

Minutes of Monthly Meeting of Kildare County Council
held at 2.00p.m on Monday, 27 June 2016
at Áras Chill Dara, Devoy Park, Naas, Co Kildare

Members Present: Councillor I Keatley (Mayor), Councillors A Breslin, A Breen, FBrett, K Byrne, B Caldwell, D Callaghan, M Coleman, R Cronin, I Cussen, M Dalton, S Doyle, T Durkan, D Fitzpatrick, B Hillis, C Kelly, P Kennedy, A Larkin, M Lynch, P McEvoy, M McCabe, J McGinley, F McLoughlin-Healy, M Miley Jnr, S Moore, T Murray, J Neville, N O’Cearúil , S O’Neill, J Pender, R Power, S Power, M Stafford, M Wall, P Ward, B Weld and B Young

Apologies: Councillor M Aspell, T Redmond and D Scully

Also Present: Mr P Carey, Chief Executive, Messrs T McDonnell, P Minnock. N Morrissey, J Boland, Ms S Kavanagh (Directors of Services), Ms E Hanlon, Head of Finance, Ms M McIvor (Meetings Administrator) and other officials.

01/0616

Welcome

The Mayor welcomed everybody to the meeting and called for a moment’s reflection.

02/0616

Adoption of minutes

The council considered the minutes of the monthly meeting on 30 May 2016 together with the progress report.

Resolved On the proposal of Councillor Wall, seconded by Councillor Brett, that the minutes of the monthly meeting of 30 May 2016 be adopted and the progress report noted.

03/0616

Adoption of Minutes of Draft Kildare County Development Plan

The council considered the minutes of the Draft Kildare County Development Plan meetings of 5 April, 11 April and 20 April 2016.

Resolved On the proposal of Councillor McEvoy, seconded by Councillor Hillis, that the minutes of the Draft Kildare County Development Plan meetings of 5 April, 11 April and 20 April 2016 be adopted.

04/0616

Disposal of Land

To approve the disposal of the following land

0.0191ha of land at Whitehouse, Ballyteague

A plot of land measuring 0.0191 hectares of land and outlined on drawing No L/1286 to be transferred to Alison O'Brien, Whitehouse, Ballyteague, Co. Kildare for a consideration of €100. This is necessary for the rectification of title due to a mapping discrepancy.

Resolved On the proposal of Councillor Caldwell, seconded by Councillor Brett, pursuant to Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001, the Council consent to the disposal of the land in accordance with statutory notice dated 8 June 2016

5 The Green, Hazelhatch Park, Celbridge, Co. Kildare

This property was purchased by Ms Orla O'Neill as an Affordable property under the Shared Ownership scheme. Consent to sell this property is required.

Resolved On the proposal of Councillor Caldwell, seconded by Councillor Brett, pursuant to Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001, the Council consent to the sale of this property in accordance with statutory notice dated 15 June 2016.

20, Eason Mews, Easton Road, Leixlip, Co Kildare

This property was purchased by Kieran Herron and Claire Herron under the Shared Ownership scheme. Consent to sell the property is required.

Resolved On the proposal of Councillor Caldwell, seconded by Councillor Brett, pursuant to Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001, the Council consent to the sale of this property in accordance with statutory notice dated 15 June 2016.

0.026 ha at Greenhills, Kill and 0.012 ha at Greenhills, Kill

This land formed part of the N7 Naas Road Widening and Interchanges Scheme and the consent of the members is required to transfer Plot A 0.026ha at Greenhills Kill and 0.012 ha at Greenhills outlined on Drawing No NRO103/LT/137/02 to Liam and Joan Bradley for the consideration of €10.00

Resolved On the proposal of Councillor Caldwell, seconded by Councillor Brett, pursuant to Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001, the Council consent to the disposal of the land in accordance with statutory notice dated 15 June 2016.

05/0616

Historic Monuments Advisory Committee

A report prepared by the Heritage Officer was circulated to the members outlining the background to the Historic Monuments Advisory Committee and requesting the approval of the committee as recommended by the Economic Development, Enterprise and Planning Strategic Policy Committee.

Councillor McEvoy sought permission from the Mayor to absent himself from this item on the agenda as he had a conflict of interest in that a family member was seeking a position on the committee.

The Mayor agreed and Councillor McEvoy left the meeting.

