

## **CORRESPONDENCE**

### **September 2021 Council Meeting**

- Letter received on 1<sup>st</sup> July, 2021, from the Office of the Taoiseach in reply to correspondence requesting that the Minister for Transport would meet with a Deputation comprising the Mayor, Chief Executive and relevant stakeholders to discuss the closure of the Aer Lingus base at Shannon, the retention of the Shannon/Heathrow slots, and the appointment of a Chair to the Shannon Group.
- Letter received on 1<sup>st</sup> July, 2021, from the Senior Executive Officer, Corporate Services, Clare County Council, outlining resolution adopted by the Council in relation to women's health issues and calling on the Minister for Health and the Department of Health to address the issues outlined.
- Letter received on 1<sup>st</sup> July, 2021, from the Senior Executive Officer, Corporate Services, Clare County Council, outlining resolution adopted by the Council calling on the Government to put forward a global ban on fracking being proposed by Ireland at the United Nations General Assembly, on climate migration, public health, environmental protection and human rights grounds.
- Letter received on 5<sup>th</sup> July, 2021, from the Office of the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Defence in reply to resolution adopted by the Council requesting the Minister to explore the possibility of Ireland establishing a formal partnership with an African country with a view to developing closer, mutually-beneficial administrative, cultural and economic links. It was envisaged that such a partnership could provide a strong framework under which cities like Limerick, and other cities and counties throughout Ireland, could look to develop their own links and possibly work towards a more formal sister city/twin city relationship at some point in the future.
- E-Mail received on 7<sup>th</sup> July, 2021, from Mr. John Paul Guiheen, Executive Officer, Communications Department, Road Safety Authority (RSA), in reply to resolution adopted by the Council requesting the RSA to develop and deliver a communication/education campaign about safe and appropriate parking practices, with a focus on the dangers of parking on footpaths, cycle lanes and bus stops, and advising that the Council would reflect any such campaign across its communications channels.
- Letter received on 7<sup>th</sup> July, 2021, from the A/Director of Services, Corporate Affairs, Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council, outlining resolution adopted by the Council in relation to the purchase of goods or services from illegally occupied territories.

- Letter received on 8<sup>th</sup> July, 2021, from Senator Robbie Gallagher enclosing correspondence from a Seanad debate relating to Local Authority Water Services Staff and Service Level Agreement with Irish Water.
- E-Mail received on 12<sup>th</sup> July, 2021, from the Office of the Minister for Transport in reply to a request that the Minister would meet with a Deputation comprising the Mayor, Chief Executive and relevant stakeholders to discuss the closure of the Aer Lingus base at Shannon, the retention of the Shannon/Heathrow slots, and the appointment of a Chair to the Shannon Group.
- Letter received on 13<sup>th</sup> July, 2021, from the Senior Executive Officer, Corporate Services, Clare County Council, outlining resolution adopted by the Council calling on the Department of Health to provide funding to all communities throughout County Clare for defibrillators and training.
- Letter received on 13<sup>th</sup> July, 2021, from the Senior Executive Officer, Corporate Services, Clare County Council, outlining resolution adopted by the Council calling on the Minister for Health to consider using vaccination centres to administer the HPV vaccine.
- E-Mail received on 15<sup>th</sup> July, 2021, from the Senior Executive Officer, Corporate Services, Cork County Council, enclosing copy of letter sent to Mr. Niall Collins, TD, Minister of State, Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, calling on Cork Education and Training Board to consider expanding the range of educational courses available at Mannix College, Charleville, Co. Cork.
- E-Mail received on 15<sup>th</sup> July, 2021, from the Office of the Minister for Health in reply to resolution adopted by the Council supporting the campaign of Epilepsy Ireland to address longstanding issues impacting on people with epilepsy and their families in Limerick, namely: (i) access to free travel, and (ii) provision of reasonable accommodation for State Examinations for students with epilepsy, a copy of the Motion having been sent to the Ministers for Health, Social Protection and Education, the Chair of the Oireachtas Committee on Disability, and other Local Authorities.
- E-Mail received on 15<sup>th</sup> July, 2021, from the Office of the Minister for Education in reply to resolution adopted by the Council supporting the campaign of Epilepsy Ireland to address longstanding issues impacting on people with epilepsy and their families in Limerick, namely: (i) access to free travel, and (ii) provision of reasonable accommodation for State Examinations for students with epilepsy, a copy of the Motion having been sent to the Ministers for Health, Social Protection and Education, the Chair of the Oireachtas Committee on Disability, and other Local Authorities.

