

**Minutes of Meeting of Cavan County Council held in the Council Chamber, Courthouse,
Cavan on Monday 13th May 2024 at 12.00 noon**

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
J. McKernan, Senior Engineer
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 8th April 2024.

Miontuaririsci cruinnithe 8 Aibreán 2024 a dhearbhú.

It was

Proposed by Councillor P. McVitty

Seconded by Councillor C. Kelly

And

Resolved;

“that minutes of monthly meeting of Cavan County Council held on 8th April 2024 be
hereby approved”

2. Minutes of first meeting of Cavan County Council held on 22nd April 1899

Councillor P. Brady read the minutes from the 1899 Council Meeting to mark the 125th
celebration of Cavan County Council.

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

Noted.

4. To note Minutes of Corporate Policy Group meeting held on 7th March 2024.

Noted.

**5. To hear presentation from Cavan Monaghan Branch of the Irish Kidney
Association.**

Mr. Paul Donohoe, Chairman of Cavan Monaghan Irish Kidney Association Branch and
Mr. Karl Cronin made a presentation to the members on organ donation and
transplantation and the services offered by the Irish Kidney Association. Mr. Donohoe
who himself is a kidney dialysis patient called on people to consider organ donation to
help others like him. He stated that he was on dialysis for seven months and received a
successful transplant that lasted for twenty-seven years. He stated that unfortunately
his kidney has started to fail, and he finds himself back on dialysis three times a week

for four hours at a time. Mr. Donohoe stated that it is an important conversation to have with your family, it can take only sixty seconds and is giving the gift of life. Mr. Donohoe stated that Cavan Dialysis Unit is crucial for this area because it is covering a huge geographical area, Cavan, Monaghan, Longford, Meath and Leitrim. He stated that the Irish Kidney Association is urging people to act and prioritise kidney health, especially given its close links to diabetes, hypertension, and heart disease. He stated that through initiatives like World Kidney Day and the Forget Me Not Flag day, the association hopes to start a public conversation on the importance of early detection and collaborative care in managing chronic kidney disease effectively.

The members in turn thanked Mr. Donohoe and Mr. Cronin for their presentations.

- 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 Health regarding shingles vaccination.**

Noted.

- (b) To note reply from the Office of the Minister for Agriculture in relation to disruption caused by recent storms.**

Noted.

- (c) To note reply from National Transport Authority regarding Local Link Services.**

Noted.

- (d) To note reply from the Office of the Minister for Agriculture regarding the Targeted Agriculture Modernisation Scheme (TAMS3).**

Noted.

- (e) To note reply from the Office of the Minister of State Jack Chambers TD regarding Light Emitting Diode (LED) lights.**

Noted.

- (f) To note reply from the Office of Minister Roderic O'Gorman TD regarding the lack of information being provided to communities when accommodating refugees.**

Noted.

- (g) To note reply from Office of the Minister of State for the Department of Public Expenditure, National Development Plan, Delivery and Reform regarding Broadband rollout rates in Cavan.**

Noted.

(h) To note reply from Mary Butler TD, Minister for Mental Health and Older People concerning the provision of resources for the HSE Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS).

Noted.

(i) To note reply from Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage regarding the Croi Conaithe Towns Fund.

Noted.

(j) To note reply from the Department of Social Protection regarding the RSS, TUS and the Job Initiative (J1) Schemes.

Noted.

8. Member's Question – Councillor S. O'Reilly

To ask Cavan County Council the number and location of vacant Council owned houses in each of the 3 MD areas and the number of houses currently being revamped for re-letting in each of the 3 MD areas.

A reply issued to Councillor O'Reilly prior to the meeting.

9. Member's Question – Councillor S. O'Reilly

The number of planning permissions in 2022, 2023 and 2024 to date where:

Planning was required and has not been obtained;

Planning Permission has been granted but the development has not been carried out in accordance with the plans lodged or conditions of the planning permission granted;

Planning does not satisfy all the conditions and limitations so as to be considered as exempt development.

A reply issued to Councillor 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 Folio CN8118F containing house at Swellan, Cavan (known as Ashvale House) to the Irish United Nations Veteran's Association for a nominal fee of €100, pursuant to Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001, Article 206 of the Planning Regulations 2001 and Section 211 of the Local Government (Planning & Development) Act 2000, and notices circulated.

