

## **Minutes of Meeting of Cavan County Council held in the Council Chamber on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> September 2025 at 2.00p.m.**

Councillor J.P. Feeley, Cathaoirleach, presiding

**PRESENT:** Councillors W. Bennett, D. Brady, N. Brady, S. Conaty, N. Connell, B. Fay, C. Kelly, S.P. O'Reilly, T.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  
D. Gilchrist, Senior Executive Officer  
E. Smith, Administrative Officer.

**APOLOGIES:** Councillors P Brady, C. Brady

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Councillor W. Bennett Leas-Cathaoirleach welcomed all to the meeting and wished Ms. Deirdre Gilchrist well in her new role as Senior Executive Officer, Human Resources and Corporate Affairs.

### **Confirmation of Minutes**

**1. To confirm Minutes of Monthly Meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> July 2025. Miontuairiscí cruinnithe 14<sup>th</sup> Mí Iúil 2025 a dhearbhú.**

It was

Proposed by Councillor S.P. O'Reilly

Seconded by Councillor N. Smith

And

Resolved;

“that minutes of monthly meeting of Cavan County Council held on 14<sup>th</sup> July 2025 be hereby approved”

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

Noted.

### **Note Minutes of Committee Meetings**

**3. To note Minutes of Corporate Policy Group meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> June 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.

### **Correspondence:**

- 5.(a) To note reply from Department of Education and Youth regarding the Leaving Certificate Oral Examinations.**

Noted. Councillor Á. Smith expressed her disappointment with the reply received.

- (b) To note reply from Fáilte Ireland regarding the request that a package of measures be put in place to encourage new B&B units into the market following the repurposing of same to accommodate an influx of IPAS.**

Noted.

- (c) To note reply from Office of the Minister for Justice, Home Affairs and Migration regarding Luke's Law.**

Noted. Councillor S.P. O'Reilly welcomed the response.

- (d) To note reply from Office of the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage regarding the Housing Assistance Payment (HAP).**

Noted.

- (e) To note reply from Simon Harris, T.D., Tánaiste regarding voting rights in Presidential Elections.**

Noted.

- (f) To note reply from Office of the Tánaiste regarding proposed changes to the triple lock legislation.**

Noted.

- (g) To note reply from Office of the Minister for Transport in relation to roads funding.**

Noted.

- (h) To note reply from Office of the Minister of State for Nature, Heritage and Biodiversity in relation to hedgerows.**

Noted.

- (i) To note reply from John Kearney, CEO, National Council for Special Education regarding the appointment of Special Needs Assistant (SNA) support to secondary schools.**

Noted.

The meeting was adjourned for ten minutes.

Councillor J.P. Feeley thanked Councillor W. Bennett for chairing the meeting in his absence. Councillor Feeley welcomed Ms. Deirdre Gilchrist to the meeting. Councillor Feeley welcomed new Chief Fire Officer, Ms. Sinéad Sweeney to the meeting. Ms. Margaret McNally, Head of Finance welcomed Ms. Sweeney and stated that she is looking forward to working with her. Mr. Eoin Doyle, Chief Executive welcomed Ms. Sweeney to Cavan County Council. The members in turn welcomed Ms. Sweeney to the meeting. Ms. Sweeney thanked the members for their kind welcome.

Councillor C. Kelly asked the executive what the situation is in relation to proposed developments in Kingscourt.

Mr. Paddy Connaughton, Director of Service stated that the Council is working proactively with the department, and a letter of offer was recently received. It is a €12 million Project to include the development of new public library and public realm. He stated that this allocation allows us to formally appoint a designer.

**6. To approve the attendance of members at the following:**

**(a) AILG Autumn Training Seminar to be held in the Westport Woods Hotel on 17<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup> September.**

It was

Proposed by Councillor S.P. O'Reilly

Seconded by Councillor N. Smith

And

Resolved;

“that the attendance of Councillors S.P. O'Reilly, A. Rogers, B. Fay, N. Smith, Á. Smith, P. Walsh, C. Kelly, P. Brady, J.P. Feeley. T.P O'Reilly, V. Smith, W. Bennett, N. Brady and T. Smith at the AILG Autumn Training Seminar to be held in the Westport Woods Hotel on 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> September, 2025 be hereby approved”.