- Letter received on 19<sup>th</sup> July, 2021, from the Office of the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Defence in reply to resolution adopted by the Council requesting the Minister to explore the possibility of Ireland establishing a formal partnership with an African country with a view to developing closer, mutually-beneficial administrative, cultural and economic links. It was envisaged that such a partnership could provide a strong framework under which cities like Limerick, and other cities and counties throughout Ireland, could look to develop their own links and possibly work towards a more formal sister city/twin city relationship at some point in the future.
- Letter received on 19<sup>th</sup> July, 2021, from the Office of the Minister for Social Protection in reply to resolution adopted by the Council supporting the campaign of Epilepsy Ireland to address longstanding issues impacting on people with epilepsy and their families in Limerick, namely: (i) access to free travel, and (ii) provision of reasonable accommodation for State Examinations for students with epilepsy, a copy of the Motion having been sent to the Ministers for Health, Social Protection and Education, the Chair of the Oireachtas Committee on Disability, and other Local Authorities.
- Letter received on 21<sup>st</sup> July, 2021, from the Chief Executive Officer, UL Hospitals Group, in reply to resolution adopted by the Council calling for the lifting of restrictions in the Limerick Maternity Hospital to allow women to receive the support needed throughout all the maternity stages.
- Letter received on 22<sup>nd</sup> July, 2021, from the State Examinations Commission in reply to resolution adopted by the Council supporting the campaign of Epilepsy Ireland to address longstanding issues impacting on people with epilepsy and their families in Limerick, namely: (i) access to free travel, and (ii) provision of reasonable accommodation for State Examinations for students with epilepsy, a copy of the Motion having been sent to the Ministers for Health, Social Protection and Education, the Chair of the Oireachtas Committee on Disability, and other Local Authorities.
- Letter received on 23<sup>rd</sup> July, 2021, from the Department of Social Protection in reply to resolution adopted by the Council supporting the campaign of Epilepsy Ireland to address longstanding issues impacting on people with epilepsy and their families in Limerick, namely: (i) access to free travel, and (ii) provision of reasonable accommodation for State Examinations for students with epilepsy, a copy of the Motion having been sent to the Ministers for Health, Social Protection and Education, the Chair of the Oireachtas Committee on Disability, and other Local Authorities.
- Letter received on 6<sup>th</sup> August, 2021, from the Office of the Minister of State, Hildegard Naughton, Department of Transport, in reply to correspondence requesting that the Minister for Transport would meet with a Deputation comprising the Mayor, Chief Executive and relevant stakeholders to discuss the closure of the Aer Lingus base at Shannon, the retention of the Shannon/Heathrow slots, and the appointment of a Chair to the Shannon Group.

- Letter received on 30<sup>th</sup> August, 2021, from the Office of the Minister for Transport in reply to resolution adopted by the Council calling for a phased re-introduction of a freight and passenger service along the Limerick City to Foynes railway line in time for the 2027 Ryder Cup.
  - Letter received on 10<sup>th</sup> September, 2021, from the Meetings Administrator, Sligo County Council, outlining resolution adopted by the Council calling for the work of frontline workers to be remunerated.
  - Letter received on 15<sup>th</sup> September, 2021, from the Senior Executive Officer, Corporate Services, Finance and Support Services Directorate, Clare County Council, outlining resolution adopted by the Council calling for an extension of the deadline date for works to be completed under the Streetscape Enhancement Grant Scheme 2021 to allow successful applicants sufficient time for completion.
  - Letter received on 17<sup>th</sup> September, 2021, from the Meetings Administrator, Meath County Council, outlining resolution adopted by the Council calling on the Department of Agriculture to put in place a policy to control Japanese Knotweed on agricultural land and private property, and to take responsibility for the eradication of this invasive species.
  - Letter received on 21<sup>st</sup> September, 2021, from Ms. Mairead O'Donovan, Clerk to the Joint Committee on Disability Matters, in reply to resolution adopted by the Council supporting the campaign of Epilepsy Ireland to address longstanding issues impacting on people with epilepsy and their families in Limerick, namely: (i) access to free travel, and (ii) provision of reasonable accommodation for State Examinations for students with epilepsy, a copy of the Motion having been sent to the Ministers for Health, Social Protection and Education, the Chair of the Oireachtas Committee on Disability, and other Local Authorities.
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29th June 2021

