



Comhairle Contae Chorcaí

Cork County Council

Minutes of Proceedings at Meeting of Cork County Council held in the Council Chamber, County Hall, Cork and by Microsoft Teams on 28th February 2022 at 11am.

I LATHAIR

Comhairleoir Gillian Uí Chochláin, Méara Chontae

Comhairleoiri: Uí Chochláin G, Ó Colmáin, Ó Murchú C, Ó Suilleabháin S, Uí Shuilleabháin M, Ó Donnabháin, Ó Coileáin, Ó Murchú PG, Ó Conaill, Mac Craith, Uí Daltún, Ó Muircheartaigh, Uí Bhuachalla, De Faoite S, Daltún Ó Suilleabháin, Ní Cheallacháin, Barra, Sheppard, Rasmussen, Ó Conchubair S, Ó Conchubair A, MacCarthaigh N, Ó Flionn, Uí Bhriain, Ó Laoghaire, Dawson, De Róiste, Ó Muineacháin B, Ó Dubhghaill, Ó Sé SP, Ó Murchú G, Críod, Ó Luanaigh, Ó, Ó Chochláin M, Uí Loinsigh, Ó Luasa, Ó Haodha Padraig, Ó Murchú Gearóid, Ó Cinnéide, Ó Madaoin, Ó Sé T, Léineacháin Uí Foghlú, Ó Héigheartaigh, Ní Heachthigheirn, Mac Uaid, Ní Cheallaigh, Ó Cearbhaill, Ó Muirthile, Uí Chaochlaioich, Ó Haodha Pól

PRESENT

Councillor Gillian Coughlan, County Mayor, presided.

Councillor: Coughlan, Coleman, Murphy K, O'Sullivan J, O'Sullivan M, O' Donovan, Collins, Murphy PG, O' Connell, McGrath, D'Alton, Murtagh, Buckley A, White J, Dalton – O' Sullivan, O' Callaghan, Barry, Sheppard, Rasmussen, O' Connor S, O'Connor A, McCarthy N, O'Flynn, O'Brien, O'Leary, Dawson, Roche, Moynihan B, Doyle, O'Shea JP, Murphy G, Creed, Looney, Coughlan M, Lynch, Lucey, Hayes Pat, Murphy Gearóid, Kennedy, Madden, O'Shea T, Linehan – Foley, Hegarty M, Ahern, Quaide, Kelly, Carroll, Hurley, Coakley, Hayes Paul

Chief Executive, Mr. Padraig Barrett, Director of Services, John Slattery, Senior Engineer, Roads & Transportation, Senior Executive Officer

DEFER MEETING FOR 15 MINUTES TO RESOLVE TECHNICAL ISSUES

Proposed by Cllr. Michael Hegarty

Seconded by Cllr. Martin Coughlan

[a] CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

1/2-2

Proposed by Cllr. Frank O'Flynn

Seconded by Cllr. Karen Coakley

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Meeting held on 14th February, 2022 be confirmed and signed by the Mayor.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Proposed by Cllr. John Paul O'Shea

Seconded by Cllr. Gerard Murphy

To discuss funding for Ballymacquirke junction. Members agreed to suspend standing orders to discuss these matters at 1.00pm.

[b] VOTES OF SYMPATHY

2/2-2

TO: Wexford County Council on the death of William Kinsella.

TO: Mrs. Rita Kinsella on the death of her husband William Kinsella.

TO: Greg & Rose Cummins on the death of their son Jack Cummins.

TO: Mrs. Kathleen Egan on the death of her husband former Town Councillor Thomas Egan.

TO: Mrs. Mary O'Donovan on the death of her husband Michael O'Donovan.

TO: Mrs. Ann O'Sullivan on the death of her husband Noel O'Sullivan.

TO: The O'Sullivan Family on the death of their brother Ben O'Sullivan.

TO: Mr. Stephen O'Sullivan on the death of his father Paddy Joe O'Sullivan.

TO: Ms. Larysa Gerasko, Ukraine Ambassador on the loss of life.

[c] STATUTORY BUSINESS

3/2-2

DISPOSAL OF PROPERTY:

SECTION 183 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001:

Members noted the following disposals: _

MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF COBH:

Disposal of land at Ballintubbrid East, Carrigtwohill, Co Cork

3(a)/2-2

In accordance with the provisions of Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001, the disposal of the property as shown hereunder shall be carried out in accordance with the terms specified in the notice issued to members dated 18th February, 2022.