Resolved On the proposal of Councillor Weld, seconded by Councillor O'Cearuil, the Council agreed to the constitution of the Historic Monuments Advisory Committee as outlined in the report dated 20 June 2016.

06/0616

Appointment to the Historic Monuments Advisory Committee

As outlined in the report from the Heritage Officer and now approved by Council, the members were required to appoint another elected representative to the committee.

Councillor Weld nominated Councillor Moore. The Mayor asked Councillor Moore was he in a position to accept this nomination and Councillor Moore confirmed that he was.

Councillor McLoughlin-Healy complimented the excellent report and suggested that it be used as a template for other reports to the members.

Resolved On the proposal of Councillor Weld, seconded by Councillor Kennedy, Councillor Moore was appointed to the Historic Monuments Advisory Committee.

07/0616

Management Report

Councillor Pender referred to page 3 under Housing which noted that the key output of the Housing Needs Assessment 2016 will be a summary of the net need, i.e. the number of qualified households on the housing list whose need has not been met. Councillor Pender stated that it was

obvious that HAP was not a long term solution and therefore those applicants, despite being accepted onto the transfer list will not be included in the assessment. She said that this had not been raised at the Strategic Policy Committee and it was the first time that it was included in the Management Report.

Councillor Cussen referred to page 13, in particular the North Kildare Civic Amenity Site. She stated that it does not appear that there is any movement on the identification of a site and she asked for more detail on actual progress.

Mr McDonnell, Director of Services informed the members that the Assessment of Housing Needs 2016 had not been referred to the Strategic Policy Committee as the Circular has just been received from the Department. The wording of that section in the Management Report is taken directly from the circular.

Councillor Pender said that it had been agreed that Kildare County Council would keep Housing Assistance Payment applicants on the transfer list but she was concerned that this appears to be in contravention of the circular.

Councillor Wall asked the Director to confirm that these applicants are on the transfer list.

Mr McDonnell stated that in accordance with the motion passed by the members he introduced this system in Kildare. He confirmed that this process will remain. However, in the completion of the return on the 2016 Housing Needs Assessment, he will be guided by the Department.

Mr Boland, Director of Services agreed with Councillor Cussen that the identification of a site in North Kildare for a Civic Amenity had been lengthy. A site on the Maynooth Road, Celbridge identified earlier was not suitable because of planning and engineering difficulties. There are two sites under consideration at present and Mr Boland will be in a position to brief the members further next week.

The Mayor suggested to the members that as the Management Report was just for noting, and that in future if there was an issue that they wish to have clarified, they should e-mail him in advance.

Resolved That the Management Report be noted.

08/0616

Section 85 Agreements

To approve, pursuant to Section 85 of the Local Government Act 2001

Agreement between Fingal County Council and Kildare County Council for the rehabilitation work on the Leinster Bridges Expansion Joint Replacement Contract - 2015

Resolved On the proposal of Councillor McGinley, seconded by Councillor Hillis that the

agreement between Fingal County Council and Kildare County Council to be signed in accordance with section 85 of the Local Government Act 2001.

Agreement between Carlow County Council and Kildare County Council for the carrying out of improvement works to CW-N81-003.00 Tullow Brige to include the construction of dedicated pedestrian footways/boardwalks adjacent to the existing bridge structure and associated site works.

Resolved On the proposal of Councillor McGinley, seconded by Councillor Hillis that the agreement between Carlow County Council and Kildare County Council be signed in accordance with section 85 of the Local Government Act 2001.

Agreement between Wexford County Council and Kildare County Council for the Carlow and Wexford Bridges Contract 2016.

Resolved On the proposal of Councillor McGinley, seconded by Councillor Hillis that the agreement between Wexford County Council and Kildare County Council be signed in accordance with Section 85 of the Local Government Act 2001.

09/0616

Street Lighting Policy and Planning Guidance

Mr Morrissey, Director of Services referred to the Street Lighting Policy and Planning guidance Document circulated to the members. He said that the discussions that took place with the members were positive and he said that it is good practice to have a policy and specification in place for developers.

Councillor Miley expressed concern regarding rural areas and the restrictions of the scoring system. He said that the elderly in rural communities need to be supported when they wish to remain in their own homes and sometimes a public light can afford some protection against criminal activity.

