

**Minutes of the Budgetary Plan Meeting  
for the Athy Municipal District  
held on Monday, 19 October 2020 at 1.00 p.m.  
in the Council Chamber, Áras Chill Dara,  
Naas, Co Kildare**

**Members Present:** Councillor A Breslin (Cathaoirleach), Councillors V Behan, B. Dooley, I Keatley and M. Leigh

**Officials Present:** Ms A Aspell (District Manager)  
Ms F Millane (Financial Accountant)  
Mr L Dunne (Senior Executive Officer)  
Ms P Pender (A/Senior Executive Officer)  
Mr D O’Flaherty (Municipal District Engineer)  
Mr S Wallace (Senior Executive Parks Superintendent)  
Mr B McGrath (Meetings Administrator)  
Ms O Mooney (Meetings Secretary)

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**MY01/1020**

**2020 Draft Budgetary Plan**

Ms Millane informed the members that a briefing on the current status of the Budget for 2021 had been given to the Corporate Policy Group (CPG) and the Finance Committee. She then gave a briefing to the members on the challenges posed by the reduction in income and the increases in non-discretionary expenditure. She stated that any changes to the current position would continue to be discussed at CPG and Finance Committee and would be advised to full council at the briefing session scheduled for 16 November in advance of the statutory budget meeting on 23 November.

Ms Millane informed the members that in accordance with Section 58 of the Local Government Reform Act 2014 the draft General Municipal Allocation (GMA) for Kildare County Council was €20,421,750 for 2021. She stated that the GMA for 2021 took account

of the council's decision made at the council meeting on 21 September 2020 to again vary the Local Property Tax (LPT) rate by +7.5%. She stated that the impact of that decision was to ring-fence €4,885,257 of discretionary funding to the municipal districts and this money was included in the GMA.

Ms Millane confirmed the following points of the draft budgetary plan with the members:

- Pay Parking income had decreased substantially.
- As a result of appeals to the rates tribunal, combined with limited additional properties being valued by the rates valuation office, net income from commercial rates had decreased by €700,000.
- Costs had increased due to the Public Service Pay Agreement 2018-2020, the accounting for staff for a full year who had been include in 2020 for part of the year, the facilitation of remote working due to COVID-19, together with other Covid 19 related costs.
- All viable expenditure (i.e. excluding grant aided spend, payroll, loans, statutory and other fixed) except for Fire Services and IT have been reduced by 13.5%. This includes housing maintenance, own-funded roads maintenance, council grants, parks, library services, support services etc.
- There might be additional funding made available to the council from the Central Government Budget which would reduce the need for reductions to variable spend.
- She advised the members to lobby via their local TD's to Government seeking additional funding for their areas.
- The members at this meeting are provided a change to re-allocate monies. She added it would be difficult this year to change anything as many services were cut already. She confirmed that the members cannot use other municipal district monies.

The following questions were asked by the members:

- Regarding extra funding, who can decide where this money would be allocated to?
- Regarding pay parking, why was the surplus €-73,000 and are parking fines not being issued?
- Regarding pay parking, if the council are no longer receiving an income, would the council end up paying Apoca for their service.
- What happens to any surplus left over from previous years?

- Why was €2,076 allocated for twinning?
- Why was €50,000 allocated to Athy/Kildare Heritage?
- Regarding retained LPT, how would this be handled?
- Regarding Festival Grants, can any monies roll-over from this year?

Ms Millane confirmed the following points with the members:

- Regarding extra funding, the members can decide at their budget meeting however if they decide to change/cut any service, they must identify funding to balance the budget.
- With regard to pay parking, the amount was minus for a number of reasons i.e. extension of 15 minutes to 30 minutes grace and people not using the service, customers were coming and going within 30 minutes and getting their business done within this time and supermarkets were now doing deliveries thus reducing of customers using the parking services. Parking fines are also reduced as people are getting their business carried out within 30 minutes.
- Pay parking was not brought in as a revenue stream. The council would deal with the consequences in the short-term as Covid would eventually diminish and pay parking services would return to normal.
- Regarding twinning, the flat rate was allocated here.
- Regarding Athy/Kildare Heritage, the contribution was not cut from last year and was considered a viable spend.
- Regarding LPT, it could be looked at as a five-year plan.
- Regarding Festival Grants, there was €5,000 left in 2020 Budget to be spent this year. No monies can roll over except for LPT and pay parking.

Ms Millane informed the members that legalisation required that the Draft Budgetary Plan either be adopted in its' current form or with amendments by the members that day as there was no facility to defer the meeting. She stated that if it was not adopted that day the Chief Executive could adopt it as it was currently presented.

**Resolved** on the proposal of Councillor Keatley, seconded by Councillor Leigh and agreed by all members present that the Athy Municipal District Draft Budgetary Plan for 2021 be adopted.

The meeting concluded.