

COMHAIRLE CHONTAE UÍBH FHAILÍ

MINUTES OF STATUTORY BUDGET MEETING OF OFFALY COUNTY COUNCIL

HELD IN ÁRAS AN CHONTAE, TULLAMORE
ON MONDAY, 10TH JANUARY 2011 AT 10.00 A.M.

PRESENT:

Cllr. B. Cowen (Presiding), Cllrs. N. Bourke, M. Buckley, J. Butterfield, J. Carroll, P. Clendennen, D. Dolan, E. Dooley, S. Dooley E. Fitzpatrick, J. Foley, C. Hanniffy, N. Hogan, T. McKeigue, J. Leahy, T. McLoughlin, S. Moylan-Ryan, P. Ormond, D. Owens, G. Plunkett and L. Quinn.

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr. P. Gallagher, County Manager, Mr. D. Kirrane, D.O.S., Mr. F. Heslin, D.O.S., Mr. D. Conlon, H.O.F., Mr. S. Murray, D.O.S., Ms. M. Cleary, Meetings Administrator, Mr. T. Mawe, Financial Management Accountant, Mr. D. Mahon, S.E.O., Mr. H. O'Donoghue, H.I.S., Ms. A. Dillon, S.E.O.

STATUTORY BUDGET MEETING

In welcoming the members to the Statutory Budget Meeting the Cathaoirleach, Cllr. B. Cowen, referred to the Council meetings held in committee on 20th December 2010 and 7th January 2011 to consider the Draft Budget 2011. He acknowledged that compiling the 2011 Budget had been a challenging task for the members and executive. The Draft Budget 2011, he advised, was now before the members for adoption. He invited the County Manager to introduce the Draft Budget 2011 and the Head of Finance to highlight the most significant items therein.

County Manager's Report

The County Manager advised that the Council is required to adopt the Draft Budget, with or without amendment, and to determine, in accordance with the Budget so adopted, the annual rate on the valuation to be levied. The Council, he advised, is required to complete the statutory process within the prescribed period.

The Manager advised that the DEHLG had informed the Council that the Local Government Fund for 2011 was €4.139m. The Manager informed the meeting that the main influences in drafting the Budget included the reduction in the Local Government Fund by 8.12% (or €1.249m) on the 2010 allocation, constraints on income generation and the cumulative cuts across the services since 2008. He drew the members' attention to Section 102, Local Government Act, 2001 which requires the members to have regard to the available resources, have a reasonable balance between the authority's functions and adopt a balanced budget. He informed the members that each Head of Section closely monitor their budgets and that the Council continues to be focussed on revenue collection.

The Manager advised that the Council had taken decisive action since 2008 to curb expenditure. Since July 2008 whole time equivalent staff numbers had reduced by 21% (or 112 staff). Services had been reconfigured and he acknowledged that service delivery had been affected. He advised that pension costs had increased by €200,000. The Council, he advised, had submitted a comprehensive response as required by the Public Sector Agreement (Croke Park Agreement).

The Manager advised that the recent severe weather would have a serious impact on the Roads and Water Services budgets. The grant received from the National Severe Weather Fund of €230,000

would not be sufficient to meet the total costs of water repairs. He complimented the staff, and in particular the outdoor crews, who, he said, had responded in a timely and efficient manner. He highlighted the serious impact resulting from the decline in road grants.

The difficult economic situation being experienced by commercial businesses was acknowledged by the Manager and, accordingly, for the third consecutive year he was not proposing an increase in commercial rates. He drew the members' attention to the table set out in Appendix B noting that Offaly's Rate Multiplier ranked thirtieth from the thirty-four local authorities.

The Manager advised that the Draft Budget provides for a fire service as outlined in the *Draft Plan for Fire and Emergency Operations, Sections 26, Fire Services Act 1981* which, he noted, was still before the members for adoption. He recommended that, in association with the adoption of the budget, the *Draft Plan for Fire and Emergency Operations, Sections 26, Fire Services Act 1981* be adopted. This, he advised, would provide a clear plan for the operation of the service from 2011 onwards.

