

KILDARE COUNTY COUNCIL
Minutes of meeting of Full Council
held at 3:00 p.m.
Monday 26 April 2021 on
Microsoft Teams

Members Present: Councillor M Stafford (Cathaoirleach), Councillors VL Behan, A Breen, A Breslin, F Brett, B Caldwell, B. Clear, M Coleman, A Connolly, N Connolly, Í Cussen, B Dooley, S Doyle, K Duffy, T Durkan, A Farrelly, A Feeney, N Ó'Ceairúil, C Galvin, P Hamilton, N Heavey, I Keatley, C Kelly, C Kenny, N Killeen, M Leigh, V Liston, P McEvoy, S Moore, J Neville, P O'Dwyer, T O'Dwyer, C Pender, R Power, E Sammon, P Ward, B Weld and B Wyse.

Apologies: Councillor D Fitzpatrick, Councillor F McLoughlin Healy

Also Present: Mr P Carey, Chief Executive, Ms A Aspell, Mr J Boland, Ms S Kavanagh and Mr E Ryan (Directors of Service), Ms C Barrett (A/Director of Service), Ms F Millane (A/Head of Finance), Ms B Sweeney (Financial Accountant), Ms C O'Grady (Meetings Administrator), Ms K Keane (Meetings Secretary) and other officials.

The Cathaoirleach welcomed everyone to the April online meeting of full council. He confirmed that the press and the public were attending via email on Teams and advised all attendees that recording was prohibited. He drew the members attention to the guidance for online meetings and asked that members refrain from posting on social media during the meeting. He confirmed there would be a break at 4.30pm and the meeting would conclude at 6pm with a decision made on any outstanding items at that point.

01/0421

Bereavements

The Cathaoirleach extended his sympathy to the family of the late:
Mrs Ann Elders mother of Celine Brennan Finance.

Mr John (Johnnie) Gibbons, father of John Gibbons Transport and father in law of Anne Gibbons Housing.

Mrs Lily Burke, former Librarian in the Curragh Library.

A minute's silence was observed.

02/0421

Declaration of Interests

The Cathaoirleach sought declarations of interests from the members under Section 177 of the Local Government Act, as amended. There were no declarations of pecuniary or beneficial interests declared under Section 177 of the Local Government Act 2001 (as amended).

03/0421

Minutes and Progress Report

The council considered the minutes of the monthly meeting on 29 March 2021 together with the progress report.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor Moore seconded by Councillor McEvoy and agreed by the members present, the minutes of the monthly meeting on 29 March 2021 were adopted. The progress report was noted.

04/0421

Chief Executive's Monthly Management Report

The members noted the Chief Executives monthly management report.

05/0421

Section 183 Notice for Disposal of Lands

The members considered the statutory notices of the 13 April and 15 April 2021 respectively pursuant to Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001, as amended:

- i. Disposal of 1.179 hectares of land at Moortown, Celbridge.
- ii. Disposal of 0.0111 hectares of land at 25 Willowbrook Grove, Celbridge.

The Cathaoirleach confirmed the members had received the statutory notices setting out the details of the proposed disposals.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor Caldwell seconded by Councillor Liston and agreed by the members present that pursuant to Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001 as amended and statutory notice issued on 13 April, 2021 that the council consented to the Disposal of Land of 1.179 hectares of land at Moortown, Celbridge.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor Doyle seconded by Councillor Hamilton and agreed by the members present that pursuant to Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001 as amended and statutory notice issued on 15 April, 2021 that the council agreed to defer the item related to the Disposal of Land of 0.0111 hectares of land at 25 Willowbrook Grove, Celbridge.

06/0421

Annual Financial Statements (AFS) for 2020

The members considered the Annual Financial Statements (AFS) for 2020 including a request to approve over-expenditure for the year ended 31 December 2020 (Appendix 9).

Ms Sweeney gave an update on the AFS for the year ended 31 December 2020 and confirmed the Revenue Account showed a surplus for the year of €163,364 which reduced the overall general reserve deficit from €335k to €171k at the end of 2020. She acknowledged the significant role Government supports had played in supporting the council and business communities during 2020 confirming the Housing July Stimulus Package had totaled €1.7m, the Roads July Active Travel Stimulus Package had totaled €1.8m, the Rates Waiver for 9 months had totaled €22m (80% of ratepayers got a grant) and the Restart Grants had totaled €26m (38% of ratepayers got a grant). She also confirmed that in March 2021, the council had received €3.2m for Goods/Services loss, including the payment of the loss of income on Pay Parking of €1.1m (municipal district pay parking), €600k for Roads payroll expenditure and covid expenditure of €1.5m. She confirmed the covid waiver amount had totaled €22m.

Ms Sweeney confirmed that Appendix 9 showed over expenditure compared to budget and an example of this was D09 Restart Grants of €26m not budgeted for and sought the members approval to this over expenditure. She confirmed Appendix 10 showed expenditure compared to budget for 2020 for the capital programme and noted this was the first year this has been done. and the members could discuss it in more detail as part of the Capital Programme 2022-2024 discussions at their municipal district meetings in June/July.

The Cathaoirleach thanked Ms Sweeney and the whole Finance team for their hard work in managing the council's finances, in particular over the last year during very difficult times.

Councillor Duffy also thanked Ms Sweeney, Ms Millane and commended the Finance team on the work they had been doing on the instigation of KPI reporting and the further strengthening of governance for the eight entities listed in the AFS.

The Chief Executive also commended the work of Ms Sweeney, Ms Millane and the Finance team and the work of Management Team and the Finance Committee in supporting and managing the finances of the council and thanked the elected members for their continued support in this regard.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor Duffy seconded by Councillor Kelly and agreed by the members present to approve the Annual Financial Statements (AFS) for 2020 and to approve the over expenditure for the year ended 31 December 2020 (Appendix 9 AFS).

07/0421

Audit Committee Annual Report 2020

The Cathaoirleach welcomed Dr Moling Ryan, Chair of the Audit Committee to the meeting and thanked him for his work to date. He also thanked his fellow members of the Audit Committee Councillors Killeen and Councillor Moore for their work also. The Chief Executive thanked Dr Ryan for his leadership on the Audit Committee and the members of the committee for their work also. He noted the significant challenges that were being addressed and added it was testament to this hard work and leadership that the council continued to be on an improvement curve in the vast majority of areas that had been reviewed.

Dr Ryan thanked the Cathaoirleach and the members for the opportunity to attend their meeting. He thanked the Chief Executive and the staff for the significant support shown to the committee. He also thanked the elected members for their very positive contributions. Dr Ryan confirmed that the Audit committee were operating under the governance structures that were in place and that he was very impressed with the councils performance in the recent NOAC report, confirming this formed the basis for what the Audit Committee based their work priorities on.