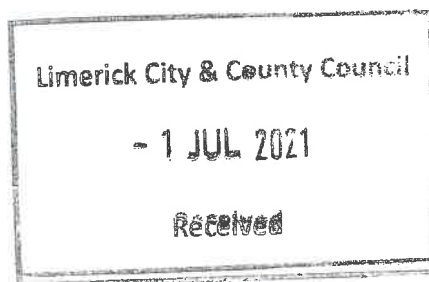
Ms. Laura Flannery  
Meetings Administrator  
Limerick City & County Council  
Corporate Headquarters  
Merchants Quay  
Limerick  
V94 EH90



Dear Ms. Flannery,

I wish to acknowledge receipt of your letter of 28th June 2021 to the Taoiseach,  
Micheál Martin T.D.

Yours sincerely,



  
Christina Downey  
Assistant Private Secretary to the Taoiseach

Telephone: 01-6194000  
E-mail: taoiseach@taoiseach.gov.ie



COMHAIRLE | CLARE  
CONTAE AN CHLÁIR | COUNTY COUNCIL

28<sup>th</sup> June, 2021.

**Our Ref: June 21-28/AR/MMcI**

Dear Meetings Administrator,

At the adjourned June meeting of Clare County Council the members passed the following resolution:

“Due to “the huge unmet need” as described by Dr Deirdre Lundy (an expert in menopause care & HRT prescribing, who advises GPs throughout Ireland) on Liveline with Joe Duffy (May 13<sup>th</sup>, 2021) that Clare County Council call on the Minister for Health and the Department of Health to recognise the need to address all forms of womens’ health by:-

1. Providing funding and support both in hospitals and in general care for menopausal care.
2. Initiating a campaign to inform the public of the multiple and diverse symptoms attributable to menopause.
3. Providing all necessary resources to train and up skill Irish GPs on menopausal care.
4. Including HRT “body identicals” in drugs scheme.
5. Communication with health insurance companies to ensure that menopausal care coverage is provided.”

It was agreed that this resolution would be circulated to other local authorities.

Yours sincerely,

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***Ann Reynolds,  
Senior Executive Officer,  
Corporate Services Department,  
Finance and Support Services Directorate.***

**An Roinn Seirbhísi Corparáideach  
Stiúthóireacht Airgeadais agus Seirbhísi Tacaíochta**  
Áras Contae an Chláir, Bóthar Nua, Inis, Co. an Chláir, V95 DXP2

**Corporate Services Department  
Finance and Support Services Directorate**  
Áras Contae an Chláir, New Road, Ennis, Co. Clare, V95 DXP2



COMHAIRLE | CLARE  
CONTAE AN CHLÁIR | COUNTY COUNCIL

25<sup>th</sup> June, 2021.

**Our Ref: June 21-34/AR/MMcI**

Dear Meetings Administrator,

At the adjourned June meeting of Clare County Council the members passed the following resolution:

“Clare County Council call on Government to put forward a global ban on fracking being proposed by Ireland at the United Nations General Assembly on climate-mitigation, public-health, environmental-protection and human-rights grounds.”

It was agreed that this resolution would be circulated to other local authorities.

Yours sincerely,

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***Ann Reynolds,  
Senior Executive Officer,  
Corporate Services Department,  
Finance and Support Services Directorate.***

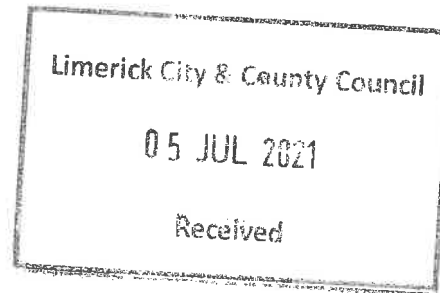
**An Roinn Seirbhísí Corparáideach  
Stiúirtheacht Airgeadais agus Seirbhísí Tacaíochta**  
Áras Contae an Chláir, Bóthar Nua, Inis, Co. an Chláir, V95 DXP2

**Corporate Services Department  
Finance and Support Services Directorate**  
Áras Contae an Chláir, New Road, Ennis, Co. Clare, V95 DXP2



Ms. Laura Flannery  
Meetings Administrator  
Limerick City and County Council  
Corporate Services  
Corporate Headquarters  
Merchants Quay  
Limerick  
V94 EH90

29 June 2021



Reference No: DFA-MCO-04921-2021

Dear Ms. Flannery,

On behalf of the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister for Defence, Mr. Simon Coveney T.D., I wish to acknowledge receipt of your letter of 17 June 2021.