It was

Proposed by Councillor P. Walsh

Seconded by Councillor M. Argue

And

Resolved;

“that the disposal of Folio CN8118F containing house at Swellan, Cavan (known as Ashvale House) to the Irish United Nations Veteran’s Association for a nominal fee of €100, pursuant to Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001, Article 206 of the Planning Regulations 2001 and Section 211 of the Local Government (Planning & Development) Act 2000, be hereby approved”.

12. To approved Roadworks Programme 2024.

It was

Proposed by Councillor J.P. Feeley

Seconded by Councillor P. McVitty

And

Resolved;

“that the Roadworks Programme 2024 be hereby approved”

Councillor S.P. O’Reilly proposed that a letter be sent to the Minister for Transport with Cavan County Council’s roadworks programme attached.

13. In accordance with Section 211, Local Government Act 2001, as amended, adoption of the 2023 Annual Report.

It was

Proposed by Councillor C. Kelly

Seconded by Councillor S.P. O’Reilly

And

Resolved;

“that In accordance with Section 211, Local Government Act 2001, as amended, the 2023 Annual Report be hereby approved”

Centre Regeneration Scheme Funding

Councillor C. Kelly welcomed the €10.9m allocated towards Kingscourt Town Centre Regeneration Scheme and thanked Minister Heather Humphreys T.D. and her Department for the allocation of same.

Councillor C. Brady welcomed the €6.1m allocated for St. Michael’s Hall Community Centre in Cootehill and thanked Minister Heather Humphreys T.D. and her Department for the funding.

Mr. Eoin Doyle, A/Chief Executive stated that it was a great day for Cavan and great credit is due to Minister Heather Humphreys and her Department for the investment. Mr. Doyle commended Mr. Brendan Jennings, Director of Service and the staff in Community and Enterprise for the work they do in compiling these projects.

Votes of Sympathy

- Aodh Dolan, Killeshandra and San Francisco son of former Councillor and Senator Seamus Dolan.
- Gabriel Hurson, Community & Enterprise on the death of his father Patrick Hurson, Monaghan.
- Councillor Philip Brady and the Brady Family on the death of his uncle Fr. Jim Brady, Mullahoran.

Votes of Congratulations

- Cavan ladies u14, u16 and u18 football teams on winning the Ulster Final.
- Bailieborough Community School u-16 girls on winning the Ulster Final Schools Competition.

Retirement of Councillor M. Argue

Councillor T.P. O'Reilly wished Councillor M. Argue well in her retirement from Cavan County Council and thanked her for her years of service to Cavan County Council. Councillor O'Reilly wished Councillor Argue's daughter Niamh all the best in the forthcoming local elections.

Councillor J.P. Feeley on behalf of the Fianna Fáil group wished Councillor Argue well in her retirement. Councillor Feeley stated that Councillor Argue was a great friend to everyone and a very sincere person.

Councillor W. Bennett thanked Councillor Argue for all the work she did for County Cavan and the Cavan Belturbet electoral area and wished her well in her retirement.

Councillor P. McVitty paid tribute to Councillor Argue's steady hand as an elected representative and to her empathy as a person.

Councillor C. Brady stated that Councillor Argue was like an older sister to her and she mothered her since she joined Cavan County Council. She wished Councillor Argue the very best in her retirement.

Councillor T. Smith joined in the well wishes to Councillor Argue and noted that she had given twenty-five years of excellent service to her County. Councillor T. Smith also wished Councillor C. Lovett well as he was not standing for re-election.

Councillor V. Smith wished Councillor Argue well and noted that she was a tremendous support to all in the Chamber.

Councillor C. Kelly congratulated Councillor Argue on her retirement and stated that she was an excellent Councillor who served her County well.

Councillor P. Walsh stated that even though herself and Councillor Argue were different political parties they were the best of friends. She stated that she hoped their friendship

would continue. Councillor Walsh stated that Councillor Argue's presence in the chamber after the June election will be missed.

Councillor B. Fay wished Councillor Argue well in her retirement.

Councillor Á. Smith stated that Councillor Argue had been very kind to her after she was co-opted to the Council after the death of her father Seán and noted that Councillor Argue was a great role model for female Councillors.

