



COMHAIRLE CONTAE CHORCAÍ

Minutes of Proceedings at Meeting of Cork County Council held in the Council Chamber, County Hall, Cork on 26th June, 2017.

I LATHAIR

Comhairleoir D. Ó hUrthuile, Méara Chontae

Comhairleoiri S. MacCraith, Mac Seafraida, Daltúin, Ní Fhúarthain D. Ó Donnabháin, Ó Cainte, S. Ó Coileán, M. Ó Murchú, Ó hEarchaí, R. Mhic Cárthaigh, Lombard, C. Ó Murchú, Ní Cochláin, Ó' Donnabháin, G. Ní Mhuimhneacháin, Críod, Ó Gráda, Ó Luasaigh, Ó Riain, Ó Conbhuí, P. Ó Suilleabháin, C. MacCárthaigh, Ó Ceocháin, Sheppard, De Barra, O'Cádhlá, Rasmussen, N. Ó Coileán, A. Ó Suilleabháin Uí Thuama, Ó hEigeartaigh, S. NicCárthaigh, Léanacháin-Foghlú, N. MacCárthaigh Ní Bhrian, Ó Floinn, Ó Dúghaill, Mhic Dháibhí, J. Uí Mhurchú, Ó Sé, G. Ó Murchú, G. Ó Murchú, Uí Mhaoláin, T. Ó Coileán, D. Ó Coileán, Ó Cearúill, S. Ó Suilleabháin, C. Ó Suilleabháin, P.G. Ó Murchú, Uí hEigeartaigh, Ó hAodha

PRESENT

Councillor D. Hurley County Mayor presided.

Councillors McGrath, Jeffers, D'Alton, Forde, Ó Donnabháin, Canty, J. Collins, Ml. Murphy, Harris, R. McCarthy, Lombard, K. Murphy, Coughlan, O'Donovan, G. Moynihan, Creed, O'Grady, Lucey, Ryan, Conway, P. O'Sullivan, K. McCarthy, G. Keohane, Sheppard, Barry, O'Cádhlá, Rasmussen, N. Collins, A. O'Sullivan, Twomey, Ml. Hegarty, S McCarthy, Linehan-Foley, N. McCarthy, O'Brien, O'Flynn, Doyle, Dawson, J. Murphy, O'Shea, G. Murphy, G. Murphy, M Mullane, T. Collins, D. Collins, Carroll, J. O'Sullivan, C. O'Sullivan, P. G. Murphy, M. Hegarty, Hayes,

Chief Executive, Senior Executive Officer.

Suspension of Standing Orders –

Cllr. Marcia D'Alton proposed a suspension of Standing Orders to discuss the Commission for Energy Regulation plans to increase the public service obligation (PSO) levy.

Members agreed that the matter would be discussed at 1pm.

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

1/6-2(a)

Proposed by Councillor Michael Hegarty

Seconded by Councillor Susan McCarthy

RESOLVED:

“That the minutes of the “ In Committee” Meeting of the Council held on 12th June, 2017, be confirmed and signed by the Mayor.”

1/6-2(b)

Proposed by Councillor Timmy Collins

Seconded by Councillor Derry Canty

RESOLVED:

“That the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 12th June, 2017, be confirmed and signed by the Mayor.”

1/6-2(c)

Proposed by Councillor Kevin Murphy

Seconded by Councillor Mary Linehan Foley

RESOLVED:

“That the minutes of the Special Meeting of the Council held on 16th June, 2017, be confirmed and signed by the Mayor.”

VOTES OF SYMPATHY

2/6-2

TO: The Connolly family, on the death of John Connolly, former Bantry Town Councillor.

TO: Mr. Noel Delea (Carrigaline Area) on the death of his aunt, Eileen.

TO: Mr. Enda O’Halloran, on the death of his father, Pat

TO: Mr. Denis Weathers, Banteer, on the death of his father, Jeremiah

STATUTORY BUSINESS

Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001:

Members noted the following disposals.

DISPOSAL OF LAND (FOLLOWING TRESPASS) AT THE BURREN, KILBRITTAIN, CO. CORK

3(a)/6-2

In accordance with the provisions of Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001, the disposal of property as shown hereunder shall be carried out in accordance with the terms specified in the notice issued to members dated 15th June, 2017.

DISPOSAL OF PROPERTY AT ROSE COTTAGE, CARRIGTWOHILL, CO. CORK

3(b)/6-2

In accordance with the provisions of Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001, the disposal of property as shown hereunder shall be carried out in accordance with the terms specified in the notice issued to members dated 15th June, 2017.

The Mayor informed Members that item No 7 on the meeting agenda relating to the Social Housing Bundle 2 PPP Programme would be taken under Statutory Business of the meeting.

SECTION 85 AGREEMENT: SOCIAL HOUSING BUNDLE 2 PPP PROGRAMME

3(c)/6-2

Members noted the following report on the Social Housing Bundle 2 PPP Programme, which outlined as follows;

Section 1: Project Background.

In November 2014, the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (now the Minister for Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government) launched the Social Housing Strategy 2020, which included that off-balance sheet mechanisms will be used to maximise the delivery of Social Housing. In this context, the Strategy set out that a large scale Public Private Partnership (PPP) Programme would be considered as one of the mechanisms.

The Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, in budget 2015, envisaged a programme to invest €300m in the PPP mechanism, with a view to developing up to 1,500 homes, across three bundles of circa 500 homes each with an associated value of €100m.

On the 21st of July 2016, the Minister for Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government announced the approval of the second bundle of site locations for approximately 470 new social housing homes, which are to be developed through the PPP Programme.¹ The selected sites and local authorities involved are as follows:

¹ The first bundle comprises approximately 520 new social housing units across six local authorities.

	Site	Local Authority
1	The Miles, Clonakilty	Cork County Council
2	Poundhill, Skibbereen	Cork County Council
3	Oakwood, Macroom	Cork County Council
4	Shannon East	Clare County Council
5	Ballyburke	Galway City Council
6	Butterstream, Clane	Kildare County Council
7	The Walk, Roscommon Town	Roscommon County Council
8	Slievekeale	Waterford City and County Council

It is noted that the use of off-balance sheet mechanisms allows the government and local authorities to access otherwise unavailable funding, which in turn allows additional Social Housing to be built in the context of constrained state resources. In this way the upfront construction costs are covered by private funds, which are additional to the Government's social housing capital programme. The state then pays for the construction and management of these homes over the contract period.

Section 2: Overview of the Social Housing Public Private Partnership (PPP) Bundle 2, Project.

The Social Housing PPP Programme will be a partnership between the Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government (DHPCLG), the Local Authorities involved (as set out in Section 1), the National Development Finance Agency (NDFA) and a specially formed Project Company.

