

South Tipperary County Council

Minutes of South Tipperary County Council Meeting held in The Council Chamber, County Hall on 7th March, 2011

In the Chair	Cllr. Sean McCarthy
Present	Cllrs. T. Acheson, L. Ahearn, S. Ambrose, M. Anglim, J. Brennan, S. Cooney, Sheehan, J. Crosse, J. Crowe, J. Donovan, P. English, J. Fahey, M. Fitzgerald, M. Hanna Hourigan, D. Landy D. Leahy, S. Lonergan, L. McLoughlin, R. Molloy, M. Murphy, MI Murphy, J. O'Brien, E. O'Meara, D. Ryan, T. Wood.
In attendance	E. O'Connor, B. McEvoy
Meetings Administrator	Mr. John O'Mahoney
Dáil Election	<p>The Cathaoirleach congratulated Cllr. S. Healy on his election to Dáil Eireann and congratulated Cllr. Michael Murphy on his outstanding performance. He also congratulated Deputy Tom Hayes and Deputy Mattie McGrath on their re-election and commiserated with Martin Mansergh. He conveyed the good wishes of the Council to Cllr. Browne who was ill during his election campaign. He also conveyed the good wishes of the Council to the incoming government.</p> <p>Members were associated with the votes of congratulations and good wishes.</p>
Cashel 2011 Hosting of the Charter of European Rural Communities	<p>The Cathaoirleach welcomed Shaun Leahy and Niall Gregory and invited them to make a presentation to the members on the hosting of the Charter of European Rural Communities in Cashel from the 30th June to the 4th July, 2011.</p> <p>The European Charter started in 1989 with a few countries including Ireland. It now had 27 member countries that engaged in socio-economic conferences</p>

and projects, the results of which formed part of policies and regulations across the EU.

Almost 300 delegates would visit Cashel staying with host families and the event would showcase Irish culture through various activities, excursions and shows. The theme of this year's Conference was the Role of Demographic Development in Rural Economy.

Mr. Gregory gave a breakdown of operational costs of the event which amounted to €150,000. They thanked Cashel Town Council for their generous allocation of €39,000 but there was a shortfall of €65,000 and were seeking assistance in meeting this shortfall from South Tipperary County Council.

Members praised the organisers of the event on the amount of work they had input to date and welcomed the opportunity to showcase South Tipperary. They made various suggestions on local sights to visit and other issues to consider.

Minutes

On the proposal of Cllr. M. Fitzgerald
Seconded by Cllr. M. Anglim the Minutes
of the Council Meeting held on 7th
February, 2011 were adopted.

Conferences

On the proposal of Cllr. M. Fitzgerald and
seconded by Cllr. M. Anglim, it was agreed
that:-

Cllrs. Tom Wood and Sylvia Cooney
Sheehan be nominated to attend
conference organised by Carlow Tourism
entitled "9th National Tourism Conference"
to be held at The Seven Oaks Hotel, Athy
Road, Carlow on 3rd – 5th March, 2011

Cllr. Eddie O'Meara be nominated to
attend conference organised by Celtic

Conferences entitled "A practical guide to Media Skills for Councillors" to be held at The Celtic Ross Hotel, Rosscarbery, Co. Cork on 4th – 6th March, 2011

Cllrs. Michael Murphy, Liam Ahearn, John Crosse and Tom Acheson be nominated to attend conference organised by Esperanza Enterprises entitled "Employment Law and Insurance Issues – The consequences for you and your Local Authority" to be held at The Kingsvalley Hotel, Merlin Park, Dublin Road, Galway City on 4th – 6th March, 2011

Cllrs. Michael Murphy, Marie Murphy, John Crosse, Liam Ahearn, Seanie Lonergan, John Fahey and Joe Brennan be nominated to attend conference organised by Esperanza Enterprises entitled "The Local Government Planning Service" to be held at the Silver Tassie Hotel and Spa, Ramelton Road, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal on 11th – 13th March, 2011

Cllr. Richie Molloy be nominated to attend conference organised by Smart Marketing entitled "A guide to effective Public Relations" to be held at the Falls Hotel, Ennistymon, Co. Clare on 11th – 13th March, 2011

Cllrs. Michael Murphy, Seanie Lonergan, Liam Ahearn and John Crosse be nominated to attend conference organised by Esperanza Enterprises entitled "Equal Status Legislation and its effect on service provision in Local Authorities" to be held at Westport Plaza Hotel, Castlebar Street, Westport, Co. Mayo on 18th – 20th March, 2011

Cllrs. Sean McCarthy, Denis Landy, Seanie Lonergan and Joe Brennan be nominated to attend conference organised by Cork City Council entitled "NICHES + National Seminar" to be held at River Lee Hotel,

Western Road, Cork on 23rd March, 2011

Cllrs. Mary Hanna Hourigan, Denis Landy, Michael Fitzgerald, Darren Ryan, Eddie O'Meara, John Fahey and Joe Brennan be nominated to attend conference organised by Association of County and City Councils entitled "Association of County and City Councils Annual Conference" to be held at Tullamore Court Hotel, Tullamore, Co. Offfaly on 24th – 25th March, 2011

Cllrs. Jimmy O'Brien, Michael Fitzgerald and Michael Murphy be nominated to attend conference organised by Kadenza Consultancies Ltd entitled "Changing Trends in Drug and Alcohol Abuse" to be held at Silver Tassie Hotel, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal on 25th – 27th March, 2011.