The Manager advised that the Draft Budget which proposed cuts in expenditure of €2 million had resulted in substantial cuts across all service areas.

In conclusion, the Manager acknowledged the commitment and flexibility of staff, thanked the Management Team and the Elected Members, Corporate Policy Group and Cathaoirlioh for their support over the past year.

Head of Finance Report

In briefing the members on the provisions made within the Draft Budget under the various programme groups Mr. D. Conlon, H. O.F., outlined the cuts to expenditure of the order of €2m. The principal areas where the cuts were made were as follows:

Main Expenditure Reductions	€k
Housing Maintenance	29
D.P.G.'s – Net	358 (€200,000 from Internal Capital Receipts to partially compensate)
County roads	88
Public Lighting	51
Water/Sewerage Operational	571
Planning	39
Tourist Promotion	14
Community & Enterprise	40
MRA/BMW	23
Urban Village renewal	15
Heritage	5
Landfill Operations/Environment	185
Veterinary Services	15
Burial Grounds	4
Fires Services incl. add 250k in 2010	310
Library Services	51
Arts	24
Election Costs	10
Central Overheads	171
Increased Income	
Reduced Landfill Income	- 900
Misc. Charges	40
House Rents	85

Mr. D. Conlon reiterated the County Manager's observation that the cuts will impact on service delivery. He drew the members attention to the reduced Net Effective Valuation, i.e., reduced from €152.050 to €140.768 and to the *Capital Budget Report 2011-2013*. He advised that there is an estimated shortfall of €24.361m in the projected expenditure over the next three years. Accordingly, he advised that works will need to be prioritised.

Mr. D. Conlon drew the meeting's attention to Table A: Calculation of Annual Rate on Valuations for Financial Year 2011 and outlined the provisions of the Draft Budget under each of the programme groups giving details of the significant changes over the 2010 provisions.

Discussion on the Draft Budget 2011

The Cathaoirleach, Cllr. B. Cowen, thanked the County Manager and Head of Finance for their comprehensive reports and for the clarity in presenting the Draft Budget. He invited members to comment on the proposals.

Cllr. E. Dooley noted that the Local Government Fund had decreased from €17m in 2008 to €4.139m in 2011. This decrease, combined with declining revenues, and the fact that 85% of expenditure is non-discretionary, made it difficult, in his opinion, for the members to find further savings. The cost associated with two consecutive winters of severe weather conditions had, he stated, added to an increasingly difficult financial situation. He advised that the members had reduced other services in 2010 to provide an additional €250,000 to maintain the Fire Services operational in Banagher, Daingean and Kilcormac. However efficiencies within the Fire Service had not materialised. The Draft Budget 2011, he stated, sought reductions across the various services in the sum of €2m, including a reduction in the Fire Services of €310,000. He advised that the proposed cuts to the Disabled Persons Grants (DPG) could not be agreed.

Cllr. E. Dooley recommended the Budget as presented by the Executive subject to the following amendments (to allow for a total spend on DPGs of €1,842,175 for 2011 as opposed to the figure of €1,293,725 outlined in the Draft Budget):

- a) Operation of Morgue and Coroner Expenses – Coroner Fees and Expenses €105,000, and
- b) Educational Support Services – Contribution to VEC €13,435

These items of expenditure, he suggested, would be more appropriately discharged from the Department of Justice and Department of Education and Skills/VEC budgets respectfully. He recommended that the Executive write to the relevant Departments requesting that the discharge of these functions be removed from the Local Authority. Cllr. E. Dooley proposed that in the event that the Council is legally obliged to discharge these monies, that an additional €100,000 (which would allow for a total spend on DPG in the sum of €1.75m) be allocated to DPG by reducing the budgets below as follows:

Arts Programme	€50,000
Planning	€5,000
Environmental Services	€18,275
Local Election Reserve Fund	€10,000
Overheads	€16,725

He noted that the draft Budget makes provision for the operation of the Fire Services in accordance with the *Draft Plan for Fire and Emergency Operations, Sections 26, Fire Services Act 1981* (presented to the members in September 2009). Cllr. E. Dooley proposed the adoption of the Budget 2011 subject to the amendments proposed above, and that in light of the amended budget, that the *Draft Plan for Fire and Emergency Operations, Sections 26, Fire Services Act 1981*, be deemed to be adopted.