Councillor Miley asked if specific funding were identified by Municipal District members for rural lighting, is this in order or will the policy restrict this? He made the point that rural dwellers pay property tax in the same way as urban dwellers and where necessary, he stated that public lighting should be provided.

Councillor McGinley welcomed the report, referring to a motion he had some time back regarding the yellow versus the white light. He said that the policy makes economic sense and he hoped that the budget would reflect that. Councillor McGinley proposed the approval of the policy.

Councillor Wall referred to the points system and supported Councillor Miley regarding public lighting in rural Kildare. He said that some areas have had a high level of criminal activity and he asked that the rural lighting budget be examined in light of this. Councillor Wall also asked the Director to confirm that if the members identify funding for rural public lighting at Municipal District level, that such lighting will be installed.

Councillor McLoughlin-Healy queried the definition of lighting schemes and asked if members could have access to the scoring system.

Mr Morrissey confirmed that this policy will not affect rural lighting. He agreed that funding from the Local Property Tax through the Municipal Districts could be explored. He said that he would share the work programme with the members and that they would have access to the scoring system.

Councillor Miley seconded the approval of the policy.

Resolved On the proposal of Councillor McGinley, seconded by Councillor Miley, the Street Lighting Policy and Planning Guidance document was approved.

10/0616

Variations of the Athy Town Development Plan 2012 - 2018 and the County Development Plan 2011 - 2017

The Mayor referred to the report that was circulated and informed the members that the members of the Athy Municipal District have been fully briefed on the variations of the Athy Town Development Plan 2012 - 2018 and the County Development Plan 2011 - 2017 and that they were unanimous in their agreement to proceed.

Resolved The members considered the report and the variations and agreed to proceed

11/0616

Mayor's Business

The Mayor thanked the members for all their good wishes on his appointment.

He welcomed the fact that Minister Catherine Zappone opened the Youth Hub in Kildare Town. He said that he attended the Derby in the Curragh on Saturday and he warmly welcomed the planning permission granted for the redevelopment of The Curragh and said that it was a good news story for the county.

He thanked the Dubai Duty Free for their ongoing support and sponsorship.

Councillor O'Cearuil congratulated the Mayor and thanked Councillor Weld for his excellent tenure

in office.

He requested permission to raise an issue regarding the challenge taken by Councillor Campbell in Donegal to the Minister's wind farm direction.

The Mayor allowed the question and asked Mr Minnock, Director of Services to respond.

Mr Minnock referred to the statement on the Government's website and confirmed that the settlement allows the Minister the opportunity to appoint an independent inspector before 31 July 2016. Following receipt of the inspector's report, the Minister will have six weeks to consider whether or not to issue the direction or to issue an amended direction.

The Mayor asked Mr Minnock to keep the members briefed on the situation in relation to this challenge of the wind farm direction from the previous Minister Alan Kelly.

12/0616

Conferences and Training

The Meetings Administrator referred to report of 17 June 2016 regarding conferences and training circulated to the members

Resolved On the proposal of Councillor McEvoy, seconded by Councillor Caldwell and in accordance with Section 142(5) of the Local Government Act 2001, as amended by Section 53(2) of the Local Government Reform Act 2014 retrospective approval is granted for the attendance of Councillors Neville and S Power at the AILG Annual Conference in the Inishowen Gateway Hotel, Buncrana on 5 and 6 May 2016.

Councillors Aspell, Dalton and Neville at the AILG Training in Station House Hotel, Letterkenny, Co Donegal on 14 May 2016

Councillors Murray, O'Neill Dalton and Kennedy at the AILG Training in the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Dundalk on 18 June 2016

Councillor O'Neill at the Mental Health First Aid Training in St John of God Hospital in Stillorgan on 13 and 14 June 2016.

13/0616

Bereavements

The Mayor and members expressed sympathy to the family of the late

Mrs Emily Keyes (nee Thompson) mother of Ann Kavanagh, Internal Audit

Mrs Kathleen Cody, sister of Ann Scanlon, Planning Department

Mrs Teresa Hutchinson, mother of Dave Hutchinson, Athy Area and mother-in-law of Carmel Hutchinson, Library Services

Mr Liam Reidy, former Engineer with Kildare County Council.