The Cathaoirleach thanked Dr Ryan and the other non-elected members of the Audit Committee for the due diligence they had shown in their work to date.

The Audit Committee Annual Report 2020 was noted.

08/0421

Mid-East Region Homelessness Action Plan 2021-2023

The Cathaoirleach thanked the Housing Department for facilitating the earlier presentation to the members on the plan and acknowledged all the work in producing it. Ms Aspell confirmed that the Mid East Region Homelessness Action Plan 2021-2023 had been recommended by the Housing SPC, had been considered by CPG and was now before the members for adoption. She further confirmed that the plan had been adopted by Meath and Wicklow County Council at their meetings on the 12 April 2021.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor Aoife Breslin seconded by Councillor Noel Connolly and agreed by the members present, the Mid-East Homelessness Action Plan 2021-2024 was adopted.

09/0421

Consideration of a candidate Decarbonising Zone

The members considered putting forward one candidate Decarbonizing Zone to the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage as required by Action 165 of the All of Government Action Plan 2019, and the reports circulated in advance of the meeting and noted the comprehensive detail contained in them. They welcomed the DCZ process and commended all the applicant groups for their quality submissions and noted the Climate Action SPC's endorsement that Maynooth be recommended as the candidate Decarbonizing town.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor Fintan Brett, seconded by Councillor Chris Pender and agreed by the members present, pursuant to Action 165 of the All of Government Action Plan 2019, the council approved Maynooth as the candidate Decarbonizing Zone Town.

10/0421

Appointment of external nominee to SPC

The Meetings Administrator referred to the report which included a short bio of the proposed nominee, that had been circulated to the members in relation to the appointment of the IFA's pillar nominee to the Environment and Water Services Strategic Policy Committee. She confirmed that the IFA had nominated Mr Thomas O'Connor in this regard and Mr O'Connor was the IFA's first appointment to the position since the current SPC scheme was adopted by council.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor Bernard Caldwell, seconded by Councillor Anne Connolly and agreed by the members present that Mr Thomas O'Connor be appointed to the Environment and Water Services Strategic Policy Committee as the IFA pillar nominee.

11/0421

Gnó an Cathaoirleach/Cathaoirleachs Business

The Cathaoirleach confirmed all relevant information was included in the Chief Executives report.

12/0421

Comhfhreagras/Correspondence

The Meetings Administrator confirmed ten items of correspondence had been received and circulated to the members, with the Progress Report.

13/0421

Conferences and Training

The Meetings Administrator confirmed the report had been circulated in advance of the meeting which included details on an AILG online training webinar on Local Authority Housing and the Housing Agency, which had been rescheduled to take place on the 07 May. Also listed was an AILG training event on Housing policy and the County Development Plan scheduled for Friday 30 April and Friday 28 May, and an AILG brochure on all upcoming training requests.

Ms O'Grady confirmed a request had been received from Councillors Pender, Cussen and Noel Connolly to attend a series of six online training workshops in Social Welfare Law being run by Mercy Law in June and July 2021 with a cost of €210 per person. She also confirmed receipt of a request from Councillor Noel Connolly to complete a one year online Certificate course in Housing Studies Level 6, being run by the IPA with a contribution of 50% of the fees sought totaling €495. The Meetings Administrator confirmed CPG had approved all the training requests as outlined. She also confirmed there were no conferences for approval.

Resolved with the agreement of the members present, attendance at the AILG training, the Mercy Law online training and application for funding for a further education course as outlined, were approved.

14/0421

Motion referral from the Clane-Maynooth MD

The following motion referred from the Clane-Maynooth Municipal District was considered by the members.

That the council resolve the issue of litter in public areas throughout the Clane-Maynooth Municipal District given COVID-19 Legislation and the Alcohol Bye-Laws to the satisfaction of the members and the public by providing 1,100 litre commercial bins where necessary while paying

particular attention to areas with high levels of pedestrian/cyclist traffic to include but not limited to playgrounds, parks, harbours, greenways, public walkways, town squares and any other public amenity spaces.

The motion was proposed by Councillor Durkan and seconded by Councillor Cussen.

A report from the Corporate Services Department informed the members that the report prepared for the Clane-Maynooth Municipal District Committee and the extract of the draft minutes relating to the item at that meeting, had been circulated.

The report for the Municipal District from the Community and Cultural Development Department informed the members that the the Parks Section carry out regular cleaning and inspections of playgrounds in the municipal district. This involves safety inspections of the sites, removal of waste from bins, the site and any landscape maintenance that might be required. This varied from once a week for the Bawnogues, twice a week in Prosperous and three times a week in Maynooth and Clane. Part of the grass maintenance of parks, open spaces and roadways also involved litter picking. This was carried out on a fortnightly basis in conjunction with the grass cutting.

In addition to this the council also provided occasional additional visits to deal with specific safety or maintenance issues that occurred. These occasional visits had increased in the last year as result of increased use of the facilities during the various lockdowns.

The council did not have the resources to increase this frequency or provide additional waste collection facilities and would not be in favour of providing additional bins or commercial bins. This would increase waste disposal costs and could also promote illegal dumping. A more sustainable approach needed to be adopted to control waste and rather than increase opportunities for the public to dispose of the waste they generated it should be decreased and a 'Leave no trace' approach adopted. The general public needed to appreciate that they were responsible for the waste they generated and therefore the appropriate disposal of it.

A report was also received from the Environment and Water Services Department informing the members that problems relating to significant littering had become very pronounced in recent times and had coincided with the current COVID lockdown. These issues were not confined to the Clane-Maynooth Municipal District and were indeed widespread. To date, staff had dealt effectively with the resulting clean-ups though there could be a lag at specific locations, sometimes

at weekends. Indeed, the members would be aware of Maynooth's exceptional performances in the National IBAL league in recent years.

Specifically, in relation to Maynooth, the Harbour Field had been particularly problematic and had been the subject of ongoing representations. The Environment Section had also viewed the video evidence and it was truly appalling. Therefore, one fully understood the frustrations of the elected members as well as the wider community, particularly the Tidy Towns Group.

Regrettably, there were no easy answers and there were a number of aspects to be considered: In the first instance, consideration really needed to be given to providing large commercial style bins in locations such as this. Inevitably, this would only add to the existing problems, would lead to fly-tipping and disposal of domestic waste on a significant scale as well as encouraging social gatherings at a time of lockdown.

In addition, the merits of providing such bins at a range of locations really needed to be considered in a broader context. Aside from the costs and logistical aspects (particularly in relation to servicing), the members really needed to be mindful of the message that such an action would convey, particularly at a time when sustainability/climate action was to the fore. Though well intentioned, this was hardly the correct response and would likely only reinforce existing problems.