Councillor S. O'Reilly wished Councillor M. Argue the very best in her retirement and admired her for her long dedication to public service.

Councillor S.P. O'Reilly stated that to him Councillor Argue was the "Mammy of the Council". He stated that Councillor Argue was very good to all Councillors and she will be sadly missed.

Councillor P. Brady on behalf of himself and his father former Councillor Danny Brady wished Councillor Argue well in her retirement and noted that it was a pleasure to serve with Councillor Argue.

Councillor A. Fitzpatrick wished Councillor Argue all the best in her retirement and noted that she was an excellent Councillor for her area.

Mr. Eoin Doyle, A/Chief Executive and on behalf of the executive wished Councillor Argue well in her retirement. Mr. Doyle stated that Councillor Argue was first elected to office in 1999 and is the daughter of the late Senator Andy O'Brien. Councillor Argue served as Cathaoirleach of Cavan County Council in 2018-2019 and was one of two vice-presidents of the Fine Gael Party in 2021. Mr. Doyle noted that Councillor Argue was also a member of the Party's Executive Council. Mr. Doyle stated that Councillor Argue was an absolute lady to work with and wished her well.

Councillor M. Argue thanked everyone for their well wishes and stated that after twenty-five years on the Council working for County Cavan it was time to go. Councillor Argue expressed her delight that her daughter Niamh will stand for election on 7th June.

Councillor Argue stated that she was honoured to replace her late father on the Council. She stated that she made many great friends throughout her time on the Council.

Councillor Argue thanked her husband Terry and four children for their support through the years. Councillor Argue stated that she strongly advises following your conscience as the truth always wins in the end. Councillor Argue wished her fellow Councillors the best of luck in the forthcoming election. Councillor Argue thanked the executive and media for their support.

MEMBER'S ITEM – DEFERRED FROM APRIL MEETING

- 14.1 To discuss the issue of multinational supermarkets selling 'Irish produce' without the 'Bord Bia' label.**

Councillor S. O'Reilly noted that there had been many incidents recently where supermarkets have engaged in deception, in one case onions and broccoli were advertised in a supermarket brochure as having the Bord Bia Quality Assurance mark. She stated that when customers went to the supermarket, they discovered that the produce was not as advertised and were actually Irish brown onions originating in the Netherlands and Irish broccoli originating in Spain and there was no Bord Bia Quality mark as advertised. Councillor S. O'Reilly stated that this is unsatisfactory, not alone their play on the words Irish, but also advertising the produce in the weekly brochure as having the Bord Bia Quality Assurance mark. She stated that farmers work hard to ensure that they meet strict Quality Assurance standards set by Bord Bia so that their product is eligible for the Quality Assurance mark. Councillor O'Reilly noted that the findings of Board Bia's audits are not made public as the audit process is confidential and believes full transparency and disclosure builds a better trust between all stakeholders and it is important that consumers and farmers have confidence and trust in Bord Bia's systems. Councillor S. O'Reilly proposed that Cavan County Council write to the Minister for Agriculture to ask what measures are in place with Bord Bia to address these issues and to prevent them from happening again. Councillor S.P. O'Reilly stated that there is an issue in that if the product is packaged in Ireland, they can use the tri-colour and this needs to be highlighted in Europe. Councillors W. Bennett, C. Kelly, B. Fay, M. Argue, P. Walsh, A. Fitzpatrick and P. Brady supported the motion.

MEMBERS' ITEMS – MAY

14.2 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

Mr. Brendan Jennings, Director of Service stated that there had been no recent updates on the North South Interconnector since the April Council meeting.

14.3 Whilst the increase, announced recently, in the Domestic Wastewater Treatment Systems (Septic Tanks) grant scheme from €5,000 to €12,000 is welcome, I propose that Cavan County Council write to the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage seeking that the eligibility for grant scheme be extended to the entire County and not just confined to certain areas.

Councillor P. McVitty proposed that Cavan County Council write to the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage asking that the eligibility for grants be extended to all areas for the upgrading of wastewater treatment systems. Councillor P. McVitty stated that these grants need to be extended to the entire county not just

confined to certain areas. Councillor McVitty stated that he has received complaints from residents whose neighbours secured the grant, but they did not qualify based on their Eircode. Councillor P. McVitty stated that clarity is needed from the Department. Councillor Áine Smith supported the motion and noted that many people are feeling disheartened because they do not qualify.

