

**Minutes of Meeting of Cavan County Council held in the Council Chamber, Courthouse,
Cavan on Monday 11th March 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
L. McGavigan, A/Director of Service
E. McGinn, Senior Staff Officer

Councillor P. Brady welcomed all to the meeting.

1. To confirm Minutes of Monthly Meeting held on 12th February 2024.

Miontuaririsci cruinnithe 12 Feabhra 2024 a dhearbhu.

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 12th February 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 8th January 2024.

Noted.

4. To hear presentation from Mr. Maurice Brady, Irish Farmers' Association.

Mr. Maurice Brady, Chairman Cavan Irish Farmers' Association gave a detailed presentation to the members of Cavan County Council and stated that over the past number of weeks, farmers across mainland Europe have been voicing their anger and frustration at an ever-increasing administrative burden being placed on farmers which have a major impact on farm family incomes. He noted a number of key issues that are contributing to growing frustration and anger with the political system:

- The transformation of CAP away from supporting food production towards actually reducing farm output.
- The failure of the EU to properly compensate farmers under CAP. Farmers are being asked to do more to receive less.

- The proposed Mercosur trade deal being pushed by the European Commission has the capacity to devastate, in particular the Irish beef sector. Europe is placing additional regulations on European farmers but at the same time seeking to increase food imports from South America produced under much lower environmental rules with a higher carbon footprint.
- Overly complicated schemes which have been poorly implemented by the Irish Department of Agriculture which has contributed to widespread delays in payments most notably the ACRES scheme.
- He stated that there has been a complete systems failure on farm investment grant aid (TAMS) scheme.
- Farm schemes are now so complicated that agri consultants are threatening strike action as they feel they can no longer administer these schemes designed by the Department of Agriculture effectively.
- Reductions to the nitrate's derogation from 250kg organic N to 220kg organic N imposed by the European Commission with absolutely no flexibility offered.
- The Nature Restoration Law which places further restrictions on farmers particularly on designated lands with no compensation. He stated that as part of the debate around biodiversity it is important that the Council know that 20% of Cavan farmland is considered "space for nature" by the Department of Agriculture under CAP criteria.
- The industrial emissions directive has huge implications for the pig and poultry sector. Agriculture measures which are not being measured fairly.
- The shambolic management of Ireland's forestry policy which has led to farmers losing complete confidence in the forestry sector compounded by the refusal of the Department of Agriculture, Food, and the Marine to provide appropriate recompense for farmers impacted by Ash Dieback.
- Vat rebate – unregistered farmers have here to fore been able to claim back VAT on fixed items during farm building and building refurbishment. Mr. Brady stated that revenue have changed their interpretation of some of the items and circumstances in which farmers can claim a refund.

Mr. Brady acknowledged the work of the members of Cavan County Council and noted many of the issues above have been tabled as motions by the members. Mr. Brady thanked the Cathaoirleach and members of Cavan County Council and the executive for allowing them the opportunity to speak at the Council meeting.

Mr. Frank Brady, Ulster/North Leinster Chairman stated that the "Enough is Enough" campaign is being held nationwide as the Irish Farmers' Association demands support of local authority and elected members. Mr. Brady stated that "if ye don't

look after us, we won't look after ye" noting that a local election is around the corner and farmers have a vote. Mr. Brady noted that there are ten thousand people in Cavan employed either directly or indirectly in agriculture, 25% of the working population is in agriculture and the average age of a farmer in County Cavan is fifty-seven years. He stated that the IFA members were in the chamber because of red tape and no margins.

Mr. Maurice Brady stated that the IFA are asking Cavan County Council to do their utmost to highlight the issues raised and seek a fundamental reset of how farm policy is devised and implemented both at the EU and in Ireland. He asked Cavan County Council to put forward the following resolution:

Cavan County Council resolves to write to the President of the EU Commission, the Taoiseach and the Minister for Agriculture advising them that the Council has passed the following resolution:

"Cavan County Council supports the IFA "Enough is Enough" campaign. The Council recognizes the significant contribution that farming, and the Agri-sector makes to the Irish and local economy. The Council acknowledges the income challenge on Irish farmers arising from the significant increases in the cost of doing business, regulatory costs and cuts in Basic Income support for farmers. The Council calls on the Government to introduce no further regulations on farmers or any measures that may increase costs on farms without full negotiation and agreement with the Irish Farmers Association (IFA). The Council calls on the European Union and the Irish Government to provide additional stand-alone funding, separate to the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), to support farmers to undertake climate and biodiversity measures.

