

**Minutes of Meeting of Cavan County Council held in The Council Chamber,  
Courthouse, Cavan on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> February 2024 at 2.00p.m.**

Councillor P. Brady, Cathaoirleach, presiding

Present; Councillors M. Argue, W. Bennett, C. Brady, B. Fay, J.P. Feeley, A. Fitzpatrick, C. Kelly, C. Lovett, P. McDonald, P. McVitty, S. O'Reilly, S.P. O'Reilly, T.P. O'Reilly, Á. Smith, T. Smith, V. Smith, P. Walsh.

In Attendance; E. Doyle, Acting Chief Executive  
P. Connaughton, Director of Service  
B. Jennings, Director of Service  
M. McNally, A/Head of Finance  
E. McGinn, Senior Staff Officer

Councillor P. Brady welcomed all to the meeting.

**1. To confirm Minutes of Monthly Meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> January 2024.**

**Miontuaririsci cruinnithe 8 Eanáir 2024 a dhearbú.**

It was

Proposed by Councillor P. McVitty

Seconded by Councillor C. Brady

And

Resolved;

“that minutes of monthly meeting of Cavan County Council held on 8<sup>th</sup> January 2024 be hereby approved”

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

Noted.

**3. To note Minutes of Corporate Policy Group meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> December 2023**

Noted.

**4. To hear overview from Enda Tiernan, Head of Information Systems regarding new hybrid meeting setup in the Council Chamber.**

Mr. Enda Tiernan, Head of Information Systems made a presentation to the members regarding the new hybrid setup in the Council Chamber. Mr. Tiernan stated that the Council had replaced and invested in new equipment within the chamber such as a ninety-eight-inch flat screen, new comfort monitors, four new cameras and two new speakers. Mr. Tiernan noted that the cameras would only be used for invited attendees. Mr. Tiernan stated that new microphones were placed on all desks and are used in connection with the cameras. Mr. Tiernan acknowledged the support from the Department of Housing and Local Government and noted that Cavan was one of the few local authorities to secure funding for the project. Mr. Tiernan assured the members

that the IT section is available at any time to assist the members. Mr. Tiernan informed the members that only two microphones can be on at the one time, and you must speak directly into the microphone especially if there are people joining online.

The members in turn thanked Mr. Tiernan for his presentation.

**5. To hear presentation from Diarmuid O’Callaghan, President and Irene McCausland, Vice President of Strategic Planning, Communications and Development, Dundalk Institute of Technology regarding their Strategic Plan for 2023-2028.**

Councillor P. Brady welcomed Mr. Diarmuid O’Callaghan, President, and Ms. Irene McCausland, Vice President of Strategic Planning, Communications and Development, Dundalk Institute of Technology to the meeting to make a presentation to the members regarding their Strategic Plan for 2023-2028. Mr. O’Callaghan stated that the presentation aims to ensure that Dundalk Institute of Technology provides the necessary skills for local industry and contributes to the educational landscape in the region. Mr. O’Callaghan outlined in detail a range of developments at Dundalk Institute of Technology with the goal of attaining technical university status for the third level educational facility. Mr. O’Callaghan noted that DKIT currently has an enrolment of five thousand students and provides graduate and postgraduate courses ranging from levels six to ten. He stated that DKIT covers a catchment area which includes counties Louth, Cavan, Monaghan, Meath and Dublin. He stated that DKIT emphasis is research in areas such as ICT Health & Agriculture, Renewable Energy and Creative Arts which informs its teaching programmes. Mr. O’Callaghan stated that DKIT is currently involved in three capital projects on its eighty-seven-acre site to position itself relative to other higher institutions with their priority to become a technical university and connect with a university in the region, possibly NUI Maynooth. Mr. O’Callaghan acknowledged the difficulty of running a campus when decision making power lies elsewhere but expressed efforts to find an alternative solution. Mr. O’Callaghan stated that he wanted to establish what Cavan County Council needed from DKIT and how the college can strengthen its engagement with local authorities as part of a concerted effort to progress.

The members in turn thanked Mr. O’Callaghan for his presentation and highlighted the links between DKIT and Cavan Institute.

Mr. Eoin Doyle, Acting Chief Executive thanked Mr. O’Callaghan and Ms. McCausland for attending the meeting and stated that it was important to strengthen the link going forward between DKIT and Cavan Institute. Mr. Doyle stated that a link with Cavan Local Enterprise Office would also be beneficial going forward.