Situation: Disposal of land at Ballintubbrid East, Carrigtwohill, Co Cork.
Area: 0.0423 hectares/0.1045 acres
Consideration: €1

MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF EAST CORK:

Grant of Lease of Land at Broomfield, Midleton, Co Cork

3(b)/2-2

In accordance with the provisions of Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001, the disposal of the property as shown hereunder shall be carried out in accordance with the terms specified in the notice issued to members dated 18th February, 2022.

Situation: Grant of Lease of Land at Broomfield, Midleton, Co Cork.
Consideration: €1

Grant of Wayleave at Broomfield, Midleton, Co Cork

3(c)/2-2

In accordance with the provisions of Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001, the disposal of the property as shown hereunder shall be carried out in accordance with the terms specified in the notice issued to members dated 18th February, 2022.

Situation: Grant of Wayleave at Broomfield, Midleton, Co Cork.
Consideration: €1

MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF KANTURK/MALLOW:

Lease of building - Kilshannig Church, Newberry, Mallow, Co Cork

3(d)/2-2

In accordance with the provisions of Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001, the disposal of the property as shown hereunder shall be carried out in accordance with the terms specified in the notice issued to members dated 18th February, 2022.

Situation: Lease of building – Kilshannig Church, Newberry, Mallow, Co. Cork.

Consideration: €1.00.

4/2-2

CHAPTER 2 SECTION 128B (1) (I) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM ACT 2014 **2021 LCDC NORTH, SOUTH & WEST CORK ANNUAL REPORTS:**

Requirement of LCDC to prepare, adopt and submit to the local authority a report in relation to the performance of its functions for the previous year. North Cork LCDC Annual Report was adopted at meeting held on 14th February, West Cork and South Cork Annual Reports adopted at their meetings held on 10th February.

Members noted the Annual Reports for the North, South and West LCDCs.

[f] REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF OFFICERS **TUAIRISCÍ AGUS MOLTAÍ Ó OIFIGH**

5/2-2

CIRCULAR RW 02/2022 CORK COUNTY COUNCIL REGIONAL AND LOCAL ROAD GRANT ALLOCATIONS 2022

Report to Cork County Council on Circular RW 02/2022 Cork County Council and Local Road Grant Allocations 2022

Mr. John Slattery, Senior Engineer outlined the key grant types:

Type	Description
Restoration improvement	Pavement strengthening & overlays (annual programme approved by Members)
Restoration Maintenance	Surfacing dressing

Discretionary Grant	Maintenance (e.g. pothole repair)
Bridge Rehabilitation	Repair/replacement of road supporting structures (introduced in 2014; works programme based on rolling programme of inspection)
Specific Improvement Grant	Improvement works between €200k & €5M (typically realignments, junction improvements)
Strategic R&L Roads	Improvement works greater than €5M (typically relief roads, bypasses)
Safety Improvement Works	Safety improvements at locations with an accident history
Drainage Works	Drainage works
Community Involvement Scheme	Community contribution (15-30%) in the upkeep of lightly trafficked public roads
Climate Change Adaptation & Resilience	Measures to make road network more resilient to the effects of climate change (introduced in 2021; typically mitigating against flooding, undermining of roads, etc)

He outlined the funding for the Council for 2022:

Cork County Council	
Restoration improvement	€34,793,500
Restoration Maintenance	€5,368,000
Supplementary Restoration Maintenance	€4,217,500
Discretionary Grant	€9,962,000
Bridge Rehabilitation	€1,877,617
Specific Imp. Grants	€1,095,000
Strategic Regional and Local Roads	€70,000
Safety Improvement Works	€881,500
Speed Limits (Housing Area Signage)	€40,135
Speed Limits (Rural Speed Limit Signage)	€25,500
Training Grant	€266,000
Drainage Works	€2,512,277
Community Involvement Scheme	€2,072,400
PSCI: Survey Support	€95,000
Cycle Signs	€21,750
Climate Change Adaptation & Resilience Works	€1,914,500
Former National Roads	€604,809
Total Allocation	€65,817,488

He compared the funding with the 2021 allocation. He stated that the unspent funding from the 2020 July Stimulus Programme came forward into 2021. He also said the unspent active travel funding of €2,573,812 from the 2020 July Stimulus Programme came forward into 2021. Active travel funding will be allocated by the NTA from 2022. Active travel funding has been removed from the 2021 allocation as presented to allow comparison.

