

Minutes of Meeting of Cavan County Council held in the Council Chamber on Monday 9th June 2025 at 2.00p.m.

Councillor T.P. O'Reilly, Cathaoirleach, presiding

PRESENT: Councillors W. Bennett, C. Brady, D. Brady, N. Brady, P. Brady, S. Conaty, N. Connell, B. Fay, J.P. Feeley, C. Kelly, S.P. O'Reilly, A. Rogers, Á. Smith, N. Smith, T. Smith, V. Smith, P. Walsh

IN ATTENDANCE: E. Doyle, Chief Executive
P. Connaughton, Director of Services
B. Jennings, Director of Services
L. McGavigan, Director of Services
M. McNally, Head of Finance
E. McGinn, Senior Staff Officer

Councillor T.P. O'Reilly welcomed all to the meeting.

Confirmation of Minutes

1. To confirm Minutes of Monthly Meeting held on 12th May 2025. Miontuairiscí cruinnithe 12th Mí Bealtaine 2025 a dhearbhú.

It was

Proposed by Councillor N. Smith

Seconded by Councillor C. Brady

And

Resolved;

“that minutes of monthly meeting of Cavan County Council held on 12th May 2025 be hereby approved”

2. Disclosure of Interests (*Section 177 Local Government Act 2001*).

Noted.

Wellman International

Councillor S.P. O'Reilly thanked Cathaoirleach Councillor T.P. O'Reilly for suspending standing orders to allow the members speak on Wellman International. Councillor S.P. O'Reilly thanked the members of Cavan County Council and Oireachtas members for attending a meeting on Friday 6th June with staff from Wellman International in relation to the shocking news that it was going into examinership and they had one hundred days from 3rd June to find a solution, to save a business and to protect the livelihoods of more than two hundred people living in the east of the county. Councillor S.P. O'Reilly stated that Wellman International was founded fifty-three years ago and is synonymous with Mullagh. Councillor S.P. O'Reilly stated that there is a lot of anger with the direction the business has been taken in recent years. He stated that the company manufactures recycled polyester fibres from used plastic materials that have a wide variety of industrial uses. He stated that Wellman

say they are steep in financial loss due to external pressures, including soaring energy prices largely driven by ongoing geopolitical conflicts and as a result its parent company, Indorama Ventures has withdrawn its support. Councillor S.P. O'Reilly stated that a virtual meeting took place between all Oireachtas members in Cavan Monaghan, Meath East and Meath West on Wednesday 4th June joined by Government Ministers. He stated that Councillors from Cavan and Meath heard from Examiner Andrew O'Leary, Kieran Wallace of Interpath Advisory and Anthony Troy, Director of Wellman International where Mr. Troy stated that the decision to enter examinership is no reflection on the hard work and commitment of Wellman's employees. Councillor Reilly stated that it is one of the largest recycling centres in the country and yet 90% of bottles are sent outside the country for recycling when they could be done in Mullagh. Councillor S.P. O'Reilly thanked Chief Executive, Mr. Eoin Doyle for contacting Wellman Internation to offer the support of Cavan County Council. Councillor S.P. O'Reilly proposed that Cavan County Council write to the Taoiseach, Mr. Micheál Martin, Tanáiste Simon Harris as well as Mr. Peter Burke, Minister for Enterprise, Tourism and Employment to stress the importance of Wellman not just in terms of employment but to the community also.

Councillor T. Smith supported the motion stating that it would be a huge loss to the people of Cavan and Meath and noted that the union wants the factory to survive.

Councillors N. Connell concurred with all that was said and stated that the workers do not want redundancy, they want the factory up and running again. Councillor Connell stated that there must be cross party support for the good of the workers.

Councillor P. Brady supported the motion and stated that we need to do all we can for the people of the area.

Councillors. Smith, C. Kelly, W. Bennett, B. Fay, D. Brady, P. Walsh and T.P. O'Reilly supported the motion.

Mr. Eoin Doyle, Chief Executive acknowledged the concerns of the members in relation to Wellman International and stated that he was in contact directly with Wellman International.

Note Minutes of Committee Meetings

3. To note Minutes of Corporate Policy Group meeting held on 10th April 2025.

Noted.

Note Members' Reports from Conferences/Training events

4. To note members' reports from conferences and training events (*Section 142 and Section 143 of the Local Government Act 2001; Local Government (Expenses of Local Authority Members) Regulations 2014 Part V Section 5 (1)*).

Noted.