**14. To approve Cavan County Council’s Draft Climate Action Plan 2024-2029.**

It was

Proposed by Councillor W. Bennett

Seconded by Councillor T.P. O'Reilly

And

Resolved;

“that Cavan County Council’s Draft Climate Action Plan 2024-2029 be hereby approved”

Ms. Brona Keating gave an overview of the plan to the members and stated that the plan was developed as part of the implementation of national guidelines regarding a 51% reduction in carbon emissions by 2030. Ms. Keating noted that flooding, drought and heatwaves are likely to increase, and everybody will have to deal with it. She stated that Cavan County Council will ensure that no one is left behind in a more sustainable future. She stated that the climate action plan represents the collective aspirations, wisdom and determination of the whole community and signals the local authority’s commitment to address climate change and the environmental, social and economic challenges. She stated that the plan also helps communities living in Cavan to understand and effectively respond to climate change impacts. It supports the county in transitioning to a climate neutral local economy where activities do not have a negative impact on climate. Ms. Keating stated that the plan ensures Cavan makes a meaningful contribution towards national and global climate action targets under the Paris Agreement and Sustainable Development Goals. She stated that it positions the county to stay competitive and attractive to live, work and visit during the transition to climate neutrality. Ms. Keating thanked all for their assistance in preparing the plan.

The members in turn thanked Ms. Keating for her presentation.

Mr. Paddy Connaughton, Director of Service thanked Brona Keating, Colm O’Callaghan, Helen Smith and Tara Smith for their work in preparing the plan.

Mr. Eoin Doyle, Acting Chief Executive acknowledged the fact that the members adopted the plan and noted that it will be a challenge going forward to adopt the actions. He commended the Climate Action team for their hard work in preparing the plan.

**6. 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**

**7.(a) To note reply from Office of the Minister for Agriculture regarding the granting of approval to TAMS applicants who require investments relating to slurry.**

Noted.

**(b) To note reply from HSE regarding free or reduced car parking charges in Hospitals.**

Noted. Councillor Á Smith proposed that the Council write back to the HSE asking that through an administrative role, patients be informed if parking is free.

**(c) To note reply from the Office of the Minister for Justice regarding allocations to open centres.**

Noted. Councillor Feeley acknowledged the response but stated that it does not deal with the fact that prisoners have absconded from prison and asked that a letter be sent to the Prison Service. Councillor S. O'Reilly seconded Councillor Feeley's proposal.

**(d) To note reply from CEO, Courts Service regarding the request for the expansion of the Drug Treatment Courts to Cavan.**

Noted.

**(e) To note reply from the Office of the Minister for Education in relation to the two year PME Post Primary Initial Teacher Education Programme.**

Noted.

**(f) To note reply from the Office of the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine regarding the management of roadside trees.**

Noted.

**(g) To note reply from the Office of the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage regarding the Tenant (Incremental) Purchase Scheme.**

Noted. Councillor C. Kelly expressed his disappointment with the reply.

**(h) To note reply from CEO, Waterways Ireland regarding the development of the Shannon Navigation north of Lough Allen towards the village of Dowra.**

Noted.

**(i) To note reply from the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Employment regarding additional support and assistance to small businesses.**

Noted.

**(j) To note reply from the Office of the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage regarding the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant.**

Noted.

**8. (a) To approve attendance of members at Association of Irish Regions training event and seminar held in the Woodlands House Hotel, Adare, Co. Limerick on 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> February 2024 (retrospective approval)**

It was

Proposed by Councillor W. Bennett

Seconded by Councillor Á Smith

And

Resolved;

“that the attendance of Councillors C. Kelly, T. Smith, P. McVitty, C. Brady, M. Argue, W. Bennett, T.P. O’Reilly, V. Smith, S.P. O’Reilly and S. O’Reilly at the Association of Irish Regions training event and seminar held in the Woodlands House Hotel, Adare, Co. Limerick on 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> February 2024 be hereby approved”.

**(b) To approve attendance of members at AILG training conference to be held in Arklow Bay Hotel on 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> February 2024.** It was

Proposed by Councillor W. Bennett

Seconded by Councillor Á Smith

And

Resolved;

“that the attendance of Councillors C. Kelly, J.P. Feeley, A. Fitzpatrick, Á Smith, P. Walsh, P. Brady, T. Smith, P. McVitty, C. Brady, M. Argue, W. Bennett, T.P. O’Reilly, V. Smith, S.P. O’Reilly, B. Fay and S. O’Reilly at the AILG training conference to be held in Arklow Bay Hotel on 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> February be hereby approved”.

**9. Member’s Question – Councillor S. O’Reilly**

To ask Cavan County Council to confirm if it has applied for funding for the installation of public electric charge points under a recent SEAI Government Scheme and to ask:

- (a) The number of electric charge points installed in the County since 2020;
- (b) The location of electric charge points installed since 2020;
- (c) The number of future electric charge points to be installed.

A reply was issued to Councillor S. O’Reilly prior to the meeting.

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

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

Noted.