Mr. Slattery stated that if the grant allocation had remained at a level no lower than the 2008 grant, an

additional €279M would have been allocated by the DOT to R&L roads in Cork County since then.

He compared Cork County allocations with other Local Authorities and stated that Cork County has 12.96% of the R&L roads network across all rural counties with 11.37% of the grant allocation. If the grant allocation had been made on the basis of road length, Cork County would have benefited by an additional €9.2M.

He stated the following:

- If Cork County was allocated €3,854/km in RI funding, Cork County would have benefited by an additional €10.4M.
- If Cork County was allocated €1,062/km in RM funding, Cork County would have benefited by an additional €2.9M.
- If Cork County was allocated €176/km in SIW funding, Cork County would have benefited by an additional €1.2M.

He outlined other considerations:

- The Carrigaline Western Relief Road is currently under construction. This project has received a grant allocation of €6.4M from the Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage under the Urban Regeneration & Development Fund. If the URDF grant had not been allocated to this project, an application would have been made to the DOT for grant funding under Strategic R&L Roads.
- The Kanturk Link Road has recently been completed. This project received a grant allocation of €0.74M from the Department of Community & Rural Development under the Rural Regeneration & Development Fund. If the RRDF grant had not been allocated to this project, an application would have been made to the DOT for a Specific Improvement Grant.
- The Government has committed funding to Cork County on a number of major national roads projects, including the N22 bypass of Macroom & Ballyvourney, the Dunkettle Interchange, and the M28 to Ringaskiddy.

He outlined the challenges for 2022:

1	High levels of growth Construction sector output predicted to grow nationally by 18.5% in 2022 to €32B. Construction sector output peaked at €38B in the 2000s.
2	Cost inflation Tender costs increased by 10% in 2021 due to increases in material, labour & energy costs. 2021 saw significant increases in the cost of steel and timber, for example. Tender costs are expected to increase by 5% in 2022.
3	Labour shortages The shortage of skilled labour for key trades continues. Number of undergraduates studying for key professions such as engineering, architecture, & QS, still recovering after last recession.

He concluded his report by stating:

- Despite the challenges of 2021, CCC spent all of the 2021 allocation
- CCC received a total allocation of €65,817,488 in 2022
- Adjusting for Active Travel, this is a 2.83% increase on the 2021 allocation
- Not adjusting for inflation, the 2022 allocation sees a return to 2008 levels of funding
- Compared with other rural Local Authorities, Cork County Council has received the lowest grant allocation based on length of road network

- Between the 2021 allocation and the final drawdown of the 2022 grants, there is likely to be tender cost increases of the order of 15%. This will have a significant impact on the quantum of work that will be delivered in 2022
- The increase in the 2022 allocation confirms Government confidence in Cork County Council to deliver essential road maintenance and improvement works across an extensive 11,740km R&L roads network. However, more funding is needed to maintain and improve the network.

Mr. Slattery stated that Kildare and Meath get additional funding as they are close to Dublin. Waterford and Limerick also get additional funding because they are cities in functional areas. He said if Cork county got the same as Kildare and Meath, it would get an additional €10.4m. There is an important level of activity in the county and said there is a case to be made for a multiplier. The allocations confirm that the Government has confidence in the Council to deliver but more funding is needed.

Mr. Pdraig Barrett, Director of Services stated that €66 m was the highest ever allocation to the Council. He stated that the County is treated the same per km of road as other counties. He said an argument can be made that Cork gets similar heavy good traffic to Kildare and Meath so requires additional maintenance. If Cork county was treated the same, the Council would be entitled to €15m more in allocations.

The Mayor thanked Mr. Barrett and his team for their work. She stated that funding was equivalent to 21 other rural Local Authorities. She acknowledged the huge funding under the Active Travel Grants Scheme.