The council was currently spending in excess of €4 million annually on street cleaning and litter management. This was a very significant sum and its opportunity cost also really needed to be considered. Notwithstanding the scale of the spend, the council was in receipt of ongoing requests to provide additional street cleaning and public bins at numerous locations throughout the county. This was not sustainable, nor could such be accommodated within existing budgets. On the contrary, the emphasis really should be on the phased removal of public bins and challenging existing societal mores in relation to littering and fly-tipping.

It was fully appreciated that this was not an easy position to take. It was also fully understood the pressures on the elected members but calling for more and more as well as bigger bins would only exacerbate the existing problems.

In addition, there was also the issue of encouraging public congregation during a time of lockdown. In this context, the council had been liaising with the local An Garda Síochána who had

a statutory role in relation to COVID-19 restrictions as well as the Alcohol Bye-Laws. There was also ongoing liaison with the Municipal District Engineer with a view to providing some reasonable and more proportionate additional arrangements for The Harbour Field when resources and circumstances allowed.

The council would also like to acknowledge the ongoing assistance of the Tidy Towns Group. It was accepted that the scale of littering was indeed beyond the resources of any voluntary group. A local shopping outlet had also been helpful with clean ups and this was further acknowledged.

A further report was received from the Roads, Transportation and Public Safety Department informing the members that the Municipal District Office had no additional resources to assign to street cleaning without compromising the existing litter management plan and that without a reduction to the current service bin emptying and street cleaning service provided throughout the Municipal District requests for additional services could not be sanctioned.

Councillor Durkan stated the motion had originated in the MD due to the increase in rubbish volumes with the loosening in covid restrictions. He confirmed that the council could not rely on the Tidy Towns groups to deal with this matter and the council needed to install these bins in areas which are regularly frequented to allow the public enjoy the open spaces around the county and to promote the ‘Bring home your own waste’ message. The Cathaoirleach noted that the issues raised were of concern to all the members.

Councillor Durkan proposed that the surplus of €163k referred to earlier by Ms Sweeney be used to purchase these bins as outlined. Councillor Ó’Cearúil seconded the proposal and asked that the matter be put to a vote.

Director of Service, Mr Boland stated the matter had been discussed in great detail at the MD meeting and confirmed the council strongly supported the Tidy Towns groups stating it was not just a capacity issue, but had become endemic in society. He stated that providing more bins/bigger bins/weekend collection service was not sustainable from an environmental and a financial point of view. He acknowledged that the MD Engineers had been proactive in dealing with these one off events and confirmed he was meeting with the Roads, Parks and Finance departments to try and devise a more focused approach.

The Head of Finance clarified that the €163k surplus she had referred to earlier was not available for reassignment as had been put against the councils deficit and the financing of the item in question now had to be re-examined.

The Chief Executive stated he accepted the spirit of the motion and the principle being made and asked the members to allow the executive time to further consider and find a way to address it.

Councillor O’Cearuil asked that the original motion be put to a vote. The members agreed.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor Durkan, seconded by Councillor Hamilton with 33 members voting in favour of the motion, 0 members against and 3 abstentions, the motion was passed.

The Chief Executive noted for the record, that provision had not been made for this item in the 2021 budget but that all options would be looked at. Councillor Durkan asked that the item be added to the Progress Report.

15/0421

Unauthorised Quarries in Kildare

The following adjourned motion in the name of Councillor Evie Sammon was considered by the members.

That the council outlines the environmental and ecological damage caused by unauthorised quarries and the measures they are taking to address unauthorised quarries in Kildare.

The motion was proposed by Councillor Sammon and seconded by Councillor Tracey O’Dwyer.

A report was received from the Planning, Strategic Projects & Public Realm Department informing the members that quarry applications undergo a rigorous assessment as part of the planning process and are required to undergo Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and in most cases Appropriate Assessment (AA). A list of priority quarries for enforcement action is currently being compiled and reviewed by the Planning Authority. This list is being prioritised by the Planning Authority in terms of Enforcement action and a number of Warning Letters have been issued. Matters considered include a broad spectrum of areas within each unauthorised quarry and include compliance with relevant EIA and AA legislation on the protection of the environment and Natura 2000 sites. Arising from the issuing of Warning Letters, some quarry operators have

complied with the issues raised, whilst some have been referred to the Council's legal advisors for further action.

Councillor Sammon welcomed the report and asked that the priority list be shared with the members when completed. Mr Ryan noted this area was extremely complex due to historic/legacy issues, which was further complicated by substitute consent.

Councillor Pender proposed an amendment to the motion which was seconded by Councillor Sammon and agreed by the members present as follows

That the council outlines the environmental and ecological damage caused by unauthorised quarries and the measures they are taking to address unauthorised quarries in Kildare including in tabular format the date any enforcement order has been issued and any follow up.

Resolved that the amended motion proposed by Councillor Pender seconded by Councillor Sammon was agreed by the members present and that the priority list being worked on that outlines the environmental and ecological damage caused by unauthorised quarries and the measures they are taking to address unauthorised quarries in Kildare, include in tabular format the date any enforcement order had been issued and any follow up, and that this priority list be circulated to the members.

16/0421

Extension of the Dublin Bikes scheme along the Royal Canal

The following adjourned motion in the name of Councillor Naoise Ó Cearúil was considered by the members.

That the council consults with Dublin City Council and Fingal County Council to extend the Dublin Bikes scheme along the Royal Canal as a commuting option as with new Hybrid bicycles in the Dublin Bikes fleet, it makes this option possible to a wider range of people.

The motion was proposed by Councillor Ó Cearúil and seconded by Councillor Durkan.

A report was received from the Roads, Transportation and Public Safety Department informing the members that the Transportation Directorate will discuss the viability of this proposal with the National Transport Authority, before engaging with further stakeholders listed.

It is understood that a key parameter of the Bike Scheme is that it primarily operates within a 30kph zone in Dublin (i.e. slower speed environments) and therefore the scheme operates without

mandatory cycle helmets. This will be something to be investigated further with the National Transport Authority.

Councillor Ó'Cearúil noted the contents of the report stating there was still a body of work to do to bring the Royal Canal greenway up to standard and noted the council needed to be ambitious in its plans in this regard. Councillor Neville supported the motion noting the Greenway had to be completed first and the council should look firstly look at potential partners within the county and he would welcome a discussion at SPC on this.

Ms Barrett confirmed that the soundings from initial discussions held with the NTA on this had not been positive noting that the further out of the city centre you go, usage of the bike-scheme reduces, and the costs increase. Subject to the members approval, she supported a further discussion at the SPC on the matter.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor Ó Cearúil seconded by Councillor Durkan and agreed by the members present that the report be noted and the motion referred to the Roads, Transportation and Fire Safety SPC.

17/0421

Infill Plan to Build Homes for Single People

The following adjourned motion in the name of Councillor Noel Connolly was considered by the members.