5. Member's Question / Ceist – Councillor Niall Smith

To ask Cavan County Council for an update on the position regarding Bus Stop Planning submitted in relation to Local Link Bus Service, which will service Cootehill, Shercock, Bailieborough and Virginia. I understand Bus Stops have been finalised, and the service has gone to Tender, and the agreed Bus Stops have gone to Planning. Could an update be provided as to when a decision may be expected in relation to this Planning Application as this Bus Service will provide an important link to the Cavan/Dundalk Service and Virginia to Dublin Service going forward to the people living in these local Towns.

A reply issued to Councillor N. Smith prior to the meeting.

Business prescribed by Statute, Standing Orders or Resolutions of the Council

6. To note Chief Executive's monthly report (*Section 51 Local Government Reform Act 2014*).

Noted.

7. In accordance with Section 221, Local Government Act 2001 as amended, adoption of the 2024 Annual Report.

It was

Proposed by Councillor P. Brady

Seconded by Councillor S.P. O'Reilly

And

Resolved;

"that in accordance with Section 211, Local Government Act 2001 as amended, the 2024 Annual Report be hereby approved".

Votes of Sympathy:

Sympathy was offered to the families of the following:

- The O'Dwyer Family, Munterconnaught on the death of their son and brother Mr. Darren O'Dwyer.
- The Brady Family, Redhills on the death of Mr. Philip Brady, former businessman in Cavan Town.

Vote of Congratulations:

- Mr. Alex Owens, Cootehill, son of former County Registrar, Mr. Tommy Owens on being the first Cavan man appointed as a High Court Judge.
- Group of men from the West Cavan Region who cycled 642km from Malin to Mizen Head in aid of Cavan Monaghan Palliative Care.
- Mr. Conor Kelly, Cavan who cycled from Cavan to Snowdonia in Wales to climb Mount Snowdon and cycled back to Cavan to raise funds for SOSAD.

- Mr. Ben Brunton, Mountnugent on winning a gold medal in the 5000m race at the CSIT World Sports Games in Greece.

MEMBERS' ITEMS – DEFERRED FROM MAY MEETING

8.1 That Cavan County Council call on renewable energy companies to make curtailed or wasted renewable energy available to support households experiencing energy poverty or for community use and that in amending the County Development Plan that we make compliance with this objective a condition of any grant of planning.

Councillor J.P. Feeley proposed that Cavan County Council write to renewable energy companies asking that they make curtailed or wasted energy available to support households experiencing energy poverty or for community use and that amending the County Development Plan, Cavan County Council make compliance with this objective a condition of any grant of planning. Councillor J.P. Feeley stated that latest figures for curtailed energy are enough to heat the tanks of more than two million homes.

Councillor W. Bennett supported the motion and stated that Ireland has lost a significant amount of generated energy due to challenges with grid capacity.

Councillors T.P. O'Reilly and P. Walsh supported the motion.

Mr. Paddy Connaughton, Director of Service stated that the Council is to pilot a new scheme using surplus renewable energy to tackle energy poverty. He stated that the project will be conducted in partnership with Energy Cloud Ireland, a company focused on redirecting wasted renewable energy within the grid back to needy households. Mr. Connaughton stated that the pilot scheme will initially focus on Cavan town before being rolled out to the rest of the County.

8.2 In light of the decision of the Orange County, California and other regions to implement a moratorium on BESS facilities and other new restrictions, that Cavan County Council call on the Minister for Local Government to implement a regulatory framework for such facilities in Ireland.

Councillor J.P. Feeley proposed that Cavan County Council write to the Minister for Local Government asking that a regulatory framework be implemented in relation to BESS facilities. Councillor Feeley noted that a decision was made in the Orange County, California following a substantial fire from a battery facility to implement a moratorium on BESS facilities and other new restrictions. Councillor Feeley asked for a moratorium on new BESS developments in Ireland until such time as comprehensive safety guidelines are established.

Councillor S. Conaty seconded Councillor J.P. Feeley's proposal.

The motion was supported unanimously.

MEMBERS' ITEMS – JUNE

8.3 That Cavan County Council provide an update on the North South Interconnector.

Councillor C. Kelly asked the executive of Cavan County Council if there had been any recent updates on the North South Interconnector

Mr. Brendan Jennings, Director of Service stated that the three planning departments and agents met on 13th May 2025 and there is still a lot of work to be done regarding planning conditions.

8.4 That Cavan County Council encourage strongly Minister for Justice, Jim O'Callaghan, T.D. to introduce "Lukes Law" during the lifetime of this Government.