Your letter is receiving attention at the moment.

Yours sincerely,

Nora Delaney  
Private Secretary to the Minister for Foreign Affairs





**From:** John Paul Guiheen  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 7, 2021 9:02 AM  
**To:** Customer Services  
**Subject:** Attention of Laura Flannery

Hi Laura

I am replying to your letter dated 16 June to the RSA in relation to a meeting of Limerick city and County Council for the RSA to develop campaign about safe and appropriate parking practices with a focus on the dangers of parking on footpaths, Cycle lanes and bus stops.

We actually ran a campaign in March on this with An Garda Siochana. Please see press release here <http://rsa.ie/en/Utility/News/2021/RSA-and-An-Garda-Siochana-remind-drivers-that-parking-on-footpaths-or-cycle-lanes-is-unsafe-and-illegal/>

We also hope to run this campaign again in the coming months so I will let you know when that will be

Regards  
John Paul



**John Paul Guiheen**  
Executive Officer | Communications Department

Road Safety Authority, Moy Valley Business Park,  
Primrose Hill, Dublin Road, Ballina, Co. Mayo, F26 V6E4.  
Tel. (096) 25002, Mob. (086) 0452783, locall 1890 40 60 40  
[www.rsa.ie](http://www.rsa.ie)

**An Rannóg Gnóthaí Corparáideacha**  
**Corporate Affairs**

Secretarial Section  
**Leonora Earls**, A/Director  
Corporate Affairs  
Marine Road, Dún Laoghaire, Co. Dublin  
Direct Tel: 01 2054826  
[agendamtgs@dlrcoco.ie](mailto:agendamtgs@dlrcoco.ie)

**7 July 2021**

**To all Local Authorities**

Dear Meetings Administrator,

I wish to advise you that Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council at their meeting held on 14 June 2021 adopted the following resolution which was agreed to be circulated to all Local Authorities:

"To ask the Council to suspend standing orders to consider the following motion:  
It is the policy of this Council not to purchase goods or services, produced or provided, in whole or in part (as practicable), from illegally occupied territories<sup>1</sup> by illegal settlers<sup>2</sup> and that any such contracts should cease as soon as allowed.

We ask that a copy of this motion if successful is sent to each Local Authority.

Footnotes:-

1. Occupied Territories: a territory which is occupied within the meaning of the 4th Geneva convention and confirmed as such by the International Court of Justice, International Criminal court or International Tribunal.
2. Illegal Settlers: a member of the civilian population of an occupying power whose presence within the relevant occupied territory is being facilitated by the occupying power<sup>3</sup>.
3. Occupying Power: as defined by fourth Geneva convention."

Yours sincerely



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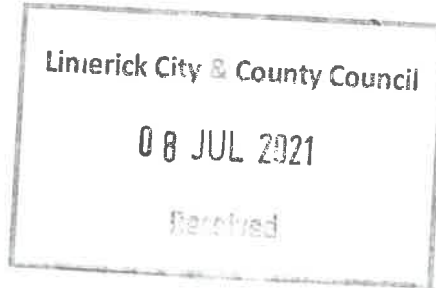
**Leonora Earls**  
**A/Director of Service**  
**Corporate Affairs**



SENATOR  
**Robbie Gallagher**  
SEANAD SPOKESPERSON FOR JUSTICE  
URLABHRAI DLI AGUS CIRT AN TSEANAID



07/07/2021



Dear Meetings Administrator,

I hope this letter finds you well.

I would appreciate if you could circulate the correspondence attached to your councillors. It's from a recent Debate in the Seanad where I raised concerns of 3,500 Local Authority water services staff in relation to the service level agreement with Irish Water.