The members in turn thanked Mr. Maurice Brady and Mr. Frank Brady for their detailed presentation.

It was proposed by Councillor J.P. Feeley and seconded by Councillor C. Kelly to suspend standing orders to deal with the IFA's motion.

It was proposed by Councillor W. Bennett and seconded by Councillors S.P. O'Reilly and C. Kelly to write to the European Commission, An Taoiseach and the Minister for Agriculture in relation to the IFA's motion.

Councillor P. Brady wished the IFA well in their work and endeavors.

5. 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

6.(a) To note reply from Office of the Minister for State with special responsibility for Communications and Circular Economy regarding legislation on a mandatory waste collection service.

Noted.

(b) To note reply from An Bord Pleanála regarding the request that planning applications be dealt with more quickly.

Noted.

(c) To note reply from the Office of the Minister for Finance regarding the Disabled Drivers and Disabled Passengers Scheme.

Noted.

(d) To note reply from the Office of the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage regarding current income limits for social housing support.

Noted.

(e) To note reply from the Office of the Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth regarding child trafficking.

Noted.

(f) To note reply from the Office of the Minister for Education regarding the process of the STEM Learning grant.

Noted.

(g) To note reply from the Office of the Minister of State for Transport regarding the National Car Testing Service.

Noted.

(h) To note reply from the Office of the Minister for Justice regarding An Garda Síochána.

Noted.

7. (a) To approve attendance of members at AILG training on “Local Elections 2024 Preparation” to be held in Hodson Bay Hotel, Athlone on 23rd March.

It was

Proposed by Councillor J.P. Feeley

Seconded by Councillor S.P. O’Reilly

And

Resolved;

“that the attendance of Councillors C. Kelly, J.P. Feeley, A. Fitzpatrick, Á. Smith, P. Walsh, P. Brady, T. Smith, P. McVitty, W. Bennett, T.P. O’Reilly, V. Smith, S.P. O’Reilly and B. Fay at the AILG training on “Local Elections 2024 Preparation” to be held in the Hotson Bay Hotel, Athlone on 23rd March 2024 be hereby approved”.

(b) To approve attendance of members at 2024 Annual Suck Valley Way Training Conference to be held in Hannon’s Hotel, Athlone Road, Roscommon on 13th and 14th March.

It was

Proposed by Councillor J.P. Feeley

Seconded by Councillor S. P. O’Reilly

And

Resolved;

“that the attendance of Councillors J.P. Feeley, A. Fitzpatrick, C. Brady, W. Bennett, T.P. O’Reilly, T. Smith and V. Smith at the 2024 Annual Suck Valley Way Training Conference to be held in Hannon’s Hotel. Athlone Road, Roscommon on 13th and 14th March be hereby approved”.

8. Member’s Question – Councillor J.P. Feeley

That the Council set out details of all sponsorship provided by Cavan County Council over the past two years, setting out the reason for such sponsorship and the budget from which such sponsorship was allocated.

Reply to be issued to Councillor Feeley.

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

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

Noted.

Councillor J.P. Feeley asked for an update on Greenways.

Councillor Feeley suggested getting word into Schools, IFA, GAA, and other clubs to highlight the need of adding people to the register of electors.

Councillor Feeley noted that damage is being caused to our roads network by operators in each municipal district and it needs to be addressed. He stated that it is unfair to leave the matter with the area engineer to sort, stern and urgent action is required.

Mr. Paddy Connaughton, Director of Service stated that in relation to the roads issue if Councillor Feeley makes the areas known to him he will have them looked at. Mr. Connaughton stated that what is in the Chief Executive’s report is the most recent update on the Greenways.