**(b) AILG OPR Elected Member Planning Training to be held in Arklow Bay Hotel, Wicklow on 9<sup>th</sup> October or Horse and Jockey Hotel, Tipperary (out of region) on 11<sup>th</sup> October.**

It was

Proposed by Councillor S.P. O'Reilly

Seconded by Councillor N. Smith

And

Resolved;

“that the attendance of Councillors S.P. O'Reilly, A. Rogers, B. Fay, N. Smith, Á. Smith, P. Walsh, C. Kelly, P. Brady, J.P. Feeley. T.P O'Reilly, V. Smith, W. Bennett, N. Brady and T.

Smith at the AILG OPR Elected Member Planning Training to be held in the Arklow Bay Hotel, Wicklow on 9<sup>th</sup> October 2025 or Horse and Jockey Hotel, Tipperary (out of region), on 11<sup>th</sup> October 2025 be hereby approved”.

**(c) LAMA Autumn Seminar to be held in the Amber Springs Hotel, Gorey on 16<sup>th</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup> October**

It was

Proposed by Councillor S.P. O’Reilly

Seconded by Councillor N. Smith

And

Resolved;

“that the attendance of Councillors S.P. O’Reilly, A. Rogers, B. Fay, N. Smith, Á. Smith, P. Walsh, C. Kelly, P. Brady, J.P. Feeley. T.P O’Reilly, V. Smith, W. Bennett, N. Brady, T. Smith and S. Conaty at the LAMA Autumn Seminar to be held in the Amber Springs Hotel, Gorey on 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> October, 2025 be hereby approved”.

**7. Member’s Question / Ceist – Councillor Brendan Fay**

To ask how many speed infractions have taken place on the new distance cameras on the N3 between Cavan and Belturbet.

A reply issued to Councillor B. Fay prior to the meeting.

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

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

Noted.

**9. Approval of nominee to Cavan Local Community and Development Committee under Section 128C (3)(b) of the Local Government Reform Act 2014:**

- **Mr. Seamus Quinn, Older People’s Interests replacing Ms. Frances O’Neill, Disability Interests Network.**

It was

Proposed by Councillor P. Walsh

Seconded by Councillor S.P. O’Reilly

And

Resolved;

“that Mr. Seamus Quinn, Older People’s Interests replacing Ms. Frances O’Neill, Disability Interests Network on Cavan Local Community and Development Committee under Section 128 (3)(b) of the Local Government Reform Act, 2014 be hereby approved”.

- 10. To approve the disposal of 0.38 hectares of land at Rathardrum, Virginia, Co. Cavan for the sum of €60,000 to Diamhous Properties Ltd., Threecarva, Bailieborough, Co. Cavan, pursuant to Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001 and Section 211 of the Local Government (Planning & Development) Act 2000, and notices circulated.**

It was

Proposed by Councillor S.P. O'Reilly

Seconded by Councillor A. Rogers

And

Resolved;

“that the disposal of 0.38 hectares of land at Rathardrum, Virginia, Co. Cavan for the sum of €60,000 to Diamhous Properties Ltd., Threecarva, Bailieborough, Co. Cavan, pursuant to Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001 and Section 211 of the Local Government (Planning & Development) Act 2000 be hereby approved”.

- 11. To approve the disposal of 0.17 hectares of land containing derelict house at Gartbratten, Cavan for the sum of €80,000 to Mr. Ciaran Shields, Creevy, Granard, Co. Longford, pursuant to Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001 and Section 211 of the Local Government (Planning & Development) Act 2000, and notices circulated.**

It was

Proposed by Councillor W. Bennett

Seconded by Councillor N. Brady

And

Resolved;

“that the disposal of 0.17 hectares of land containing derelict house at Gartbratten, Cavan for the sum of €80,000 to Mr. Ciaran Shields, Creevy, Granard, Co. Longford, pursuant to Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001 and Section 211 of the Local Government (Planning & Development) Act 2000, be hereby approved”.