The Chief Executive stated he has no difficulty with the Council being treated as other rural Local Authorities are, but Cork county is not the same. It has vast metropolitan area within the county. There is a strong case for funding to be made. Debate needs to focus on metropolitan area that the Council services. There are significant towns driving growth. The harbour and related activity must also be considered. He suggested the case should be presented through the Road SPC.

The Mayor stated focus need to shift from parity to additional funding.

During this discussion the Members made the following points:

- Members thanks the Director and his team for interacting with Government Departments.
- Members acknowledged the work of the Roads Directorate for securing the planning granted for the Ballymacquirke Cross junction.
- Thanked the Roads SPC for working hard in securing the funding for roads.
- Stated the Council lost out in funding for country roads.
- Noted that more work is needed to get funding to the level that it should be.
- Stated a deputation is needed to go to Dublin to meet with the Minister to get this county moved from the 4th last on the table. The uniqueness of Cork county needs to be pointed out to the Department. This request must be made through the Mayor's office.
- Recognised that some roads are in very bad condition in West Cork.
- Acknowledged the great ability of the Roads Directorate to utilise funding smartly and properly.
- Noted impact of inflation and price increase and asked if this will impact tender prices in 2022.
- The Council needs to emphasise need for funding at a reasonable level.
- Acknowledged the work of the Area Engineers in putting together the well-planned applications for national funding.
- It was noted that the tourism industry in West Cork generates traffic.
- Recognised that road restoration works last test of time so it is money well spent.
- Welcomed the funding for the N73.

- Acknowledged that other areas need to be improved on.
- Noted that the N71 (Clonakilty to Rosscarbery) road is on the agenda for the last no. of years. This work needs to be done now.
- It is important to tap into this national funding.
- Acknowledged there is positively in report. Members credited past delegations that met Ministers.
- Noted that the current Minister's focus is on Active Travel.
- Members asked the Mayor to enforce a plea for a meeting.
- Members noted differences in Limerick and Cork roads and stated Cork should have the same status as Limerick.

The Mayor stated the Member supports the work of the Roads and Transportation Directorate.

RESOLVED:

That a letter would issue from the Mayor's office to the Department of Transport to seek a meeting as it is necessary to make a case for a multiplier to be applied to the grant applications. Focus is needed to move from parity to additional funding.

[g] CORRESPONDENCE FROM GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS COMHFHREAGRAS Ó RANNA RIALTAS

6/2-2

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH OFFICE OF THE MINISTER

Correspondence received 31st January 2022 in response to the Council's letter dated 26th April 2021 in relation to research into the mental wellbeing of farmers in Co. Cork.

During this discussion the Members made the following points:

- Members welcomed the response but said the letter was mixing up mental health with farm suicides.
- Members stated there were 41 farm related suicides in 2021 and 13 already this year.
- Said that pressure from financial institutes can cause a person to be driven over the edge.
- This can be very upsetting so asked for authorities to take notice of citizens problems.
- Members stated that this was discussed recently at that HSE Forum and that there is a list of approved organisations available that should be circulated. Alone is an organisation qualified to deal with mental health issues in rural communities.
- Said the figures are very frightening for Cork.
- Suggested that personal approach may be better and less frightening than a letter.
- Noted that not everyone can interact with the state online. A digital divide must be recognised by the state.
- Support must be given to small farmers who are unable to make a living from it.
- Larger farmers are under pressure to expand and are getting into debt.

REVIEW OF CURRENT TERMS OF PAY AND CONDITIONS OF OUR RETAINED FIREFIGHTERS AND RESPONDERS

7/2-2

Councillor Ian Doyle proposed, seconded by Councillor Gearóid Murphy

“That Cork County Council would write to Minister for public expenditure to look at the current terms of pay and conditions of our retained firefighters and responders both for here in Cork but Nationally”

During this discussion the Members made the following points:

- Members stated that no one can recognise the work of the retained service. They act as first responders and traffic management at accidents.
- Members recognised their role has increased over the last few years. It is a vital service.
- Members noted that retained firefighters and responders are in receipt of basic pay nationally and stated that a review is needed.
- Said that 24 hours a day, 7 days a week cover is needed, as they need to be on call all the time.
- It is very important that people are attracted to the service.
- Stated it must be a sustainable option for those who sign up.
- It can affect the whole life of those in a part time role, as they may be on for 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- It can impact insurance on own vehicles for retained firefighters. During Red Weather warnings, firefighters must respond to calls from their own homes. This needs to be addressed.
- Recognised issues with recruitment and retention might arise.
- Members acknowledged that firefighters and responders are the first point of call for fire and accidents. They face out into the unknown. Communities are in debt to the service.
- Noted that they face difficult tasks and deserve better remuneration.