That with a view to launching an infill plan to build homes for single people whilst having regard to maintaining sufficient green areas, Kildare County Council will survey all land it owns or controls in existing developments to build such homes and will also invite private developers and Approved Housing Bodies to bring forward proposals to do the same, on lands not owned by Kildare County Council.

The motion was proposed by Councillor Noel Connolly and seconded by Councillor Hamilton.

A report was received from the Housing Department informing the members that Kildare County Council has prepared a database of housing lands known to be in its ownership and potentially suitable for housing development. The database identifies land suitable for development for housing, including open space, within existing social housing developments and small pockets of land suitable for infill development. Proposals are being prepared for infill developments on a number of these sites. Given the urgent need to deliver units in large numbers, resources are

being concentrated on the larger sites which will yield greater unit numbers. There are only a small number of sites where proposals for a single unit is being developed.

Typically, our infill proposals involve a number of units from 4 units in Newtown, Leixlip to 16 units on open space in St. Evins in Monasterevin. Progress on these units is detailed in the monthly housing report prepared for the Plenary Council meeting. Development of further infill sites will be progressed as resources permit. The council continue to engage with Approved Housing Bodies and private developers to discuss and plan for future housing to meet the increasing demand for social housing in County Kildare.

Councillor Noel Connolly accepted the report and asked that the council make the AHBs aware that it was actively seeking proposals for infill developments in housing estates.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor Noel Connolly seconded by Councillor Hamilton and agreed by the members present that the report be noted, and the council make the AHBs aware that they were actively seeking proposals for infill developments in housing estates.

18/0421

Payment of rent on leases

The following adjourned motion in the name of Councillor Mark Leigh was considered by the members.

That the council pauses the payment of rent by all sports clubs that have a leasehold with the Council, during the pandemic.

The motion was proposed by Councillor Leigh and seconded by Councillor Pender.

A report was received from the Parks Department informing the members that subject to the members agreement, this can be actioned, but rent will still be due once the pandemic restrictions lift and clubs are fully functional again.

Councillor Leigh stated he was happy with the report. Councillor Farrelly sought the members agreement to include community and voluntary groups in this request. The members agreed.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor Leigh seconded by Councillor Pender and agreed by the members present that the council pauses the payment of rent by all sports clubs, community and voluntary groups that have a leasehold with the council, during the pandemic.

The Cathaoirleach proposed to take agenda item 18, motion by Councillor Noel Heavey and agenda item 32, motion by Councillor Íde Cussen together. The members agreed.

19/0421

Legacy Funding for Municipal Districts

The following adjourned motion in the name of Councillor Noel Heavey was considered by the members.

That this council provide a report to include reasons for, amounts of money involved, and commitments entered into for whatever period, to do with 'Legacy Funding;' and/or any other anomaly that exists when funding Municipal District programmes in our county up to now, as a precursor to reform of funding for each Municipal District based on an equitable formula (e.g. number of councillors in each municipal district).

The motion was proposed by Councillor Heavey and seconded by Councillor Anne Connolly.

The following motion in the name of Councillor Íde Cussen was considered by the members.

That the members are provided with a report from the council that includes responses as appropriate from departments including, but not exclusive to, Environment/Roads (e.g. bin services), Parks, Finance, Community; that details any legacy services and/or funding agreements that were made at the cessation of Town Councils and the commencement of Municipal Districts in 2014. This report to provide all the necessary data to assist in an assessment/review process that would enable changes if necessary to address inequity between and within Municipal Districts.

The motion was proposed by Councillor Cussen and seconded by Councillor Pender.

A report was provided to the members from the Community Department, Roads Section and Environment as follows.

Report 1 (Community): The legacy funding is applicable to three areas involving the Community Department. These are:

1. Christmas Lights
2. Festival Grants
3. Private Resident Association Grants

1 & 2. Christmas Lights and Festival grants

The following table sets out the legacy funding in respect Christmas Lights and Festivals grants since 2015.

Group	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Leixlip Christmas Lights	€14,000	€14,000	€14,000	€14,000	€14,000	€14,000
Naas Christmas Lights	€0	€20,665	€23,999	€25,000	€25,000	€25,000
Newbridge Christmas Lights	€24,000	€24,000	€24,000	€24,000	€24,000	€24,000
Athy Christmas Lights	€10,987	€10,896	€8,528	€9,679	€9,680	€10,000
Newbridge St. Patricks Day parade	€0	€10,000	€10,000	€10,000	€10,000	€0
Midsummer Arts Festival	€0	€8,000	€5,000	€10,000	€8,000	€0
Leixlip Festival	€10,000	€10,000	€10,000	€10,000	€10,000	€0
Naas Easter Parade	€0	€1,500	€2,085	€5,000	€3,700	€0
Celbridge Food Festival	€1,500	€2,000	€9,543	€9,995	€12,000	€0

Each year, the Christmas Lights legacy funding is deducted from the Community Grants annual allocation for the Municipal District (MD) leaving the following sums available for other community Grants in the MD's (2021) i.e.

Community Grants by MD	Deductions	Remaining Balance
Athy	€35,364	less €10,000 = €25,364

Celbridge Leixlip	€61,003	less €14,000	= €47,003
Kildare Newbridge	€57,467	less €24,000	= €33,467
Clane Maynooth	€39,785	(no deduction)	= €39,785
Naas	€91,947	less €25,000	= €66,947

The Festival Grants legacy funding is deducted from the Festival Grants allocation for the MD leaving the following sums available for other Festival Grants in the MD's (these deductions are being shown for illustrative reasons even though most of the festivals may not proceed this year 2021)

Festival Grants			
	by MD	Deductions	Remaining Balance
Athy	€10,813	(no deduction)	€10,813
Celbridge Leixlip	€21,625	less €12,000	€9,625
Kildare Newbridge	€21,625	less €10,000	€11,625
Clane Maynooth	€10,813	(no deduction)	€10,813
Naas	€22,058	less €11,700	€10,358

3. Private Residents Association grants

The core funding allocated to each Municipal District is as set out in the spreadsheet that was presented by the Finance Department to the members in October 2020 .

The figures regarding Private Residents Association grants are in the main based on an historical breakdown, due to the contributions made by Town Councils. This reflects itself in the differences in the per households' rate between the Municipal Districts.

The allocations for 2021 are as follows:

		Number of Houses
Athy	€ 7,971	2,004
Celbridge Leixlip	€13,776	5,861
Kildare Newbridge	€21,948	5,057
Clane Maynooth	€18,406	5,031
Naas	€48,618	6,183
Total	€110,719	24,136

Budgets can be considered by members during the budget process, but there have been no increases in recent years as to do so, would have meant a reduction in allocations elsewhere.