- 12. To approve the disposal of 0.459 hectares or 1.134 acres of land approximately at Portaliffe, Killeshandra, Co. Cavan for the sum of €20,000 to Ice Cream Treats Limited, of current address Killeshandra Enterprise Centre, Portaliffe or Townspark, Killeshandra, Co. Cavan, pursuant to Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001 and Section 211 of the Local Government (Planning & Development) Act 2000, and notices circulated.**

It was

Proposed by Councillor B. Fay

Seconded by Councillor D. Brady

And

Resolved;

“that the disposal of 0.459 hectares or 1.134 acres of land approximately at Portaliffe, Killeshandra, Co. Cavan for the sum of €20,000 to Ice Cream Treats Limited, of current address Killeshandra Enterprise Centre, Portaliffe or Townspark, Killeshandra, Co. Cavan, pursuant to Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001 and Section 211 of the Local Government (Planning & Development) Act 2000 be hereby approved”.

**13. To note Audit Committee Reports for 2022 and 2023 pursuant to Section 121 of the Local Government Act, as amended by Section 60 of the Local Government Act 2014.**

Noted.

**14. To fix the date and time of the Budget 2026 Meeting (Section 103 Local Government Act 2001).**

It was agreed that the Budget 2026 meeting will take place on Friday 21<sup>st</sup> November 2025.

It was

Proposed by Councillor W. Bennett

Seconded by Councillor P. Walsh

And

Resolved;

“that the Budget 2026 Meeting be held on Friday 21<sup>st</sup> November 2025 at 10.30am in the Council Chamber.

Ms. Margaret McNally informed the members that an in-committee budget meeting will take place on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> November 2025 at 10.00am in the Hotel Kilmore.

**Vote of Sympathy:**

- Ms. Elaine McGinn, Corporate Services on the death of her mother-in-law Mrs. Mary McGinn, Castlerahan.

**Votes of Congratulations**

- Council Staff on the organisation of Heritage Week
- Staff who organised the reception for the delegation from Kurnch Germany

**MEMBERS' ITEMS – DEFERRED FROM JULY MEETING**

**15.1 To request the Minister for Climate, Energy and the Environment, Darragh O'Brien, T.D., to provide grants to households in areas where there is a high concentration of lime in their public water supply as it is causing extreme damage to household appliances.**

Cllr Kelly stated that at a recent meeting in Portlaoise, he raised the issue of high concentration of lime in public water supplies with Uisce Eireann. He was told that it is

not in Uisce Éireann's brief and that they are not obliged to deal with it. Cllr Kelly stated that this is very serious as householders must replace showers and washing machines which is leading to a lot of problems and huge expense. Cllr Kelly requested that Cavan County Council write to the Minister for Climate, Energy and the Environment, Mr. Darragh O'Brien T.D. requesting that grants be provided to households for the provision of filtering systems.

Cllr Á Smith supported the motion stating that when there is a high concentration of lime in the water it can be very hard to drink, and appliances can be damaged. She stated that St Mogue's school in Bawnboy had to install filters to enable students to drink the water.

Cllr SP O Reilly stated that he would like to include the issue of magnesium in the letter as it is also a problem in the Mullagh area which causes decolourisation of clothes.

Cllr D Brady fully supported the motion stating that the downfall of a good water supply is the presence of lime which blocks copper piping which results in people having to install very expensive systems.

Cllr JP Feeley supported the motion stating that lime has a huge effect on appliances and that something needs to be done either with water treatment plants or to help people put systems in their homes.

## **15.2 To request an update from Irish Water on what plans they have for the upgrading of water and sewage systems in the town and villages in the County.**

Cllr Clifford Kelly asked for an update from Uisce Éireann on any plans to extend or upgrade the water and sewage systems in the County.

Cllr JP Feeley called on Minister Brown to assist towns and villages and to reopen funding for schemes such as Milltown as it is the only village that does not have services. He stated that a substantial application was submitted to the department in the past.

Cllr Á Smith stated that the works being carried out by Uisce Éireann on the road at McCarrens is causing a lot of annoyance to people and she requested clarification or an update from Uisce Éireann as to when the works will be completed.

Cllr D Brady requested that the Council write to Uisce Eireann in relation to the serious delays in getting a water connection. Councillor Brady noted that it takes 26 weeks and when the council was in charge, it only took a matter of days.