Councillor S.P. O'Reilly proposed that Cavan County Council write to the Minister for Justice, Mr. Jim O'Callaghan, T.D., asking him to introduce "Lukes Law" during the lifetime of this Government. Councillor O'Reilly stated that an incident took place in Cork where thirty-three-year-old Luke Hyde was filmed by onlookers as he got into difficulty and drowned in the river Lee. Councillor O'Reilly stated that Lily Hyde, mother of Luke witnessed people callously filming her son's final moments. Councillor O'Reilly stated that families right across the country have also been subjected to similar pitiful actions and currently there is no legal protection to prevent the sharing of videos for someone in their final moments. He stated that it is terrible to think people stood filming and taking footage of somebody in trouble instead of helping him and then share it on social media. Councillor O'Reilly stated that anybody caught recording footage of a fatal accident should be brought before the courts and fined €1,000. Councillor O'Reilly stated that this law already applies in Germany.

Councillor P. Brady seconded Councillor S.P. O'Reilly's motion and stated that the fine should be €5,000 for anyone caught filming the scene of an accident. He stated that the trend of taking out a phone to video an incident instead of offering help was deeply concerning.

The motion was supported unanimously.

8.5 In welcoming a full state apology to the O'Farrell Family on the handling of the case of the tragic death of Shane O'Farrell, that Cavan County Council continue to support the O'Farrell family in requesting a full public enquiry into the case.

Councillor S.P. O'Reilly proposed that in welcoming a fully state apology to the O'Farrell family on the handling of the case of the tragic death of Shane O'Farrell, that Cavan County Council continue to support the O'Farrell Family by writing to the Minister for Justice asking that a fully public enquiry into the case take place. Councillor S.P. O'Reilly noted that in August 2011, Shane O'Farrell left his home in Carrickmacross to

go on a cycle and unfortunately never returned home as he was killed by a Lithuanian man, Zigimantas Gridziuska, who had forty previous convictions and who had been stopped by the Garda Drugs squad an hour before Shane was killed. Mr. Gridziuska failed to stop at the scene. Councillor S.P. O'Reilly praised the O'Farrell family especially his mother Lucia for their determination over the years. Councillor S.P. O'Reilly commended Deputy Brendan Smith and Deputy Matt Carthy as well as John McGuinness for continuing to highlight the case. He stated the truth is the O'Farrell family have been let down by the State. He stated that the Government must get to the bottom of what happened and therefore asked that the Minister for Justice go that extra step and hold a public inquiry.

Councillor N. Connell supported the motion and stated that all files on the case need to be handed over for a full public inquiry.

Councillor J.P. Feeley supported the motion and complimented the Minister for Justice for apologising on behalf of the State to the O'Farrell family. Councillor Feeley stated that any outstanding information should be brought into the public domain. He stated that it is great to see the Department of Justice funding a scholarship every year in the name of Shane O'Farrell that will be awarded to a student who distinguishes him or herself in the Master-in-Law degree at University College Dublin.

Councillor T.P. O'Reilly supported the motion and acknowledged the Minister's apology which was long overdue and noted that there are still a lot of questions to be answered.

8.6 That this Council call for an urgent review of the LTI Scheme (Long Term Illnesses) as a priority to include many conditions not listed.

Councillor S.P. O'Reilly proposed that Cavan County Council write to the Minister for Health calling for an urgent review of the LTI (Long Term Illnesses) scheme as a priority to include many conditions not listed. Councillor S.P. O'Reilly stated that no review has taken place on the scheme since 1985, and one must take place to ensure that patients get the support and care they require. Councillor O'Reilly stated that it is a way to reduce the financial burden on individuals and families with ongoing healthcare costs. Councillor O'Reilly stated that upgrades and additions must be made for those with long term illnesses. He stated that the scheme currently provides a range of drugs, medicines and surgical appliances, without charge, to people suffering from long-term diseases or disabilities. He stated that people who are on long term medication for cancer, psoriasis and other unseen illnesses are not covered, and this is a barrier for people accessing medicines and appliances. Councillor O'Reilly stated that the current scheme is not fit for purpose and needs updating urgently.

Councillor P. Walsh supported the motion and noted that there needs to be a review done to include those suffering with unknown illnesses.

Councillor Á. Smith supported the motion and noted that currently there are not a lot of illnesses included in the scheme. Councillor Smith stated that there are not enough resources or clinics in Ireland to currently deal with women's issues and so many people are suffering in silence.

