor Fallon's Notice of Motion.

Proposed by Councillor Padraig Fallon, seconded by Councillor Martin Kenny AND UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED

"That Leitrim County Council calls on the Department of Education and Skills to carry out a review regarding the Primary School Transport Scheme and ensure that any family in receipt of Back to School Clothing and Footwear allowance or with medical cards are afforded Free School transport.

It does not make sense that you can receive back to school allowance have a medical card – all means assessed and still be expected to pay for a bus ticket."

15/118
06/07/2015

Creation of Jobs

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

"I ask CEO Mr. Frank Curran how many jobs were created in County Leitrim in the past 12 months and a break down for each Municipal area?"

Report by Director of Service, Planning, Community and Economic Development

"In 2014, the Leitrim County Council Local Enterprise Office (LEO), supported 19 new jobs across the county as follows: Carrick on Shannon MD = 11, Ballinamore 8.

The Annual Employment Survey compiled by Forfas, is an annual census of employment in all manufacturing and internationally-traded services companies supported by the enterprise development agencies, IDA Ireland, Enterprise Ireland and Údarás na Gaeltachta. The survey identifies that there were 138 jobs gained in Leitrim in 2014 compared to only 52 in 2013 and 51 in 2012. The survey does not provide sub county analysis. However, through contact with some of the main employers across the county, it has been established that a number of companies employed new staff during 2014 despite challenging global conditions with 161 jobs created, 116 in Carrick on Shannon MD, 32 in Manorhamilton and 13 in Ballinamore."

Councillor Justin Warnock expressed his disappointment with the reply and welcomed that the Members will have a further opportunity to review the Draft Economic Strategy 2015-2021 before it is adopted. He referred to the existing high level of unemployment in the county with approximately 2,740 people currently on the Live Register and he called for the appointment of a dedicated staff resource to be responsible for job creation within the county. Councillor Warnock referred to the lack of employment opportunities for young graduates interested in returning to live and work in Leitrim and stated that this situation was very concerning and must be addressed.

Mr Frank Curran stated that the Council continue to engage with Enterprise Ireland, the IDA and the Local Enterprise Office in order to attract new enterprise and to create employment opportunities within the County. He outlined that progress has been achieved with 138 new jobs created in 2014 compared to 52 in 2013. He concluded by stating that the Council will continue to have an active role as the Lead Agency to promote the economic development of the county.

15/119
06/07/2015

MABS Service

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

"I call upon Leitrim County Council to unanimously support a call on Tanaiste and Minister for Social Protection, Ms. Joan Burton T.D, to immediately suspend the plans to reconfigure the MABS service as the proposed plan will result in increased cost of administration at national level while preventing the delivery of a very essential service at local level to local people many who desperately need it. Members are aware of the invaluable service that MABS has provided particularly in the last number of years and how essential it is for people who are experiencing financial difficulty to have the assistance of MABS."

Councillor O'Rourke referred to the excellent work of the local office of the Money Advise & Budgeting Service (MABS) in Leitrim. He called for the existing service levels currently provided by MABS to be maintained for persons experiencing financial difficulties. Councillor O'Rourke called upon the support of his colleagues to support this Notice of Motion to write to Ms. Joan Burton, Tanaiste and Minister for Social Protection to suspend any proposal to reconfigure the existing

MABS Service.

Proposed by Councillor Paddy O'Rourke, seconded by Councillor Caillian Ellis AND UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED

"That Leitrim County Council call on Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection, Ms. Joan Burton T.D, to immediately suspend the plans to reconfigure the MABS service as the proposed plan will result in increased cost of administration at national level while preventing the delivery of a very essential service at local level to local people many who desperately need it. Members are aware of the invaluable service that MABS has provided particularly in the last number of years and how essential it is for people who are experiencing financial difficulty to have the assistance of MABS."

15/120

06/07/2015

Verge Cutting and Hedge Trimming

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

"At the July meeting of Leitrim County Council I will propose that Leitrim County Council should contract - out all verge cutting and hedge trimming to private operators at this time of year. This work should be taking place now but I understand that out-door staff numbers are at an all time low and that a lot of surface dressing takes place at this time of year also."

Report by Director of Service, Planning, Community and Economic Development

"The hedge cutting and verge trimming on National Roads and on Regional Road junctions is carried out by Contractors. Hedge cutting is primarily the responsibility of landowners and the Council pursues relevant landowners throughout the open season of October to February. However, works are carried out by Leitrim Council where there is a road safety issue or roadwork's being undertaken. Financial resources of the roads program limits works to these areas only."