The Mayor stated it is a risky occupation. Firefighters put themselves at risk. The recruitment must be more attractive.

Members agreed to write to the Minister for public expenditure to look at the current terms of pay and conditions of our retained firefighters and responders both for here in Cork but Nationally.

SOLUTION TO THE EVER WORSENING FUEL CRISIS

8/2-2

Councillor Ross O’Connell proposed, seconded by Councillor Marcia Dalton

“As an immediate solution to the ever-worsening fuel crisis and an affordable way for people to reduce their CO2 emissions, that this Council would write to the Minister for Transport (Eamon Ryan) requesting that; (a) grants be introduced to vehicle owners for LPG conversions, and (b) incentives be provided to encourage the roll out of additional Bio-LPG pumps in forecourts across the country”.

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During this discussion the Members made the following points:

- Members stated that fuel has increased by 33% in the last year. This has put pressure on families and businesses.
- Members recognised that this has impacted lower income families.
- Members noted that LPG is a possible solution as it is an approved fuel alternative.
- It is half the cost of petrol. The majority of vehicles can be converted to LPG or have a dual fuel option. There would be a 10% drop in energy output and it produces much less pollution.
- The EU is trying to reduce the reliance on Eastern Europe energy.
- Members stated that Bio-LPG is made from waste oils. It is 30% cheaper than gas. It is generated in Rotterdam and available in Cork.
- Said that a government subsidy is needed.
- Recognised that by reducing the CO₂ emissions, huge saving can be made.
- Stated that in the medium term, practical solutions are needed. LPG is recognised as the best solution.
- Said that people are being hit in the pockets and an alternative solution is needed.
- Suggested Bio-LPG as a substitute for LPG as it is a renewable fuel. It is exempt from Carbon Tax.
- Noted that 1% of cars in the UK are fuelled by it.
- Acknowledged that presently there is a lack of incentives from the Government for conversions.
- Recognised that LPG is kinder the environment.
- Noted that LPG is an old fuel and when it was introduced 20 years ago, it was not always available at the pumps.

The Mayor stated she would include on the agenda for the meeting she requested with the Minister of Transport.

Members agreed to write to the Minister of Transport requesting that; (a) grants be introduced to vehicle owners for LPG conversions, and (b) incentives be provided to encourage the roll out of additional Bio-LPG pumps in forecourts across the country.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Members agreed to suspend standing orders to discuss funding for Ballymacquirke junction.

During this discussion the Members made the following points:

- Members welcomed the good news of An Bord Pleanála's approval to Ballymacquirke junction.
- They recognised the small allocation from TII. The TII is now going to request approval for the next stage.
- They stated they want to write to the TII to request approval to go to tender in 2022.
- Noted that it is a dangerous junction that needs upgrading as soon as possible.
- Welcomed that the Roads Directorate would update the Northern Division in due course.
- Noted that 6000 people signed a petition requesting the upgrading. Mentioned that there were fatalities in the past.
- Thanked the staff in the Roads Department for all the work.
- Stated that it should be no impediment now as a safety matter.

She also agreed to put this on the agenda for the meeting with the Minister of Transport.

The Chief Executive stated that it was necessary that discussions should be advanced with TII to progress this contract.

REPAIR OF PUBLIC ROADS FOLLOWING THE FELLING AND TRANSPORTATION OF TIMBER

9/2-2

Councillor John Paul O'Shea proposed, seconded by Councillor Frank O'Flynn

“That the Director of Roads would outline what process is in place within the Council to engage with Coillte/Dept. Of Agriculture in relation to the repair of public roads following the felling and transportation of timber. Some roads are in very bad condition following the recent felling and transporting of timber from local forestry”.