**LAMA Award
2011 – Best
Green Authority**

This item was adjourned to a future meeting

**County
Managers
Orders for
February, 2011**

County Managers Orders for the month of February were noted.

Notice of Motion

**Cuts to the
Higher
Education
Scheme**

The Council considered the following Notice of Motion in the name of Cllr. Pat English: -

“That we call on the Minister for Education to reverse cuts to the Higher Education Grants Scheme, as they are placing huge hardship on students and their parents”

It was agreed to write to the Minister. Cllr. S. Cooney Sheehan asked that the position in relation to the non adjacent rate be reviewed as it was causing hardship to a number of college students.

**Roundabout at
Kedrah**

The Council considered the following Notice of Motion in the name of Cllr. Seanie Lonergan: -

“I propose that this Council contact the NRA to have the roundabout at Kedrah renamed “Kedrah Roundabout”. This will create less confusion than having a number of roundabouts called “New Inn Road Roundabout” within a short distance of New Inn”.

The approach taken by both South Tipperary County Council and the N.R.A. is that roundabouts are named where possible such that information is communicated to motorists who are not familiar with such locations in order to assist them in reaching their destinations. In this case it was decided that “New Inn Road Roundabout” is the appropriate name and this ensures consistency of approach throughout the county as other roundabouts have been named Cashel Road Roundabout, Tipperary Road Roundabout, Fethard Road Roundabout etc. In the absence of being able to take this approach the second preference is to use the local townland name such as in the case of Knockagh. There should be no confusion for drivers because “New Inn Road Roundabout” is not used on other roundabouts in Cahir.

Cllr. Lonergan and Cllr. Ahearn expressed their dissatisfaction at the reply. Mr. McEvoy outlined the reasons why the NRA had chosen to call this roundabout the “New Inn Road Roundabout”.

**Work at Ginchy
Terrace, Cahir**

The Council considered the following Notice of Motion in the name of Cllr. Seanie Lonergan: -

“That this Council honour their promise to carry out the work to the

road at Ginchy Terrace, Cahir. The monies had been allotted in 2009 and the promise has not been upheld”.

The funds were allocated in 2009 under the Discretionary Improvement Scheme for the construction of a footpath from the junction of Mountain View Drive and the Mountain Road past the houses in Ginchy Terrace. The works did not proceed because the acquisition of a small piece of land was needed and agreement could not be reached with the owner. With the agreement of the Cahir Area Councillors the funds were spent on other projects in Cahir town and environs. No funding was allocated to the Discretionary Improvement Scheme in 2010 and none has been allocated in 2011.

This section of Mountain Road is in need of drainage, strengthening and resurfacing. Subject to the agreement of the Cahir Area Councillors those works will be included in the 2011 Restoration Improvement Programme.

Footpaths in Fethard

The Council considered the following Notice of Motion in the name of Cllr. Jimmy O'Brien: -

“I call on South Tipperary County Council to carry out an immediate survey on the Footpaths in Fethard to make sure they are up to standard for wheel chair users”.

A survey of footpaths in Fethard will be carried out as requested and a priority list of works required will be prepared on the basis of an accessibility audit. Subject to the availability of funding, a limited number of projects may be carried out in 2011.

Rate Payers in 2012

The Council considered the following Notice of Motion in the name of Cllr. Tom Wood: -

“In an effort to stimulate more activity in the Retail/Commercial Sector, this Council affords new starts a rates free 1st year and a 25% reduction in year two, with a 20% reduction for all other existing rate payers in 2012”.

A Rates Waiver scheme as outlined in your motion would require the sanction of the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government. Any similar Rates Waiver schemes proposed to the Minister on previous occasions have been refused on the basis: -

- that the rates waiver scheme would have to be funded through additional rates on the existing ratepayers,
- would be problematic in terms of fair competition,
- could not be guaranteed that such a scheme would not result in the displacement of existing business
- may have implications for both State aid and EU competition rules.

Any reduction/change in the Annual Rate on Valuation is a matter for the Members as part of the budgetary process.

A 20% reduction would equate to €1,500,000 in 2010 and this amount would therefore have to be found either by increasing charges in other areas or reducing expenditure and the consequent reduction in the provision of Council services.

In an effort to stimulate more activity in the retail/commercial sector the Council will continue to implement the economic action plans drawn up in conjunction with

relevant community groups (traders, retailers, tidy towns etc) for the towns. The Economic and Planning SPC propose to look at the whole area of retail to establish if collaborative actions could be undertaken to support and assist the retail economy.