Cllr. C. Hanniffy seconded Cllr. E. Dooley's proposal. She noted the impact of the Department of Transport Memorandum, coupled with the severe weather, would impact extremely negatively on the County Roads budget. She agreed with the re-allocation of money towards the DPGs. Keeping the Fire Stations in Banagher, Daingean and Kilcormac open, she acknowledged, was not viable

having regard to the significantly reduced allocation in 2011. She advised that the members had not proposed funding to match the required expenditure to maintain the service.

Cllr. J. Foley proposed that the savings resulting from the following expenditure cuts be assigned to stand up the Fire Service in Banagher, Daingean and Kilcormac:

D11	Heritage & Conservation Services	€37,000
D02	Development & Management	€132,000
E09	Maintenance of Burial Grounds	€15,000
G04	Veterinary Service	€30,000
G01	Land Drainage Costs	€27,000
F05	Operation of Arts Programme	€21,000
F03	Outdoor Leisure Areas Operations	€20,000

The Cathaoirleach invited Mr. D. Conlon, H.O.F., to comment on the proposal. Mr. Conlon advised that Cllr. Foley's proposed savings were neither viable nor sufficient to meet the costs of running the stations in question.. These proposed savings, he advised, did not take into account non-discretionary expenditure such as pay, statutory demands, legislative demands and the requirement for the Council to provide for future services. He explained that some of the suggested expenditure cuts were contra items and accordingly a cut to expenditure would reduce income on a *pro rata* basis.

Cllr. Foley accepted Mr. Conlon's response.

A lengthy discussion ensued. The members acknowledged the challenging task that was involved in compiling the 2011 Budget. A number of members stated that the Council should prioritise core functions and in doing so endeavour to stand up the Fire Brigades in Banagher, Daingean and Kilcormac. The members expressed disappointment that efficiencies had not been realised in this service and suggested that a greater effort should be made in collecting fire charges from insurance companies.

Other issues raised during the discussion included: the need to reallocate resources from other services to maintain the DPGs; the possibility of requesting the Office of Public Works to take responsibility for Drainage Boards and the Department of Agriculture to take responsibility for Veterinary Services; the difficulties being experienced by the Town Councils in paying the County Demand (which has seen no reduction in the past number of years); the cost of the Council's landfill charges and whether these costs were contributing to the Council's declining revenues from this service; the cost of Local Representation on the authority; the impact of the severe weather on roads and water services and the cost implications for the Council; the reduced income from the LGF (which accounted for 20% of the Council's income), landfill and rates.

It was also noted that discretionary expenditure amounted to only 15% of the Council's overall budget.

There was unanimous support for the proposal not to increase commercial rates (the third consecutive year that the Council has adopted this position).

During further discussions Cllr. D. Dolan proposed an amendment to Cllr. Dooley's proposal, involving cuts to a number of services amounting to €400,775, and the reallocation of these sums as follows:.

Proposed Savings

		<u>Amount</u>	<u>Reductions</u>	<u>Savings</u>
Page 13	AO 102 Maintenance Traveller Accommodation Units	37,891	10%	3,789
	AO 103 Traveller Accommodation Management	224,047	10%	22,405
	AO 201 Assessment of Housing Needs	206,304	to 2010 levels	19,556