Councillor Frank Dolan acknowledged the reply to his Notice of Motion, however, he outlined that it is important from a health and safety perspective for road users and for tourists that the hedge-cutting and verge trimming on national and regional roads commences as soon as possible. Councillor Dolan expressed concern that the works had not commenced to date and referred to other counties that had their hedge-cutting programme in progress much earlier in the season.

Councillor Caillian Ellis supported the motion and outlined that there is poor visibility of signage in certain locations due to due to overgrown vegetation. He also sought clarification in relation to establishing who has responsibility for hedge trimming in circumstances where the local authority has purchased a section of land from a landowner.

Councillor's Enda Stenson and Sean McGowan also supported this Notice of Motion.

Mr. Shay O'Connor, Senior Engineer outlined that the hedge-cutting and verge trimming programme had not commenced earlier in the year as a number of IR issues had arisen. He outlined that the matter have since been resolved and that tenders have been invited from private Contractors to complete the works on national and regional roads. Mr. O'Connor informed the members that the contract will be awarded to the successful Contractor in the coming days and that the works will then commence on the national and regional roads and that the local roads will be completed by direct labour.

In response to Councillor Ellis's query Mr. O'Connor confirmed that it is the responsibly of the local authority to ensure hedge trimming is carried outside of a fence where the land has been

purchased by the local authority. He advised Councillor Ellis Member to provide the details to the relevant Area Office in order to have the works carried out.

15/121
06/07/2015

Speed Indicator Signs

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

"I ask that Speed Indicator Signs which are Vehicle Activated with LED lighting and give true speed displays with programmable symbols or messages are placed at
(a) along the bypass in Carrick-on-Shannon by the Social Welfare Office
(b) along approach roads to Leitrim Village. From Carrick-on-Shannon and Drumshanbo.
I request that the existing Speed indicator sign at Acres Lake in Drumshanbo is brought out a further distance on the R207 to create awareness earlier prior to vehicles passing McGuire's Cottages where children are often at play. The one at Killianiker in Rooskey is very effective."

Report by Senior Executive Officer, Planning, Community and Economic Development

"Speed Indicator Signs have been erected by this Council in areas where speed has been identified as a problem. The speed at the locations requested will be measured in order to establish the situation. With regard to Leitrim Village the Council will be installing ramps at the existing pedestrian crossings which will help to reduce speed in the village. In Drumshanbo, the sign was erected at the Acres Lake amenity due to the presence of children at this location. It can be moved further out the Carrick on Shannon road as long as it does not reduce the impact of the sign at the Acres Lake amenity. The matter will be reviewed in order to determine the most appropriate location for the sign."

Councillor Finola Armstrong McGuire outlined that she was satisfied with the reply and the Notice of Motion was supported by all of the Members.

15/122
06/07/2015

Single Farm Payment Cuts and Penalties

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

"At the July meeting of Leitrim County Council I will look for the support of members in calling on the Department of Agriculture and Minister Simon Coveney to reverse, the unjust Single Farm Payment cuts and penalties imposed on farmers, in marginal and disadvantaged areas across rural Ireland. Many farmers are struggling to survive, with loss of income and penalties imposed on farm land which had been actively farmed and properly maintained for generations but was deemed ineligible and not fit for farming in 2013. I also call on the Minister to cease all Land eligibility, ground and aerial satellite inspections, until this unfair situation is resolved."

Councillor Sinead Guckian stressed that many farmers are struggling to survive, with loss of income and penalties imposed on farm land which had been actively farmed and properly maintained for generations but was deemed ineligible and not fit for farming in 2013.

Councillor Sinead Guckian's Notice of Motion was debated and received the unanimous support of all the Members.

Councillor Sinead Guckian proposed that this resolution be circulated to all the Local Authorities

for their information and attention.

Proposed by Councillor Sinead Guckian, seconded by Councillor Caillian Ellis AND UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED

"That Leitrim County Council call on the Department of Agriculture and Minister Simon Coveney to reverse, the unjust Single Farm Payment cuts and penalties imposed on farmers, in marginal and disadvantaged areas across rural Ireland. Many farmers are struggling to survive, with loss of income and penalties imposed on farm land which had been actively farmed and properly maintained for generations but was deemed ineligible and not fit for farming in 2013. I also call on the Minister to cease all Land eligibility, ground and aerial satellite inspections, until this unfair situation is resolved."