14/0616

Pay by Weight Bin Charge System

The following adjourned motion in the name of Councillor Cussen was considered:

That the members of Kildare County Council state their opposition to the introduction of a pay-by-weight bin charge system which was imposed by Minister Alan Kelly in the dying days of the Government. Recognising that the introduction of green bin charges will discourage people from recycling their household waste and recognising the particular difficulties this will cause for the carers across the state who cannot recycle medical waste material, for example, nappies, disposable sheets, wipes and plastic syringes, that we write to the Minister requesting that the imposition of these charges be stopped and an Independent Commission be appointed to poverty proof the measures and assess its impact upon carers as well as other groups such as those on low incomes, those in receipt of state benefits and those who suffer from ill health or a disability. The motion was proposed by Councillor Cussen and seconded by Councillor Lynch.

A report from Mr Boland, Director of Services informed Councillor Cussen that this issue has been raised with Department officials on a number of occasions at her request.

Councillor Cussen stated that she was glad that the pay-by-weight system is now on hold for a year. In this regard, Councillor Cussen submitted the following amended motion in writing That the members of Kildare County Council request that a letter is written to the Minister requesting constructive engagement over the coming months with the Department and the Waste Management Industry, Family Carers Ireland and other groups to ensure poverty proofing of the pay-by-weight charging system which is now on hold until mid 2017.

The amended motion was proposed by Councillor Cussen and seconded by Councillor McCabe. Mr Boland said that events have overtaken his reply to the motion but that the entire situation is now under review. He agreed that the motion is timely and that it was important that the Minister was aware of the views of the members.

Resolved On the proposal of Councillor Cussen, seconded by Councillor McCabe, with all the members in agreement, the amended motion was carried.

15/0616

Historic Monuments Advisory Committee

The following motion in the name of Councillor Moore was considered:

That the approach by Kildare County Council, its Planning and Heritage Section and Corporate Policy Group in failing to incorporate the Historic Monuments Advisory Committee as part of a planning administrative panel to monitor, protect, report and promote the values, condition and importance of the prescribed list and unlisted historic inheritance that exists in County Kildare, is unacceptable and neglectful and its formation should be agreed forthright.

The motion was proposed by Councillor Moore and seconded by Councillor Brett

The Mayor referred to the report that was circulated and in particular to item 4a and 4b on today's agenda and asked Councillor Moore to confirm that in light of the council's decision to approve the membership of the Historic Monuments Advisory Committee that he was now satisfied that this matter had been dealt with satisfactorily.

Councillor Moore confirmed that he was satisfied that the committee had been formed.

Resolved On the proposal of Councillor Moore, seconded by Councillor Brett that the report be noted.

16/0616

Design Criteria

The following motion in the name of Councillor Young was considered:

In order to counter the tendency towards suburban sprawl, the planning of housing by the council will promote the construction of housing in the form of terraces (of various sized units) both for social housing and private development and will let this preference be known to developers.

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

A comprehensive report from Mr Minnock and Mr McDonnell, Directors of Services, stated that Policies in relation to the design and density of housing in the County are set out in the Kildare County Development Plan 2011-2017 and in the Draft Kildare County Development Plan 2017 - 2023. Standards are developed having regard to national guidance documents such as the Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas, DECLG 2009 which set out density and design criteria. The policies are further developed in Local Area Plans, Village Plans and Settlement Plans.

National policy advocates a level of flexibility in relation to the application of design and density criteria in response to site context or local circumstances. The application of the policies and standards set out in these plans through the planning application process is an operational matter

and will be determined based on the type of settlement and zoning objective, site size and context, the need to protect residential amenity and transport and environmental considerations. Part 8 schemes developed by or on behalf of the Council are developed with regard to the same factors and the approval of such schemes is a reserved function of the members.

It is considered inappropriate to limit future housing in the County to a single type. This is contrary to national guidance which advocates mixed housing types that respond to the local context and local need.

With respect to the provision of social housing, experience has shown that terraces or high density developments for local authority tenants often do not work because tenants have a lack of personal space, and there is a greater incidence of disputes or serious disputes with neighbours. National policy is for the development of sustainable communities, and this is borne in mind in the planning of housing schemes.