Report 2 (Parks): The only legacy services and funding that the Parks Section acquired from the cessation of Town Councils was the provision of Summer bedding in Leixlip Village for €15,000 per annum and the provision of dog bags in Naas. No funding was inherited for the dog bag service

Report 3 (Roads): The Municipal District Engineers offices have confirmed they are not aware of any Roads, Transportation and Public Safety legacy service agreements carried forward from the former Town Councils.

Report 4 (Environment) Director Service Joe Boland advised that the former Town Council's prioritised certain funding lines over the years as was their entitlement given the democratic context .The former Naas Town Council would seem to have prioritised community/ residents groups, Athy strongly emphasised housing maintenance and Newbridge focused on assisting the Tidy Towns group. This is a broad observation. This might not necessarily accord with the priorities of the Municipal Districts, which is understandable too. However, such is the nature of the democratic process.

The Municipal Districts have considerable discretionary LPT expenditure and therefore, are in a position to allocate funding based on their own priorities which might, if their members wish, include addressing the impact of any historical considerations. In truth, it would be really difficult to try to quantify such historical aspects and indeed, the merits of such would likely be of limited value.

Councillor Heavey noted the detail contained in the report stating his motion was to establish the overall position and that he believed that the funding to municipal districts should be proportionate to the population and the number of councillors elected to the Municipal District. He welcomed the clarity given around community grants and noted the disparity and stated he would like to work with the members to introduce a more equitable approach to the allocations per municipal district given the big disparity in their membership numbers.

Councillor Cussen enquired regarding the agreement that was made in relation to the legacy funding when the phasing out was being agreed and asked had an “evening out” or a “weaning off timeline” been considered. She stated that a review was now necessary to ensure equitable access to funding by all the municipal districts.

Following a discussion, the members raised the following points:

- One of the aims of the Putting People First document was a 5-year transition away from legacy funding.
- Equity in relation to the collection of commercial rates and where they were spent, should also be considered if this approach was being considered
- Municipal Districts should be looking at supporting each other, rather than looking to take things away from each other
- Reducing legacy funding would have a significant impact on those municipal districts affected
- This was a budget issue and should be further discussed in the budget discussions in September.
- The matter should be considered by the Finance Committee as it was a very complex issue

Ms Millane noted the suggestion to refer the matter to the Finance Committee and advised that if the members agreed, the matter could then be referred as such and further considered during the discussions for Budget 2022.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor Heavey seconded by Councillor Cussen and agreed by the members present that the report was noted and both motions be referred to the Finance Committee for further consideration.

20/0421

Equality Impact Assessment Process

The following adjourned motion in the name of Councillor Vanessa Liston was considered by the members.

That the council implement an equality impact assessment process as part of the development stages of all council plans and policies.

The motion was proposed by Councillor Liston and seconded by Councillor Pender.

A report was received from the Housing and Corporate Services Department informing the members that subject to the members approval, the Council was committed to examining this request and would revert to the Corporate Policy Group when more information has been gathered. It will also be necessary to consult with the City and County Management Association to ensure consistency across local authorities.

It is our understanding that Equality Impact Assessment is part of a broader Public Sector Duty objective and would be something that the local authority would have to adopt. As such, it would be an extra step in the development and production of every plan and policy by the local authority. It is not known how this would impact or interact with the legislative framework in which the local authority operates but can be included as part of the information gathering process and report to CPG.

Councillor Liston welcomed the report and that the process was starting and sought confirmation on an estimated timeframe for implementation. Ms Aspell confirmed the Equality Officer was reviewing it currently but a number of matters had to be clarified first including the appropriate department to take the lead, the best way of developing awareness, establishing the necessary training requirements and a mechanism for embedding the process on a cross departmental basis. She confirmed she would update the members once she had an opportunity to discuss the matter further with the Equality Officer.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor Liston and seconded by Councillor Pender and agreed by the members present that the report be noted, and an update provided to the members when it becomes available.

21/0421

Local Government Auditor Report

The Cathaoirleach confirmed that as Councillor McLoughlin Healy was absent from the meeting and had not given written consent to another member to move her motions on her behalf, her motions could not be considered.

22/0421

Inspection Programme for all Local Authority Housing Stock

The following joint motion in the name of Councillors Brian Dooley, Bernard Caldwell, Suzanne Doyle, Noel Heavey and Robert Power was considered by the members.

That the council develop an effective inspection programme for all local authority housing stock in order to protect the significant capital investment and reduce ongoing maintenance and repair costs, and that this regime be supported by a tenancy incentive scheme that will acknowledge and reward tenants of good standing.

The motion was proposed by Councillor Doyle and seconded by Councillor Dooley.

A report was received from the Housing and Corporate Services Department informing the members that the Local Government Management Agency [LGMA], together with the Department of Housing Local Government and Heritage [DHLGH], are progressing the transition from a primarily reactive-based approach to a planned maintenance/asset management methodology for the maintenance of the local authority housing stock. The intention is to capture the current condition and link future funding to both targeted and planned maintenance works, such as energy efficiency retrofitting, in order to reduce response maintenance costs. The council currently conducts inspections on properties in line with specifically targeted funding, such as the recently announced Energy Efficiency Retrofitting Programme (EERP) and will adopt a national Asset Management System once this is introduced. The RFT for this procurement process will be progressed by the LGMA during Q2 2021.

In relation to incentivising tenants; in October 2018 the council supported the introduction of a Tenant Deposit Scheme, on the recommendation of the Housing SPC. The rationale for the

scheme was to incentivise tenants to properly maintain the property having regard to the council's tenant handbook, and in the event of the property being returned to the council in a good condition, the deposit will be refunded in full. A copy of the scheme, which was implemented from 1 January 2019, is appended to this response (see attached).

Councillor Doyle noted the level of capital investment on the councils books which would have a significant maintenance cost to the council and for this reason, there should be a regular inspection scheme, at least for the new house purchases.

Councillor Doyle proposed an amendment to the motion as follows

That Kildare's Housing Section implement a pilot inspection scheme in advance of anticipated guidelines from central Government and that these inspections concentrate on new stock in the interest of maintaining same to a very high standard and that the current incentive scheme with regard to deposits be evaluated through same.

She stated she was happy for the amended motion to go on the Progress Report for further update.

Ms Aspell stated she had not had an opportunity to review the detail of the amended motion but confirmed that the retrofit programme was resource heavy but that the new system once introduced, should allow more information to be recorded.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor Doyle and seconded by Councillor Dooley and agreed by the members present that the report be noted and an update on the amended motion be provided via the Progress Report once the Director of Housing has had an opportunity to review it.

23/0421

Community Scorecard initiative

The following joint motion in the names of Councillors Nuala Killeen, Aidan Farrelly, Bill Clear and Chris Pender was considered by the members.