Cllrs B Fay and N Brady supported the motion.

Mr. Paddy Connaughton, Director of Service stated that the work on Railway road is due to be completed within the next couple of weeks

## **MEMBERS' ITEMS – SEPTEMBER**

### **Condemn Online Threats to Public Representatives**

Cllr W Bennett condemned the online threats to Tánaiste Simon Harris and his family stating that it is bad to threaten a politician, but to threaten a child is a new low. He stated that we all want more people joining politics but when a young person reads something like this they wouldn't be encouraged.

Cllr T Smith strongly concurred with the motion and added that when families are targeted, democracy is attacked and it will put people off joining politics.

Cllr TP O Rielly concurred with the motion stating that online abuse threats need to be clamped down on and not let this type of behaviour progress.

Cllr D Brady stated on behalf of the Sinn Féin group they concurred with the motion and that they support the calls to condemn threats to politicians' families.

Cllr C Kelly stated that he thought what Tánaiste Simon Harris has had to put up with is disgraceful.

Cllr Walsh stated that anyone putting their name forward for election are here to make the country a better place.

Cllr SP O' Reilly condemned what happened to Tánaiste Simon Harris and mentioned attacks on other politicians. He stated that in the last while politics is dragged through the gutter when there should be honour between public representatives. He stated that the biggest critics are elected members themselves. We cannot expect the public to respect us if we don't respect ourselves, he stated.

Cllr JP Feeley extended his support to the Tánaiste and his family. He stated that no one is out to do the wrong thing, everyone tries to do their best and respect the integrity of all people. He noted that there is a small minority always putting the undercurrent to make something out of it.

Cllr Adrian Rogers, Cllr N Brady, Cllr B Fay supported Cllr Bennett's motion

### **15.3 That Cavan County Council provide an update on the North South Interconnector.**

Cllr Kelly stated that he is aware of a request to have meetings in other local Authorities regarding North South Interconnector. Mr Jennings stated that there had been no meetings since the last council meeting. He noted that the developer of the project has submitted compliance documents to the three local authorities for assessment.

### **15.4 That Cavan County Council request additional State support for the Post Office network.**

Cllr Á Smith stated that the Post Office Network is a lifeline for communities across Ireland, particularly in rural towns and villages, where it often provides the last remaining public service. The Post Offices process approximately 84 million transactions annually with a

total value of €14 billion, including €7 billion in welfare cash payments. Around 540 Post Offices nationwide operate in areas with no bank within a 5km radius underlining their vital role in sustaining local businesses and community resilience. She stated that the Post Offices provides essential government and financial services, combat social exclusion, and deliver reliable face-to-face services for those who may lack digital access or literacy. Over 200 Post Offices have closed since 2018, and many more are at risk without urgent state support. The Irish Postmasters' Union (IPU) has highlighted that current remuneration levels are unsustainable and has called for a €15 million annual government investment to secure the future of the network. Councillor Smith stated that the Post Office Network should be recognised as essential national infrastructure, central to the survival of rural and disadvantaged communities. Councillor Á. Smith proposed that Cavan County Council call on the Minister for the Environment, Climate and Communications and the Minister for Public Expenditure, National Development Plan Delivery and Reform, to commit to a €15 million annual investment in the Post Office Network, in line with the Irish Postmasters' Union's recommendations.

**15.16 That this Council write to the Minister for Culture, Communications and Sport, Patrick O'Donovan, T.D. requesting a clear commitment to the future investment and sustainability of the Post Office network, recognising the vital role local post offices play in supporting our communities, particularly in rural towns and villages.**

Cllr B Fay stated that this Council recognises the vital role of post offices in rural communities as essential hubs for communication, banking and community life. Councillor Fay expressed serious concerns regarding the threat of closures across the county, which would disproportionately impact on rural towns and villages, particularly the elderly and those without digital access. Councillor Fay proposed that Cavan County Council write to the Minister for Culture, Communications and Sport, Patrick O'Donovan T.D. requesting a clear commitment to the future investment and sustainability of the Post Office network, recognising the vital role local post offices play in supporting our communities, particularly in rural towns and villages.