10. To approve the Cavan Local Community Development Committee Annual Report 2023 under Section 128(b)(i) of the Local Government Reform Act 2014.

It was

Proposed by Councillor C. Kelly

Seconded by Councillor B. Fay

And

Resolved;

“that the Cavan Local Community Development Committee Annual Report 2023 under Section 128(b)(i) of the Local Government Reform Act 2014 be hereby approved.

11. To approve the Cavan Local Economic and Community Plan 2024-2029.

It was

Proposed by Councillor J.P. Feeley

Seconded by Councillor W. Bennett

And

Resolved;

“that the Cavan Local Economic and Community Plan 2024–2029 be hereby approved”
Councillor J.P. Feeley acknowledged the work done by Mr. Brendan Jennings, Mr. John Donohoe, Mr. Conor Craven and Mr. Terry Hyland in developing the Cavan Local Economic and Community Plan 2024-2029.

12. To approve the borrowing of €5m. in accordance with Section 106 of the Local Government Act 2001, and subject to Ministerial sanction, for the Abbeylands Phase 1 Project.

It was

Proposed by Councillor J.P. Feeley

Seconded by Councillor S. O'Reilly

And

Resolved;

“that the borrowing of €5m, in accordance with Section 106 of the Local Government Act 2001, and subject to Ministerial sanction, for the Abbeylands Phase 1 Project be hereby approved”

13. To approve the borrowing of €3m, in accordance with Section 106 of the Local Government Act 2001, and subject to Ministerial sanction, for the Shannon Pot and Cavan Burren Park Development Project.

It was

Proposed by Councillor J.P. Feeley

Seconded by Councillor S. O'Reilly

And

Resolved;

“that the borrowing of €3m, in accordance with Section 106 of the Local Government Act 2001, and subject to Ministerial sanction, for the Shannon Pot and Cavan Burren Park Development Project, be hereby approved”

Votes of Sympathy

- The Donohoe Family, Poles, Co. Cavan on the death of Mr. Sean Donohoe.

Votes of Congratulations

- St. Clare's College, Ballyjamesduff on winning the u19 boys basketball All-Ireland Schools League C final
- Virginia College Girls Basketball Team on winning the girls u19 All-Ireland Schools League A Final
- Ballyjamesduff Musical Society on their production of Frolics 2024
- Donal Keogan, Imperial Bar Cavan on being named the "Best National Live Music Venue of the Year 2024".
- Nuálach Automation Ltd on being awarded the best micro start up award at the LAMA All Ireland Community and Council Awards held in the Royal Dublin Convention Centre,
- Cavan Local Enterprise Office on organising a very successful Cavan Enterprise week
- The members wished Loreto School girls U16 football team the best of luck in the All-Ireland Final to be held on Saturday 16th March in Dublin.

MEMBERS' ITEMS – DEFERRED FROM FEBRUARY MEETING

- 14.1 In light of the recent storms, to ask ESB networks to carry out a comprehensive report on their overhead lines particularly those running through forested areas or adjacent to trees. Lack of access to overhead lines has been causing difficulty in carrying out timely repairs.**

Councillor B. Fay proposed that in light of the recent storms, that Cavan County Council write to the ESB networks asking them to carry out a comprehensive report on their overhead lines particularly those running through forested areas or adjacent to trees. He stated that the lack of access to overhead lines has been causing difficulty in conducting timely repairs.

- 14.2 Delays in getting ESB power restored after outages.**

Councillor P. McVitty stated that he has raised this issue on numerous occasions and supported Councillor B. Fay on his motion. Councillor McVitty noted the impact it had on local communities and stated that there are twenty-four houses between Templeport and Corlough that are being negatively impacted due to the position of wires. He stated that during the last storm a number of houses in his area were out of electricity for a week which is not good enough. He stated that an elderly lady was one of those without power and had no telephone for a week and could not be contacted by her family.