**11. To approve disposal of 0.123 hectares or 0.305 acres of land at Lurganboy, Cavan to Cavan Gaels GFC for the sum of €2,650.00, 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 M. Argue

Seconded by Councillor P. Walsh

And

Resolved;

“that the disposal of 0.123 hectares or 0.305 acres of land at Lurganboy, Cavan to Cavan Gaels GFC for the sum of €2,650.00, 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 recommendations for Arts Awards including development, emerging and professional artist awards.**

It was

Proposed by Councillor J.P. Feeley

Seconded by Councillor SP. O'Reilly

And

Resolved;

“that payment of Arts Grants in accordance with following list, as circulated, be hereby approved”

## Arts Development Award Recommendations 2024

<b>No</b>	<b>Name of Group / Event</b>	<b>Event description, location, etc.</b>	<b>Fund amount approved</b>
1	Sambanova	Reformation of Belturbet Samba Band	€1,000
2	Jago Studio	Produce a documentary style video about the largest arts festival in Co. Cavan - Cavan Arts Festival	€1,000
3	Killeshandra Tradfest Committee	St. Patrick's Weekend Concerts in Killeshandra	€1,500
4	TY Students Bailieborough Community School	Students will be given the opportunity to learn and enhance their urban photography skills with MIAN Photography	€450
5	Kilnaleck Youth Drama Society	Help towards stage, hire lighting and sound equipment and purchase set design and costume for upcoming show	€2,000
6	Bailieborough Creative Hub	To engage with other community /diverse groups for inclusive workshops/projects including in Northern Ireland	€1,000
7	Gonzo Youth Theatre	Proposing to undertake two youth theatre productions: 'Animal Farm' and 'The Owl and the Pussycat'	€2,000
8	Bee Smith	Create a St. Brigid's Cloak will be embellished with symbols associated with Brigid, goddess, and Ireland's matron saint, using nature print, crochet, stitch and felt. T	€1,000
9	Accora Orchestra	An orchestral and conducting masterclass with Robert Houlihan	€1,000
10	Crosserlough ICA	Creative writing and effective speaking classes	€500
11	PJ Flood Festival Committee	A weekend of workshops, sessions, and live performances	€1,500
12	Tullyvin Musical Society	Work with a professional facilitator who will lead 4 weeks of workshops	€1,000

13	Cavan Drama Festival Committee	Continue the tradition of bringing high quality, amateur dramatic performances from groups throughout Ireland to the Cavan	€750
14	Nicola Ward (BalletBeFit Cavan)	Deliver Ballet Be Fit workshops free of charge for marginalised adult groups	€660
15	Meitheal Group	Funding will go towards scholarships for several children from Cavan Comhaltas who wish to attend Meitheal Summer School	€1,000
16	The Cottage Market Cavan CLG	Local Live Music Performance at our seasonal market's events in 2024	€1,000
17	Shercock Drama Festival	Shercock Drama Festivals aim is to support, nurture and enhance the aspirations and activities of practitioners in the amateur theatre and to promote drama to all ages.	€750
18	Cavan Macra	Towards a workshop with an established drama facilitator	€600
19	Ballymachugh GAA Club	Proposal is to complete a collaborative art project with the teenagers in our community.	€2,000
20	Virginia Gospel Choir	Touring performances to nursing homes around the County, over the next number of months	€1,000
21	NYAH Traditional Arts	Town Hall Cavan June Afternoon Concert of Octogenarian; Kevin McDermott. Cavan Town Character, Author, Storyteller, Musician & Great Cavan Legend	€1,000
22	Sarah McKenna Dunne	To stage a high-quality production of my new play, 'Burning Truth', a tribunal, memory play, with immersive qualities, about the 1943 Cavan orphanage fire for 3 performances at Cavan Courthouse at the Cavan Arts Festival 2024	€2,000
23	Belturbet Comhaltas	Belturbet Comhaltas plan to hold a Traditional Irish Music weekend in the Autumn 2024 (28th -30th September – Date to be confirmed)	€1,500
24	Gowna Tidy Towns	Our project is "Creative Summer," an enchanting initiative tailored exclusively for children aged 4-13. Held at the Gowna Community Hall, this event brings together three acclaimed artists to conduct a series of engaging workshop	€1,000
25	Pod Youth Theatre	Engage two facilitators to run two groups weekly at Ramor Theatre Virginia.	€2,000
26	The Moogles Theatre Company	Debuting a new play with a cast of four in the winter of 2024/2025. Award will help cover costs of Director and Sound Tech	€1,000

27	West Cavan Arts Co-op / Collective / Community	Scheduled for 31/08/24, FáilteFest is a multicultural one-day festival at Lizzie Buggies Bar's Courtyard in West Cavan. The financial support from this award would enable us to expand our initiatives, providing crucial resources for nurturing and developing various artistic expressions	€2,000
28	Aisteoiri Muinchille	Performance of "Lay up your ends" in collaboration with Cootehill 300 in January 2025 to commemorate Cootehill's history in the linen industry	€1,000
29	Cootehill Arts	Street performers and musicians to perform this year at the Cootehill St Patrick's Day Parade	€2,000
30	Dowra Courthouse Community Group	We plan to have a series of kids' song sessions with music teacher Elizabeth and a kids drumming session with Peter over the Easter Weekend. We will also have a kids art afternoon and Easter Trail around the village	€1,000
31	Cavan Arts Festival CLG	Cavan Arts Festival committee recognise the need to develop legacy & support young people to engage more fully with the arts. We will develop a Young Festival Makers programme whereby the voluntary festival committee invite interested young people to become the junior festival management team	€2,000
32	Arva Town Development Association	Carry out a series of workshops of different art forms such visual art, drama, dance, and physical theatre	€1,000
33	Cavan Down Syndrome	We hope to set up Art lessons with Kidoodle Art Club in Cavan. Kidoodle Art Club aims to inspire and encourage children to develop their artistic capabilities in a fun filled environment	€750
34	Focus FRC Killeshandra Youth Drama	The project focuses primarily on drama but will include other art forms including art and movement to music. The aim is to engage young people in three groups 6 to 8years, 9 to12 years and hope to extend to secondary school age this year	€2,000
35	Belturbet Heritage Railway CLG	Wish to present a cultural experience through the mediums of flamenco, Latin music, and dance	€1,000
36	HappyDays Childcare Services	Plan to engage with various artists that we have worked with over the past year and artists that provide new and fun workshops	€700
37	Harp Foundation Ireland CLG T/A Cruit Éireann   Harp Ireland	CÉHI, in collaboration with local harpers and Music Generation Cavan Monaghan propose exciting events which celebrate Co. Cavan's thriving harping tradition for Lá na Cruite   Harp Day Cavan 2024 on Saturday 19th October	€1650
			<b>€45,310</b>