Cork County Council is acting as the lead authority for the delivery of the project and the NDFA are responsible for the procurement of the project and supervision of the Project Company during construction. Section 85 Agreements between Cork County Council and the 5 other Local Authorities will be required to facilitate the contract.

Section 3: Overview of the Structure of the Public Private Partnership

The Social Housing Bundle 2, PPP project will be delivered through an 'availability' based PPP contract. Under this type of contract the Project Company designs, builds, finances and maintains the Social Housing Units for 25 years on sites provided by the local authorities.

It is noted that ownership of local authority land is not transferred to the Project Company and the homes are part of the local authorities housing stock and will be returned to the local authority at the end of the contract. The local authority retains 100% nomination rights and will set the tenants rent using their existing differential rent methodology. The rent does not form part of any payment to the Project Company.

Payment will be made only once construction of the houses is complete and the homes are ready to house tenants. The payment comprises a monthly 'availability' payment (or unitary charge) made over the 25 term of the contract. It is noted that payment of the full amount of the monthly unitary charge is dependent on the house/apartment being maintained to an acceptable standard and the satisfactory provision of associated services by the Project Company. The DHPCLG will ultimately be responsible for the payment of the unitary charge under the contract.

Section 4: Overview of Procurement Process.

The Project Company will be selected via an advertised tender competition, held by the NDFA in accordance with EU and national procurement regulations. Competitions are typically two-

stage with between 2 and 4 qualified parties invited to tender following a competitive, pre-qualification stage.

The objective of the tender stage is to identify the most advantageous tender based on pre-defined award criteria. Usually a combination of price and qualitative criteria (which may include for example design quality and quality of services) based on the specific characteristics of a project which will have been defined prior to tenders being submitted. Following assessment, the tenderer that submitted the most advantageous tender is then appointed as the successful Project Company.

PPP projects are not just about building infrastructure, but also putting together comprehensive, legally-enforceable arrangements for ensuring the management of the homes over 25 years.

It is also important to note that PPP projects are subject to a number of 'Value for Money' tests before the contract is awarded. The key test compares the calculated costs of undertaking the project through the traditional model of delivering social housing against the successful tender in the PPP competition. If the PPP tender cost is less than the cost of undertaking the project through traditional means, then it is considered that the project is 'Value for Money' and the contract may be awarded.

Section 5: Planning

Each local authority will be responsible for obtaining the necessary Part 8 planning approval and will undertake the necessary public consultation procedure in respect of the development within their functional areas as required under the planning and development acts and regulations.

Section 6: Agreement

A motion enabling Cork County Council to act as the lead local authority in the Social Housing Bundle 2 PPP Programme and to be the contracting authority is hereby put before the Council, as follows:

'Pursuant to Section 85 of the Local Government Act 2001 as amended Cork County Council hereby agrees to enter into an Agreement with Clare County Council, Galway City Council, Kildare County Council, Roscommon County Council and Waterford City & County Council whereby Cork County Council will carry out all of the functions of these local authorities in respect of the Social Housing PPP (Bundle 2) Programme with the following exceptions:

- *the nomination of tenants to be housed in the social housing development in the relevant local authority's functional area,*
- *the calculation of the tenants' differential rent,*
- *the role of landlord under the tenancy agreements and*
- *obtaining the necessary planning approvals and undertaking the public consultation procedures in respect of the development as required under the Planning and Development Acts and Regulations.*

During the discussion that followed Members made the following comments;

- Members in the past have already outlined issues with the Social Housing Public Private Partnership (PPP) model as it could potentially delay the process of constructing housing by 5 years.
- The PPP strategy is a mistake.
- The process is convoluted, and will increase duplication.
- The 25 year duration of the project is too long

- The strategy proposes to use only large developers with a minimum annual turnover of €75 million and a minimum asset base of €50 million.
- The Minister’s Scheme will result in local/domestic contractors being excluded.
- One tender for the entire bundle was questionable.
- The public tendering process will take years to complete.
- The first of housing units would not be delivered until the strategy until 2020 at the earliest.
- Cork County Council should be providing social housing units directly.
- The PPP model should be abandoned and instead capital funding should be made available to local authorities to construct social housing.
- We cannot get contractors to repair existing housing stock let alone construct new units.
- Members would not vote against the Section 85 agreement, and would support all means of tackling the housing crisis.
- Only 100 social houses were built last year and
- Members raised concerns of not knowing the total cost of the project.
- Who will be responsible for monitoring progress on construction work
- The Housing SPC’s in the local authorities concerned should be directly engaged in contract negotiations.
- Social Clauses targeting the use of unemployed people and apprentices should be inserted in the contracts.
- Some Members said that it was a good proposal which should not be delayed.
- The Section 85 Agreement requires the full support of all Members and it would be a mistake not to pass it.
- Our main objective is to deliver as many housing units as possible and it is important we pursue all options available.
- Social Housing Bundle 2 is a national scheme that has the potential to deliver 520 houses across 8 sites, of which 3 are in County Cork.
- Members queried if additional personnel would be made available to Cork County Council as the lead authority for the Section 85 Agreement.
- It is a vote of endorsement for Cork County Council to drive the programme nationally.

The Chief Executive would welcome the Members approval of the agreement and said that he was happy to bring a briefing to the Housing SPC. The Chief Executive said having social clauses inserted in the contracts to be awarded was a matter for the National Development Finance Agency (NDFA), and that he would bring the Members concerns to the attention of the NDFA and the Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government. The Chief Executive said additional housing staffing resources would not be made available to the Council, however there would be an agreement between the local authorities involved and that for instance the calculation of rent scheme would be carried out by other local authority staff.

Proposed by Councillor John Paul O’Shea

Seconded by Councillor Kevin Murphy

RESOLVED:

“Pursuant to Section 85 of the Local Government Act 2001 as amended Cork County Council hereby agrees to enter into an Agreement with Clare County Council, Galway City Council, Kildare County Council, Roscommon County Council and Waterford City & County Council whereby Cork County Council will carry out all of the functions of these local authorities in respect of the Social Housing PPP (Bundle 2) Programme with the following exceptions:

- the nomination of tenants to be housed in the social housing development in the relevant local authority’s functional area,

- the calculation of the tenants' differential rent,
- the role of landlord under the tenancy agreements and
- obtaining the necessary planning approvals and undertaking the public consultation procedures in respect of the development as required under the Planning and Development Acts and Regulations.

It is hereby resolved under Section 85 of the Local Government Act 2001 as amended to enter into Agreements with the local authorities listed above for the provision of the services as outlined above.”

REPORTS & RECOMMENDATIONS OF COMMITTEES

ROADS & TRANSPORTATION SPC

4/6-2

Members noted the draft policy for Advertising Vehicles, Trailers, Signs, etc. including vehicles offered for sale on public roads (Section 71 of the Roads Act 1993), which outlines as follows

1. Introduction

Cork County Council adopted a policy and devised procedures in 2007 in relation to the unauthorised use of vehicles for sale on public roads.