Councillor P. McDonald stated that while a €5,000 grant would not be enough to upgrade to a new unit, it is nonetheless helpful and should be made available to everyone in rural County Cavan who has a septic tank that operates on the old system. Councillor B. Fay seconded Councillor P. McVitty's proposal.

Councillor S.P. O'Reilly supported the motion and asked the executive how many applications it had received under the Scheme in County Cavan?

Councillor T.P. O'Reilly supported the motion and noted that there should be more public announcements on the scheme stating where the designated areas are in the County.

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

14.4 To seek clarification on the Proposed new Regulations for childcare providers.

Councillor P. McDonald stated that there is huge concern and opposition to the new draft regulations among childminders and noted that childminders believe that the Child Care Act 1991 as it applies to early years' service was written for centre-based childcare and is not appropriate for those minded in a home setting. He stated that home-based care offers the same experience and flexibility of family life and allows over 53,000 children to grow and develop in a homely setting. Councillor McDonald stated that childminders feel that the draft regulations are a copy and paste of existing centre-based regulations and do not reflect or recognise their home from home care settings. Councillor McDonald stated that if the State continues in this vein, it will regulate the sector out of existence. Councillor P. McDonald proposed that the Council write to the Minister for Children, Minister Roderic O'Gorman in relation to the matter.

Councillor P. Walsh supported the motion and stated that as someone who had been involved in childcare for the last twenty-five years, it was the first caring setup outside the home for a child to experience. Councillor Walsh stated that childcare workers do not get enough acknowledgement for what they do.

Councillor T. Smith supported the motion and noted that many childcare facilities now have a problem in sourcing staff.

Councillor Á. Smith supported the motion and asked if any clarification had been received in relation to de-rating childcare providers.

The motion was supported unanimously.

Ms. Margaret McNally, A/Head of Finance stated that the Council would write to Tailte Éireann in relation to rates for Childcare providers.

14.5 That Cavan County Council support the campaign of the Irish Heart Foundation for additional resources for survivors of stroke and other cardiovascular conditions in the community and ask the HSE and Department of Health to provide the necessary allocations.

Councillor J.P. Feeley proposed that Cavan County Council support the campaign of the Irish Heart Foundation for additional resources for survivors of stroke and other cardiovascular conditions in the community and ask the HSE and Department of Health to provide any necessary allocations. Councillor J.P. Feeley noted that in County Cavan alone an estimated 9,000 people are affected by a cardiovascular condition. He stated that among stroke survivors there is a lack of community rehabilitation and support services.

The motion was supported unanimously.

14.6 That Cavan County Council call on the HSE to provide sufficient support to the Irish Wheelchair Association to allow it to maintain and enhance services in County Cavan.

Councillor J.P. Feeley proposed that Cavan County Council call on the HSE to provide sufficient support to the Irish Wheelchair Association to allow it to maintain and enhance services in County Cavan. Councillor Feeley stated that there are staffing issues due to the pay gap between the rates the Irish Wheelchair Association pay their staff and the rates of pay those doing similar roles in the HSE are receiving. Councillor Feeley stated that this situation is having a particularly negative impact on service users. He stated that people who use the service are only getting to attend the centre once every two weeks whereas previously they could attend twice a week.

14.15 To discuss concerns about the Irish Wheelchair Association.

Councillor P. Walsh stated that she and other members attended a public meeting in the Hotel Kilmore with the Irish Wheelchair Association in the hope of engaging all invested parties to look towards resolutions of the ongoing issues in Cavan. Councillor Walsh stated that the Irish Wheelchair Association is a lifeline for people using the service and asked that more staff be recruited in Cavan. Councillor McDonald stated that staff are leaving the Irish Wheelchair Association for better pay with the HSE.