14.5 Following on from the widespread disruption caused by recent storms, that forestry companies complete an urgent programme of works to remove trees near to powerlines and that Ministers for Energy and Agriculture amend existing regulations to protect services in communities from reckless planting of trees.

Councillor J.P. Feeley endorsed all that was said by Councillors B. Fay and P. McVitty. Councillor Feeley proposed that following on from the widespread disruption caused by recent storms, that the forestry companies complete an urgent programme of works to remove trees near to powerlines and that the Ministers for Energy and Agriculture amend existing regulations to protect services in communities from reckless planting of trees. Councillor Feeley noted that the local group water schemes were out of water for prolonged periods. He stated that people need water and farmers had no water in slatted sheds. He stated that he was not criticising ESB staff as they came out as soon as they could. He stated that if forestry companies treated communities where they are operating with respect then there would not be as many problems. He stated that trees should not be planted in fields where they will be on top of lines. He stated that it is a disgrace what is being allowed to happen on a regular basis.

Councillor S.P. O'Reilly supported the motions and stated that if it was agreeable with the three members that the Council also write to EIR. Councillor S.P. O'Reilly noted that in Cross there were nine breakages on one line. He stated that COMREG eventually fixed the lines three and a half weeks later. He stated that the utility providers used the storm as an excuse. He stated that people were without internet and broadband connection in the area for weeks.

Councillor S. O'Reilly supported the motion and noted that another problem impacting on communication services in local areas was the snapping of EIR poles as most of them are rotten. She stated that there is then a cost on local authorities to replace this infrastructure and she asked for a breakdown of those costs.

Councillors T.P. O'Reilly, C. Kelly and S. O'Reilly supported the motion.

14.3 To explore the possibility of a rebate of VAT for anyone availing of Croí Cónaithe Scheme.

Councillor T.P. O'Reilly proposed that Cavan County Council write to the Minister for Housing and Minister for Finance to explore the possibility of a rebate of VAT for anyone availing of the Croí Cónaithe Scheme. He stated that sellers of these derelict and vacant properties specific to the Scheme have increased the price for first time buyers because the Government grant has been made available. He stated that while it is a very worthwhile and successful scheme there needs to be a rebate of some sort for young couples who are trying to get on the property ladder.

Councillor T. Smith seconded Councillor T.P. O'Reilly's proposal. He stated that the value of the grant seems to be added to the sale of the property.

Councillor S. O'Reilly noted that couples availing of the Croí Cónaithe grant needed to have the purchased property in their name before they could draw down the grant.

Councillor J.P. Feeley acknowledged that the Minister had put a practical solution in place and asked parties to commit to not abolishing this in the future. He stated that the scheme needs a bit more tweaking and maybe a VAT rebate is the way to go.

Councillor Feeley noted that the development contribution waiver scheme is ending and asked that it be extended for a further period. He stated that currently it only applies to the construction of new houses and asked that it be extended to include restoring old buildings.

Councillors S.P. O'Reilly and C. Kelly supported the motion.

14.4 That Cavan County Council call on the Minister for Health to introduce a vaccination programme for shingles.

Councillor C. Kelly proposed that Cavan County Council write to the Minister for Health to introduce a vaccination programme for shingles. He stated that there has been a vaccination programme introduced in England for shingles and is free to all over sixty-five-year-olds. He stated that shingles can have a terrible effect on people, and it currently costs €500 to get a vaccination for shingles privately. He stated that most people cannot afford this and asked that the Minister introduce a free vaccination scheme here in Ireland.

Councillor J.P. Feeley endorsed all that was said by Councillor C. Kelly. Councillor Feeley stated that there would be long-term benefits from a vaccination programme, and it would be money well spent.

Councillors M. Argue, B. Fay, P. Walsh and P. Brady supported the motion.

14.6 To discuss the terrible impact of suicide in our county.

Withdrawn.