**15.18 That Cavan County Council call for additional investment in the Post Office network.**

Cllr JP Feeley stated that the issue is with the Management of An Post nationally as the number of letters are declining and prices have increased. Cllr Feeley further questioned how the profit from €84 million of An Post transactions a year does not trickle down to post offices, the company's "top heavy" management and the company's purchase of 200 EV vehicles at a time when they're cutting traditional post office

services. Cllr Feeley continued to appeal for people to use their post office as it could be the difference in keeping the local shop open.

Cllr Conaty stated that Ballyhaise post office is only a few months away from closure. He stated that An Post seems to take advantage of Post Masters who are operating work such as click and collect but they have no benefit from it.

Cllr SP O Reilly supported the motion stating that he is aware that the Payzone service is being phased out. This service for buying phone credit, paying bills and tolls which is another process taken from our local post offices.

Councillors D Brady, N Smith, C Kelly, T Smith and P Walsh supported the motion.

**15.5 To call on the Minister for Housing to allow Part V houses to be sold to tenants living in them for a long period of time.**

Cllr Kelly noted that tenants can live in their houses for as long as 7/8years but never get the opportunity to own their homes. Councillor C. Kelly proposed that Cavan County Council write to the Minister for Housing to change legislation to allow Part V houses to be sold to tenants living in their houses over a long period of time.

The motion was supported unanimously.

**15.6 To call on Cavan County Council to ensure hedges along our roads are maintained for the safety of all road users.**

Cllr C Kelly stated that there is an issue with hedge cutting on our roads and noted one road in particular with a housing estate and haulage company, where he received a lot of complaints in relation to instances where lorries are losing mirrors from uncut hedges leading to substantial repair costs.

**15.15 I would like to request that Cavan County Council write to or notify landowners, possibly by advertisement, or to Coillte (where appropriate in the case of forests along roads) asking that unsafe trees which overhang main roads in the county are addressed and made safe. Many trees dislodged and uprooted by “Storm Eowyn” which have not yet fallen but are resting on weak trees and need to be made safe as we approach Autumn and Winter seasons.**

Cllr N Smith expressed his concern about storm damaged trees along public roads. He requested that landowners and relevant utility companies be contacted to address any overlying or damaged trees along public roads.

Cllr A Smith supported the motion stating that lorries are moving out in the middle of the roads to avoid over hanging trees and hedges.

Cllr D Brady concurred with Cllr Kelly stating that overgrown hedges are a serious situation and there are many hedges not cut.

Cllr W Bennett supported the motion and stated that a lot of good work was carried out on main roads, but the side roads are the problem with a lot of telecom poles unsteady since previous storms.

Cllr B Fay stated that truck drivers are complaining as side railings and mirrors are being damaged and enquired if farmers could get grants to cut trees.

Cllr A Rogers, Cllr T Smith, Cllr N Brady and Cllr JP Feeley supported the motion.

Mr. Paddy Connaughton, Director of Service stated that the responsibility is with the landowners to cut the hedges which is in accordance with the Roads Act 1993 and in accordance with the Wildlife Act, hedges can only be cut from 1<sup>st</sup> September to 28<sup>th</sup> February. He further updated the members that 230 hedge cutting notices have been sent out with 137 complaints received.

**15.7 Go scríobhadh Comhairle Contae an Chabháin go dtí na hairí ábhartha, ag tacú hardú maoinithe i gCáinainéis 2026 do sheirbhísí do dhaoine leis an phlúchadh/To ask that Cavan County Council write to the relevant ministers in support of an increase in funding in Budget 2026 for services for people with asthma.**