The emphasis at the time was on ‘vehicles / cars for sale’, parked at the side of public roads, on footpaths and / or hard shoulders.

This issue is now being re-visited in response to the plethora of vehicle or trailer mounted commercial advertising signs on public roads throughout the county, especially on busiest routes.

These advertising vehicles, trailers, signs, structures or things are a distraction to motorists, especially near junctions and roundabouts and constitute traffic hazards and a danger to road users. They also impact negatively on the environment.

2. Legislation

Under Section 71 of the Roads Act 1993, it is an offence to erect, place or retain on a public road, signs, caravans, vehicles or other structures/ things (whether on wheels or not) used for the purpose of advertising, the sale of goods, the provision of services or other similar purpose, without lawful authority or the consent of the Road Authority.

3. Scope of the Policy

This policy shall apply to advertising vehicles, trailers, signs, caravans and other structures/things (whether on wheels or not) on the public road / roadside, used for the purposes of advertising, sale of goods, provision of services or other similar purpose.

The policy shall also apply to vehicles offered for sale on the public road / roadside.

For the purposes of this policy, road includes the roadway itself and any structure or thing forming part of the road, as defined in the Roads Act 1993, e.g. street, footpath, kerb, grass margin, pole, fence, wall, bridge, flyover, roundabout, hard shoulder, lay-by, median, island, etc.

4. Exemptions

This policy does not apply to signs / posters erected in relation to elections or referenda, provided such signs are removed within seven days of the poll and provided that they do not endanger public safety by reason of traffic hazard or obstruction of road users.

This policy does not apply where Cork County Council or its relevant Municipal District has given its consent by way of licence, permit or otherwise, in accordance with policies/procedures currently in place or that will be adopted, or where there are other exceptions authorised by law, provided that they do not endanger public safety by reason of traffic hazard or obstruction of road users.

5. Observations from other Directorates

The draft policy was referred to the Environment Directorate, Planning Directorate and the Municipal District Operations and Rural Development Directorate for comment and observations. These Directorates were in agreement with the intent of the policy.

6. Publicity

Once the Policy is adopted, it will be publicised.

7. Effective Date

This policy will come into effect 14 days after adoption by the Council.

8. Review of Policy

This policy is subject to any other Cork County Council policy in force in relation to advertisements signs, vehicles, structures, etc. on public or private land and relevant aspects will be superseded by any changes in such policies or in any legislation governing same.

9. Implementation

On approval of the Policy, the following procedure will be implemented to give effect to the Policy:

- a) Using powers contained in Section 71 of the Roads Act 1993, Cork County Council will take action to remove from the public road / roadside any vehicles, trailers, signs, caravans and other structures/things (whether on wheels or not) found thereon, and which are used for the purposes of advertising, sale of goods, provision of services or other similar purpose, including vehicles offered for sale.
- b) Any such vehicle, trailer, sign, etc. used for the purpose of advertising on the public road / roadside will be affixed with a Notice (in the form of a sticker) instructing its immediate removal.
- c) The Council will make efforts to ascertain by reasonable inquiry the contact details of the owner of the advertising vehicle, trailer or sign, from information displayed on the sign or by other means, and where contact details are available, may contact them advising that the Council is seeking its immediate removal.
- d) In the case of a vehicle offered for sale on the public road / roadside, the person registered as owner of the vehicle will be deemed to be the owner of the vehicle.

- e) Before placing a Notice or In addition to placing a Notice (in the form of a sticker) on the vehicle, trailer, sign, etc. the Council may contact the owner /advertiser where contact details are available, (e.g. telephone No. on the vehicle, trailer or sign or details of registered owner of the vehicle), advising them that a Notice is being put on the Vehicle, trailer, sign, etc. regarding its removal.
- f) If the advertising vehicle, trailer, sign, etc. is not removed within 24 hours of the notice being affixed, or if the same vehicle, trailer, sign, etc. is found on the public road / roadside on any subsequent occasion, it may (and without further Notice) immediately be removed by Cork County Council and stored for a maximum of 6 weeks, before being disposed of, in accordance with the provisions of Section 71 of the 1993 Roads Act.
- g) In accordance with its powers under Section 71 of the 1993 Roads Act, the Council reserves the right to remove any such advertising vehicle, trailer or sign IMMEDIATELY and without giving any prior notice to the owner, particularly if it is deemed to be a risk to the safety of road users.
- h) After a vehicle, trailer, sign, etc. has been removed and stored by or on behalf of the Council, and where the owner's contact details are available, the owner will be notified by registered post that the vehicle, trailer or sign has been removed and where it has been stored, and that it may be claimed and recovered on full payment of removal and storage costs.
- i) Any vehicle, trailer or sign not claimed within 6 weeks shall be disposed of by the Council in accordance with the 1993 Roads Act.
- j) Cork County Council disclaims all liability for any damage to such vehicles, trailers or signs placed on a public road / roadside during the period they are allowed to remain on the public road / roadside or during their subsequent removal or storage.

During a discussion that followed, Members made the following points:

- Was 24 hours of notice period too short as owners might not see the notice during the notice period.
- Would there be a minimum and maximum cost of having a vehicle removed.
- Who is responsible for implementing the policy.
- Who can people contact about having a vehicle removed.

The Chief Executive informed Members that the Director of Roads and Transportation Directorate will be responsible for activating the policy. The Chief Executive said the 24 hour period is reasonable and there would not be minimum or maximum costs. The final cost of removing items would vary depending on the type of vehicle, trailer or sign to be removed, and the relevant local Engineer would be responsible for determine the appropriate cost.

Members made the point that vehicles parked on private property are a major distraction and queried who will remove vehicles parked on public roads.

Proposed by Councillor John Paul O'Shea

Seconded by Councillor Kevin Murphy

Resolved:

“The draft policy for advertising vehicles, trailers, signs, etc. including vehicles offered for sale on public roads in accordance with Section 71 of the Roads Act 1993, is hereby adopted.”

COASTAL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

5/6-2

Members agreed that the item 5 on the meeting agenda relating to the Coastal Management Committees' motion would be deferred until the end of the meeting.

REPORTS & RECOMMENDATIONS OF OFFICES

CHIEF EXECUTIVES MANAGEMENT REPORT TO COUNCIL

6/6-2

Members noted the Corporate Services Report (No.2 of 2017), and Cork County Library Report for quarter ending 30th June, 2017.

CORRESPONDENCE FROM GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS

NATIONAL DIFFERENTIAL RENT SCHEME

8/6-2

The Mayor advised that item 8 and 17 on the meeting agenda relating to the National Differential Rent Scheme would be taken.