RESPONSE:

The Council has no powers to prevent road legal vehicles associated with the forestry industry from using public roads. The Council recognises the economic benefits arising from the industry but is also aware of the damage that HGVs associated with the industry can be inflict on public roads. This is especially the case in rural locations where the road may not have sufficient strength to support such HGVs. In these cases, the local Area Engineer would liaise with Coillte or their contractor to agree a financial contribution towards the rehabilitation costs of the road.

During this discussion the Members made the following points:

- Members mentioned policy was needed regarding how communications with Coillte happens.
- Stated a process is needed through the Department for the Council to pursue.
- Asked that it should be formalised into policy for the Roads SPC to review.
- Requested that a recent letter from Clare County Council be circulated to the Members again.
- Asked that Felling Licence should cover restoration of roads cost.
- Members also requested that this should be included in the letter to the Minister.
- Noted that this is important for people living in areas where the roads are in a poor state.
- Stated that the weight of trucks and trailers are impacting the road conditions.
- Contributions to re-instate roads from Coillte are needed.

Mr. Padraig Barrett, Director of Services stated that a system is in place for putting conditions on licences by Area Engineers. He stated that forestry is very important to economy. There is a lot of lands suitable to forestry in Cork. He said the Council must consider if additional costs will have negative impact on the industry. Mr. Barrett said licence fees and schedule of costs should be uniform. He stated he will bring this topic to the SPC and write to the Department of Agriculture.

The Mayor suggested further discussion at the SPC.

Mr. Barrett stated that the Department of Agriculture was the relevant Department. He said that the Council does not want to penalize remote sites. It must be economic to harvest forestry.

EXTENSION OF TIME:

As the time was now 1.15pm an extension of time was agreed.

Proposed by Councillor Ben Dalton O'Sullivan

Seconded by Councillor Mary Linehan Foley

CHANGE TO MOTOR TAX PAYMENT SYSTEM

10/2-2

Councillor Seamus McGrath proposed, seconded by Councillor Gillian Coughlan

"This Council requests that the Minister for Transport changes the Motor Tax payment system as soon as possible to remove the additional charges for taxing vehicles for less than 12 months and introduce a pro rata payment system."

During this discussion the Members made the following points:

- Members noted the system is unfair as there are no longer administrative costs as renewing of motor tax takes place online.
- Stated that added charges for taxing for shorter periods are unfair.
- Impacts disproportionately on lower income families.
- Noted it was a form of discrimination.
- Members recommended it should be strictly pro-rata and there should be no penalisation.
- Stated there was no penalisation for LPT for example and that can be paid monthly.
- It is an important move that the Government can make.
- Noted that motorists would welcome this change.
- Stated that people are currently impacted by inflation.
- Suggested this would ease the pressure on hand pressed motorists.
- Recommended that the option should be there quarterly and six months to tax your car without any extra charges.
- Noted that this has regressive affect on consumers in rural areas as the car is essential and indispensable.
- Members noted that a previous proposal was sent to the Minister and was not successful. Stated things have changed so requested that it was sent again.

The Mayor stated that the Country is coming out of 24 months of pandemic. Many families are impacted financially. Bills can really stress families on a budget.

Members agreed to write to the Minister for Transport changes the Motor Tax payment system as soon as possible to remove the additional charges for taxing vehicles for less than 12 months and introduce a pro rata payment system.

SEEK UPDATE ON PENDING POLICY FROM THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT MANAGEMENT AGENCY (LGMA) ON COMMUNITY CCTV SYSTEMS

11/2-2

NOTICE OF MOTION – DEFERRED TO FULL COUNCIL MEETING ON MONDAY 14TH MARCH

CLLR. DANIELLE TWOMEY

"That this council would seek an update on the pending policy from the Local Government Management Agency (LGMA) on Community CCTV systems. And, that the Chief Executive would clarify the position of Cork County Council in becoming the Data Controller for the 22 systems we have within the county and those due to be installed or be turned on. Also, to clarify if funding for the operational and set up costs will be funded by the Local Authority or the Department of Justice, and if clarification on same can be sought from the department."

COUNCIL TO REVIEW GRADIENT AT PLANNING AND DESIGN STAGES OF ALL NEW AS WELL AS EXISTING GREENWAY, PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLE ROUTES, FLYOVERS AND BRIDGES

12/2-2

Councillor Michael Paul Murtagh proposed, seconded by Councillor Gillian Coughlan

“That Cork County Council review gradient at planning and design stages of all new as well as existing Greenway, pedestrian and cycle routes, flyovers and bridges throughout the County to ensure reasonable accessibility for active wheelchair users” and
“To write to other authorities to raise awareness of this issue”.