8.7 Concerns about abolition of the triple lock.

Councillor N. Connell stated that the Triple Lock is the requirement for Government, Dáil and United Nations approval before more than twelve members of the Defence Forces can be deployed on overseas missions. He noted that the Government has stated that the mechanism is no longer fit for purpose and will soon publish plans to change it.

Councillor Connell stated that the Government's plan to amend Ireland's Triple Lock on the deployment of Defence Force peacekeepers overseas is very dangerous and noted that Ireland has an international reputation of having respected peacekeepers throughout the world. Councillor N. Connell proposed that Cavan County Council write to the Minister of Foreign Affairs to oppose the abolition of the Triple Lock.

Councillor S. Conaty seconded Councillor N. Connell's proposal noting that strength lies in diplomacy and peace building and we are now stepping away from this and getting involved in foreign wars.

8.8 That Cavan County Council write to the Ministers for Finance, the Minister for Trade, Enterprise and Employment, the Minister for Tourism and the Taoiseach to urgently call for increased and targeted supports for the hospitality sector, particularly pubs, small restaurants and SMEs which are under unprecedented financial pressure.

Councillor B. Fay proposed that Cavan County Council write to the Minister for Finance, the Minister for Trade, Enterprise and Employment, the Minister for Tourism and the Taoiseach to urgently call for increased and targeted supports for the hospitality sector, particularly pubs, small restaurants and SMEs which are under unprecedented financial pressure. Councillor Fay stated that many businesses are struggling with the cost-of-living crisis and some of these businesses have never recovered since they were forced to close during Covid lockdown. Councillor Fay noted that the tax on alcohol in Ireland is the highest in Europe and insurance costs are crippling businesses.

Councillor C. Brady highlighted the good work done by local enterprise offices and noted that the one in Cavan is a cornerstone of support for small businesses. Councillor Brady stated that Minister Peter Burke recently launched the National Enterprise Hub which provides guidance and support for businesses. Councillor Brady stated that small businesses are the backbone of our rural communities.

Councillor T. Smith supported the motion and stated that small businesses need every support available to them.

Councillors J.P. Feeley and P. Brady supported the motion.

Mr. Brendan Jennings, Director of Service thanked the members for their support and noted that our local enterprise office is doing great work to help small businesses. Mr. Jennings agreed that insurance and utility costs are destroying businesses.

8.9 That Cavan County Council conduct a review of existing online street parking arrangements in towns and villages across the county and bring forward measures to ensure that all parking is clearly marked and enforced in line with the flow of traffic, corresponding with some towns traffic management programmes.

Councillor B. Fay proposed that Cavan County Council conduct a review into the existing online street parking arrangements in our towns and villages in the County and bring forward measures to ensure that all parking is clearly marked and enforced in line with the flow of traffic, corresponding with some towns traffic management programmes.

Councillor Fay stated that parking must be clearly marked on narrow streets. Councillor Fay asked that Cavan County Council update their bye-laws to incorporate same and asked that the Council write to the RSA asking that this parking system be introduced nationally. Councillor Fay asked that his motion be forwarded to all local authorities asking for their support. Councillor Fay asked that age friendly parking be introduced at banks, post offices and chemists to allow the elderly park for twenty minutes outside the buildings with no charge.

Councillor J.P. Feeley supported the motion and asked that twenty-minute free parking be introduced in our towns.

Councillor D. Brady supported the motion and complimented Cavan County Council on the refurbishment of the multi-storey car park.

Councillor P. Walsh supported the motion.

Mr. Paddy Connaughton, Director of Service informed the members that from initial engagement with businesses, there is a desire within the community for greater parking enforcement. He stated that parking is a challenging issue, and the Council would look at proposals to impose restrictions with regards to traffic flow. Mr. Connaughton stated that the Council is currently in the process of reviewing and updating existing parking bye-laws, focusing initially on Cavan town. He stated that the first draft of the proposed changes has been completed, and key stakeholders have all been consulted.

8.10 That Cavan County Council write to the Minister for Health and the HSE to express concern about ongoing lack of dental care services for children in our National Schools.

Councillor B. Fay proposed that Cavan County Council write to the Minister for Health and the HSE to express their concern about the ongoing lack of dental care services for children in our National Schools. Councillor Fay stated that in some cases, children are heading for first year in secondary school and have not been seen in national school by the school dentist. He stated that parents are getting their children seen privately but this should not be the case when the service of school dentist is there. Councillor Fay stated that he understands the system is severely understaffed at present and urged for more investment to be put into the service.

Councillor T.P. O'Reilly supported the motion and stated that children of a school going age need regular check-ups and such services are essential to avoid problems in later life.