Councillor Young thanked the Directors for the report but said that as there will be a significant population growth before the process of the review of the Development Plan is complete, the motion is requesting that the higher density be promoted. He said that if the density in the current plan is allowed, there will be no gap between Leixlip and Celbridge as there is simply not the space to allow for development given the current criteria. Councillor Young did not accept the point in the report regarding higher density in social housing developments.

Mr Minnock said that he did not disagree with Councillor Young and agreed that there is a balance to be struck. He said that consultants will be appointed and that it is envisaged that they will have a draft before the members in October 2016.

Resolved On the proposal of Councillor Young , seconded by Councillor Pender that the report be noted.

17/0416

AED Defibrillators

The following motion in the name of Councillor Kelly was considered:

That the council provide a list of AED Defibrillators located in all public buildings in the County.

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

A report from Ms McIvor, A/Director of Services gave the detail of the location of AED defibrillators in local authority buildings. Ms McIvor stated that defibrillators located in other public buildings may have been organised through the First Responders Scheme and that a request has been sent

to the National Ambulance Service/National Emergency Control Centre requesting details of the number and location of defibrillators in County Kildare registered on the system.

Councillor Kelly thanked Ms McIvor for the report and said that the Sallins Business Association had sought this information but it was not possible to locate a definitive list.

The members agreed that this was a very worthwhile motion and it was agreed to leave it on the Progress Report until such time as the information was available.

Resolved On the proposal of Councillor Kelly, seconded by Councillor Pender that the report be noted.

18/0616

Vacant Commercial Properties

The following motion in the name of Councillor O'Neill was considered

That the council set up an internal unit to invite and assist commercial properties (in mixed planning zones) owners to make necessary adaptations so as to make the 3m compliant for residential lettings to help alleviate some of the pressures in the housing crises.

The motion was proposed by Councillor O'Neill and seconded by Councillor Cronin.

A report from Mr McDonnell and Mr Minnock, Directors of Services stated that proposed developments are assessed, as part of the planning application process, in terms of the County Development Plan. For designated zonings the development matrix adopted allows for more than one type of development, and this is indicated in the County Development Plan.

The Council's planning policies as set out in its town and village plans support the re-use/rehabilitation of properties similar to the ones outlined in the motion.

A change of use from that for which planning was originally granted requires planning permission, and, in terms of the motion above, should an owner wish to make necessary adaptations to convert a vacant commercial property to residential use, this will be considered as part of the planning process. The Planning Department seek to assist applicants at pre-planning stage with relevant advice.

It is also acknowledged that there are barriers to the re-use of older town centre buildings for good quality residential accommodation. Quite often the financial cost of such work is a significant barrier. A number of commercial units are single aspect, and this may mitigate against them being suitable for use as a dwelling, in terms of building standards.

Councillor O'Neill thanked the Directors for the report but she thought that there was a misunderstanding regarding the intent of the motion which was to partly address the housing crises by taking derelict buildings back into use. She said that she was asking the Council to write to the owners and ask them to change the use from commercial to residential.

A discussion on this motion followed with members broadly supporting it and stating that a similar motion had been tabled at the Draft County Development Plan meeting. The members agreed that some buildings may be suitable to be changed to residential use and that this should be encouraged.

Mr Minnock stated that recently the members had approved the Development Contribution Scheme thus ensuring that levies would not have to be paid a second time. He did not recommend that the council take the lead on this but he invited the members to encourage people with suitable properties to come forward and talk to and receive advice at pre planning stage.

Resolved On the proposal of Councillor O'Neill, seconded by Councillor Cronin that the report be noted.

19/0616

Swimming Pool for North Kildare

The following motion in the name of Councillor Cussen was considered

That the council outline to the members the process which resulted in the application for a Swimming Pool for North Kildare which was submitted to the Public Swimming Pool Programme in 2016 being deemed invalid.

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

A report from Mr Minnock Director of Services stated that the Council has received no communication from the Department indicating that the submission for the provision of the North Kildare Swimming Pool has been deemed invalid.

Following a meeting of Oireachtas Members with Minister Michael Ring, a submission was made on 16 October, 2015 in relation to the provision of a pool for North Kildare. This submission was acknowledged by the Minister personally and by his private secretary by letters dated 17 November and 21 October respectively.