Cllr Conaty stated that asthma is not properly cared for in Ireland. It is seen as an acute illness, rather than a chronic condition and this needs to change. He stated that Ireland has one of the highest rates of asthma in the world. Despite this, 50% of people living with asthma in Ireland do not have the condition under control, and asthma is often not understood as a potentially life-threatening condition. Councillor Conaty stated that with access to the right medication and healthcare, people with asthma should be able to live their lives symptom free. Councillor Conaty proposed that Cavan County Council call on the Government to give serious consideration in Budget 2026 to improving the quality of life for people with asthma. He stated that this would reduce pressure on our healthcare system and provide long-term cost savings for the State through reduced hospitalisations, unscheduled GP visits, reduced absenteeism from work & school, and reduced asthma-related deaths. Councillor Conaty stated that there are 5 extremely cost-effective measures which could and should be included in Budget 2026, (1) to subsidise asthma medication, (2) financial support should be made available for the development of a severe asthma register along the lines of that developed for sufferers of Cystic Fibrosis, (3) to roll out a special biologic's treatment for those with severe asthma, (4) to improve capacity within severe asthma clinics, where a clinic is staffed by a minimum of one advanced nurse practitioner and (5) increased funding be made available for the Warmer Homes Scheme, coupled with a targeted communications strategy for those with asthma.

Cllr P Walsh supported the motion stating that she has had asthma since she was a child and knows what Councillor Conaty is speaking about. She stated that the blue inhalers don't come under the long-term medical card. She stated that it's a very frightening place to be when having an asthma attack.

Cllrs N Connell, B Fay and JP Feeley supported the motion

**15.8 That Cavan County Council support school secretaries and caretakers who are on strike for better pay and conditions.**

Cllr N Connell stated that school secretaries and caretakers are the first to arrive at schools in the mornings and last to leave in the evenings. They organise records, answer phones and support teachers and principals to keep the school running throughout the day. Without them schools would simply not function. He stated that there is a two-tiered system within the school's system, school principals, teachers and SNA's are entitled to sick leave, bereavement leave and other entitlements as well as pensions and school secretaries and caretakers are not. Cllr Connell stated that the strike was unavoidable, and Ministers Helen McEntee and Jack Chambers had ample opportunity to reach a fair and equitable agreement with the Forsa Trade Union who represent the workers. They chose not to engage in a meaningful way. Cllr N Connell stated that the school secretaries and caretakers are crucial to the efficient management of every school. They have no choice but to make a stand to demand pay and entitlements parity with their colleagues. Cllr Connell asked that Cavan County Council write to Ministers Helen McEntee and Jack Chambers to engage with Forsa to get a rational outcome to the dispute.

**15.14 That Cavan County Council support school secretaries and caretakers in their campaign for fairness and pension entitlements.**

Cllr T Smith stated that there are three issues, pensions, sick pay and compassionate leave pay. He stated that all staff want is fairness and strongly supported the motion. He stated that the strike is only being called off for talks, but nothing is yet agreed. He stated that from talking to school secretaries on the picket line all they are looking for is fairness. He stated that this strike is about fairness and to be treated equally with their colleagues. He stated that it has been highlighted to him that there are schools in the county with one secretary getting all the entitlements and their colleague sitting right beside them not which is totally unfair.

**15.17 That this Council write to the Minister for Education to provide for equal pay and conditions for all school secretaries and caretakers and to ensure they have access to pension parity, critical illness benefit, and bereavement leave, in**

**recognition of the essential role they play in the daily running of schools in our communities.**

Cllr B Fay acknowledged the vital role that school secretaries and caretakers play in the daily lives of our schools. He stated that they are often the first point of contact for parents and the wider community, and they ensure that the schools are safe, well-run, and in a welcoming environment for students and staff. Despite this, he stated that many secretaries and caretakers continue to face low pay, insecure contracts, and limited recognition for their essential work which is unjust and unsustainable. Cllr B Fay stated that he is calling on the Department of Education and the Government to ensure fair pay that reflects the responsibilities and professionalism of school secretaries and caretakers, to provide secure contracts with appropriate benefits, including pension entitlements, sick pay and holiday pay thus recognising their contribution formally within the education system, treating them as integral staff members, and not ancillary workers. Councillor Fay stated that engagement in meaningful dialogue with representatives' groups to deliver lasting improvements in conditions is required as our schools cannot function without secretaries and caretakers as it is time their pay and conditions reflected the respect and value they provide.

**15.19 That Cavan County Council call for a resolution to the industrial dispute relating to the terms and conditions of employment for school secretaries and caretakers.**

Cllr JP Feeley complimented the work carried out by school secretaries and caretakers stating that they carry out a very important role and they need security in their work. Cllr Feeley stated that we should convey our support to the WRC and the two ministers involved as this is an important matter and needs to be resolved.