Members noted letter dated 29th March, 2017 from the Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government in response to the Council's Motion of the 13th March, 2017 regarding the National Differential Rent Scheme.

Members acknowledged the Department's response and during a discussion on the matter, Members made the following points:-

- The Department's letter stated that a review of differential schemes would be completed before the end of Quarter 2 2017.
- Are we going to introduce our own scheme
- We should wait for a national scheme to be rolled out
- The scheme will potential result in rent increases
- It is unfair on our housing tenants that are currently under different rent schemes.

The Chief Executive advised Members that the item being discussed was the national differential rent scheme and not Cork County Council's schemes. The Chief Executive said that following the national

review, which will be completed by the end of Quarter 2 of 2017, the process of amalgamating Cork County Council's rent schemes is expected to be completed by January 2018.

The Chief Executive drew members attention to the Minister's letter which states that a "review will be completed", and not that a new scheme will be implemented.

NOTICES OF MOTION

FLUCTUATIONS OF INCOME FOR QUALIFYING COUNCIL HOUSING APPLICANTS

9/6-2

Councillor Christopher O'Sullivan proposed, seconded by Councillor Gobnait Moynihan, the following notice of motion:-

"That this Council would review how it deals with fluctuations of income for qualifying council housing applicants where slight increases in income have temporarily pushed them above the income limit and therefore vulnerable families no longer qualify for Council housing or HAP."

Members noted report from S/Director of Housing, which outlined as follows:-

The income limits for eligibility for social housing support are set out in Part 4 of the Social Housing Assessment Regulations S.I. No. 84 of 2011 as amended by S.I. 136 of 2011.

A household with an income in excess of these income thresholds shall be ineligible for social housing support in the functional area of that authority.

A maximum income threshold of €30,000 applies to a household comprising one person that is seeking social housing support in the functional area of **Cork County Council**.

The maximum income threshold may be increased by:-

- (a) 5% in respect of each additional household member aged 18 years or more, subject to a maximum increase of 10%, and
- (b) 2.5% in respect of each household member aged less than 18 years, subject to a maximum increase of 10%.

There is no provision within the regulations that allows a housing authority to increase the maximum income thresholds from those set out in the regulations. This policy is set nationally and it should be noted that the issue has been identified at national level.

Applicants who are over the prescribed income limits experiencing a reduction in their income should notify the Social Operations section of the Housing Directorate and provide supporting documentation setting out the new reduced income details together with the required change of circumstances form. A re-assessment of their application will then take place to determine their eligibility or otherwise for social housing support based on their newly changed circumstances.

During a discussion that followed, Members made the following points:

- People are turning down work as the extra income they earn will put them over the HAP threshold
- People are refusing job seekers benefit for the very same reason.
- The Council should review applicants' income over a 12 month period as this will allow for seasonal/temporary income to be taken into account.
- We should not be fining people for working.

- Members raised concerns about the direction that the Department of Social Protection and Department of Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government are heading.
- People are losing their place on the housing list as a result of taking on extra work/hours.
- We need a common sense approach to temporary fluctuations in people's income.
- There should be graduated/sliding scales system instead of a severe cut off point in terms of benefits under HAP.
- The County Council's thresholds should be the same as those in the city.
- The Government announced proposals for an affordable rent scheme in 2015
- Minister Howlin's budget 2016 provided for an affordable rent scheme
- The Rebuilding Ireland action plan states that an affordable housing scheme was to be introduced by quarter 3 of 2016, where is it.
- The Government is good at making announcements, but poor on delivery.

The Chief Executive advised Members the income threshold limits are set out under national legislation and that Cork County Council is restricted in terms of what it can do with respect to reviewing the income limits. The Chief Executives suggested that the Members could amend the motion by seeking a review of the legislation from Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government to cater for fluctuations of income for qualifying council housing applicants where slight increases in income have temporarily pushed them above the income limit and therefore vulnerable families no longer qualify for Council housing or HAP.

Members agreed to write to the Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government requesting that the Department review the existing legislation and examine the possibility of introducing a graduated system in terms of the cut of point for income under HAP.

RETAINED EARNINGS DISTRIBUTION FUND (2017-2019)

10/6-2

Councillor Frank O'Flynn proposed, seconded by Councillor Seamus McGrath, the following notice of motion:-

“Given the allocation of €187 million by the Irish Public Bodies to county councils across Ireland under the “retained earnings distribution fund (2017-2019) for the purpose of investing this money in the infrastructure of towns and villages in order to prevent accidents on footpaths, that Cork county council ensure this payment is ring fenced explicitly for this purpose and not subsumed into general income by the finance department.”

During a discussion that followed, Members made the following points;

- Members welcome the announcement of the potential funding and stated that it could save the Council money in the long term.
- Members queried how much of the €187 million is due to Cork County Council
- Footpath infrastructure between housing estates and the town and villages they surround is lacking.
- The majority of claims result from accidents on footpaths.
- Increased funding towards providing and repairing footpaths will help reduced the number of accidents and reduced settlement claims.

- In the past funding made available to Town Councils from Non National Road Grants was very useful in terms of repairing the infrastructure of towns and villages in order to prevent accidents on footpaths.
- In the future, the Council should ring fence any funding received and match it.
- Funding for footpaths has reduced from €1 million per annum to €2,000 per Municipal District.
- There are many different types of infrastructure deficiencies in the towns and villages across all Municipal Districts.
- There are economic benefits to investing money in a footpath programme, as it will lead to an increase in footfall in town and villages.
- Approximately €3 million is required to bring all of footpaths up to standard.
- Funding should be ring fenced to upgrade footpaths in terms of accessibility.

The Chief Executive said that the process of distributing the €187 million in funding amongst local authorities has not yet concluded. The Chief Executive outlined that issues relating to ongoing settlements have yet to be determined, and that discussions with Irish Public Bodies (IPB) are ongoing. The Chief Executive said existing levels of cover and future premiums form part of the ongoing discussions with IBP and that these discussions are across all local authority areas. The Chief Executive said that it is important for the Council to continue investing in the management of risk so the levels of risk can be reduced into the future.

WIND TURBINES (ELECTTICAL)

11/6-2

Councillor Bob Ryan proposed, seconded by Councillor Danielle Twomey, the following notice of motion:-

- “Is it the responsibility of Cork County Council to inspect and ensure completed wind farm installations in County Cork are installed as per the Planning Permission Granted and comply with Industry Standards.
- If it is the responsibility of Cork County Council to carry out such inspections, Please confirm how many inspections have taken place in the last 5 years.
- If it is not the responsibility of Cork County Council to inspect and ensure completed wind farm installations in County Cork are installed as per the Planning Permission Granted and comply with Industry Standards what agency has the responsibility for same.
- Is the health and safety of residents living in proximity to wind farms monitored in any way by Cork County Council.”