14.17 Pay parity for Section 39 workers.

Councillor P. McDonald called for pay parity for Section 39 and community sector workers. Councillor McDonald noted that in 2023 an agreement was made in relation to the long-running pay dispute between workers in Section 39 in community services and their counterparts employed directly by the State. He stated that there would be an increase of 3% in April 2023, 2% increase from November 2023 and an increase of 3% from 1st March 2024. He stated that to date these payments have not been honoured and only 80% had been paid to date. He stated that this is causing huge concerns for the Irish Wheelchair Association

Councillor T. Smith supported the motion and stated that he attended the public meeting where very touching stories were heard from families present. He stated that the Irish Wheelchair Association train their staff to high standards and then they leave and go elsewhere for better pay.

Councillors W. Bennett and Á. Smith supported the motions.

14.7 Lack of early intervention places in primary schools.

Councillor Á Smith stated that every child should have the best possible chance of leading a full, happy and healthy life, especially those diagnosed with Autism. She stated that through early diagnosis and early preventions, it can lead to the best outcome for parents and the child involved, such as improved learning, proper guidance and a reduction in stress for everyone. Councillor Smith stated that Autism affects development of communication and social interaction which leads to difficulties with learning and adapting to new situations and therefore by recognising Autism early, it means that targeted support can be provided for children. Councillor Smith stated that these children then feel more secure within their learning environment and it gives them the tools to interact successfully with their peers and teachers. Councillor Smith noted that speech and therapy costs €85 for 45 minutes, occupational therapy costs €100 for 50 minutes and school observation €200 which is very expensive on parents. Councillor Smith stated that these expenses for services that are meant to be provided should be considered and refunded to parents to give their children the best chance. Councillor Smith proposed that Cavan County Council write to the Minister for Education seeking the allocation of more early intervention ASD classes and to make more courses available to teachers to work in ASD units.

The motion was supported unanimously.

14.8 To discuss the Garda Vetting System.

Councillor Á. Smith noted that Garda Vetting is vital for persons carrying out relevant work with children and vulnerable persons and stated that no organisation should permit

to undertake relevant work or activities on behalf of the organisation unless the organisation receives a vetting disclosure in respect of that person. Councillor Smith stated that once you are vetted your details should be saved on the system and a person should not have to be vetted each time they volunteer with different groups. Councillor Smith proposed that Cavan County Council write to Ms. Helen McEntee, Minister for Justice asking that something be done to improve the Garda Vetting system in place.

Councillor S.P. O'Reilly seconded Councillor Á. Smith's proposal. Councillor O'Reilly was of the opinion that Garda Vetting should be done on PPSN numbers as having to be vetted every two years is adding another layer of bureaucracy.

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

It was proposed by Councillor J.P. Feeley and seconded by Councillor A. Fitzpatrick to adjourn the meeting for five minutes.

14.9 The Council submit a request to the Department of Housing, Local Government for a review of the Housing Act 2014 insofar as it relates to dealing with anti-social behaviour. Particular reference should be made to speeding up the legal process in dealing with the recovery of possession of dwellings for breach of tenancy.

Councillor P. Brady stated that he knew of a particular housing estate where householders were dumping their rubbish next door and causing rat infestation. He stated that currently it is hard for the Council to move people out of Council houses who are causing problems for others in the estate. Councillor Brady stated that the Department need to get sheriffs on the job quicker and give them the opportunity to put people out if they are not looking after their Council house. Councillor Brady proposed that Cavan County Council write to Mr. Darragh O'Brien, Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage asking for a review of the Housing Act 2014 insofar as it relates to dealing with anti-social behaviour. He stated that reference should be made to speeding up the legal process in dealing with the recovery of possession of dwellings for breach of tenancy.

Councillor P. Walsh supported the motion and noted that one house in an estate can bring the whole estate down when it comes to awards. She stated that the Council as landlords need to act as quickly as possible.

Councillor S. O'Reilly supported the motion and noted that she knew of a local authority house in a private estate where there is a dog barking all day in the house.

The motion was supported unanimously.

Ms. Lynda McGavigan, A/Director of Services highlighted the good work being done by tenants in their estates in all weather. Ms. McGavigan stated that Cavan County Council

now have three tenant liaison officers who are engaging with tenants constantly. She stated that the first preferred option is to work with the tenant to resolve the issue. She stated that unfortunately in some cases there is no option but to go the legal route which can be complex and lengthy.

14.10 To ask Cavan County Council to write to the relevant Minister so as to put in place the automatic distribution of medical cards to cancer patients regardless of their means.