Cllr C Kelly supported the motions stating that schools cannot function without secretaries and caretakers. Caretakers and secretaries are being discriminated against as they cannot get the same conditions as others. Councillor Kelly welcomed the intervention from M McEntee

Cllr D Brady supported the motion stating that the secretaries and caretakers are the main cogs in the wheel to keep schools running.

Cllr S Conaty, TP O' Reilly, P Walsh, A Smith, V Smith, N Smith and N Smith, SP O' Reilly, A Rogers and W Bennett supported the motion

**15.9 Ag glaigh faoi choinne feabhsuithe ar nascanna iompair phoiblí do mhic léinn a bhíonn ag pileadh ar DKIT tráthnóna Dé Domhnaigh / To call for improved public transport and connectivity for students from Cavan returning to college in DKIT on Sunday evenings.**

Cllr S Conaty stated that he was approached recently by students from Cootehill and the surrounding countryside around Cootehill who are attending Dundalk Institute of

Technology, in relation to the complete lack of public transport between the East-Cavan, South-Monaghan area, to Dundalk on a Sunday evening.

He stated that at present, there are no Bus Éireann or Local Link services operating from Monaghan or Cootehill to Dundalk on Sundays. This makes it incredibly difficult for students to return to college in time for Monday morning lectures. Students have been left to rely on expensive taxis, or lifts from family members, or else delay returning until Monday, which often results in missed classes and additional academic pressure. Students from Cavan and Monaghan make up a large part of the DKIT community, yet this gap in public transport creates a real barrier to education and access. Councillor S. Conaty proposed that Cavan County Council write to the Minister for Transport and the relevant bodies, such as the NTA, TFI, and Bus Éireann, and call for a dedicated Sunday evening bus service from Monaghan to Dundalk, which passes through Cootehill. Even a single service on Sunday evenings would be a huge support for students and help reduce financial stress, improve attendance, and make college more accessible for rural students.

Cllrs N Smith and N Brady supported the motion.

**15.10 To request Cavan County Council to write to TFI to restore the local link routes in West Cavan.**

Cllr Brady stated that local link routes in west Cavan are a vital link for the people who depend on them to get them to work, school, hospital and shopping in their local town. He stated that the people who contacted him about these local link routes are very angry that they were left stranded at very short notice. The people that use these routes are left cut off from making a link to other bus routes as they don't drive and feel very isolated.

Cllr JP Feeley supported the motion stating that we need every community connected while Cllr Á Smith stated that it so important not to leave people in rural Ireland on their own.

Cllr B Fay and P Walsh supported the motion.

**15.11 Chun ard a tharraingt at theacht chun cinn tairgí nua dleathacha raithnigh síntéiseacha agus leath-síntéiseacha I siopaí galtoitíní I gContae an Chabháin, agus ag glaigh go gcuifí I bhfeidhm moltaí An Tionóil Saoránach ar Úsáid Drugaí i leith stádas dleathúil an raithnigh / To highlight the emergence of new legal synthetic and semi-synthetic cannabinoid products in vape shops in County Cavan, and to call for the implementation of the recommendations of the Citizen's Assembly on Drug Use in respect to the legal status of cannabis.**

Councillor S. Conaty stated that at a previous meeting, he highlighted the availability of HHC products in vape shops around Cavan and expressed his reservations about an outright ban of HHC, fearing that we are failing to address the underlying issue, which is, always has been and always will be, the demand for real cannabis. He stated that since the meeting, new untested and possibly more dangerous synthetic and semi-synthetic cannabinoids have emerged on to the market, and like HHC was until recently, they are fully legal and freely available to purchase in any vape shop in this county to anyone over the age of 18. He stated that we do not know what they contain, and we do not know what their short or long-term effects may be. Councillor Conaty stated that total criminalisation has put the trade of cannabis into the hands of unscrupulous manufacturers, who pollute the product on the black market to maximise profits, because there is no regulation. This lack of regulation and resulting denigration of the integrity of the plant has, in my opinion, resulted in the incorrect but commonly held belief that cannabis is the cause, rather than solution, to a lot of physical and mental health problems. Authorities in many countries have realised this, and for example, Germany has now liberalised its laws in order to combat the contamination of black-market cannabis. He stated that we need to decouple the argument of cannabis-use as a criminal matter, because there can be no justification for continuing to criminalise good, decent and hard-working people, in most cases, who use cannabis for pain, anxiety or addiction relief. Councillor Conaty stated that like alcohol and cigarettes, if they were banned in the morning, the fact is that people would continue to use them, despite the threat of ending up before the courts.