That the council consider and adopt the "Community Scorecard" initiative as part of a working document to track community assets, progress in building same, funding and / or gaps in areas and opportunities for community asset development. That the "Community Scorecard" initiative be piloted in key towns for 2021 that public participation be encouraged and that it is explored for use in development of our County Development Plan.

The motion was proposed by Councillor Killeen and seconded by Councillor Pender.

A report was received from the Economic, Community and Cultural Department informing the members that the Community Department was currently reviewing the Local Economic and Community Plan 2016-2021. This is a cross interagency plan which looks at service provision in the county. The purpose of the LECP, was to set out the objectives and actions needed to promote and support the economic development, and the local and community development, of the local authority area.

There were eight guiding principles -

1. To make a positive difference by creating an imaginative and ambitious plan based on the evidenced needs of Kildare.
2. To “Build Society in Kildare” by creating sustainable, coherent, inclusive communities and a sustainable economic environment.
3. To have a collective and accessible vision that is owned by people across the county.
4. To implement, facilitate and encourage changes in the way agencies and structures work in Kildare, by linking initiatives, maximising return, and by changing our expectation of how we work together.
5. To create a framework that aligns with a range of other statutory, collaborative and local development plans.
6. To maximise the ability of Kildare to leverage additional resources that will support the delivery of an appropriate and fair level of services and economic opportunities.
7. To provide a working plan with space to reflect and plan ahead.
8. To create a plan in accordance with the principles of sustainable development.

Kildare County Council is currently awaiting National guidelines in relation to the preparation of a new plan. The new plan, in association with the current review of the County Development Plan, will provide guidance in relation to community requirements and opportunities there and can assist in reviewing such initiatives as suggested in the motion.

Councillor Killeen stated that an agile, innovative approach was needed to link in with what is going on in our communities and confirmed she had spoken with Mr Ryan, Director of Planning in relation to a pilot programme. Ms Kavanagh noted Councillor Killeen’s comments around a pilot and agreed that the matter could be further considered once a pilot had taken place.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor Killeen, seconded by Councillor Pender and agreed by the members present that the report be noted.

24/0421

Horse Riding Trails/Bridleways Blueways and Greenways

The following motion in the names of Councillor Veralouise Behan was considered by the members.

That the council consider incorporating dedicated horse-riding trails/bridleways in any future plans for walkways, Blueways and Greenways around the county.

The motion was proposed by Councillor Behan and seconded by Councillor Kelly.

A report was received from the Roads Transportation and Public Safety Department informing the members that the primary objectives in providing Greenways and Blueway's is to provide safe and segregated facilities for cycling and walking. These modes of transport are accessible to all members of society and the demand for these modes of transport is significantly higher than that for horse riding.

Therefore, investment in cycling and walking infrastructure is prioritised over horse riding facilities. Where sufficient demand for horse riding facilities is identified the potential for segregated infrastructure could be examined, however a funding mechanism would also need to be identified in parallel with the demand identification.

Funding for Greenways and Blueway's generally comes though the National Transport Authority or the Department of Transport. A dedicated funding stream for horse riding facilities is currently not available. In regard to National Transport Authority Walkways and Greenways, this matter will be raised with the National Transport Authority at our next monthly meeting. However, it is anticipated that this would not be desirable to them from a safety perspective mixing pedestrian and cyclists with horse riding. In that regard, it is unlikely that funding for this could be sought as part of National Transport Authority project (such as Walkways and Greenways) and such facility would need to be standalone and a different funding stream sought.

Councillor Behan stated there had been a huge decrease in the bridal path network over time with horses being removed from the tourism equation on this basis. She noted that Kildare were seen to be an equine county and should be promoting this form of tourism. Councillor Behan enquired if a permit system could be considered as a way of overcoming the barriers to this important tourism option which would also support the inclusion of women in sport. She also noted that the option of hacking on roads had reduced considerably due to safety concerns which added to the importance

of looking at alternative routes. The members supported Councillor Behan's motion and Councillor Stafford enquired if it was something that could be looked at as a suitable activity following the re-wetting of the bogs.

Ms Barrett noted the members comments and stated the council were unable to source funding streams for bridal ways but that she would discuss the matter further with the Public Realm team to establish if there were other options that could be pursued to advance this item.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor Behan seconded by Councillor Kelly and agreed by the members present that the report be noted.

25/0421

Disposal of Coffee Pods

The following motion in the name of Councillor Peggy O'Dwyer was considered by the members. That the council consider running a public awareness campaign to highlight the options for disposal of coffee pods.

The motion was proposed by Councillor Peggy O'Dwyer and seconded by Councillor Tracey O'Dwyer.

A report was received from the Water and Environment Services Department informing the members that the list of items that can be placed in the recycling bin is to be revised later this year. This will include a range of plastics not currently accepted. This will require a major information campaign nationally and locally to ensure the improved service is successful.

As part of this campaign the council would propose to include information on recycling and/or disposal of coffee pods in this campaign, proposed nationally for August this year. As the councillor may be aware, different coffee pods have different disposal routes so this information would be suited to an overall campaign on recycling and the circular economy.

Councillor Peggy O'Dwyer noted the contents of the report and highlighted information currently available on the MyWaste website.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor Peggy O'Dwyer seconded by Councillor Tracey O'Dwyer and agreed by the members present that the report was noted.

26/0421

Health and Safety Audit on Canal, River and Railway Bridges

The following motion in the name of Councillor Anne Connolly was considered by the members. That the council carry out a full health and safety audit on all canal, river and railway bridges throughout the county with a view to developing and prioritising a list of works to be conducted going forward.

The motion was proposed by Councillor Anne Connolly and seconded by Councillor Noel Connolly.

A report was received from the Roads, Transportation & Public Safety Department informing the members that Kildare County Council currently receives a budget of approximately €500,000 per annum from the Department of Transport for bridge remediation works. Works are prioritised on the basis of an eirspan principal inspection report which categorises the bridge condition on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 denoting bridges with the most serious defects. Works are currently being undertaken on bridges with a rating of 4 or 5, on the basis of the availability of funding. Additionally it should be noted that any in-stream works are only allowed during the window from start July to end of September due restrictions imposed by Inland Fisheries Ireland.

The DTTAS support which operates from Kildare NRO offices have developed a Bridge Asset Management application which will be used to store the inventory of all bridges in the County along with an outline condition rating. This outline condition rating will be used to identify bridges that require more detailed inspection (eirspan inspections). Kildare County Council are currently investigating how best to undertake the initial surveys of the substantial bridge inventory throughout the county. There are over 250 bridges in Kildare, Canal Bridges are owned and maintained by Waterways Ireland, railway bridges are owned and maintained by CIE. The remaining bridges are largely controlled and maintained by Kildare County Council.