15/123

06/07/2015 Kiltyclogher as a Heritage Village for the County.

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

"At the July Council Meeting, I will propose that Leitrim County Council would adopt Kiltyclogher as a Heritage Village for the County. I think that it would be appropriate as we edge closer to 'The Centenary Celebrations' of 'The Easter Rising'."

Report by Director of Service, Planning, Community and Economic Development

"The Heritage Village was part of a promotion by Failte Ireland which is now closed to further applications. However, in light of the approach of 2016, it would be suggested that this proposal should be referred to the 2016 Centenary Committee for consideration and progression."

Councillor Sean McDermott proposed an amendment to the County Development Plan to recognise Kiltyclogher as a Heritage Village and outlined that the local community would be very supportive of this proposal. He stated that the project had the potential to generate local employment and he requested that the Chief Executive agree to this request.

Councillor Mary Bohan, Councillor Justin Warnock and Councillor Enda Stenson supported the Notice of Motion.

Mr. Curran outlined that the Council are not in position to look favourably upon this request, he agreed to review the condition of the footpaths in the village having regard to the likelihood of increased visitors to the area to coincide with the 2016 Centenary Celebrations.

15/124

06/07/2015 Centralised Procurement System

To consider the following Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Martin Kenny;

"I propose that Leitrim County Council calls on the Government to halt the proposed new centralised system of procurement of common goods and services across all public bodies. Eight common categories of spend across all public bodies, including ICT and office equipment, professional services and marketing, print and stationery are all proposed to be procured by the (Office of Government Procurement) OGP. Even plant hire and minor building and civil engineering works usually purchased locally by individual local authorities would be secured

centrally by the Local Government Operational Procurement Centre (LGOPC) hosted by Kerry County Council. There has been no account of the impact this will have on local economies and local jobs."

Report by Acting Head of Finance, Mr. John McKeon

"Under Circular 10/10: Facilitating SME Participation in Public Procurement, all Local Authorities are obliged to comply with the national centralised procurement initiatives and as a consequence we have no discretion in this regard. Under Circular 10/14: Initiatives to assist SME's in Public Procurement, various measures to assist SME's such as Sub-dividing Contracts into Lots, Consortium Bids, reduced Turnover requirements, and relevant & proportionate capacity requirements are available to SME's. In addition, Leitrim County Council provides various supports in this regard including seminars, training, & 'Meet the Buyer' events on a regular basis. The Motion will be referred to the Minister's Office."

Councillor Martin Kenny noted the reply to his Notice of Motion and acknowledged that the Council must comply with the national centralised procurement initiatives, however, he voiced his concern in relation to the impact of these provisions on local contractors/companies. Councillor Kenny stated that the measures in place disadvantage local supplies of goods and services and that it remains to be seen if the same quality of service and support will be provided by companies awarded these contracts.

All Members supported this Notice of Motion.

Proposed by Councillor Martin Kenny, seconded by Councillor Caillian Ellis AND UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED

"That Leitrim County Council calls on the Government to halt the proposed new centralised system of procurement of common goods and services across all public bodies. Eight common categories of spend across all public bodies, including ICT and office equipment, professional services and marketing, print and stationery are all proposed to be procured by the (Office of Government Procurement) OGP. Even plant hire and minor building and civil engineering works usually purchased locally by individual local authorities would be secured centrally by the Local Government Operational Procurement Centre (LGOPC) hosted by Kerry County Council. There has been no account of the impact this will have on local economies and local jobs."

15/125

06/07/2015

Childcare Providers

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

"I ask that Leitrim County Council support childcare providers in their campaign to have early childhood care facilities exempt from commercial rates and contact all relevant Departments and Ministers."

Report by Acting Head of Finance, Mr. John McKeon

"The Valuation (Amendment) Act 2015 came into operation on 8th June 2015. This Act amends the Valuation Act 2001 and the following has been included under Paragraph 22 in Schedule 4 – Relevant Property Not Rated.

"Any land, building or part of a building used exclusively for the provision of early childhood care and education, and occupied by a body which is not established and the affairs of which are not conducted for the purpose of making a private profit". This Notice of Motion will also be referred to

the Minister's Office."