I will continue to pursue this matter and will forward any relevant information as I receive it.

As always, many thanks for your assistance in these matters,

Yours sincerely,

Senator Robbie Gallagher



CAVAN-MONAGHAN



SENATOR  
**Robbie Gallagher**

SEANAD SPOKESPERSON FOR JUSTICE

**Monaghan Office,**  
18 Glaslough Street,  
Monaghan, Co. Monaghan.  
☎ 047 75050

**Seanad Éireann,**  
Leinster House, Kildare Street,  
Dublin 2, Ireland.  
☎ 01 618 3087

**Carrickmacross Office,**  
70 Main Street,  
Carrickmacross,  
Co. Monaghan  
☎ 042 966 3876

☎ 086 816 1929  
✉ robbie.gallagher@oireachtas.ie  
🌐 www.senatorrobbiegallagher.org  
📱 /Senator Robbie Gallagher  
📧 @SenRobGallagher

FIANNA Fáil

**Seanad Éireann,** Leinster House, Kildare Street, Dublin 2, Ireland. ☎ 01 618 3087  
**Monaghan Office,** 18 Glaslough Street, Monaghan, Co. Monaghan. ☎ 047 75050  
**Carrickmacross Office,** 70 Main Street, Carrickmacross, Co. Monaghan ☎ 042 966 3876  
☎ 086 816 1929  
✉ robbie.gallagher@oireachtas.ie  
🌐 www.senatorrobbiegallagher.org  
📱 /Senator Robbie Gallagher  
📧 @SenRobGallagher



## Water Services-Seanad Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> July

### Senator Robbie Gallagher

Cuirim fáilte roimh an Aire Stáit go dtí an Teach inniu. I welcome the Minister of State to the House and thank him for taking time out of his busy schedule to be here. I wish to discuss Irish Water and the service level agreement with local authority staff. I am not, and never was, a fan of Irish Water in the first instance. I fail to see the purpose of setting up another layer of bureaucracy - some would refer to it as a quango - which currently has 800 staff on its books. Local authorities continue to provide an excellent service to the people of this country in terms of water services.

Local authorities have a service level agreement with Irish Water in that the latter has tasked local authorities with providing water services to the people of this country. They are doing an excellent job. Irish Water has what it calls a balanced scorecard for each local authority, which rates each one on key performance indicators. In layman's language, it rates the service provided by local authority water services staff to the general public. I am delighted, but not surprised, to note that each local authority is performing excellently, as I am sure the Minister of State is aware. The percentage levels of performance are in the high 90s consistently year on year. In Monaghan and Cavan the levels are consistently above 90% and I thank local authority water services staff for the excellent job they do. Given such high levels of service, the question arises as to why we are taking the service away from the water services sections of local authorities and not keeping it where it is. Perhaps that is a question to which the Minister of State might relate.

Public ownership of Irish Water is the clear will of the Irish people. People want control of this utility into the future. There is a commitment in the programme for Government that Irish Water will remain in public ownership, but many are calling for a referendum to be put to the people in order that this can be enshrined in the Constitution for eternity. I support that call. Has the Government committed to holding a referendum? If so, does it have a date in mind?

Another issue I would like to raise is the fact that many local authority staff are quite happy to stay where they are. The 3,500 workers who are providing an excellent service want to stay with their local authority, and I fully agree with and support them in that notion. I understand talks are ongoing between the Government, Irish Water, local authorities and trade unions. We do not want local authority staff, who are doing an excellent job, to be forced down a road they do not want to go.

It is important that we take their concerns on board.

I respectfully appeal to the Minister of State to answer the two questions I have posed. I would like to think that local authority staff, who provide an excellent service, will be looked after and that their wishes will be respected.

Minister of State at the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage  
(Deputy Malcolm Noonan)

Gabhaim buíochas leis an Seanadóir as an gceist seo a ardú. The Government published a policy paper, Irish Water - Towards a National Publicly-Owned Regulated Water Services Utility, in February which sets out its views and expectations on the next phase of transformation in the water sector. This will involve the integration of the public water system within the organisational structure of Irish Water. This will complete the broad policy and legislative reforms that have seen public water services embark on a journey of transformation from a structure based on locally organised water services authorities towards a single, national water utility in public ownership. In setting out its views and expectations on the next phase of the water sector transformation programme in this way, the Government is enabling stakeholders to engage in a meaningful change process that will give them the strongest possible say in determining their future working arrangements.

