



**PLACEMAKING  
STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE**

**Minutes of Placemaking Strategic Policy Committee Meeting  
held via Microsoft Teams on Monday, 19<sup>th</sup> October 2020 at 3.00 p.m.**

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**PRESIDING:** Councillor Gerard Farrell, Chairperson.

**PRESENT:** Councillors – Martin Monaghan, Colm Murray,  
P.J. Reilly and Paul Ross.  
Breda Murphy, Niamh Donlon and Matt Farrell.

**APOLOGIES:** Louise Lovett and Vincent Fay.

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Ms. Barbara Heslin, Director of Services.  
Mr. Michael Nevin, Head of Enterprise.  
Ms. Mary Carleton-Reynolds, County Librarian.  
Ms. Nora O’Farrell, Senior Executive Officer.  
Ms. Ciaran Murphy, Senior Executive Officer.  
Mr. Terry Rooney, Senior Executive Officer.  
Mr. Martin Morris, Archivist.

Ms. Kitty Hughes, Chairperson, Longford Older Persons  
Council.  
Mary-Jane Sweeney, Music Generation Officer.

**MEETINGS  
ADMINISTRATOR:** Anne Lee.

**ADOPTION OF MINUTES.**

On the proposal of Councillor C. Murray seconded by Councillor P.J. Reilly, it was unanimously agreed to adopt Minutes of Placemaking Strategic Policy Committee Meeting held on the 27<sup>th</sup> July 2020, as circulated.

## **MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES.**

None.

## **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS.**

None.

## **BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT (BID).**

M. Nevin gave a summary regarding the key objectives of the Business Improvement Districts scheme which is to develop and implement a series of new and additional initiatives designed to both further promote and improve the trading environment for the area within the BID boundary in which ratepayers operate their business.

It is also designed to improve the image of towns from a tourist perspective and improve the quality of life for residents and workers in the BID area.

The role of the Local Authority is to facilitate schemes proposed by groups of ratepayers. The Local Authority ensure the scheme is appropriate and collect the money on behalf of the BID Company.

Michael replied to queries raised by the members regarding the Scheme and it was agreed that the item remain on the Agenda for the next SPC meeting.

## **RESTART GRANT and RESTART GRANT PLUS.**

Michael gave an update regarding the range of supports, both financial and non-financial, available through Longford County Council and Longford LEO to local Ratepayers including -

- ReStart Grant,
- Trading On-line voucher scheme.
- Financial planning, training and mentoring programmes run by the LEO.

## **ADDENDUM TO BUSINESS INCENTIVE SCHEME SHOPFRONT SCHEME**

Applicants for the Shopfront Scheme who are in arrears with their rates up to the end of 2019.

The following was agreed by the members of the SPC -

If rates account is in arrears at end of 2019 but a payment plan is in place and the customer is actively engaging with the rates section, a grant may be payable as a credit on the rates account – case by case basis.

If a rates account is in arrears at the end of 2019 and the customer is not pro-actively engaged with the rates section, the application will be refused.

## **ADDENDUM TO BUSINESS INCENTIVE SCHEME (VACANT COMMERCIAL PROPERTY)**

### **Government Waiver Scheme.**

The following was agreed by the members of the SPC –

If rates are up to date to the beginning of the waiver period, the period will qualify as a qualifying period and a cash grant will be payable for a full BIS year to include any waiver period therein.

## **MASTERTECH PROPERTIES**

### **Shopfront Scheme.**

To support the Ballyminion Enhancement Plan which was commissioned by Longford County Council, it was agreed by the SPC to allow businesses to the front of Mastertech to qualify for the Shopfront Scheme if they delivered improvements that supported the Enhancement Plan.

## **REGENERATION PROGRAMME – URDF (URBAN REGENERATION DEVELOPMENT FUND) AND RRDF (RURAL REGENERATION DEVELOPMENT FUND) PROJECTS AND APPLICATION.**

Terry Rooney provided an update on the following and replied to queries raised -

### **URDF**

- Only applicable to Longford Town
- €3m secured for the Longford Connected Project, which is currently being delivered
- Funding application made for the Camlin Quarter, Longford Town.

### **RRDF**

- Applicable to all Towns and Villages outside Longford Town.
- €2.9 million secured for the Granard Motte Tourism Project
- €1.2 million secured for Edgeworthstown
- €650,000 secured for Abbeyshrule
- Currently a call out for applications, closing date is the 1<sup>st</sup> December 2020.  
Two applications being progressed.

## **ADVERTISING OF HOSPITALITY BUSINESSES IN THE VICINITY OF THE GREENWAY.**

Councillor Murray referred to the following Notice of Motion which he proposed at a meeting of Ballymahon Municipal District in July –

“I call on Longford County Council to erect new signage along the Royal Canal Greenway from Clondra to the border with Westmeath. The signage would include indicated distance to the next/nearest town or village and information about some of the amenities and hospitality/tourist related businesses in the vicinity of the Greenway.”

Colm confirmed that Waterways Ireland have agreed to put up these signs.

The members of the SPC agreed with Councillor Murray’s proposal.

## **PRESENTATION ON MUSIC GENERATION.**

Mary Jane Sweeney provided an update on the following programmes and replied to queries raised –

- Instrument Bank – in partnership with local libraries.
- Online music courses for children and young people provided by Dr. Liz Doherty, I Teach Trad.
- Early Years Music Programme.
- Youth Music Sessions – in association with the Attic House Teen Project and Foroige.

## **UPDATE ON DECADE OF CENTENARIES.**

Martin Morris gave a comprehensive presentation on the Decade of Centenaries Programme which will take place in November -

- Objectives of the Longford Programme.
- Schedule of 2020 Programme on Youtube channel of Longford County Library, Heritage and Archive Services.
- Other projects.
  - An education pack for primary schools.
  - Digitisation of archives relating to that period.
  - The Clonfin Centenary – February 2021 – including a book on the North Longford Flying Column.

**PRESENTATION BY THE CHAIRPERSON OF LONGFORD OLDER PERSONS COUNCIL REGARDING “COPING WITH COVID-19”.**

Kitty Hughes addressed the members regarding how Longford OPC members have been living with COVID-19 guidelines and restrictions

Kitty spoke regarding the great plans which the OPC had for 2020, with the support of Longford County Council but, unfortunately, the Pandemic changed all those plans.

Kitty spoke regarding the fear being experienced by older people - fear of contact with and contagion of the Covid-19 virus, fear to go out and about for the daily necessities, fear and worry about our families, fear that our children will lose their jobs , fear that we won't get to the doctor or the hospital because of high demand and even delay in getting there.

Older people have adhered to advice but long for a glimmer of light at the end of this viral tunnel - the rhythm has gone from life, from the cycle of our daily routine. All our social activities have been cancelled, attendance at Church and the voluntary work we so enjoyed doing in our community.

There is deep gratitude to the friendly Postman and the good neighbours who keep us in touch with reality, and the support of Community services through Longford County Council. Kitty stated that she is imploring all who are in authority to work collectively to get the country through the Pandemic and to always do their utmost for the most vulnerable in society.

Kitty acknowledged Longford County Council for the generous commitment being given to the betterment of life in County Longford in these difficult times.

Kitty concluded by quoting Seamus Heaney - *“If we winter this out, we can summer anywhere.”*

**NEXT MEETING.**

1<sup>st</sup> February 2021.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Signed: 

**Anne Lee,  
Meetings Administrator.**

**Confirmed and adopted at Strategic Policy Committee Meeting held on the  
1<sup>st</sup> February 2021.**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
**Chairperson.**