## Professional Artists Award Recommendations 2024

No	Name of Group / Event	Event description, location, etc.	Fund amount approved
1	Eoin McEvoy	Currently working on a new series of paintings for a solo exhibition at The Ramor Arts Centre, Virginia, which will launch on Culture Night 2024 and continue until December 2024	€1,500
2	Paul McCann	Hoping to attend a song writing workshop which is an invitation only opportunity available to only 15 participants worldwide. Through this I am hoping to improve and expand my song writing skills	€1,686
3	Odhran O'Brien	This award will enable me to immerse myself in intensive skill enhancement through targeted courses, sharpening my composition, arrangement, vocal processing, and mixing and mastering abilities	€1,000
4	Rebeca Sanchez	Seeking financial support to invest the time to develop a musical theatre piece with an interdisciplinary team of artists. This musical theatre piece called "Rebeca and the Magical Bridge"	€1,500
5	Suella Holland	Would like to improve my sewing and screen-printing skills and combine these with the analogue photographs I have been capturing on fabric	€2,000
6	Colette Kearney	This grant would allow me the freedom and peace of mind to fully dedicate myself to my painting practice with the aim of creating a body of work I can confidently exhibit, and feel is representative of the artist I am striving to become	€1,500
7	Freda Donoghue	Would like to develop a 'work in progress' for performance later in 2024, arising from work initiated under an Arts Award for an emerging artist (Cavan Arts Office) and an Agility Award (Arts Council) in 2023	€2,710

8	Mark St. John Ellis	As part of the research and development for exhibitions in Berlin for the Berlin Arts Week and for an installation in Antwerp, funding is required for a printed brochure to present the current project work of sound, film and photographic stills	€2,100
9	James O'Donnell	Proposing to write, direct and perform within a site-specific play for the Cavan Arts Festival this May. The play is called 'Love Me Do' and will take place on the streets of Cavan Town in three specific locations	€3,000
10	Trevor Kaneswaran	I have written several short movies that I would like to make to develop my skills in this medium further. I would like to do this by making my project 'DRESS SMART' (the smallest of my shorts) first	€2,000
11	Tobi Kenneth Fadoju	This award would provide me with the opportunity to collaborate with the talented Irish director, Bobby Zithelo. Together, we will use the funds to develop the script and produce the film/work that I have already written	€2,000
12	Raquel Montero Calero	This award will contribute to the development of my practice because it offers a must needed financial support to allow me to take time and training to grow as artist. The objectives of this project are to develop and present a theatre performance piece written, performed, produced, and directed by myself	€2,000
13	Kim Gaffney	This award will contribute to the costs of a mentorship course called 'The Cornerstone', delivered by The Schoolhouse for Art in Enniskerry, Wicklow	€1,000
14	Marie Smith	Award will allow me to continue to make and improve my portrait skills, working with models of all ages and ethnicities. Looking for different and contemporary ways to portray the model's spirit as well as expressing my own voice in the work	€2,500
15	Claire Crehan	Develop an existing body of work through collaboration with Eileen Coyle & the Lynn Singers. Perform the new work in the Ramor Theatre on 28th September. Continue development of my own skills as pianist	€3,000
16	Lily	Record and release my second album of my own original songs. The financial contribution would enable me to afford to record approximately 12 new original songs	€1,500