Members noted report from Senior Planner, which outlined as follows:-

Not necessarily, The Irish Planning system is based on the principle of self regulation. Applicants have to satisfy themselves (and their banks) that they have complied with the terms and conditions of the relevant permission. This is normally achieved by the applicant getting sign off or written confirmation from a professional body or person that the development has been completed in accordance with the permission. Wind Farm applications are treated no differently in law or in practice to any other application/permission.

However some permissions have attached to them conditions that either need the approval of the local authority in advance of the development taking place (conditions precedent) or approval within a specified period of time, often in the case of wind farm permissions a ‘noise monitoring survey is required to be carried out within one year of commissioning of the proposed development’. Where conditions precedent or other conditions needing the agreement of the local authority have been assessed and agreed with the local authority this is generally the end of role of the planning

authority unless there are specific complaints about non compliance of conditions and an enforcement file is opened on the matter in question. The Council response is always constrained by the specific wording of the condition or conditions.

The Council do not carry out regular inspections of completed developments across the County to do so would require obviously huge resources. The Council do not have a role in ensuring completed developments comply with Industry Standards unless this is specifically itemised by way of condition.

“If it is the responsibility of Cork County Council to carry out such inspections, Please Confirm how many inspections have taken place in the last 5 years”

Response

As per above, it is not the responsibility of the Council to carry out regular inspections save where a complaint has been received and an enforcement file open relating to non compliance of a specific condition.

Of the 20 Wind Farms constructed in the County (out of over 50 planning applications) six enforcement file are currently open and eight windfarm related cases have been investigated by the Environment Directorate since 2012.

“If it is not the responsibility of Cork County Council to inspect and ensure completed wind farm installations in County Cork are installed as per the Planning Permission Granted and comply with Industry Standards what agency has the responsibility for same.”

Response

There is no national agency in existence. The Irish Wind Energy Association plays a major role in the area but this is a voluntary organisation.

“Is the health and safety of residents living in proximity to wind farms monitored in any way by Cork County Council.”

Response

No, Health and Safety is not a matter that is within the remit of the Planning Acts.

Review of the Wind Energy Development Guidelines

The Minister for Housing, Planning Community and Local Government Simon Coveney T.D., in conjunction with his colleague Denis Naughten the Minister for Communications today (13th June) announced a review of the 2006 Wind Energy Development Guidelines.

Both Ministers have developed a preferred draft approach to address the key aspects of the review of the Guidelines.

- The application of a more stringent noise limit, consistent with World Health Organisation standards, in tandem with a new noise monitoring regime.
- A visual amenity setback of 4 time the turbine height between a wind turbine and the nearest residential property, subject to a mandatory minimum distance of 500 meters;
- The elimination of shadow flicker.

- The introduction of new obligations in relation to engagement with local communities by wind farm developers along with the provision of communities by wind farm developers along with the provision of community benefit measures.

The new noise limits are being proposed in tandem with the introduction of a new noise monitoring regime in relation to wind farms. Local authorities will enforce the noise limits as condition in the Planning permission, in conjunction with the Environmental Protection Agency who will provide independent noise monitoring of wind farms.

During a discussion that followed, Members made the following points;

- We are allowing wind farms to be built in our communities with no recourse and this is a serious issue.
- We are reaching a saturation point in terms of the number of wind farms, which are detracting from our county's natural beauty
- People are mentally and physically in a state of shock resulting from wind farms.
- The health and wellbeing of those living in close proximity to wind farms needs to be front and foremost of our decisions.
- Windfarm pose a potential threat to our emergency services, as wind farms are not plotted on navigational maps/equipment.
- Shadow flicker generated by the turbines is also negatively effecting people
- The height of turbines needs to be measures.
- The mandatory minimum distance of 500m from a residential property is insufficient.
- There are concerns that wind turbines are located not where they are meant to be.
- Wind and solar farms are the future yet there is no regulation governing both energy sectors.
- The concept of self regulation is unbelievable.
- We have no idea what impact solar farms might cause.
- The Minister's guidelines do not address the issues being raised.
- Regulations are need for annual inspections to be carried out.
- Responsibility lies with the government, and successive governments have failed to regulate the area.
- Sinn Fein currently has a bill to regulate the development of wind turbines going through the Dail.
- Most complaints relate to noise
- Noise levels generated by wind turbines should not exceed the limits set by the World Health Organisation's Guidelines for Community Noise (1999).
- Once developers install wind farms there are no inspections to ensure the turbines are compliant.
- Some wind farms are now ageing and there is no requirement to inspect these older wind farms.
- The draft legislation coming through should require developers to inspect older wind farms,

The Members agreed to write to The Minister for Housing, Planning Community and Local Government requesting the Minister to review the existing guidelines, and to introduce new safeguards to guarantee the health and well being of those living in proximity to wind farms.

GATEWAY SCHEME

12/6-2

Councillor Des O’Grady proposed, seconded by Councillor Melissa Mullane, the following notice of motion:-

“To seek a report on the Gateway scheme as operated under Cork County Council. The report to include the total number of persons involved under the scheme, the locations where they were utilised, the type of work carried-out during the lifetime of the scheme and the separate numbers who went on to secure permanent or temporary employment with Cork County Council now that the scheme has ceased.”

Members noted report from the Head of Personnel, which outlined as follows:-

Operation of the Gateway Scheme involved 205 participants’ working week on/week off regime for a 22 month period. Final 7 participants are due to complete contract during August.

Allocation of participants was across all Municipal Districts (see chart) under the supervisory structure of the Roads Directorate.

Municipal District	Numbers	Breakdown
Ballincollig/Carrigaline MD	24	Ballincollig 12 /Carrigaline 12
Bandon/Kinsale MD	26	Bandon 14 /Kinsale 12
Blarney/Macroom MD	24	Blarney 14 / Macroom 10
Cobh MD	13	Cobh 11 /Glanmire 2
East Cork MD	27	Youghal 14/ Midleton 13
Fermoy MD	19	Fermoy 9 / Mitchelstown 10
Kanturk/ Mallow MD	25	Kanturk 3 /Mallow 12 /Charleville 5 / Millstreet 2 /Newmarket 3
West Cork (Bantry) MD	10	Bantry 3/ Schull 7
West Cork (Skibbereen) MD	26	Skibbereen 12 /Clonakilty 7 / Dunmanway 7
Camden Fort Meagher Project	6	
Spike Island Project	5	

Work carried out by participants was generally manual outdoor work assisting with maintenance and enhancement of Municipal Districts. Maintenance, landscaping works and assistance with development works in Camden Fort Meagher and Spike Island tourist attractions was also carried out by Gateway participants. Details of works carried out are shown on attached schedule (non exhaustive list).