Page 23	DO 101	Statutory Plans & Policy	350,895	10%	35,090
	DO 201	Planning Control (already reduced by 3%)	919,129	5%	45,956
	DO 301	Enforcement Costs	214,330	5%	10,717
Page 25	D1 101	Heritage Services	110,214	10%	11,021
	D1 103	Conservation Grants	174,566	to income level	17,454
Page 28	EO 502	Litter Control Initiatives	62,570	10%	6,257
Page 29	EO 901	Maintenance of Burial Grounds (already reduced)	57,168	5%	2,858
Page 30	E1 001	Operation of Civil Defence	136,777	10%	13,678
	E1 003	Emergency Planning	77,991	10%	7,799
Page 34	FO 501	Admin of Arts Programme	314,000	20%	62,800
Page 36	GO 404	Operation of Dog Warden Service	127,410	10%	12,741
Page 38	HO 102	Plant and Machinery Operations	1,274,898	5%	63,745
	HO 202	Admin Costs in Stores	163,933	10%	16,393
Page 39	HO 402	Local Election Costs	25,000	40%	10,000
Page 40	HO 902	Chairman's Allowance	27,264	25%	6,816
	HO 904	Expenses LA Members	93,032	25%	23,258
	HO 905	Other Expenses (SPC Chairman's Allowance)	28,000	25%	7,000
	HO 906	Conferences Abroad	5,769	25%	<u>1,442</u>
					<u>€400,775</u>

Suggested Re-allocation

AO 901	Increase DPG Fund from	1,293,725	to	1,793,725	100,000
E11 & E12	Increase Fire Brigade funding from	3,212,996	to	3,513,771	<u>300,775</u>
					<u>€400,775</u>

Cllr. Dolan advised that this proposal would increase the DPG fund to €1.8m for 2011 and suggested that with savings in construction costs this fund should deliver a DPG service equivalent to that of 2010. With regard to the Fire Services Cllr. D. Dolan acknowledged that the funding increase was not adequate to fund the €750,000 shortfall and proposed that Capital Funds be allocated on a once-off basis to the Fire Brigade Costs (Fire Equipment etc.) from the Environmental Services Development Contribution Levies, thereby allowing the fire stations to re-open. He proposed that rostering and work practice efficiencies be introduced to reduce the operational costs of the Fire Service

Cllr. J. Carroll seconded Cllr. Dolan's proposal.

The Cathaoirleach, Cllr. B. Cowen, invited the County Manager and Head of Finance to respond to the general issues and queries raised by the members. He proposed that the meeting would then be adjourned to allow the Executive an opportunity to examine and respond to Cllr. D. Dolan's proposal in more detail. This was agreed by the members.

In addressing the general issues raised, the County Manager advised that the Council was prioritising its core functions and responded to the members as follows:

- The Council was statutorily obliged to pay for Coroner Fees and Expenses and the VEC Statutory Demand. He agreed to write, as suggested by Cllr. E. Dooley, to the DoEHLG to seek the changes outlined for future budgets. The Manager advised that, as such changes could not be made in time for the 2011 budget, the amendments to the draft budget proposed by Cllr. E. Dooley, although difficult to bear for the services concerned, could be considered in an effort to adopt a balanced budget if the members saw fit to do so.
- It was not practical to reduce landfill fees further – landfill charges are low and the Council is required to provide for long term landfill remedial works.
- Neither Cllr. J. Foley's nor Cllr. D. Dolan's proposals provided enough savings to provide for the Banagher, Daingean and Kilcormac Fire Stations.
- The Veterinary Service supports small food enterprises within the county and he drew the members' attention to the D.O.S. Report circulated as part of the Budget 2011.
- The Council receives income from the Food Safety Authority of Ireland with regard to work carried out in this area.

- The Machinery Account is monitored closely and the Internal Auditor has completed a body of work on this service. The impact of the Department of Transport Memorandum will impact negatively on the operation of the machinery yard.
- The severe weather at the start and end of 2010 had, and will have, an impact on the Roads, Water and Sewerage Services. The grant received in the sum of €229,000 would off-set the over-expenditure in 2011. However, the Manager advised, that the works in relation to Water Services were currently estimated at €400,000.