17	Róisín Harten	Want to record music, interviews, and sounds on looping cassette and reel-to-reel tapes and distort these cycles through pedals and disintegrating the tapes. I want to dedicate time to experimenting with these outdated materials and delve deeper into the conceptual aspects of my ideas	€1,500
18	John O'Grady	An Award will help to create a professionally recorded and mixed 2 <sup>nd</sup> album, to be heard not only by the Irish market but by a global audience	€3,000
19	Alice Lynch	Time and cost to write a new play. I hope I can entertain, educate, and explore our troubled relationship with our national language	€2,055
20	Gillian Tuite	I have been offered an incredible opportunity for personal mentoring by, and collaboration with, three renowned songwriters in Nashville - Fred Koller, Buddy Mondlock and Dana Cooper. Award will help towards costs	€2,500
21	Stephen Dunne	Would like to apply for material costs towards the production of a new body of work. I am striving to build on the success of shows last year including a solo presentation at Cavan Townhall, a painting survey at Highlanes Drogheda, and another in the UK	€2,000
22	Sally O'Dowd	To develop major new work and present this alongside the work of Joseph Beuys, at the Ulster Museum in October 2024, curated by Anna Liesching	€3,000
23	Clare Martyn	This award would allow me to buy time, specifically to write new material, and then spend 5 days in Golden Egg Studio in Laois recording the new material	€2,500
24	Marina Moroney Harten	Will afford me the opportunity to devote concentrated time and resources to continue the exploration of image transfer and printing techniques within the realm of clay	€2,500
25	Daragh Slacke	This award would contribute greatly to my professional development as lead artist in "Dr Slacke & The Palpitations" by allowing me to again collaborate with Polish visual art & filmmaking duo Kasia Zimnoch & Paweł Kleszczewski (Konik Studios) and videographer Padraig Conaty	€3,000

26	Caroline Fay	This Award will significantly contribute to my growth as an artist by supporting research time and dedicated studio time for the development and exploration of new work	€1,500
27	Kim Mc Cafferty	This award will contribute to my development as an artist by facilitating the time and space needed as a working mother to write new work. My objective in this project proposal is to create a new piece of Street Theatre	€1,900
28	Áine Farrelly	To reinvigorate my artist practice by purchasing new equipment and having time afforded to me by monetary funding to research local day through collaborations and self-directed research	€1,500
29	Bex Sheridan	This award will enable me to take the time to better explore rural Irish folklore and illustrate it to teach the growing communities about a highly ingrained and nuanced heritage that may be wholly unfamiliar to newcomers	€2,000
30	Liam McCabe	Advancing our artistic development, particularly in the realm of music promotion and performance. The planned allocation of funds revolves around the creation of four promotional videos	€2,000
31	Orla Galligan	Develop my Art practice and create new work in 2024 with which to apply for exhibitions. The funding will help pay for materials, framing, research trips and an artist residency	€1,000
32	Margaret McKenna	Development of my upcoming artwork. I have secured two venues in which to develop my ideas. My proposed art will be based on the contrast of lake and ocean from the environmental viewpoint and how it has been impacted by human actions	€1,000
			<b>€63,951</b>

## Emerging Artists Award Recommendations 2024

No	Name of Group / Event	<i>Event description, location, etc.</i>	Fund amount approved
1	Evan Walsh	Allow me time to write and record future pieces of music and also allow me to develop different mixing and mastering styles with my mentors. I would hope to create a body of work which will be released a future date in 2024	€2,000
2	Siobhan McLoughlin	This award would be incredibly beneficial in supporting me and affording me the time I would need to focus on creating the level of work needed for my entry into the 'Hand and Lock Prize for Embroidery' in the Textile Art category	€750
3	Nathan West	I envision using these financial resources to embark on an extraordinary musical venture—my very own EP collaboration alongside the exceptionally talented singer-songwriter, Don Mescal	€2,000
4	Kevin McManus	A one week stay at the Tyrone Guthrie Centre in Monaghan to complete work on my latest novel	€400
5	Trevor Woods	Experiment with new polymer resin materials (Fume-hood needed) and finish off and experiment with some upcycled pallet artwork currently in progress which would be suited to festivals and installation works	€780
6	Louise Swords	I am a 3d clay model artist and plan to have an art exhibition in the Library/Townhall, Cavan. The inspiration is to make 3 dimensional models/dioramas/scenes surrounding issues that have affected my life	€1,500
7	Aisling Kearney	Dedicate time to writing three short stories, taking time off work to focus solely on my writing. I have planned for the three stories to be experimental in nature	€1,250
8	Deirdre Fox	As a singer/songwriter, I propose to record my original songs professionally. I plan to release them on one or more platforms e.g. Spotify	€2,000

9	Dirty Marmalade	Releasing a high quality and professional sounding album that can live up to the standard of other successful recorded music today will allow us to be taken more seriously in the music industry. Collaborating with the highly experienced engineer, Martin Quinn, from Jam Studios in Camaross	€2,000
10	Rosie Carroll	Through critical observation, I'm ambitious to invest in the development of my career, advancing my own practise by combining traditional and digital art	€1,500
11	Mark Conway	This award would allow me to deliver a high-quality product for my first screenplay, facilitating my growth as an artist and earning the respect of the artistic community	€2,000
12	Helen MacDermott	My journey as an illustrator is just beginning. I have not yet exhibited any of my work. This project would allow me to display and sell my work in a less formal way than an exhibition, at the same time seeing how it sits with people in the community	€1,500
13	Sandra Coote	To take the wool from our own indigenous rare breed sheep grazing the fields in South Cavan, dye it and needlefelt it into pieces of art depiction the Cavan Landscape. I propose to visit a mentor who specialises in this area and to participate in a day workshop with her at the end of February	€2,000
14	Charlie McGuinness	The award would be a huge support to my development as an artist. It would allow me the time to delve into a project in theatre I wish to explore. This award would financially give me the time to concentrate on my playwriting, work with an actor in developing the script further and work in collaboration with Padraic McIntyre	€2,000
15	Chris O'Brien	Recording new material as the bassist for Ria Rua Band	€2,000
16	Christopher Clarke	Enrol in more workshops so I can learn from masters and develop my craft as a visual artist	€1,000
17	Marcus Magee	Following on from multiple sellout shows in a number of different venues across 2023, one year later it has evolved to the recording of our debut album	€2,000
			<b>€26,680</b>