Cllr P Walsh stated that young children can go into certain shops to buy sweets, and the temptation is there to buy vapes. She would like the authorities to investigate what can be done.

Cllr SP O' Reilly supported the motion stating that he sat on the drugs task force for some time now and we must have an informed adult conversation about this as he has seen the harm they can do. He stated that Gardaí are losing the battle on the war on drugs

Cllr B Fay supported the motion stating that the shops need to be closed as they are a scourge on our children.

Cllr T Smith stated that shop keepers need to be more responsible.

Cllr TP O'Reilly stated that we must tread very carefully as we don't need to make drugs fashionable. He stated that we need to give our young people credit; we have to guide and educate them as much as we can. He stated that an open conversation needs to be had regarding legalising it.

Cllr JP Feeley supported the motion stating that he agrees with the closure of shops but does not support the legal status of cannibals.

**15.12 That Cavan County Council write a letter to the NDLS in relation to older people renewing their licence when it expires.**

Cllr D Brady stated that many older people discovered that their driving licence has expired and are finding it very difficult to re-new it. He stated that recently he was contacted by a person whose licence had expired and when they started the renewal process, they discovered that they had to go through the whole process as if they were getting their licence for the first time, which included applying for driver theory test and a learner permit etc. He stated that he knew of another person who sat their theory test 11 times at a cost of €45 a time and failed it. He stated that there must be a simpler test or exam or better still a mandatory letter form the NDLS to inform them that their licence is about to expire.

Cllr N Connell supported the motion.

**15.13 That Cavan County Council write a letter to the Minister for Agriculture to outline his plans for TB eradication in our county and country.**

Cllr D Brady stated that TB Eradication Program has been in existence in Ireland since the early 50s and at that time TB effected 80% of herds in Ireland. He stated that significant work has been done to eradicate TB in Ireland and in Cavan over the years, but rates have increased by 36% between the years 2022 and 2024. Cllr Brady stated that he has seen firsthand when he worked with a local vet the devastating impact on farming families when told their cattle have TB. Cllr Brady stated that the blame was pointed at wildlife namely the badger and in 2021 a new bovine TB eradication strategy was launched incorporating measures like badger vaccination to control the spread, but herd incidence has recently worsened. He stated that the eradication programme is a substantial undertaking, but the farmers need to be assured that it is going in the right direction. The success of this programme is essential for the wellbeing and future development of our livestock production for both export and domestic markets. He also stated that further work needs to be done in compensating farmers and support herds that are TB free to remain free. Cllr Brady stated that TB is a serious issue for farmers both north and south of the border and an All-Ireland approach is needed to eradicate this disease. Cllr D Brady proposed that Cavan County Council write to the Minister for Agriculture to outline his plans for TB eradication in our County and Country.

Cllr Winston Bennett stated that back 4 or 5 years ago, he thought the problem with TB had come to an end, but it has lifted its head again. He stated TB brings devastation to farmers as they are suffering massive financial loss when animals go down with TB. He stated that an area in Co Offaly was eradicated of TB as badgers, affected herds and

wildlife in the area were taken out and this should be considered in other areas. He also stated that deer is adding to the problem of TB.

Cllr Á Smith supported the motion stating that this is causing devastation to farmers and that compensation needs to be increased. She requested that the Council write to the Department of Agriculture requesting an analysis on the deer population.

Cllr TP O Reilly supported the motion stating that the same method for testing for TB is being used for the last 60 years and there should be a better testing system in place to pinpoint it.

Cllr JP Feeley supported the motion. He stated that the proper management of wildlife would have a knock-on effect in reducing the problem of TB. He also stated that proper compensation for farmers must be put in place.

The meeting concluded at 5.05pm