Following a limited call for proposals in January 2016, for the construction of new swimming pools, Kildare County Council made a submission on 4 February, 2016. In essence, the submission was around the proposal for the provision of a North Kildare Swimming Pool and referenced Leixlip as the preferred site, but notwithstanding the selection of this site, that the council were prepared to partner with Maynooth University to deliver a swimming pool on the Maynooth University Campus. The key issue in offering the partnership arrangement with Maynooth University was the potential to have a fully funded proposal which would allow money set aside by council together with grant funding from the Department to be coupled with funding coming through the University to ensure that a project could be delivered.

The report detailed the steps that had been followed in relation to lodging and following up on the submission and concluded by confirming that no communication has been received indicating a positive or negative response to either the initial submission or the recent communication and there has been no confirmation or advice that the proposition is invalid.

Councillor Cussen said that she was very surprised at this report given the reports in the local media and the comments attributed to a public representative in the north of the county. She asked the Director if it would be appropriate to write again to the Minister in view of the comments in the media.

A lengthy discussion followed with members confirming their support for the provision of a swimming pool in the north of the county and suggesting that the members of the Celbridge-Leixlip and the Maynooth Municipal Districts request a meeting with the Minister.

Councillor McLoughlin-Healy enquired why this motion was allowed for the full meeting as it was clearly a municipal district matter.

The Mayor confirmed that the issue was pertinent to two Municipal Districts and suggested that the motion be referred back to both for discussion and agreement on a deputation to meet the Minister.

Resolved On the proposal of Councillor Cussen, seconded by Councillor Lynch that the report be noted and the motion to be referred to the Celbridge Leixlip Municipal District and the Maynooth Municipal District.

20/0616

Funding from National Transport Authority

The following motion in the name of Councillor Doyle was considered

That this council initiate a consultation with other relevant counties in the mid east region (neighbouring counties of Dublin) to determine their satisfaction or otherwise with the distribution of road funds from National Transport Authority (NTA) and seek proposals for alternate arrangements, on foot of same seek to make submission to Oireachtas transport committee for review of guidelines to which NTA work.

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

A report from the Roads, Transportation and Public Safety Department stated that the National Transport Authority is a statutory body and one of its obligations is the preparation of a Strategic Transport Plan for the Greater Dublin Area (GDA), which comprises the city and county of Dublin, and counties Kildare, Meath and Wicklow. The NTA has published its Strategic Transport Plan for the Greater Dublin Area for the period up to 2030.

The Strategy's role is to establish appropriate policies and transport measures that will support the Greater Dublin Area in meeting its potential as a competitive, sustainable city region with a good quality of life for all. It is recognised that the Strategy cannot rely on high levels of investment in its early years. In addition, it also needs to be sufficiently flexible to accommodate varying levels of funding availability and to react to changing circumstances during the period of the plan. Several key national policy documents such as Smarter Travel – A Sustainable Transport Future 2009, National Cycle Planning Policy Framework 2009, the National Development Plan, the Infrastructure and Capital Investment 2012-2016 plan, Retail Planning Guidelines, National Climate Change Strategy played a major role in shaping the Strategy objectives and targets.

In the allocation of funds to Kildare County Council, the NTA considers submissions made based on the contribution they are likely to make in meeting the objectives of the Strategy. A clear hierarchy of transport users is supported, with pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users at the top of the hierarchy.

The local authorities in the GDA are in essence in competition for NTA funding and this might adversely impact on any exploratory dialogue. In addition, local authorities with larger urban centres may receive a different scale of funding. As the NTA Strategy is underpinned by key national policy documents, it would be challenging to seek alternative arrangements for funding.

Councillor Doyle said that she brought forward this motion because of the level of frustration that she and her colleagues at Municipal District level were encountering in having projects funded by the National Transport Authority. She stated that funding was not made available for a Traffic Management Plan and that while the objectives of the strategy are clear, Kildare is very much a private transport dependent society. She asked at what level the members can lobby to change the criteria, perhaps it could be through the Strategic Policy Committee?

The members contributed to a discussion on the motion and there was broad agreement at the level of frustration of the process of obtaining funding from the National Transport Authority. The fact that Kildare do not receive funding pro rata to our population should be explained and the members called for a review of the process of grant applications with perhaps a greater input from the Economic, Town Planning and Parks departments.