**13. To note statutory requirements to complete Annual Declaration in accordance with Section 5 of the Local Government Act 2001 – Part 15. Section 171 (Ethics Register).**

Noted.

### **Votes of Sympathy**

- The Bruton Family, Dunboyne, Co. Meath on the death of former Taoiseach, Mr. John Bruton, brother of Mr. Richard Bruton, T.D.
- The Wilson Family on the death of Mrs. Ita Wilson widow of former Tanáiste and Cavan Monaghan T.D. Mr. John Wilson.

A minutes silence was held in memory of the deceased and the meeting was adjourned for ten minutes.

### **Votes of Congratulations**

- Arva GAA on winning the All-Ireland Junior Football Final. A fantastic achievement for both club and county.
- Ms. Savina Donohoe, former Curator Cavan County Museum on being appointed to the Board of Pobal.
- Ms. Michelle Taite former journalist with Anglo Celt on her new communications post with Lakeland Dairies.
- Ms. Michelle O'Neill, Sinn Féin on being elected first ever Nationalist First Minister of Northern Ireland.

Councillor P. Brady stated that he hoped to have a Cathaoirleach's reception for the Arva Junior Football team in April.

### **Cathaoirleach's Awards**

Councillor P. Brady stated that the Cathaoirleach's Awards will be held on the 4<sup>th</sup> April at a venue to be confirmed. He stated that criteria has changed and there will now be six categories. He stated that if there are too many nominations the SPC will narrow it down to five per category.

### **GP Service Swanlinbar**

Councillor J.P. Feeley stated that he along with Councillors Á. Smith, P. McVitty, B. Fay and Deputy Brendan Smith attended a public meeting which was held in Swanlinbar over the weekend to maintain the GP service in Swanlinbar. Councillor J.P. Feeley proposed that Cavan County Council write to the HSE to ask that a member of the HSE attend a meeting urgently with a delegation from Cavan County Council to discuss the importance of appointing the GP who has shown commitment and a desire to practice in the community. Councillor Feeley also proposed that the Council write to the HSE asking that they advertise the position so that the doctor in situ can be appointed on a permanent basis. Councillor Feeley stated that the HSE recently indicated its intention to amalgamate GP services in Swanlinbar and Ballyconnell. He stated that the GP in

situ for the last three years in Swanlinbar has been informed by the HSE that his rolling three-month locum contract is not being renewed after the end of the month. Councillor Feeley noted that the current doctor had purchased property in the area, and he should be given the opportunity to apply for the position. Councillor Feeley stated that the people of Swanlinbar are entitled to a long-term GP service.

Councillor Á Smith seconded Councillor J.P. Feeley's proposal and stated that there is an obvious solution to the Swanlinbar situation, the GP is already there, and his wife will qualify as a GP shortly and together they can provide valuable services to the people of the area. She stated that she found it difficult to comprehend why the HSE would want to close the practice in the first instance.

Councillor P. McVitty supported the motion and noted that this is a very serious situation for West Cavan. He stated that Swanlinbar GP services cover a huge area, and it could take anything up to two weeks to get an appointment to see a GP in Ballyconnell.

Councillor McVitty stated that the HSE needs to be convinced to do the right thing.

Councillor B. Fay supported the motion and noted that the public meeting was very well organised. Councillor Fay stated that it is time the HSE listened to the people.

Councillor S.P. O'Reilly supported the motion but noted that it was not about GP services but medical card payments which are currently worth €700 per patient to a GP. The motion was supported unanimously.

## **MEMBERS' ITEMS – DEFERRED FROM JANUARY MEETING**

### **15.1 Call on the government to introduce a school bus scheme to facilitate all families who wish to avail of it.**

Councillor C. Kelly proposed that Cavan County Council call on the Government to introduce a school bus scheme to facilitate all families who wish to avail of it. Councillor Kelly noted that every September without fail public representatives are inundated with requests from parents in relation to a seat for their child on the school bus. Councillor Kelly stated that a proper bus service needs to be put in place for children going to school as in most cases both parents in a household are working and school transport is vital to them to get their children to and from school. Councillor Kelly stated that the Minister for Education must take this seriously and do what is right for the children of our country.

Councillor Á Smith supported the motion and noted that the school she teaches in is dealing with school transport issues year in year out. She stated that it is time the Department of Education were looking at school bus routes and sorting it out.