14.7 To discuss the upcoming Referendum on the Family Amendment and the Care Amendment.

Councillor S. O'Reilly stated that personally as a member of the Aontú Party she was very pleased with the outcome of the referenda and noted that it demonstrated a rejection of deeply flawed amendments on family and meaningless referenda on Care, both of which were deeply insulting to the electorate. Councillor O'Reilly stated that the government squandered a valuable opportunity for this generation to update the language of the constitution, to include rather than take out. It squandered the opportunity to strengthen the rights of parents, children, older people, and people with

disabilities. She stated that the proposed amendments provided no meaningful rights or supports but instead would have injected vague ambiguity with unknown consequences into the constitution. She stated that the people of our country recognised this, and they voted overwhelmingly against it. She stated that the decisive referendum result shows a huge lack of trust, not just in the government but also in Sinn Féin, Labour, the Social Democrats and People before Profit. She stated that there is a huge disconnect between the political establishment and the people. She stated that the Government's family amendment was appallingly poor, and no one knew what it meant including the Government as they regularly contradicted each other on its meaning. She stated that Aontú takes significant issue with the Government not informing the public honestly of knock-on ramifications to a vote. She stated that it was a David v Goliath campaign, and Aontú took on the might of the entire establishment, along with just a few well informed and capable independent TD's, Senators and Lawyers on the NO side. Councillor O'Reilly stated that the Minister seems unable to accept his handling of the referenda and the Government spent €23m of taxpayers money on what was government electioneering. Councillor O'Reilly stated that she heard a lot of government and opposition TD's saying that the messaging was wrong, people did not understand what they were being asked, they were confused, she stated that this is the height of insult to our citizens, they knew exactly what was being put in front of them, it was appallingly written and it would have guaranteed chaos. Councillor O'Reilly stated that the Government needs to stop with the culture wars and start fixing our broken systems, reform of the carers allowance should be on the priority list now.

Councillor S. P. O'Reilly supported Councillor S. O'Reilly and noted that €23m would go a long way in fixing the road network across the Country. Councillor S.P. O'Reilly stated that Minister Roderic O'Gorman needs to consider his position and noted that the Government need to stop blaming each other and admit they got it wrong.

Councillors J.P. Feeley, T.P. O'Reilly, B. Fay and P. McDonald supported the motion.

MEMBERS' ITEMS – MARCH

14.8 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 proposed that Cavan County Council write to Eirgrid asking them to withdraw the insulting letters that they sent to landowners in relation to North South Interconnector. Councillor S. O'Reilly seconded the proposal.

Mr. Brendan Jennings, Director of Service stated that since the last meeting the three planning authorities in Meath, Cavan and Monaghan had received a request from ESB

Networks to meet with them and this meeting will take place on the 14th March in Monaghan.

14.9 Calling on Cavan County Council to raise awareness for people with hidden disabilities.

Councillor P. Brady called on Cavan County Council to raise awareness for people with hidden disabilities. Councillor Brady stated that he would like to see the rollout of Sunflower Lanyards across the County which would alert the likes of retail staff that a person has a hidden disability and may need longer in the shop. He stated that some disabilities, conditions, or chronic illnesses are not immediately obvious to others and for some people this can make it hard to understand and believe that someone, with a non-visible condition genuinely needs support. He stated that the hidden disabilities sunflower will also encourage inclusivity, acceptance and understanding. He stated that the roll out of the Just a Minute card would also make it easier for people with disabilities to be given more time in public areas to perform their duties.

Councillor S.P. O'Reilly seconded Councillor P. Brady's proposal. Councillor S.P. O'Reilly also asked that the Council write to the Minister for Health asking that he review the long-term illness scheme which has not been reviewed since 1976.

Councillor Á. Smith supported the motion and stated that there are many hidden illnesses out there that people are not aware of. She stated that people should be given the option of wearing the sunflower lanyard as not all people might like to wear it. Councillor Smith stated that the initiative comes down to people being aware and education is key.

Councillor P. Walsh, T.P. O'Reilly and C. Brady supported the motion.