Councillor Brendan Barry outlined that Ireland is one of the most expensive countries in Europe in relation to child care costs. He stated that all Early Childcare Facilities should be exempt from commercial rates in order to alleviate some of the costs associated with childcare. Councillor Martin Kenny supported the Notice of Motion calling upon the relevant Departments and Ministers to have Early Childcare Facilities exempt from commercial rates.

Proposed by Councillor Brendan Barry, seconded by Councillor Martin Kenny AND UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED

"That Leitrim County Council support childcare providers in their campaign to have early childhood care facilities exempt from commercial rates and contact all relevant Departments and Ministers."

15/126

06/07/2015 Planning Regulations in regard to erecting new fences

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

"I propose that Leitrim County Council write to the Minister for Agriculture, Mr Simon Convene not to implement the new regulations in regard to farmers having to get Planning Permission to replace existing fencing or when erecting new fences on their lands."

Councillor Caillian Ellis outlined the purpose of his Notice of Motion and called upon the Members to support his request to contact the Minister for Agriculture Mr. Simon Coveney urging the Minister to implement the new regulations which will require farmers to seek planning permission to replace or erect new fencing on their lands. Councillor Ellis requested that a copy of the resolution be circulated to all Local Authorities.

Councillor Brendan Barry supported Councillor Ellis's Notice of Motion and outlined that this is an additional cost being forced on farmers.

Proposed by Councillor Caillian Ellis, seconded by Councillor Brenda Barry AND UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED

"That Leitrim County Council writes to the Minister for Agriculture, Mr Simon Coveney not to implement the new regulations in regard to farmers having to get Planning Permission to replace existing fencing or when erecting new fences on their lands."

15/127

06/07/2015 Green Certs for young farmers

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

"At the moment, the Department of Agriculture, have set out guidelines that all young Farmers must complete a course the equivalent of the Green Cert, to avail of Grants and all other entitlements, there are a huge number of expressions of interest in this course, unfortunately Teagasc is only in a position to offer 30 places to farmers in Ballymote. I call on the Department of Agriculture and E.T.B. to provide Educational Officers and facilities here in Leitrim to any farmer who needs to complete this course."

Councillor Enda Stenson outlined that up to 130 young farmers in Leitrim may miss out on the

Young Farmers Scheme payments if the appointment of a new Education Officer by Teagasc is not approved by the Department of Agriculture. He outlined that the Teagasc centre in Ballymote, Sligo has 30 places and will not be able to cater for the existing demand for the course. Councillor Stenson estimated that up to 300 farmers from Leitrim and Sligo have expressed an interest in beginning the FETAC level six agricultural qualification before the Young Farmers Scheme deadline at the end of August. He outlined that there are two state of the art Teagasc facilities in the county one in Mohill and one in Manorhamilton but they have no Education Officer to carry out the course.

Councillor Mary Bohan, Councillor John McCartin and Councillor Caillian Ellis supported the Notice of Motion.

Proposed by Councillor Enda Stenson, seconded by Councillor Mary Bohan AND UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED

"At the moment, the Department of Agriculture, have set out guidelines that all young Farmers must complete a course the equivalent of the Green Cert, to avail of Grants and all other entitlements, there are a huge number of expressions of interest in this course, unfortunately Teagasc is only in a position to offer 30 places to farmers in Ballymote. Leitrim County Council calls on the Department of Agriculture and E.T.B. to provide Educational Officers and facilities here in Leitrim to any farmer who needs to complete this course."

15/128

06/07/2015

Services in Drumkeerin

The Cathaoirleach, Councillor John McCartin indicated that he was permitting Councillor Mary Bohan to raise an urgent matter. This was agreed by the Members.

Councillor Mary Bohan thanked the Cathaoirleach and the Members for agreeing to her request to raise an item in relation to the potential loss of a G.P Service in Drumkeerin, Co. Leitrim. She outlined that the G.P currently managing the Doctors Surgery is leaving after four years and that the post has been advertised for the second time and that there is a possibility that the post will not be filled. Councillor Bohan outlined the concerns of the local community and she proposed that a letter issue to the Minister for Health, Mr. Leo Varadkar calling on him to take whatever steps are necessary to provide permanent GP Services for the People in the Drumkeerin area.

This request was supported by the Members.

The business of the meeting concluded at 2.25 pm

Signed:

**Councillor John McCartin
Cathaoirleach**

Signed:

**Sinead Flynn
Meetings Administrator**

Dated: 7th September 2015