Councillor Connolly acknowledged the contents of the report noting that this issue had been raised at municipal district level on numerous occasions and that a large proportion of bridges throughout the county were taking traffic volumes that they were neither designed for or intended to take. Ms Barrett confirmed remediation works were prioritised on the scale of the works and the required funding was sought accordingly. Councillor Anne Connolly asked if the inventory list of

bridges not owned and maintained by the council could be made available to the members and Ms Barrett undertook to make enquiries in this regard.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor Anne Connolly seconded by Councillor Noel Connolly and agreed by the members present that the report be noted and confirmation of the availability of the non-council owned bridges be followed up on.

27/0421

Countywide Campaign and Guidebook

The following motion in the name of Councillor Tracey O'Dwyer was considered by the members. That the council launch a countywide campaign and guide book, to promote and identify safe walking and cycling routes for people to bring awareness to the many different walking and cycling options already available in the county and the variety that each route has to offer. The Guide book to include maps and a legend giving details and suitability of each route.

The motion was proposed by Councillor Tracey O'Dwyer and seconded by Councillor Brett.

A report was received from the Chief Executive Into Kildare on behalf of Ms S Kavanagh, Director of Service, Economic Development, Community and Culture Department informing the members that Into Kildare would be delighted to assist with this project if budget was made available. To date, Into Kildare has collaborated with the Heritage Officer and Sports Partnership to review and update the Tow Path Trails brochure. The updated brochure would include the addition of the new walking and cycling routes recently launched, as well as those where work is currently underway. A quote has been received to design and print a revised Tow Path Trails brochure (10,000 copies).

A report was received from the Kildare Sports Partnership section informing the members that Kildare Sports Partnership have detailed maps of the signed Slí na Sláinte routes around the county as well as the Tow Path Trails Booklet on their website. The Tow Path Trails Booklet is currently being updated.

Councillor Tracey O'Dwyer welcomed the reports and enquired if a county wide campaign could be launched around 'safe walking', in conjunction with An Gardaí if appropriate but that the council would take the initiative in this regard. Councillor Cussen highlighted an initiative taken in the Celbridge-Leixlip Municipal District around signage branding and their 'We Care in Kildare'

campaign. Councillor Heavey asked that any brochures produced be available in digital and App format also.

Ms Kavanagh noted the members comments and confirmed the matter could be raised with the Gardaí via the Joint Policing Committee, and with the Road Safety Officer and consideration be given to applying to the Outdoor Recreation Fund Scheme. Councillor Tracey O'Dwyer thanked the members for their support and welcomed any initiatives that could be introduced.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor Tracey O'Dwyer seconded by Councillor Brett and agreed by the members present that the report was noted and the issues raised be discussed with the Gardaí and the Road Safety Officer.

28/0421

Community Wealth Building Model

The following motion in the name of Councillor Noel Connolly was considered by the members. That the council examines the Community Wealth Building model with a view to incorporating it into their Local Economic Community Plan (LECP) and in doing so, it should correspond with councils in Preston (England), North Ayrshire (Scotland), Cleveland (USA) and elsewhere which have successfully developed this model.

The motion was proposed by Councillor Noel Connolly and seconded by Councillor Doyle.

A report was received from the Economic Development, Community and Culture Department informing the members that Kildare County Council are currently awaiting guidance from the Department of Rural and Community Development regarding the review of the Local Economic and Community Plan. The guidelines will outline the process to be used in terms of reviewing the LECP and preparing a new plan. Pending the receipt of the guidelines and to assist the process, we can review the Community Wealth Building Model and the lessons learned by other authorities when using it.

Councillor Noel Connolly acknowledged the report noting this model had proved very successful in the examples given and a fundamental change was needed in how the council reviewed its plans. He noted that specific social clauses could be included in procurement tenders such as Living Wage agreements, prohibition of zero hour contracts, climate change targets etc and confirmed that Galway County Council had adopted this approach with Clare and Limerick County Council

passing it only last week. Councillor Noe Connolly further stated that the Head of the OGP had also spoken positively on this approach and confirmed that EU rules do not prohibit the use of it. Director of Services, Ms Kavanagh stated the clarity provided around the public procurement element was helpful and she would liaise with the councils referenced and provide feedback via the SPCs.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor Noel Connolly seconded by Councillor Doyle and agreed by the members present that the report was noted, and feedback would be sought from the councils referenced and fed back through the SPCs.

29/0421

Outdoor Seating and Dining

The following motion in the name of Councillor Joe Neville was considered by the members. That the council continue to actively plan and put all possible resources into having outdoor seating and dining ready for in the coming months as part of a general outdoor summer plan in the identified towns. Notwithstanding Covid measures, it would be important to get everything in place before the June bank holiday weekend with regular updates on progress given to the members.

The motion was proposed by Councillor Neville and seconded by Councillor Behan.

A report was received from the Planning Strategic Development and Public Realm Department informing the members that Failte Ireland recently announced funding for outdoor dining, with the focus of the scheme to provide a level of financial support to tourism and hospitality businesses, in Kildare's town centres, to purchase or upgrade equipment to provide additional outdoor seating and, therefore, increase their outdoor dining capacity for the summer of 2021. This scheme which is being co-ordinated through the Local Enterprise Office will financially assist and support independent tourism and hospitality business owners to create outdoor dining experiences in a regulated and accessible manner. Funding under the scheme is only available to existing businesses.

The scheme is open to attractions, hotels, restaurants, cafes, public houses or other tourism and hospitality business establishments where food is sold for consumption on the premises. Where a business wants to use public footpaths/space the business must apply for a Section 254 licence. The Planning Department and Transportation Department are working together to ensure that all S254 applications received will be treated as a matter of priority to ensure a quick turnaround of

these applications so as to support businesses in their applications to the above funding stream. As the Public Realm Team are already progressing plans for parklets in a number of towns cross departmental consideration will have to be given to additional appropriate locations, over and above those being funded through the Town & Village Renewal Scheme and those being funded by the recently announced Failte Ireland scheme for businesses as outlined above.

Councillor Neville noted the contents of the report and stated the Public Realm Team needed to be supported by all the other sections of the council who were involved in creating and managing outdoor spaces and referenced the recently announced €15m funding by Minister Ryan for outdoor spaces.

The members supported the motion and made the following points:

- The public realm team were doing great work, especially on the Blueways and Greenway
- It was proving difficult to bring some outdoor public realm projects through to the end
- Tidy Towns were carrying out a lot of the functions in keeping areas clean
- The council needs to do more regarding bins and litter collection
- The next 2 months were critical for business, and the council needs to support them in every way possible

Mr Ryan welcomed the positive comments from the members stating the council would do everything it could to deliver these projects in the timeframes available however he did note that it was proving difficult to procure outdoor street furniture given the unprecedented demand for these items currently.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor Neville seconded by Councillor Behan and agreed by the members present that the report was noted

30/0421

Temporary Public Toilets in the Form of Portaloo's

The following motion in the name of Councillor Naoise Ó Cearúil was considered by the members. That in light of future outdoor dining throughout the county this summer, that the council examines the need for temporary public toilets in the form of portaloo's.