During the life of the Scheme, 22 no participants were recruited to temporary posts with the Council:

- 19 General Operatives, with assignment to Road, Water Services & Environment Directorates
- 2 Gateway Foreman for supervision of the Scheme
- 1 Foreman Roadworks

The Council is currently recruiting for:

- Seasonal general operatives for assignment to the Roads Directorate (7 month temporary contracts)
- Crews for Water Services Find & Fix Project (2 year temporary contracts)
- Selection for these temporary contracts is, in the first instance, confined to Gateway participants/former participants. Interviews are currently underway.

In addition, as part of regularisation of temporary positions process agreed with Irish Water, a number of former Gateway participants currently employed as temporary General Operatives will have an opportunity to compete for permanent positions in a confined competition. This process has also commenced.

Works carried out under Gateway Scheme

Kanturk/Mallow Municipal District:

- General tidy up and repairs within Mallow Castle building and on the grounds - including miscellaneous painting, weather-proofing building, minor construction jobs, washing, grass cutting, strimming, litter picking, etc.
- Works have also been carried out to repair, tidy up and refresh the Council weighbridge facility on the N20. Maintenance assistance at Gouldshill cemetery.
- In Buttevant, assistance provided to the local tidy towns group.
- In Newmarket, work has been carried out at the Council Depot – including clearing of overgrowth around perimeter, tidying up – re-organising materials & signs, painting of storage shed and canteen, installation of internal doors in storage shed/canteen, construction of sheds & covers for storage of signs and over previously open salt bays, top soiling and planting ditch at area office. Replacement and painting of a public counter with a more user friendly version, litter picking and emptying of bins in Newmarket.
- In Millstreet, maintenance works including removing ivy from boundary walls, edging of footpaths, weed removal from existing footpaths, placing chipping on existing gravel footpaths, hand digging and laying of a water service pipe to the public tap within graveyard has been done in St Mary's Cemetery in the town. Similar type work in Drishane cemetery.

Fermoy Municipal District:

- Substantial graveyard maintenance Kilcrumper Old Graveyard
- Footpath replacement in Kilcrumper New Cemetery,
- Street cleaning / litter picking in Mitchelstown
- Painting in Fermoy Swimming Pool / Fermoy Town Hall
- Rathcormac Amenity Walk – Fencing/ regrading
- Castlelyons Graveyard / Playground Maintenance

Cobh Municipal District:

- Cleaning Five Foot Way Car Park, Cobh.
- Cleaning Burma Steps, Cobh.
- Cleaning Promenade (Public Park), Cobh.
- Lay floors Tiles – Roads office and reception floors - Glanmire roads office.
- Cleaning road signage, Glanmire/Cobh.
- Cleaning/power washing Lusitania statue and footpaths, Cobh.
- Glanmire roads office - lawn enhancement and flower-bed planting.
- Cleaning/power washing stone flower beds – Cobh

East Cork Municipal District:

Youghal Area

- Filling Sand Bags in the Yard
- Litter picking on beaches: Pilmore , Redbarn, Claycastle
- Clearing Vegetation in Grave Yards – Dangan Cemetery

Midleton Area

- Clearing overgrowth in the Lodge Grounds.
- Edging and cleaning at:
 - Forrest Hill.
 - Tim Daly Terrace.
 - Lourdesville.
 - Beachwood Estate.
 - Bailick Park.
- Clean and weed Bailick Park.
Painting :
 - Railings at the Baby’s Walk.
 - Railings at Bailick Amenity Park.
 - Railings at the Lodge Entrance.
 - Gates at the Fair Green.
 - The litterbins around the Town
 - Signposts and Railings at Clonmult Terrace.
- Strimming;
 - The Lodge.
 - Bailick Park.
- Litter Picking;
 - Distillery car park.
 - Roxboro.
- Daily cleaning;
 - The Lodge.
 - Distillery area.
- Digging and preparing Flowerbeds throughout the town.

Ballincollig/Carrigaline Municipal District:

Ballincollig Area:

- Maintenance work at Regional park allotments site – painting/weeding/creating pathways/Fencing
- Painting railings and fencing at Area Office site

- Removing all old wreaths and debris from graves and grass cutting at St Oliver's Cemetery
- Litter picking in town
- Removal of weeds/moss from footpaths in town
- Clean up of Council yard in town

Carrigaline Area:

- Litter picking/Park maintenance – Carrigaline
- Litter picking/cleaning of public walkways within town
- Painting in Area Office
- Assisting Tidy Towns with planting projects
- Cleaning up and re-organising Yard and stores at Area Office
- Weeding and cutting back vegetation on Passage to Rochestown walk and Hartys Quay car park.

Blarney/Macroom Municipal District:

Blarney:

- Street cleaning and litter picking in Blarney Village – including targeting areas as requested by Blarney Tidy Towns
- Clearing and cleaning of footpaths (inc sod removal) from Tower – Cloghroe and Tower to Blarney
- Clearing of paths, pruning of trees and clearing of overgrowth along Waterloo Walkway
- Clearing of paths, strimming and removal of overgrowth on Clogheenmilcon Walkway
- Improvement works to boundaries / overgrown ditches etc in St Senan's Cemetery, Tower
- Cleaning of Coachford Village, Coachford Graveyard and maintenance of public walkway in Coachford

Macroom:

- Cleaning and clearing of concrete drainage channels in and around Macroom Town
- Cleaning and tidying O'Connor Park Estate, Barrett Place Estate, St Colmans Park Estate
- Cleaning of Inchigeelagh village
- Cleaning of Ballyvourney village

Bandon/Kinsale Municipal District:

Bandon:

- Renovation at Bandon office, including relaying brick pavement and footpaths, painting of railings at entrance
- Renovations to staff toilets
- Clearing rubbish at Deerpark Estate, Clancool/Richmond Court incl. trimming pathway overgrowth and sweeping
- Cleaning overgrowth at proposed allotments at Richmond Court and work to new parking area, placing of kerbs, etc
- Cleaning on By Pass and Clonakilty Road
- Boundary wire mesh fence and posts between Oaklawn and The Mews

Kinsale:

- Assisting in street sweeping & rubbish collection
- Replacement of timber post and rail fence at Fort Hill Eastern & Western Cemeteries
- Removal of heavy grass sod at cemeteries
- Clearing of overgrown vegetation from pathways, boundary walls, etc at St. Eltin's Cemetery & Carmelite Abbey Cemetery

- Treat & repair timber post and rail fence at Area Engineer's Office, New Road
- Works at Kinsale Museum, including cleaning, painting and waxing of timber floor
- Clearing & removal of overgrown material from walkway at Charles Fort

West Cork (Bantry) Municipal District:

Bantry:

- Cleaning and tidying up areas around Bantry town
- Cleaning of town plaza and repair works to existing slabs at town plaza
- Clean up of Bantry Council Yard
- Provided assistance to Bantry Tidy Towns