RESPONSE:

There are over 3,500 bridges in the public road network in the administrative area of Cork County Council. The review of gradients on existing bridges in the context of wheelchair accessibility is conducted on a case by case basis in response to public demand.

All new bridges are designed in accordance with best practice with reference to guidance documents such as:

- Transport Infrastructure Ireland “Design Criteria for Footbridges” & “Footway Design”;
- Department of Transport “Design Manual for Urban Roads & Streets”;
- Irish Wheelchair Association “Best Practice Access Guidelines – Designing Accessible Environments”;
- National Transport Authority “National Cycle Manual”

New bridges are delivered following a planning process that includes public consultation.

Awareness of wheelchair accessibility on bridges outside the administrative area of Cork County Council is a matter for the responsible authority.

During this discussion the Members made the following points:

- Members thanked the Director of Services for the response.
- Members welcomed the new infrastructure but noted ways that the Council can improve.
- Stated that wheelchair users have flagged some issues.
- Said there are differences in Greenways with old and new infrastructure. “Rest stops” on an incline for wheelchair users makes it difficult to navigate.

COUNCIL TO CONTINUE TO SUPPORT CRAFTWORK OF CORK

13/2-2

Councillor Deirdre O’Brien proposed, seconded by Councillor Frank O’Flynn

“That Cork County Council would continue to support and give priority to craftwork of Cork for presentation of gifts or prizes when visiting abroad.”

RESPONSE:

All items given as corporate gifts and prizes are sourced in Cork and where possible have a County Cork theme or are distinguishable as Cork products.

Corporate Services has liaised with the Enterprise Boards to obtain a list of suitable suppliers. Priority is given to hand crafted items that represent the tradition of artisanal work throughout the county. Consideration is given to including the Council's crest and logo where possible.

For gifts to be awarded when visiting abroad, the items must be durable for transport and of a suitable size and weight.

During this discussion the Members made the following points:

- Stated the Notice of Motion was timely as St. Patrick's Day visits are going abroad.
- Suggested there was increased talent in County Cork and many have received support from the Council.
- Stated that all products from food and beverages in addition to crafts are very good in Cork. Noted that some of Cork cheeses are famous.
- Said how amazing many local communities are for making crafts. Stated the Council should be using these products.
- Suggested that Corporate Services should invite local craft makers to submit their crafts.
- The range of options should be expanded.

The Mayor stated she sees magnificent crafts when she meets groups in the county.

REQUEST TEMPORARILY SUSPENDING VAT ON HOME ENERGY BILLS

14/2-2

Councillor Ben Dalton O'Sullivan proposed, seconded by Councillor Mary Linehan Foley

"That Cork County Council would write to the office of the Minister for Finance and An Taoiseach to ask them to temporarily suspend VAT on home energy bills given the cost of living crisis which the country is now facing."

During this discussion the Members made the following points:

- Members stated there is a fear among elderly regarding the high cost of living.
- Members said a suspension of VAT (13.5%) would be very helpful.
- Members mentioned that everyone is finding it hard since prices of fuel and energy are escalating so the Government needs to look at it.

Members agreed to write to the Minister for Finance and an Taoiseach to ask them to temporarily suspend VAT on home energy bills given the cost of living crisis which the country is now facing.

[K] VOTES OF CONGRATULATIONS

15/2-2

TO: Clonmult Memorial Committee on the successful recent centenary celebration

TO: Conor Nelligan, Heritage Officer and Commemorations Coordinator on his input to the celebration

TO: Sheila Power for raising over €40,000 for CUH

TO: Lauren Farr on receiving a Cork City and Cork County Youth Sports Award and also on being selected onto the National Swim Squad

[I] ANY OTHER BUSINESS

16/2-2

1. Members agreed that the County Hall would be lit up in the Ukrainian colours to show the county's solidarity with Ukraine.
2. Members requested that the Mayor's office would support 'National Slow down' day and it was agreed.

~ THIS CONCLUDED THE BUSINESS OF THE MEETING ~