The motion was proposed by Councillor Ó Cearúil and seconded by Councillor Pender.

A report was received from the Roads, Transportation & Public Safety Department informing the members that public conveniences were previously installed in Kildare, Newbridge, Naas and Athy. Members at that time raised questions regarding the cost of providing the conveniences and the perceived underutilisation of these units. Following detailed discussions at MD meetings it was agreed to terminate the contract with the service provider in 2018. The installation of any future public conveniences would require the identification of a funding stream to cover the associated costs.

Councillor Ó' Cearúil stated the council needed to actively address this issue adding that it was incumbent on everyone to act responsibly in relation to this issue and in relation to litter, dog fouling and the proper use of public space given the move to outdoor dining/takeaways/socialising. He queried the possibility of opening public buildings during the day to enable the public avail of the toilet facilities in them.

Ms Barrett confirmed the council did not have a budget for this item and portaloos were not the short term answer given issues related to cleaning them/hygiene and the potential for vandalism. She confirmed that the council would consult the sector on identified solutions and she would bring any findings or suggestions back to management team for further discussion. Councillor Ó' Cearúil asked that the item remain on the Progress Report for further update.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor Ó' Cearúil seconded by Councillor Pender and agreed by the members present that the report was noted, and the matter remain on the Progress Report for further update when available.

31/0421

Amendments to the Local Improvement Scheme

The following motion in the name of Councillor Kevin Duffy was considered by the members. That the council write to the Department of Rural and Community Development and seek amendments to the Local Improvement Scheme eligibility criteria to widen the definitions of 'Agriculture' to include Equine activities, and 'Amenity Road' to include a reference to sporting facilities.

The motion was proposed by Councillor Duffy and seconded by Councillor Keatley.

A report was received from the Roads, Transportation & Public Safety Department informing the members that with the Members agreement, the Transportation Department will write to the Department of Rural and Community Development seeking amendments, as proposed by Councillor Duffy, to the Local Improvement Scheme eligibility criteria.

Councillor Duffy welcomed the response noting its importance given Kildare's position as an equine county.

Ms Barrett confirmed that the Roads Department had sought clarification from the Department who had stated that the equine activities could come under the definition of agriculture once it was not "large scale" activity. Councillor Duffy thanked the Director for following up with the clarification so promptly.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor Duffy, seconded by Councillor Keatley and agreed by the members present that the report was noted.

32/0421

Protection of Hedgerows and Mature Trees

The following motion in the name of Councillor Peter Hamilton was considered by the members. That the council puts in place more clear and concrete measures for the protection of hedgerows and mature trees in all developments – including specification of non-invasive species (as per the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan Pollinator Friendly Planting Code) and inclusion of the review and redress of hedgerow and tree protection in the housing bond and taking in charge processes.

The motion was proposed by Councillor Hamilton and seconded by Councillor Doyle.

A report was received from the Parks Department informing the members that Since 2019 the Parks Section have introduced more detailed conditions in relation to the retention and protection of trees and hedgerows on development sites on planning applications referred to us. The conditions continue to be reviewed and revised and were dependent on the site and the scale of development. A sample of planning conditions was provided to the members also.

Regarding the review of hedgerow and tree protection in the housing bond and taking in charge process this will be discussed with the Planning Department and Development Control Sections to see how this can be improved.

Councillor Hamilton noted the report but stated that a greater emphasis was needed on enforcing the requirements of these planning conditions and in taking the appropriate enforcement action when they were not complied with. He asked that the council review the process around bonds and asked it to ensure invasive species are kept to a minimum noting the cherry blossom was deemed to be an invasive species. Councillor McEvoy stated that the Planning SPC were preparing a report on this and would report back to council further.

Ms Kavanagh noted the members comments and confirmed she would bring them back to the Parks team.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor Hamilton seconded by Councillor Doyle and agreed by the members present that the report was noted.

33/0421

National Home Retrofit Scheme

The following motion in the name of Councillor Vanessa Liston was considered by the members. That with a view to maximising the amount of drawdown from the National Home Retrofit Scheme, the council outline the amount of funding it has secured for both social housing retrofitting and required staffing, and outline how many houses and in which estates this funding will be applied to across the county this year and over the next 5 years.

The motion was proposed by Councillor Liston and seconded by Councillor Doyle.

A report was received from the Senior Architect informing the members that Kildare County Council was receiving funding in 2021 under both the Midlands Energy Efficiency Retrofitting Programme (MEERP) and the Energy Efficiency Retrofitting Programme (EERP) to retrofit our social housing stock.

The council received €3.3m in funding under MEERP and had identified between 80-100 housing units across four developments to be retrofitted in four phases commencing in May:

Phase 1 Beechgrove, Rathangan

Phase 2 Ashbrook, Derrinturn

Phase 3 Bishopsland (Farrincooley and Dunmurray Rise), Kildare

Phase 4 St Evin's Park, Monasterevin

In addition, the council had received €1,488,786 in funding for 2021 under EERP and have compiled a work programme for 55 units across three developments which are separate to the

developments to be retrofitted under MEERP [Loughnamona, Leixlip; Clonmullion, Athy; Cill Corbain, Naas].

Kildare County Council did not seek funding under the National Home Retrofit Scheme. There was limited interest in this scheme from the local authority sector, with ultimately no local authorities progressing applications mainly arising from by the roll out of the EERP by the DHLGH.

A number of staff have been assigned to both the MEERP and EERP on a part-time basis and consideration is being given to what additional resources may be required to deliver both programmes. There is no indication at this time of the likely funding over the next 5 years.

Councillor Liston welcomed the position news in the report which showed the momentum that was gathering in this area. She sought clarification on the additional resources referred to, was there further funding coming and asked that the item be included as an item for update in the Chief Executives monthly management report. Councillor Stafford enquired with regard to the Midlands Retrofit Programme and whether this type of work had been assigned through this programme and whether it involved the employment of former staff of the peat industry.

Ms Aspell confirmed that the council was assessing the resources necessary for this programme, the programme would be rolled out over the course of 2021, the council was not anticipating any further funding this year and going forward, an update, as it became available, would be included in the Chief Executives monthly management report.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor Liston seconded by Councillor Doyle and agreed by the members present that the report was noted and an update, as it becomes available, would be included in the Chief Executives monthly management report.

The Cathaoirleach confirmed that concluded the business of the meeting and that the register of Chief Executive Orders would be available to view online immediately following the conclusion of the meeting. He sought the members agreement to holding the May meetings of council online, to be further reviewed by them at the May plenary meeting. The members agreed.

Resolved with the agreement of the members that the May meetings of council be held online.

The meeting concluded.