The Council's Economic Development Unit also works closely with businesses, supporting them in various ways. The Economic Development Unit would be happy to give an overview of the work undertaken in this area to the full Council if the Members so wish.

Cllr. Wood in speaking to the motion outlined the reasons why the motion deserved the support of the members and the motion was seconded by Cllr. Landy.

A number of members spoke in support of the principal of the motion. However they raised issues including the impact on existing businesses, ability to pay, previous ministerial refusal, property valuation, other outgoings including rents and insurance, the need for support for the SME sector, the need to increase the LG Fund. Suggestions were made for the establishment of a Task Force consisting of officials and elected members to prepare a submission to the Minister.

Cllr. Wood however stated that he wished the motion as submitted by him to be considered. The County Manager referred to the overall financial difficulties facing local authorities. In particular the shortfall between the Local Government Fund and the Rate Income which would have accrued had certain categories of rates not been abolished. Other government supports to South Tipperary County Council had reduced by €17m over the period 2008 to 2011. The Manager felt this was a national issue and would

best be dealt with through the members representative associations and cautioned strongly that the 20% rate reduction referred to in the Notice of Motion was not affordable. He recommended that a general submission should be prepared, that consultation on a draft of such submission would be undertaken with the party whips and Councillor Wood. This would then be forwarded to the Minister and representative organisations.

Following further lengthy discussion the following amendment was proposed by Cllr. Fitzgerald "That a general report in relation to the overall local authority funding with particular reference to rate income be prepared in consultation with representatives of the elected members and that such submission when finalised would be submitted to the Minister for the Environment, AMAI and ACCC". This was seconded by Cllr. MI Anglim.

A vote was taken on the amendment as follows: -

Comhairleoir	For	Against	Absent
1.Acheson Tom	✓		
2.Ahearne Liam	✓		
3. Ambrose, Siobhan	✓		
4.Anglim, Michael	✓		
5.Brennan , Joe	✓		
6.CooneySheehan, Sylvia	✓		
7.Crosse, John	✓		
8.Crowe, Jack	✓		
9.Donovan, Joe	✓		
10.English, Pat	✓		
11.Fahey, John			-
12. Fitzgerald, Michael	✓		
13.Hanna Hourigan Mary	✓		
14.Landy, Denis	✓		
15.Leahy, Denis	✓		
16.Lonergan, Seanie		✓	
17.McCarthy, Sean	✓		
18.McLoughlin, Louise	✓		
19. Molloy, Richie			-

20.Murphy, Marie	✓		
21.Murphy, Michael	✓		
22.O'Brien, Jimmy			-
23.O'Meara, Eddie			-
24.Ryan, Darren			-
25.Wood, Tom		✓	
Totals	18	2	5

The amendment was carried by 18 votes to 2.

Street Lights at Redmondstown, Clonmel

The following Notice of Motion was considered in the name of Cllr. English: -

“That two additional street lights be provided at Redmondstown, Clonmel and the existing lighting upgraded, as the estate is very dark at night”.

No new public lights will be erected in 2011 because no funding provision was made for such in the Roads Budget 2011 due to reduced funding allocations.

Accordingly, it will not be possible to erect two new lights as requested.

Cllr. English requested that the provision of the additional lights be considered in 2012 and was supported by Cllr. Ambrose.

Bend in the road at Old Road, Cashel

The Council considered the following Notice of Motion in the name of Cllr. Pat English: -

“That the bend in the road at Old Road, Cashel, near the residence of Niall and Samantha Walsh be removed and traffic calming measures and a mirror be installed”.

I wish to advise that there are no plans in the 2011 draft Cashel Area Roadworks Programme to carry out road realignment at this location.

The Walsh family have been advised in the past by the Cashel Area Engineer that

the removal and setting back of the existing fence and hedging could be undertaken by the family themselves.

Resurfacing at Graigue, Clogheen

The Council considered the following Notice of Motion in the name of Cllr. Pat English: -

“That the boreen serving the Cleary and Quinn households and the land of the Ryan Family at Graigue, Clogheen be resurfaced”.

The list of applications under the Community Involvement Schemes for the Cahir Area was considered at the 2011 Cahir Annual Area Roads Meeting which was held on 1st March 2011. This road was included in this year’s scheme for the Cahir Area and the works will be carried out as part of this years programme.

Votes of Sympathy

- Family of William O’Donnell, Former Station Officer, Cahir Fire Station
- John and Eamon Phelan on the death of their mother Mary Phelan
- Wife and Family of Frank Howley, Former Overseer
- Wife and Family of Denis Collins, Former Borough Engineer
- James Bray on the death of his wife Patricia Bray

Votes of Congratulations

- John Kelly, Photographer on winning the AIB Professional Photographers Association of Ireland Sports Portfolio Category,
- Irish Cricket Team on their win at the World Cup in Bangalore
- Ann O’Grady on her appointment as Editor of the Tipperary Star

The meeting then concluded.

Signed/_____. Dated/_____.
Cathaoirleach.

Signed/_____. Dated/_____.
Meetings Administrator.