With regard to the Fire Services the Manager advised:

- The Draft Budget 2011 proposed increased income from Fire Service charges. A waiver scheme applies to these charges but every effort will be made in recouping the charges.
- The introduction of rostering and the attainment of work practice efficiencies had, regretfully, not been achieved through local negotiation, and were now with the Labour Relations Commission.
- As industrial relations matters were on-going in the Fire Service it was not appropriate to estimate redundancy costs at this time.
- The Council had made every effort to curb costs over the past number of years. Building Control functions were assigned to the Fire Officers some time ago.
- Mr. F. Heslin, D.O.S., had responded at length to the DBK – SOS (Daingean, Banagher and Kilcormac – Save Our Stations) Groups submission at the meeting, held in committee, on Friday, 7th January 2011 and had met with any member who requested further information or clarification.
- The reconfiguration of the Fire Services, by introducing a one-pump station in Birr or Edenderry, was not considered to be an effective or efficient way to provide a Fire Service for the county, and could raise further issues which would be difficult to address.
- With regard to Cllr. D. Dolan's proposal the Manager advised that the Development Contribution Scheme does not provide for the allocation of resources to the Fire Service. The cost of retaining the three Fire Brigades was €750,000 and there was no viable proposal to provide for the shortfall.

Mr. D. Conlon, H.O.F., drew the members' attention to Appendix 1 which summarised the Central Management Charge for 2011. The Central Management Charge, he advised, was reduced from 2010 by €171,000. He informed the members that the Charge included costs for pensioners, rates on Council buildings, loan charges, communication networks, printing and stationery, provision of area offices, energy and insurance costs etc.

The Cathaoirleach's earlier proposal, i.e., to adjourn to allow the Executive to examine Cllr. D. Dolan's proposal in more detail, was agreed. At 4.30pm the meeting was adjourned until 5pm.

When the meeting reconvened Cllr. B. Cowen, Cathaoirleach, invited the Manager and Head of Finance to discuss Cllr. D. Dolan's proposal.

The County Manager drew the members' attention to the circulated document which set out the savings proposed by Cllr. D. Dolan and a breakdown of each saving into discretionary and non-discretionary pay and identified contra items. The Manager advised that there were difficulties with Cllr. D. Dolan's proposal in that the additional cuts proposed severely compromised the council's ability to perform its statutory duties in a number of areas such as planning enforcement and control. The Manager advised that a subvention is received from the Department of Defence towards the cost of operating Offaly Civil Defence. The proposed reduction, he stated, may result in the subvention being reduced on a *pro rata* basis. The Manager reminded the members of their acknowledgement and appreciation of the Civil Defence's contribution during the severe weather and he acknowledged the assistance they provided to people throughout the county at that time. Cllr. D. Dolan's proposal, he advised, also reduced machinery yard expenditure by €46,000. This cut, he advised, would compromise the Council's ability to respond to crisis situations, such as

severe weather, and impact on the Council's ability to maintain county roads and provide for the replacement of vital machinery.

Mr. D. Conlon, H.O.F., went through each saving proposal in detail. He drew the members' attention to the consequences of the removal of non-discretionary funds from the proposed savings, which would deliver a significant cut to the non-discretionary element, resulting in a budget so reduced that staff would not be in a position to carry out their functions.

In responding to Cllr. D. Dolan's query the Manager advised that it was not legally possible to amend the Development Contribution Scheme to allow money be assigned to the Fire Services. The Manager advised that he was not in agreement with Cllr. D. Dolan's proposal as it did not provide adequate funding to ensure the Council met its statutory obligations, and also did not provide adequate funding to open the three Fire Stations.

On the proposal of Cllr. D. Dolan the members agreed to adjourn the meeting until 6pm.

When the meeting resumed Cllr. E. Dooley proposed, Cllr. P. Clendennen seconded, and members agreed to adjourn Standing Orders to allow the meeting continue beyond 6pm.

Cllr. D. Dolan proposed an amendment to his original proposal to allow for the re-allocation of €100,000 towards DPG and €250,000 towards keeping one Fire Station open. He outlined proposed cuts as follows:

		<u>Savings €</u>
Page 13	AO 102 Maintenance Traveller Accommodation Units	4,000
	AO 103 Traveller Accommodation Management	0
	AO 201 Assessment of Housing Needs	10,000
Page 23	DO 101 Statutory Plans & Policy	35,000
	DO 201 Planning Control (already reduced by 3%)	46,000
	DO 301 Enforcement Costs	0
Page 25	D1 101 Heritage Services	11,000
	D1 103 Conservation Grants	0
Page 28	EO 502 Litter Control Initiatives	12,000
Page 29	EO 901 Maintenance of Burial Grounds (already reduced)	3,000
Page 30	E1 001 Operation of Civil Defence	14,000
	E1 003 Emergency Planning	8,000
Page 34	FO 501 Admin of Arts Programme	63,000
Page 36	GO 404 Operation of Dog Warden Service	12,000
Page 38	HO 102 Plant and Machinery Operations	38,000
	HO 202 Admin Costs in Stores	8,000
Page 39	HO 402 Local Election Costs	10,000
Page 40	HO 902 - HO 906 Local Representation & Civic Leadership	39,000
	J Division	<u>38,000</u>
		<u>€51,000</u>

Following a lengthy discussion Cllr. D. Dolan proposed that the proposed cuts be made and that the Draft Budget 2011, so amended, be adopted and that the *Draft Plan for Fire and Emergency Operations, Sections 26, Fire Services Act 1981* be considered at the monthly meeting on 17th January 2011. This would allow the Executive the opportunity to consider and recommend which Fire Station should be retained.

The County Manager reiterated his earlier comments advising that the proposed cuts did not provide adequate resources to allow the Council discharge its statutory functions properly, noting in particular the requirements of the Planning and Development (Amendment) Act, 2010. The proposed cuts to the Plant and Machinery Operations would not allow the Council to address severe weather conditions in a similar manner to that which had happened in the recent weeks. He cautioned members that the cuts to Civil Defence may result in a *pro rata* cut to the Council's subvention. The Manager advised that the *Draft Plan for Fire and Emergency Operations, Sections*

26, *Fire Services Act 1981*, first presented in September 2009, offers the citizens of Offaly an acceptable and effective service within the Council's constrained resources. The Manager said the executive had given its recommendation for the organisation of fire services in the county to the members in the *Draft Plan for Fire and Emergency Operations, Sections 26, Fire Services Act 1981*, and that any amendment to the draft plan was a matter for the elected members in accordance with the legal advice previously furnished.

On the proposal of Cllr. G. Plunkett the members agreed to adjourn the meeting for a further period to allow the matter to be considered.

The meeting resumed at 7.05pm.

In responding to questions on the implications of Cllr. Dolan's proposal the Manager advised that:

- The Council's capacity to meet its statutory obligations would be compromised due to the limited amount of discretionary funding in a number of services in the draft budget.
- Acceptance of the proposal would result in an inadequate non-pay budget allocation of €15,000 for a range of statutory planning requirements, such as preparation of the Core Strategy, variation of the three Development Plans, revision of Edenderry Local Area Plan, as well as liaising with the Office of Public Works on the CFRAMS.
- The remaining budget available for planning control may confine staff to base and not provide sufficient resources to address issues with regard to unfinished estates and pursue the collection of development contributions.
- A modest provision for the replacement of plant and machinery should be provided for as a minimum
- The reduction to the plant and machinery budget would compound the negative impact on the county roads budget of the Department of Transport's Memorandum on Roads Grants.
- The Council was facing a significant challenge in maintaining road worker jobs throughout 2011 as a result in cuts to roads programmes funding. This challenge would be heightened further by the proposed cuts to the plant and machinery budget.
- The Draft Budget 2011 is based on the introduction of work practice efficiencies and rostering within the Fire Service. The Council continues to incur costs while these efficiencies are not achieved.
- Civil Defence income may be affected if the Council makes the proposed cut to that service.
- The Council is statutorily required to perform a housing needs assessment in 2011.
- The Council has introduced significant efficiencies and cuts to all services since 2008.
- The retention of a sixth Fire Station would result in the baseline costs for Fire Services being increased in future years.
- The members have a statutory duty, in determining the budget, to strike a reasonable balance between the Council's services.

Cllr. D. Dolan acknowledged that the proposal would result in reduced services but suggested that it was a means of saving one Fire Brigade and called on the Cathaoirleach to put his proposal to a vote.