Councillor A. Fitzpatrick proposed that Cavan County Council write to the Minister for Health asking that the Government put in place the automatic distribution of medical cards to cancer patients regardless of their means. Councillor Fitzpatrick stated that this is a traumatic time for cancer patients without having to apply and re-apply for a medical card. He stated that it will not cost the Government money and it is a safety net for cancer patients knowing that they can get their medicine free of charge.

Councillor P. Walsh supported the motion.

Councillor C. Lovett supported the motion and noted that medical cards should not be means tested for cancer patients.

Councillor Á. Smith supported the motion and noted that cancer patients also have the cost of carparking and tolls to deal with as well. She stated that there needs to be an overall look at how we treat our cancer patients.

The motion was supported unanimously.

14.11 To ask Cavan County Council to write to Ministers Darragh O'Brien and Minister O'Gorman to increase financial aid to first time home builders to help them install the various compulsory energy saving devices to their homes.

Councillor A. Fitzpatrick proposed that Cavan County Council write to Ministers Darragh O'Brien and Roderic O'Gorman asking them to increase financial aid to first time home builders to help them install the various compulsory energy saving devices to their homes. He stated that when young couple are building houses from scratch there is no help there for them as the Croí Cónaithe is available to do up old houses.

Councillor C. Lovett supported the motion and noted that there is a scheme in place to waive development contributions to the end of the year.

Councillor J.P. Feeley supported the motion.

Councillor T.P. O'Reilly supported the motion and noted that first time buyers are being targeted and need help from the Government. He stated that the current Croí Cónaithe scheme is pushing up the price of houses for sale.

The motion was supported unanimously.

14.12 That Cavan County Council write to the Ministers for Health and Education outlining the serious struggles families have getting appointments, financial assistance and therapies for children with autism.

Councillor B. Fay proposed that Cavan County Council write to the Ministers for Health and Education outlining the serious struggles families have getting appointments, financial assistance and therapies for children with autism. Councillor Fay stated that early assessment is key for these children. He stated that these therapies are breaking families financially as they must go private in order to avail of the services. He stated that vital therapies are a right for children not a luxury.

Councillor V. Smith supported the motion and noted that it is impossible to get through to anyone on the phone and families are getting very frustrated.

The motion was supported unanimously.

14.13 That Cavan County Council write to the Minister for Financial Affairs, Jennifer Carroll MacNeill TD asking why insurance premiums are still increasing considering the fact claims are going down.

Councillor B. Fay proposed that Cavan County Council write to the Minister for Financial Affairs, Ms. Jennifer Carroll McNeill, T.D., asking why insurance premiums are still increasing considering the fact that claims are going down. Councillor Fay stated that according to industry's annual report 2022, claims are down for a third consecutive year. He stated that all of this has resulted in a sixteen year low in the value of insurance claims paid off, yet the Central Statistics Office says the premiums are still rising despite industry claims dropping by 35%. Councillor Fay noted that what is going on is bullying and rip-off tactics by the insurance companies and the Minister for Financial Affairs needs to seriously look at the matter.

Councillor J.P. Feeley supported the motion and highlighted how all of this proved that the ordinary person is not being given any consideration by insurance companies. He stated that there should be more focus on the ordinary person paying their insurance every year and not on the insurance company and their stakeholders.

The motion was supported unanimously.

14.14 That Cavan County Council write to the Minister of Transport highlighting the problems with waiting times for driving licences and the structure of theory tests.

Councillor B. Fay proposed that Cavan County Council write to the Minister for Transport highlighting the problems with waiting times for driving licences and the structure of theory tests. He stated that applicants are currently waiting eight months to do their driving test.

Councillor P. Walsh supported the motion and noted that parents must drive these young adults to work until such time as they do their driving test.

The motion was supported unanimously.

14.16 To discuss school holiday food poverty.

Councillor P. Walsh noted that there are local families who can only afford small amounts of food on the table for their children. Councillor Walsh highlighted the importance of school meals and stated that she was very aware of children and teenagers' needs when it came to food consumption. She stated that some families can only afford to put small amounts of food on the table and who may need help now that we are coming into summer holiday season. Councillor Walsh stated that the hot meals provided in schools is a great initiative but unfortunately during the summer not all children might get these. Councillor P. Walsh proposed that the Council write to the Minister for Education in relation to the matter.