Ms. Lynda McGavigan, Acting Director of Service stated that the Council recognised the importance of the Sunflower Lanyard and registration for this initiative is underway and about to be rolled out by Cavan County Council shortly. She stated that the Council have ordered lanyards and wristbands, and awareness training will be provided for all staff members. Ms. Gavigan stated that the Council will liaise with communities and the Disability Network in the coming weeks as part of a concerted effort to roll out the initiative across the County.

14.10 Calling on the Minister for Health to urgently look at the long waiting lists to see rural GPs

Councillor P. Brady proposed that Cavan County Council write to the Minister for Health asking that he urgently looks at the long waiting lists to see rural GPs. Councillor P. Brady noted that there are several long-standing GP practices within the County and there is a lot of excellent work being done. He stated that the problem lies with the lack of GPs in the Country and noted that there is now approximately one GP to every one

thousand four hundred people. He stated that most GP services in the County are at capacity and cannot take on any new patients. Councillor Brady stated that in 2022 four hundred and twenty-two doctors left the Country to work abroad. Councillor Brady stated that newly qualified doctors should have a clause in their contract that ensures they work in Ireland for two to three years after they qualify. He stated that we need to give newly qualified doctors incentives to stay here in Ireland instead of leaving for another country where they will set up practice.

Councillor T.P. O'Reilly supported the motion and noted that we also need to give our nurses permanent contracts.

Councillor J.P. Feeley endorsed all that was said and noted that it is a challenge to get a doctor in rural Ireland. He stated that GPs are finding it difficult to get locum cover for one day's leave and the cost of same is very expensive. He stated that we need to ensure that we have better conditions of employment for our GPs to keep them in the Country.

Councillor S.P. O'Reilly supported the motion and stated that there should be no reason why people have to wait nearly two months to see a doctor. He stated that there are sixteen doctors working in practices covering Mullagh, Ballyjamesduff, Virginia and Oldcastle and these doctors should come together to form a co-operative and rotate weekend work. He stated that Covid restrictions have now been lifted everywhere and patients should not have to stand outside GP practices giving their information over an intercom system which is still happening in some areas.

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

14.11 Calling on the Minister for Transport to ensure all airlines have a box to tick to ensure your passport is in date while booking a flight and will be in date by the time you fly.

Councillor P. Brady proposed that Cavan County Council write to the Minister for Transport asking that he ensure all airlines have a box to tick to ensure a person's passport is in date when booking their flight and will also be in date by the time they fly to their destination. Councillor Brady noted that over the years the passport office is getting busier due to people letting their passports run out of date and applying last minute for new ones when they have their holidays already booked. He stated that if airlines inserted a box for ticking when booking a flight, it would ease the pressure on the passport office.

Councillor P. Walsh seconded Councillor P. Brady's proposal.

Councillor Á. Smith supported the motion and asked that the airline company ask for expiry date rather than just tick the box,

Councillors B. Fay, T.P. O'Reilly, J.P. Feeley, C. Brady and C. Kelly supported the motion.

14.12 To discuss the need for an Irish Officer in Cavan County Council to help promote the Irish Language.

Councillor Á. Smith called on Cavan County Council to discuss the need for an Irish Officer to help promote the Irish Language. Councillor Smith noted that every fourteen days a language dies in the world and highlighted how the Irish Language has survived invasions and famine, native speakers young and old use Irish every day. She noted that there is currently a revival of the Irish Language and safeguarding it for future generations will require interventions. She stated that the Government's deadline of securing two hundred and fifty thousand Irish speakers by 2030 is fast approaching with little to show for it. Councillor Smith stated that the target can only be achieved through education and the Gaeltacht. Councillor Smith stated that Irish speakers have often found themselves having to leave Irish behind to speak English, language equality must be achieved and yet there is no Irish Language Officer in Cavan County Council. Councillor Smith stated that the Council needs a person to steer and unite groups across the County and noted that she would like more Irish spoken in the Chamber.

14.18 I am calling on Cavan County Council to engage with Conradh na Gaeilge to ensure that a full Programme of events is organised for Seachtain na Gaeilge 2025.