Schull:

- Maintenance of villages, beaches and amenity/public areas
- Cleaning of signs and removal of vegetation
- Draining and cleaning of gullies
- Landscaping work
- Small painting projects

West Cork (Skibbereen) Municipal District:

Skibbereen:

- Landscaping and cutting/trimming in cemeteries
- Cleaning in playgrounds, including power washing
- Street cleaning and maintenance, litter picking, grass-cutting and landscaping in Baltimore, Tragumna, Union Hall, Glandore, Leap, Drinagh and Reenascreena villages
- Cleaning of footpaths and kerbs in above villages
- Painting of public toilets in Glandore
- Landscaping and grass-cutting of open spaces in Skibbereen
- Painting of bollards, street furniture and lamp standards
- Cleaning signage, footpaths, kerbs in Skibbereen town and housing estates
- Clearing, weeding and power washing at O'Donovan Rossa Park

Clonakilty:

- Concrete channel and water table cleaning
- Cleaning footpath and landscaping footpath e.g. , Clonakilty to Ring village
- Painting seats in public areas
- Grass cutting estates in Clonakilty
- Maintenance, cleaning to housing estate roads throughout Clonakilty town
- Tidying and maintenance to Council yard and buildings and equipment
- Street cleaning and maintenance, litter picking, grass-cutting and landscaping in villages in area

Dunmanway:

- Cleaning, planting river walk by green bridge
- Power washing and painting entrance walls to cemeteries in Dunmanway town
- Power washing and painting of public toilets in Dunmanway
- Cleaning and painting kerbs and street furniture.
- Weeding of flower beds, weed control and new planting in villages of Ballineen, Enniskeane, Rossmore, Ballygurteen, Ballinacarriga, Castletown, Coppeen, Terelton, Kilmichael, Togher and Inchigeela.

During a discussion that followed, Members made the following points;

- People on the scheme worked 19.5 hours for 22 week and were paid €20 per week in addition to the dole.
- People that failed to turn up for job interviews face cuts to their welfare payments.
- People were forced onto the Gateway Scheme due to austerity
- The scheme is like slave labour for those who took it up.
- People on the scheme that gave a great service to the Council are not being rewarded.
- The scheme has cost people money as it does not cover their travelling costs.
- It was disappointing that none of the 205 participants' secured permanent jobs with the Council.
- Members welcomed that 22 participants were recruited to temporary positions.
- The majority of jobs outlined in the report were maintenance jobs, which Cork County Council should be doing anyway.
- Were there any tourist related jobs performed under the scheme and have any of the gateway scheme staff working on Spike Island received a job from the Council.
- Members queried how the work of the 2 Gateway Foremen differed from the other gateway participants
- When the gateway scheme concludes, the Council will lose 205 valuable workers.
- How will the Council replace the lost staff
- The Municipal District areas are desperate for outdoor staff and there is an urgent need to advertise for general operative positions.
- Members queried if the recruitment embargo is still in place.

The Chief Executive said that Gateway is a national scheme which will conclude in August, and it was not an appropriate to discuss in this forum the Council's plans to recruit additional staff as work force planning discussion between the Council, Unions and the Department were ongoing.

The Chief Executive said the once the workforce plan is agreed by all parties, and the Council is in a position to fund the workforce place, the employment of additional staff can commence.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

At 1pm, Members discussed the Commission for Energy Regulation proposal to increase the PSO levy on electricity consumers by 27% for the year 2017 – 2018, and made the following points;

- The effect of the most recent proposed increase would be an additional €8.27 on the domestic bill per month (€2.37 increase over last year) and an added €8.79 monthly on the small businesses (an increase of €8.06 over last year).
- If the PSO levy increase is approved by the CER, the consumer would see a pre-VAT increase in their bill of almost €20. This amount is VAT exclusive The PSO levy is effectively a tax so therefore the consumer is then taxed on that tax.
- This is a charge on every consumer but very few are aware of it. Even fewer are aware of the proposed increase, which is being introduced by stealth.
- Members raised concerns about the cumulative increase in the levy. In the past 5 years, that cumulative increase has been 131% on the domestic consumer's bill. Since 2011, the cumulative increase has been 414% for the domestic consumer.
- The cost of electricity in Ireland is already high relative to many other European countries and its annual rate of increase is, for the consumer, running at multiples that of inflation.

- An increase in the PSO levy will increase business costs and lead to increase costs in the agricultural sector
- The PSO levy is highly regressive where consumers are paying a flat charge irrespective of their usage, and the levy needs to be based on usage.
- Similar to increases in health insurance, there is no accountability to where the PSO levy will go.
- Planning for the future of renewable energy sources is lacking regulation,
- The proposed increase needs to be condemned.
- The deadline for submissions on the proposed PSO levy increase is Friday 30th June.

Members agreed to make a submission to the Commission for Energy Regulation highlighting the issues raised at their meeting, and their opposition to the proposed increase to the PSO levy.

EXTENSION OF TIME

Proposed by Councillor Kevin Murphy

Seconded by Councillor John Paul O'Shea

Members agreed an extension of time until 1.45pm.

REVIEW “REBUILDING IRELAND”

13/6-2

Councillor Diarmaid O’Cádhla proposed, seconded by Councillor Noel Collins, the following notice of motion:-

“That this Council welcome the commitment of An Taoiseach in his statement on 14th June, tasking the new Minister for Housing, Planning & Local Government to review “**Rebuilding Ireland**” within 3 months; to include consideration of a greater quantity of Social Housing.

In light if this review, and in light of the continuing crisis in housing, and the urgency of the matter for so many families, that this Council resolves as follows:

- i. To write to the Minister requesting that significant additional capital funds be made available to Cork County Council for use in the construction of public/social housing on the Council’s own lands

To request direct engagement with the Minister in regards to the level of funding that might be made available, and that we stress the urgency involved.

- ii. That each of our Municipal Districts be invited to identify at least on site, on Council owned property, where development of public/social housing might be possible.

That our Planning Department provide members with assistance in preparing draft proposals in this regards to development of the sites identified – with the intention that such proposals be considered at September’s Development meeting.”

During a discussion that followed, Members made the following points;

- In the past more houses were being built when the Council was directly building.
- Members recalled at time when the Council opened 125 new houses on a single day.
- There are 1,900 people in Midleton on the housing list
- Members were disappointed that there were no proposals for Midleton included in the Social Housing Bundle 2.
- A land bank of 57 acres in Cobh has been lying idle for 20 years. The land bank was handed over to the council from Cobh Town Council.
- The county is full of similar sites.
- This motion shows us the way forward
- The Minister should be asked to notify local authorities of their 5 year capital funding.
- There is an onus on the Government to provide funding, the Municipal Districts to identify suitable sites and the Planning Department to identify sites that are lying idle.
- A multifaceted approach is required to solve the housing crisis.