Councillor B. Fay supported the motion and noted that a little bit of forward thinking would go a long way in solving the problem.

Councillor S. P. O'Reilly supported the motion and noted that every year it is the same problem, some children can get buses and others cannot. He stated that Bus Eireann could put two buses on some routes during Covid and now they cannot accommodate the children.

Councillor J.P. Feeley supported the motion and noted that there are challenges every year getting buses and drivers.

Councillors P. Walsh, T. Smith and A. Fitzpatrick supported the motion.

## **MEMBERS' ITEMS – FEBRUARY MEETING**

### **15.2 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. Councillor Kelly noted that Eirgrid had sent letter to landowners in relation to the situation stating that it is going ahead whether the people liked it or not.

Mr. Brendan Jennings, Director of Service stated that no correspondence has been received since the last Council meeting. He stated that a meeting is to take place at the end of February involving the three local authorities planning departments and Eirgrid.

### **15.3 The need to establish a local Hackney Scheme throughout County Cavan.**

Councillor Á Smith noted that public transport is a particular challenge in rural areas, with a lot of population not having access to public transport including local link. Councillor Smith stated that infrastructure must be put in place to support thinly populated areas to grow and to improve connectivity and access for rural dwellers to work, study, for social activities and for public services. Councillor Smith noted that a Hackney pilot scheme was rolled out by Minister Ryan but the only place in Cavan where the local hackney pilot is, is in Killeshandra. She noted that she received calls from locals regarding this scheme and none of them know who is named for the pilot scheme. She stated that the hackney scheme would be a good resource for some of the older citizens who live in very rural and sometimes remote areas and who may not have access to private or public transport. Councillor Smith stated that taxi fares on a regular basis for such people are a big draw on their income and subsidised hackney services would make an enormous difference for them and would enable them to go out and about more often to shop or to do other routine household chores. Councillor Smith proposed that Cavan County Council write to Minister Ryan and request that his Department expand the hackney pilot scheme and clarify details regarding the pilot scheme.

Councillor P. Walsh seconded Councillor Smith's proposal and noted that when people go out it is hard to get home because of lack of taxi services. Councillor Walsh also noted that it is hard to get drivers to drive at night.

Councillor B. Fay supported the motion and noted that this scheme was announced in Killeshandra last February but there is still no hackney in place in Killeshandra.

Councillor S.P. O'Reilly supported the motion and noted that you cannot use a car more than ten years old. He noted that publicans are subsidising people to bring customers in and out of rural towns.

Councillor T. Smith supported the motion and noted that there is a stipulation where your taxi must be wheelchair accessible and one of these could cost up to €50,000. He stated that these taxis should only be for large fleets and not for the person starting off in business.

Councillors S. O'Reilly, C. Brady, P. Brady, and P. McDonald supported the motion,

**15.4 Cavan County Council call on the Minister for Expenditure and Reform to clarify what farm equipment is eligible for VAT refund under the current "interpretation of the law" to farmers and to ask that the Government amend the statutory instrument to remedy and include previously allowable equipment.**

Councillor S. O'Reilly proposed that Cavan County Council call on the Minister for Expenditure and Reform to clarify what farm equipment is eligible for VAT refund under the current "interpretation of the law" to farmers and to ask that the Government amend the statutory instrument to remedy and include previously allowable equipment.

Councillor S. O'Reilly stated that she is being contacted daily by farmers who have been refused VAT refunds on items of equipment most notably bulk milk tanks and automatic scrapers. She stated that previously eligible fixed machinery items such as calf feeders, automatic scrapers and bulk milk tanks are now being excluded from the VAT rebate scheme. She stated that revenue commissioners insist that there is no change to their policy, however it is quite clear from the practical experience of farmers that the policy has changed. Councillor O'Reilly stated that farmers have expended large sums of cash in the belief that they would be reimbursed for the VAT, which is vitally important to them. Councillor O'Reilly stated that the Government must state categorically that items that were previously eligible will be re-instated and that, if necessary, the statutory instrument on this matter should be amended to remove any doubt.

**15.6 VAT refunds for farmers.**

Councillor Á Smith stated that animal welfare, labour efficiency and greater sustainability are some of the positive outcomes of modernising any farm business and investments are needed by most farmers to sustain the minimal requirements needed to meet the

growing demands of red tape and environmental duties which come at a huge cost to farmers. Councillor Smith noted that in the past you would receive VAT back on a cattle feeder in about three weeks whereas now it would take seven years to write it off. She stated that talking to farmers they are now deciding to postpone planned investments due to the lack of clarity and due to the higher expenditure needed to carry out such investments. Councillor Smith stated that the Government must support farmers and she called on Minister Michael McGrath to reconsider the changes to the VAT refunds.

**15.15 To seek a review and clarification from the Minister for Agriculture on certain items on which VAT is retainable under TAMS.**

Councillor T.P. O'Reilly proposed that Cavan County Council write to the Minister for Agriculture to seek a review and clarification on certain items on which VAT is retainable under TAMS. He stated that VAT can now only be claimed back on static products, but a milk tank is not static, it can be moved. He stated that the Taoiseach gave a guarantee at the IFA Annual General Meeting that he would get it sorted.