Cllr. M. Buckley requested that the Fire Brigade to be retained, were Cllr. D. Dolan's proposal accepted, should be identified prior to members voting on severe cuts that, according to the advice of the Manager, would impact negatively on the Council's capacity to carry out a number of core functions, including the gritting of roads.

In responding to a question the Manager clarified that as the *Draft Plan for Fire and Emergency Operations, Sections 26, Fire Services Act 1981* was still before the members for consideration, and as it impacted on the Budget 2011, it was in order for the members to consider, and, if appropriate, adopt the *Draft Plan for Fire and Emergency Operations, Sections 26, Fire Services Act 1981* at the meeting. He advised that it was a matter for the members to propose and, if agreed, adopt the *Draft Plan for Fire and Emergency Operations, Sections 26, Fire Services Act 1981* with or without

amendment. However, if the members proposed to retain a sixth Fire Station this Station would have to be identified in their amendment to the *Draft Plan for Fire and Emergency Operations, Sections 26, Fire Services Act 1981*, and reasons for the amendment must be set out.

A lengthy discussion on the *Draft Plan for Fire and Emergency Operations, Sections 26, Fire Services Act 1981* and Draft Budget 2011 continued with some members suggesting that Cllr. Dolan's proposal was not sustainable while others called for a vote on the Draft Budget 2011 and an adjournment on the identification of the Fire Brigade to be retained until the ordinary meeting of the Council on 17th January 2011.

On the proposal of the Cathaoirleach, Cllr. B. Cowen, the members agreed to adjourn to allow the members to consider their positions prior to a vote of the members being held.

Following the adjournment the meeting resumed at 8.30pm.

The Cathaoirleach informed the members that he proposed to take a roll call on the amendment proposed by Cllr. D. Dolan, seconded by Cllr. J. Carroll, identifying savings of €350,000 in the Draft Budget 2011 and the allocation of these savings as follows: €100,000 to DPGs and €250,000 to the Fire Services, without identifying which individual Fire Service that this money would be allocated to. The members voted as follows:

In favour of the proposal: Cllrs. J. Butterfield, J. Carroll, D. Dolan, E. Fitzpatrick, J. Foley, J. Leahy and S. Moylan-Ryan.

Against the proposal: Cllrs. M. Buckley, B. Cowen, E. Dooley, S. Dooley, T. McKeigue, T. McLoughlin, P. Ormond and D. Owens.

Abstained: Cllrs. N. Bourke, P. Clendennen, C. Hanniffy, N. Hogan, G. Plunkett, and L. Quinn

The Cathaoirleach declared the proposal defeated.

The Cathaoirleach informed the members that he proposed to take a vote on the proposal of Cllr. E. Dooley, seconded by Cllr. C. Hanniffy, to adopt the Draft Budget 2011 subject to the making of €100,000 savings as outlined and the re-allocation of this money to DPGs, and that in light of this amended budget, the *Draft Plan for Fire and Emergency Operations, Sections 26, Fire Services Act 1981*, be deemed to be adopted. The members voted as follows:

In favour of the proposal: Cllrs. N. Bourke, M. Buckley, B. Cowen, E. Dooley, S. Dooley, C. Hanniffy, T. McKeigue, T. McLoughlin, P. Ormond and D. Owens.

Against the proposal: Cllrs. J. Butterfield, D. Dolan, E. Fitzpatrick, J. Foley, J. Leahy and S. Moylan-Ryan.

Abstained: Cllrs. J. Carroll, P. Clendennen, N. Hogan, G. Plunkett and L. Quinn

The Cathaoirleach declared the proposal carried.

On the proposal of Cllr. C. Hanniffy, seconded by Cllr. M. Buckley, the resolution to adopt the General Annual Rate on Valuation to be levied at €56.7658 was agreed. This represented no increase on the 2010 General Annual Rate of Valuation.

The Cathaoirleach thanked the County Manager, the Management Team, Head of Finance and his staff for drafting the Budget. He thanked all the members for their valuable contribution to the debate.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

MINUTES CONFIRMED:

_____ **CATHAOIRLEACH**

_____ **RUNAÍ**

21st MARCH 2011