8.11 Need for varied sizes in housing developments nationwide.

Councillor Á. Smith stated that there is a critical need to plan future housing developments that address both the growing overall housing demand and the specific needs of our aging population. She stated that a one-size-fits-all approach to new housing is no longer viable, particularly in light of shifting demographics and increasing pressure on health and social care systems. Councillor Á. Smith stated that by 2040, it is projected that over one in four residents will fall within the sixty-five and over age group, with a notable rise in those aged eighty and above. Councillor Á. Smith noted that many older residents wish to remain in their communities, close to family, services and amenities but face barriers due to the lack of suitable housing options. She stated that building more appropriate homes for older residents can help free up under-occupied larger homes, supporting younger families and improving housing circulation across the market. Councillor Á. Smith proposed that Cavan County Council write to the Minister for Housing and Local Government acknowledging the growing housing need across the county and asking that he ensures future housing strategies include a targeted approach to meeting the needs of older residents. Councillor Á. Smith requested that the Planning Department conduct a comprehensive review of existing and future housing supply to assess the availability of age-appropriate homes in terms of size, layout and location. Councillor Smith requested for planning guidance to define and promote suitable house sizes for older adults, including minimum floor space standards and flexible design features that allow for aging and that we require developers, where appropriate, to include a proportion of homes within new developments both private and social that are specifically designed or easily adaptable for older residents.

Councillor P. Walsh seconded Councillor Á. Smith's proposal.

Councillor S. Conaty supported the motion and stated that more one and two bedroom houses need to be built to accommodate single people.

Councillor T.P. O'Reilly supported the motion and stated that accessible bathrooms should be mandatory in all new houses under construction.

Mr. Brendan Jennings, Director of Service stated that over the last eighteen months, there is a good mix of development being constructed in the County and the council are working well with developers to achieve this.

8.12 To seek a review of the HAP allocation for County Cavan.

Councillor T.P. O'Reilly proposed that Cavan County Council write to the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, Mr. James Browne, T.D. asking for a review of the Housing Assistance Payment system as current rates have not increased since 2016. Councillor T.P. O'Reilly stated that the rates offered to tenants are not up to speed with the growing rents.

Councillor N. Brady seconded Councillor T.P. O'Reilly's proposal noting that Cavan is the second lowest rate paying county and yet one of the highest when it comes to renting.

Councillor S. Conaty supported the motion and stated that with the growing cost of living HAP as a social support to those who have a long-term housing need is not enough.

Councillor S.P. O'Reilly supported the motion and noted that the HAP payment in Cavan is much less than that in Meath. Councillor O'Reilly stated that a review is needed, and we should not be feathering the nest of any landlord or property owner. Councillor O'Reilly stated that the next generation will not be able to provide from their own resources and people are currently being exploited by landlords.

Councillors B. Fay, P. Walsh, T. Smith and C. Kelly supported the motion.

8.13 Ag iarraidh at Rialtas na hÉireann deireadh a chur le Cineadhóithú na Pailistine a mhaoiniú tríd Bhannaí Cogaidh Iosrael a dhíol agus a éascú / To call on the Irish Government to stop financing the Palestinian Genocide through the sale and facilitation of Israeli War Bonds.

Councillor S. Conaty proposed that Cavan County Council call on the Irish Government to stop financing the Palestinian Genocide through the sale and facilitation of Israeli War Bonds. Councillor Conaty stated that the Central Bank of Ireland currently authorises the sale of these bonds, which raises capital for the Israeli Government and stated that supporting military operations, apartheid structures and illegal settlements implies that Ireland is funding war crimes. He stated that this is a stain on the Irish State. Councillor Conaty stated that Sinn Féin drafted a bill aimed at blocking the Central Bank from selling Israel's bonds and it was voted down. He stated that the bill was independently drafted, legally sound and in no way a breach of international law. Councillor Conaty stated that what is a breach of international law is the intentional burning of children

alive, the assassination of journalists, medics and aid workers and starving the entire population on purpose. Councillor Conaty stated that this is the fourth motion he has down on the agenda previously calling for a ban on military use of Shannon airport and the introduction of ethical procurement policy targeting the Israeli goods. Councillor Conaty welcomed movement on the passage of the Occupied Territories Bill but noted that it was a watered piece of legislation to the point that their version of the Bill is more symbolic than effective.

Councillors N. Connell and D. Brady supported the motion.

The meeting concluded at 3.55p.m.

Certified Correct: _____ Date: _____

Cathaoirleach: _____