Councillor W. Bennett supported the motions and noted that VAT cannot be claimed back currently on any farm machinery that is moveable. He stated that farmers are pulling out of purchases as they cannot claim VAT back.

Councillors P. McDonald and P. Brady supported the motions.

**15.5 That Cavan County Council supports proposed Local Link Bus Routes.**

Councillor P. McDonald stated that the growth of local link bus routes within our county is very positive. Councillor P. McDonald noted that the National Transport Authority's Connecting Ireland Public Consultation results saw the highest number of responses coming from County Cavan. Councillor McDonald noted that Killinkere is not included as a stop on the Cootehill to Virginia route via Shercock. He stated that a stop in Killinkere would serve a lot of local people from the area and Cross. Councillor McDonald proposed that the National Transport Authority and Local Link re-examine routes within the County and include Killinkere as a stop as there should not be a drive for seven kilometres without a stop. Councillor P. McDonald noted that the Cootehill to Cavan route is still in design phase.

Councillor S. O'Reilly supported the motion and noted that the Cootehill to Virginia route is still in design phase and Killinkere should be included as a stop.

Councillors V. Smith and A. Fitzpatrick supported the motion.

It was proposed by Councillor C. Brady and seconded by Councillor B. Fay to extend the time of the meeting to 5.30p.m.

### **15.7 Means assessment for public services.**

Councillor Á Smith proposed that Cavan County Council write to the Minister for Housing, Mr. Darragh O'Brien asking him not to include the working family payment as part of the assessment of means for social housing. Councillor Smith noted that low paid workers qualify for the working family payment on the basis that their income from employment is not adequate to sustain that person and their family. She stated that this means that their income is not adequate to meet day to day family needs and such income should not be factored into the assessment of a person's means when they are being assessed regarding eligibility for social housing. She stated that a person in receipt of family income supplement has no chance of getting a mortgage from a bank or any other financial institute for their own home. Councillor Smith stated that these people are being subjected to long-term rental which is not satisfactory. She stated that rents are extremely costly and if a person does not qualify for social housing, they are not able to avail of the housing assistance payment, so they have a huge cost due to the cost of renting.

Councillor C. Kelly supported the motion and noted that the income limits are different in County Meath. Councillor Kelly stated that if people are renting long-term then they cannot save money to purchase their own house.

Councillors M. Argue, P. McVitty, T. Smith and S. O'Reilly supported the motion.

Mr. Eoin Doyle, Acting Chief Executive acknowledged the comments made by the members and noted that a letter would be sent to the Department.

### **15.8 I call on this Council to ask Minister Roderic O'Gorman, T.D., Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth to be more open and cooperative and to communicate with local communities as lack of information is allowing false information to be spread and is causing anguish and fear in some communities.**

Councillor B. Fay proposed that Cavan County Council call on Minister Roderic

O'Gorman, T.D., Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth to be more open and cooperative and to communicate with local communities in relation to the accommodation of refugees as lack of information is allowing false information to be spread and is causing anguish and fear in some communities. Councillor Fay noted that we all know refugees are arriving in Ireland and most people have no problem with this, however in recent times the lack of information regarding the purchase of properties in Killeshandra and concerns over who has been allocated to the Scouts Den in Castlesaunderson had led to numerous people wanting answers. Councillor Fay stated that the Department of Integration and Scouting Ireland are in negotiations to accommodate refugees, but it is the lack of information about the imminent arrival of

refugees into communities that is at the very heart of the spread of lies, misinformation and untruths on social media. He stated that the Department should be answering the questions that everyone is asking and most importantly who will answer questions about the need for service provision in the communities into which refugees are arriving.

Councillor S.P. O'Reilly supported the motion and noted that social media is fuelling the fire of people's vulnerabilities and worries. Councillor O'Reilly wondered how you could put refugees into areas with no services and no transport available to them. Councillor O'Reilly stated that the Minister has let the Country down and should consider resigning from his position.

Councillor P. McDonald supported the motion and stated that it was incomprehensible that people are being put into the middle of the country with no transport service, no health services, and no supports around them.

Councillor J.P. Feeley noted that there are several refugees in Blacklion and even though there were issues with schools and transport the State agencies came together and they and the community worked tirelessly to address the problems. He stated that they got through the challenges and these refugees, and the community have had a positive experience so far.

Councillors P. Walsh, P. McVitty, C. Kelly, A. Fitzpatrick and Á Smith supported the motion.

Councillor P. McVitty asked if there had been any communication with the Department and Cavan County Council's Housing Section.

Mr. Eoin Doyle, Acting Chief Executive stated that there had been no communication between the Minister's Office and the Council.

**Item Nos. 15.9, 15.10, 15.11, 15.12, 15.13, 15.14 and 15.16 were deferred.**

**Meeting concluded at 5.30p.m.**

Certified Correct: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Cathaoirleach: \_\_\_\_\_