Councillors J.P. Feeley, B. Fay and P. Brady supported the motion.

14.18 To discuss the notable increase in telecommunication structures/masts erected under Class 31 exemptions of the Planning Regulations.

Councillor S. O'Reilly stated that masts are being erected literally overnight under Class 31 exemptions, whereby Communication towers can and are being erected without planning if under 12 metres in height. She stated that it seems to be happening particularly at Eircom exchange sites all around the Country, Councillor O'Reilly stated that some communication companies are really taking advantage, not consulting with communities and there are no constraints to where they will place a mast. Councillor O'Reilly stated that communication masts are dotted around the County, more now than ever and we do not seem to have any improvements in telephone/internet coverage. Councillor O'Reilly stated that the Council's County Development Plan urges providers to share communication infrastructure, that means sharing towers/masts that already exist and are in place, yet this is not happening. Councillor S. O'Reilly proposed that Cavan County Council write to Minister Darragh O'Brien to provide for these situations under new Planning Regulations laid down by the new planning and development bill, currently going through the Dáil. Councillor O'Reilly stated that the Government need to look after the people and not large organisations.

Councillor P. McDonald supported the motion and noted that it is a grey area regarding height and proximity of masts to houses.

Councillors C. Kelly and B. Fay supported the motion.

Mr. Brendan Jennings, Director of Services stated that under national policy the mast must be under 12m to be exempt.

14.19 Fair pay for construction apprentices.

Councillor Kelly stated that the current rate of pay for construction apprentices is €7.50 per hour and this should be increased to the minimum wage of €12.70 per hour.

Councillor Kelly proposed that Cavan County Council write to the Minister for Further Education asking that the rate of pay for construction apprentices be raised to €12.70 per hour.

Councillor P. Walsh supported the motion and noted that the Country needs tradesmen and they should be paid the minimum wage.

Councillor C. Brady supported the motion and noted that an extra few pounds in their pockets would be essential.

Councillor A. Fitzpatrick supported the motion and stated these people are doing a day's work and should be entitled to the minimum wage.

Councillors Á. Smith, J.P. Feeley and T.P. O'Reilly supported the motion.

14.20 Supporting care workers.

Councillor C. Kelly proposed that Cavan County Council supports Family Carers Ireland who are campaigning for a better deal for home carers. Councillor Kelly stated that people want to continue living and being cared for in their own homes. Councillor Kelly stated that Family Carers Ireland offer essential supports, services and advice to assist carers in their caring roles.

Councillor P. McDonald seconded Councillor C. Kelly's proposal.

The motion was supported unanimously.

Councillor J.P. Feeley noted that this was Councillor C. Lovett's last Council meeting as he is not contesting the next local election. Councillor Feeley wished Councillor Lovett well and thanked him for his service over the last five years.

Councillor P. Walsh wished Councillor Lovett the very best and hoped that they might see him back in the chamber in years to come.

Councillor T.P. O'Reilly thanked the executive for their help over the last five years and wished Craig well in the future and all Councillors going forward for re-election on the 7th June the best of luck.

The members in turn wished Craig well for the future and thanked him for his service with Cavan County Council over the last five years.

Councillor C. Lovett thanked his fellow Councillors for the kind words. Councillor Lovett thanked the executive and staff of Cavan County Council for their help and support over the last five years.

Mr. Eoin Doyle, A/Chief Executive joined in the comments and wished Councillor Lovett well in the next phase of his life. Mr. Doyle wished all members well in the forthcoming

election and appreciated the sacrifice being made by the Councillors in working selflessly for the Council over the last five years.

Councillor P. Brady thanked all his fellow members and staff of Cavan County Council for the respect shown to him as Cathaoirleach over the last year. Councillor Brady thanked the executive of Cavan County Council and Mr. Tommy Ryan former Chief Executive and Mr. Eoin Doyle, A/Chief Executive for their help and support over the last year. Councillor Brady thanked Ms. Geraldine McGrath, Ms. Kathleen Reilly, Ms. Evelyn Smith and Ms. Elaine McGinn, Corporate Services for their help throughout the year.

The meeting concluded at 4.20p.m.

Certified Correct: _____ Date: _____

Cathaoirleach: _____