Mr Morrissey, Director of Services said that he heard the level of frustration of the members some time ago and as a response he met the National Transport Authority. He stated that he now has a monthly meeting with the relevant officials and he said that the relationship is very good. The criteria are set out in the strategy and if a project does not fit those criteria, it will not receive funding and perhaps another funding source should be identified. Mr Morrissey informed the members that there are a substantial number of projects at planning stage and that when these projects come through the process, the level of funding to Kildare will have substantially increased.

Several members reacted stating that what Mr Morrissey now advised was in direct conflict with the information given to the members of the Kildare Newbridge Municipal District when they raised issues on specific projects under consideration for funding.

Mr Morrissey said that he will inform the National Transport Authority of the views of the members and the level of frustration that they are encountering.

Councillor Doyle said that the motion was to set up a forum and perhaps this could be advanced through the Strategic Policy Committee?

Resolved On the proposal of Councillor Doyle, seconded by Councillor Miley with all the members in agreement, that this motion be referred to the Transportation, Safety and Emergency Services Strategic Policy Committee to initiate a consultation as outlined in the motion.

21/0616

Road Signage

The following motion in the name of Councillor Lynch was considered

That this council accepts the fast rate of technological change in relation to road usage; particularly in relation to navigation by sat nav's, google maps etc. and the impending driverless cars and we take into account that the amount of road signage required in future will be seriously reduced, potentially to zero. Thus to save the council both time and money, that we cease installing non critical signage and that this council only erects signage on a critical need basis. In many instances signage is being asked to be erected on a regular basis as a solution to long standing road issues without regard for the costs involved, the detrimental visual effect they have on the physical environment and the fact that they will most likely be totally needless and that we may be calling for their removal in the very near future.

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

A report from the Roads, Transportation and Public Safety Department stated that the Council has a statutory obligation to install clear and effective traffic signs for the efficient operation of the road network, for the enforcement of traffic regulations and for road safety. The Traffic Signs Manual provides details of the traffic signs for use on roads in Ireland, including layout and symbols, the circumstances in which each sign may be used, and rules for positioning them. The legal framework for traffic signage is contained in a number of Acts and Regulations. These include the Road Traffic Acts, the Road Traffic (Signs) Regulations and the Road Traffic (Traffic and Parking) Regulations. Kildare County Council erects such signage in compliance with current guidelines and regulations and as issued by the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport.

It is expected that any changes in the regulatory environment relating to signage in response to future use of technology will be addressed by further guidelines and regulations as deemed appropriate by the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport.

The Roads Department intends to commence a programme for the removal of redundant and non critical signage in the Naas Municipal District in the first instance, following a full audit of signage by the newly established Naas Roads and Transportation Working Group on Signage.

Councillor Lynch accepted the report but urged the Council to take the technology into consideration given the prohibitive cost of signage. He also asked other members to scale back on their requests for signage given the fast pace of technological development and the fact that they may not be necessary.

There was a brief discussion among the members with broad support for the motion.

Mr Morrissey assured the members that the Council will continue to fulfil its statutory obligation with regard to road signage.

Resolved On the proposal of Councillor Lynch, seconded by Councillor Cussen, with all the members in agreement the motion was carried

22/0616

Incremental Tenant Purchase Scheme

The following motion in the name of Councillor Stafford was considered

That the council request the Minister for Housing Planning and Local Government to amend the Housing (Sale of Local Authority Houses) Regulations, 2015 in relation to the Incremental Tenant Purchase Scheme to exclude or reduce the requirement for a minimum amount of annual income of €15,000.00 where the intended source of funding for the purchase money is the applicants own resources.

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

Councillor Stafford stated that the income requirement of the Housing (Sale of Local Authority Houses) Regulations 2015 excludes tenants who have less than €15,000 per annum income. He said that this was unfair because tenants who had savings but not necessarily that income are excluded. He asked the members for their support on this motion.

Mr McDonnell, Director of Services said that he had no difficulty if the members wished to have a letter issued to the Minister.

Resolved On the proposal of Councillor Stafford, seconded by Councillor Durkan with all the members in agreement, the motion was carried.

23/0616

Public Sector Energy Efficiency Programme

The following motion in the name of Councillor Pender was considered

That the council endeavour to achieve ISO50001 accreditation as part of its obligations under the public sector energy efficiency program and outline the steps prescribed in order to meet the required standards including timelines for delivery.

