

**KILDARE COUNTY COUNCIL**  
**Minutes of meeting of Council**  
**held at 12 o'clock**  
**Monday 27 November 2017**  
**Áras Chill Dara, Devoy Park, Naas, Co Kildare.**

**Members Present:** Councillor M Miley (Mayor), A Breen, A Breslin, F Brett, K Byrne, M Coleman, R Cronin, I Cussen, S Doyle, D Fitzpatrick, B Hillis, I Keatley, M Lynch, M McCabe, F McLoughlin Healy, M Miley, N Ó'Cearúil, S O'Neill, J Pender, R Power, S Power, T Redmond, D Scully, M Wall, B Weld and B Young.

**Also Present:** Ms M Mclvor (Meetings Administrator), Ms K Keane (Meetings Secretary) and other officials.

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**National Suicide Awareness Initiative**

The Mayor welcomed the members to the presentation and welcomed Ms Niamh Keaveney of the Mojo programme to the meeting along with Mr Mike Bartlett and Ms Kirstin Cunningham who were in attendance also.

Ms Keaveney thanked the Mayor for the invitation to present to the council and also thanked the members and the executive of Kildare County Council for their support to date. She went on to outline the statistics that men are 4 times more likely than women to die by suicide and that the highest suicide rate is in the 45-54 age group. The national average per 100,000 is 9.6% and the rate is currently running at 11% in Kildare with cluster suicides a particular issue of concern in the county. She stated the Mojo programme is an inter-agency response to vulnerable men at risk and that 2 programmes are currently in operation i.e. Mini Mojo and the Mojo Programme both which contain the 4 elements of wellbeing and resilience, life planning, physical fitness and male networking. She stated there has been unprecedented demand for the programme with 211 men engaging since 2015 with 76% progression to

employment and further education and training.

In 2017, she confirmed 3 Mojo Programmes, 6 Mini-Mojo programmes and 2 Mojo male spaces had been run which engaged with 165 men with a total budget cost of €135,000. For 2018, Ms Keaveney stated the aim is to run 5 Mojo programmes, 8 Mini Mojo programmes, thematic workshops and 3 Mojo male spaces with a view to engaging with 218 men. She confirmed an estimated budget cost of €180,000 is required to achieve these aims and was seeking the members support in this regard.

Ms Keaveney introduced Mr Mike Bartlett to the meeting then stating he had been through the Mojo programme and thus was best placed to speak on the issue. Mr Bartlett thanked the members for the opportunity to speak to them and gave the background to his personal circumstances that led him to the Mojo Programme. He stated that when the recession hit, it affected him in so many ways both mentally and physically and when he was made redundant and wanted to retrain, he found the process of trying to engage with Government Services particularly difficult and stressful. He confirmed his mental health deteriorated considerably at this time and engaged with the services of ARAS who referred him to the Mojo programme. Mr Bartlett could not stress how important this referral to the Mojo programme has been to him and his family as it has both saved and changed his life. He stated the Mojo programme has given him a platform to manage his mental health, has helped him identify his goals and has enabled him to find a way to retrain confirming he is currently employed and living a much happier and better quality of life.

Ms Keaveney introduced Ms Cunningham to the meeting, Mr Bartlett's wife who spoke to the members about how the programme had impacted on her life as Mike's mental health suffering impacted on every facet of their family life. She said it was a huge relief for her when Mike got accepted onto the programme as at last, there was something and someone out there that would help them. She stated Mike's group became a very close group of men who were participating in the programme together and supporting each other through the difficulties they were encountering also. She stated the programme is about men learning to help themselves and

recognising the positive contribution they can make to society.

The Mayor thanked both Mike and Kirsten for their extremely honest presentation saying it was both inspirational and humbling to listen to their stories and that he was very pleased to hear the Mojo programme had been instrumental in helping them through this difficult time. He stated the council will support the Mojo campaign in whatever way it can and asked the members to consider this item when agreeing their LPT programmes for 2018.

All members present expressed their appreciation to Ms Keaveney and her team for the work they are doing in this area. They also thanked Mike and Kirsten for their honesty stating their story is an empowering one and they all agreed to support this most worthwhile programme.

Following a query in relation to the funding of the programme and how they raise their funding, Ms Keaveney stated they receive funding from a number of sources such as Tusla, the Peter McVerry Trust, the Drugs Taskforce, the Sports Partnership and Kildare County Council. She stated they are working towards core funding and is hopeful they will be successful in this regard.

The presentation concluded.

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