Councillor P. McDonald called on Cavan County Council to engage with Conradh na Gaeilge to ensure that a full programme of events is organised for Seachtain na Gaeilge 2025. Councillor McDonald noted that Seachtain na Gaeilge runs annually from the 1st to 17th March and stated that the Local Authority has a vital role in organising this and it is time for Cavan County Council to step up to the plate. He stated that Conradh na Gaeilge made efforts to contact Cavan County Council but to no avail and noted that if we are serious about our Language then we need to appoint an Irish Officer.

Councillor J.P. Feeley endorsed all that was said and stated that there was a need for an Irish Language Strategy in the Council. He stated that it is important to have an Irish Officer in place and noted that all signs in Cavan County Council should be bi-lingual.

Councillor T. Smith supported the motion.

Councillor P. Brady supported the motion and noted the importance of the Irish Language.

Ms. Lynda McGavigan, Acting Director of Service noted that the position of Irish Officer in Cavan County Council became vacant only recently and the local authority have begun a recruitment process to appoint a new one. Ms. McGavigan stated that Cavan

Library Service has rolled out an Irish Language programme for Seachtain na Gaeilge and a pop-up Gaeltacht began in Cavan Town on March 2nd. She stated that when an Irish Officer is appointed, they will focus on next year's Seachtain na Gaeilge.

It was proposed by Councillor S.P. O'Reilly and seconded by Councillor C. Brady to extend the time of the meeting to 5.30p.m.

14.13 To request the Broadcasting Commission, An Garda Siochana and Meta to combat broadcasting scams on social media.

Councillor S.P. O'Reilly proposed that Cavan County Council write to the Broadcasting Commission, An Garda Siochana and Meta to combat broadcasting scams on social media. Councillor S.P. O'Reilly stated that it was appalling and disgusting the way a recent RIP scam targeted a young woman who passed away in Cavan. He stated that the undertaker placed the death notice on the RIP website only for scammers to come along and hack the notice which was then shared on social media encouraging people to click to view the funeral mass. He stated that once the link was clicked on people were asked to pay for the service. He stated that when people know the person that passed away they are very likely to click on these links. He stated that scammers had reached a new level of low and stated that the media has not done enough to combat his very unscrupulous behaviour.

Councillor T.P. O'Reilly supported the motion and stated that it was a very disturbing incident and urged people to be vigilant and careful when online.

Councillor P. Walsh supported the motion and advised people not to click on any links on Facebook particularly those that are not computer savvy.

Councillor T. Smith supported the motion.

14.14 To call on the Government to reinstate and increase the cancelled bereavement grant.

Councillor S.P. O'Reilly proposed that Cavan County Council write to Minister Heather Humphreys, Minister for Social Protection asking her Department to reinstate and increase the cancelled bereavement grant. He stated that this payment was cancelled ten years ago due to financial pressure at the time within Government. He stated that over the years lots of people benefited from the bereavement grant of €850 when a family bereavement occurred. He stated that these people worked hard all their lives and paid stamps and it is only right that they are recognised for their contribution to the State.

Councillor P. Walsh supported the motion and noted that the death of a loved one is a hard time for families without having to worry about financial concerns.

14.15 To call on the Minister for Road Safety to engage with car manufacturers regarding the dangers caused by strong LED and Xenon headlights on Irish roads.

Councillor S.P. O'Reilly proposed that Cavan County Council write to Minister Eamon Ryan, Minister for Transport asking him to engage with car manufacturers regarding the dangers caused by strong LED and Xenon headlights on Irish roads. Councillor S.P. O'Reilly noted that some headlights have a green or blue hue of them and when driving in rain and bad weather one can be blinded by the lights.

Councillor Á. Smith supported the motion and stated that some lights on cars are very strong, and something needs to be done at European level.

Councillor B. Fay seconded Councillor S.P. O'Reilly's motion.

14.16 That Cavan County Council clarify the process by which new appointed local authority tenants can claim additional needs payments from the Department of Social Protection.

Withdrawn.

Item Nos. 14.17, 14.19, 14.20, 14.21, 14.22, 14.23 and 14.24 were deferred.

Meeting concluded at 5.30p.m.