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

A report from Mr Boland, Director of Services stated that the Council's Energy Management Team, comprising a broad based group (representative of each department) has been actively working on a range of initiatives with a view to ensuring compliance with the public sector energy targets. To date, a total of 13 projects have been delivered comprising a range of areas. The following represent a small sample of activities to date:-

- Development of an energy management policy, endorsed by the Senior Management Team.
- Introduction of a purchasing policy for energy efficient equipment.
- Installation of daylight/occupancy sensors in library and other buildings.
- Automatic shutdown of computers and other IT equipment.
- Review of lighting requirements in remote offices.
- Energy efficient upgrades to lighting and heating systems.
- Energy bills analysis training
- Low energy day.
- Energy re-fit of housing stock.
- Special training to encourage energy efficient driving by Council vehicles.

It has also undertaken extensive group training including:-

- Energy Map
- Advanced diagnostics

In particular, it is working closely with SEI in relation to these matters.

In addition to the foregoing, there are some 19 initiatives ongoing now again relating to a spectrum of activities. The most significant initiative involves the identification of the top 20 energy users within the Council and to appoint "energy champions" within these areas (e.g. Fire Service, Swimming Pools, Leisure Centres etc) in order to carry out energy audits and to bring forward a planned programme with a view to ensuring energy reduction. This will be progressed in the context of the "Energy Partnership Agreement" with Sustainable Energy Ireland who continues to give invaluable help and assistance. This initiative is a current priority. Consideration has also been given to the feasibility, or otherwise, of the ISO 50001 accreditation. This has been discussed by the Energy Management Team on a number of occasions. It is proposed that, in

due course, the Council will also progress such a proposal. However, in the short to medium term, the team will be concentrating on its current priorities.

To date, since the 2009 base year, the Council has reduced its energy consumption by 14.14%, compared to a target level of 18%. The overall target for the public sector is 33% by 2020. A further breakdown of this figure across the spectrum of inputs (i.e. electricity, thermal, transport etc) is available on request.

Councillor Pender thanked Mr Boland for the comprehensive report. She said that there was a risk that climate change would go off the agenda and she would like to see the Energy Management Policy on the website and an update included on a quarterly basis on the Management Report. Councillor Pender said that in the absence of the energy audit it is difficult to gauge progress.

There was a brief discussion on the motion and members expressed concern regarding the reduction of funding in this area and it was agreed that the most modern ideas and thinking should be employed in this area.

The Chief Executive said that targets have been set and some very good work has been done in this area. He referred to expenditure on public lighting as a huge operational cost, to the efficiencies that have been achieved in Aras Chill Dara and to the Carbon Neutral scheme planned for Newbridge.

Mr Boland stated that the Energy Management Team has been in place for the past three years and that projects are ongoing. He would be happy to put the information regarding projects that have already been delivered on the website.

Resolved On the proposal of Councillor Pender seconded by Councillor Moore with all the members in agreement, the report was noted. The Policy to be put on the website and progress included on a quarterly basis on the Management Report.

24/0616

Release of Ibrahim Halawa

The following motion in the name of Councillor Cronin was considered

In light of the completely inappropriate nature of a mass trial, the length of the delay before his trial and the lack of evidence provided against him, this council calls on Egypt to immediately release

Irish citizen Ibrahim Halawa and asks An Taoiseach Enda Kenny to write to the Egyptian embassy to convey our views.

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

Councillor Cronin outlined the background to the case of this young man, an Irish citizen, who has been detained in Egypt and asked the members for their support for this motion.

The members contributed to a discussion on this issue, noting the work already undertaken by the Government but expressing dissatisfaction at the delay and the 13 adjournments of this trial to date.

Councillor Young proposed an amendment to the motion as follows:

In light of the completely inappropriate nature of a mass trial, the length of the delay before his trial and the lack of evidence provided against him, this council calls on Egypt to immediately release Irish citizen Ibrahim Halawa and asks An Taoiseach Enda Kenny to write to the Egyptian embassy to convey our views and the Council issues a Press Statement to that effect.

This amendment was seconded by Councillor Cronin.

Resolved On the proposal of the amended motion from Councillor Young, seconded by Councillor Cronin with all the members in agreement, the amended motion was carried.

The meeting concluded.