The Chief Executive said he welcomed part 1 of the motion, which proposes to write to the Minister requesting that significant additional capital funds be made available to Cork County Council. The Chief Executive said that in September he will bring a full housing report to Development Committee, the report identify what lands we have in areas that are suitable for development. The Chief Executive said he did not see the need for staff at Municipal District level identifying suitable sites, as all professional resources available within the organisation, including the Housing Capital Office, are used to bring forward development proposals on our own land including the preparation of Part 8 reports. The Chief Executive said he has a fundamental problem with part 2 of the motion and was not in a position to activate it as there is already a process in place for the delivery of housing capital and said he was not in a position to put staff at the disposal of members to identify sites.

Members agreed the motion was adopted; however, the Chief Executive's comments were noted.

HOME CARE SYSTEM

14/6-2

Councillor Noel Collins proposed, seconded by Councillor Mary Linehan Foley, the following notice of motion.

“That this Council request the Minister for older people, Helen McEntee, T.D., as a matter of urgency, to expedite legislation to allow for the implementation of the proposed – Home Care system, for Senior Citizens, many living alone, in isolated areas of the country.

During a discussion that followed, Members made the following points

- Only 180 people in Ireland have a comprehensive home care package.
- The elderly should be entitled to stay at home and this should be a key priority
- There is a ticking time bomb in terms of our ageing population
- We need to be proactive by encouraging sheltered housing schemes and not reactive as we are witnessing with the housing crisis.
- Society should plan with, not for older people.
- The lack of support of older people to stay in their homes is stark.
- When carrying out enhancement works in our towns and villages we need to plan for including older people.
- The home care allowance of €50 per week makes economic sense when compared to the cost of €1,300 per week for hospital care and €800-€1000 per week for nursing home care

- The Fair Deal scheme is very blunt.
- Members were asked to join the Cork County Older Peoples Council.

Members agreed to write requesting the Minister to expedite legislation to allow for the implementation of the proposed Home Care system.

REPOSESSION OF FAMILY HOMES

15/6-2

Councillor Joe Harris proposed, seconded by Councillor Danny Collins, the following notice of motion.

“That this Council call on the Minister for Justice and Finance to explain why homeowners that have their family home repossessed are not being protected under insolvency laws.”

During a discussion that followed, Members made the following points

- We need to highlight the greed of the banks that have no intention of writing off any debt.
- Members expressed the frustration with the cowardice of institutions of state
- The state and its institutions are meant to protect and stand up for citizens.
- The steady rise in repossessions is dumping people out of their homes and onto council housing lists.
- The Courts need to stop granting repossessions.

Members agreed to write to the Ministers of Justice and Finance.

THE CONVENTION AGAINST TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN ORGANS

16/6-2

Councillor Eoghan Jeffers proposed, seconded by Councillor Des O’Grady, the following notice of motion.

“To call on the Irish government to ratify, as soon as possible, The Convention against Trafficking in Human Organs which was adopted by the Council of Europe on 9 July 2014 in order to criminalise illegal organ transplantations [1]. The Irish Government has already signed this convention, but is yet to ratify it.

To call on the Oireachtas Foreign Affairs committee to follow through on the pledge made by the Oireachtas Sub Committee on Human Rights to "investigate to the maximum extent possible"[2], persistent, credible reports of forced organ harvesting and other severe human rights abuses imposed on Falun Gong practitioners and other prisoners of conscience in China.

To call on the Chinese government to end its practice of forced live organ harvesting of prisoners of conscience. Release all illegally detained Falun Gong practitioners in China, and end the persecution of Falun Gong.”

During a discussion that followed, Members made the following points

- In China there is state sanctioned practice of illegal organ harvesting from prisoners, theologian and detained Falun Gong practitioners.

- The figures raised in the Amnesty International report are a serious concern
- Ireland has yet to ratify the convention.
- Ireland must raise human rights issues with the China
- Similar motions have been passed recently by many other Councils.
- Members requested that the Mayor would raise the issue with Chinese delegations that visit Cork over the forthcoming year

Members agreed the motion was adopted and agreed to write to the Government, Oireachtas Foreign Affairs Committee and Chinese Government on the matter.

CORRESPONDENCE FROM OTHER BODIES

WITHDRAWAL OF AMBULANCE SERVICES IN MILLSTREET

18/6-2

Members noted the letter dated 14th June, 2017 in response to the Council's correspondence of 6th June, 2017, in relation to the withdrawal of ambulance services in Millstreet, Co. Cork.

During a discussion that followed, Members made the following points

- Disappointed with the reply not addressing the specific issue we initially raised which was the withdrawal of the transporting ambulance from Millstreet.
- The response received is generic as it did not even refer to Millstreet.
- Services are being withdrawn with no consideration for rural people.
- Up to 2014, the approved budget for the NAS included a transporting ambulance for Millstreet and members request to return to this budget.
- What is the varied budget between and Rapid Response Vehicle (RRV) and an ambulance for Millstreet
- A transporting ambulance was re-instated last year from 8am - 8pm in Millstreet before it was withdrawn of recent times. This service relied on an overtime shift from ambulance personnel but if a paramedic was appointed here, it would relieve this situation.
- The HSE National Ambulance Service commissioned a report by "Lightfoot" in 2015 on its emergency service baseline and capacity review and this clearly outlines that RRV's do not work effectively in rural communities and are more effective in large urban centres.
- Why place an RRV in Millstreet, which is one of the most rural areas of County Cork.
- A strongly worded response should be sent back to the HSE.
- The HSE National Ambulance Service should be invited to meet with Members and explain their decisions for the withdrawal ambulance services.

Members agreed to write a strongly worded letter back to the HSE National Ambulance Service on the matter

COASTAL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Members agreed that the item 5 relating to the Coastal Management Committees' motion would be deferred to the next full council meeting in July to allow adequate time for discussion on the motion.

VOTES OF CONGRATULATIONS

19/6-2

- TO: Dairygold for winning the Cork Chamber Company of the Year Award 2017.
- TO: The County Architects Department and Giulia Vallone, Senior Executive Architect, Cork County Council for Clonakilty Town winning the 'Best place of the Year 2017' at the Royal Institute of Architects of Ireland (RIAI) awards.
- TO: Jim Daly on becoming the new Minister of State for Mental Health & Older People.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

20/6-2

Opening of Tenders

The following tenders were opened at the Meeting:-

- Tenders for the Public Lighting Maintenance & New Works Contract (2017-2019) – 3 no.

Meeting with Minister Shane Ross

The Mayor advised Members that a cross party delegation from Cork County Council is to meet Minister Shane Ross on Monday 3rd July, to discuss "roads" issues across Cork County.

This concluded the business of the Meeting