Significant issues relating to the workforce remain to be addressed in the context of integrating the day-to-day operation and delivery of water services within Irish Water. To resolve these issues, my colleague, the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, Deputy Darragh O'Brien, has tasked the Workplace Relations Commission to recommence engagement on water sector transformation with all parties aimed at reaching a collective agreement on a framework for the future delivery of water services. This engagement is currently under way, although the inability to hold face-to-face discussions due to the Covid-19 restrictions has hampered the process. I imagine the Senator will appreciate that is a challenge and it is important that these discussions can take place face to face as that is the best way forward. I understand, however, that the discussions will take place in the coming weeks in line with the current relaxation of restrictions.

Change is difficult for any workforce and I am fully aware that many in local government services do not necessarily wish to see changes to the current arrangements, as the Senator has outlined. However, the fact that the Government has decided that Irish Water is to become a fully integrated direct labour national public utility means the *status quo* is not an option. Continued uncertainty about the future does a disservice to everyone currently employed in water services within local authorities. It is important, therefore, that the parties to the transformation process engage intensively in the coming weeks at the Workplace Relations Commission to agree an outcome that will deliver for all parties and for the greater good. The Government believes it will be possible to reach a collective agreement that addresses the interests and concerns of all parties.

Senator Gallagher raised a second matter. It is certainly the case that there is a commitment in the programme for Government to refer the issue of the environment, including water and its place in the Constitution, to the relevant joint committee for consideration, namely, the Joint Committee on Housing, Local Government and Heritage. My role includes responsibility for electoral reform. We have a schedule of proposed referenda throughout the lifetime of this Government. It is not my intention, and I do believe it would be appropriate, to hold a number of referenda on the same day. I believe it is important that we hold a stand-alone referendum on this issue as to do otherwise would dilute the message - excuse the pun - and dilute what we are trying to achieve with this referendum. In any event, I am keen to give the assurance that this referendum is significant and important in assuring the people on

the issue of ownership of water infrastructure in public hands for the common good. It is important to emphasise that. The policy paper on water transformation agreed by Government further commits the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage to consult with the Irish Congress of Trade Unions' local authority group of unions in respect of the proposed referendum. I hope that offers some assurance to the Senator on the questions posed and to the utility workers currently within local government around the transformation process.

The process is in place for the common good of all. We hope it will lead to a robust and transformative process around regulation and the provision of critical water infrastructure for the country for nature, for biodiversity and for communities.

### Senator Robbie Gallagher

My thanks to the Minister of State for his comprehensive reply. As he outlined, the uncertainty for local authority staff and water services staff is disappointing. They find themselves in a stressful situation.

I welcome the commitment of the Minister of State to hold a referendum and I look forward to an early date for that. The old adage holds that if it is not broken, we should not fix it. That springs to mind in the context of water services provided by local authorities. Having said that, as long as the views of staff are respected and as long as they are happy - ultimately, with the terms and conditions put in front of them - then I fully support them. The service they have provided to the public, to me as a public representative and to many others has

been top class and I am keen to acknowledge the excellent service we get from them. I hope that will be respected by decision makers when a final call is made.

### Deputy Malcolm Noonan

I wish to reassure the Senator on the matter. I wholeheartedly concur with his comments in respect of water services staff and local authorities. They provide an exceptional level of service to communities. They are constantly on call winter and summer, as well as during emergencies throughout the year. We must and do give due regard to that wonderful level of service. We want to achieve a transition towards Irish Water with which they will be happy and such that they will be satisfied that they are being taken care of.

The issue of the referendum is critical as well. I want to give an assurance that the process with the Workplace Relations Commission is inclusive. We want to ensure that all parties are brought on board to create the transformation that we all require for the country to move forward.

**From:** Minister Diary Inbox  
**Sent:** Monday, July 12, 2021 5:03 PM  
**To:** Customer Services  
**Subject:** For the attention of Ms Laura Flannery

Dear Laura,

On behalf of Minister Eamon Ryan I would like to acknowledge receipt of your letter.

Unfortunately due to the Minister's current diary schedule I cannot arrange a meeting.  
I have forwarded your request to Minister of State, Hildegard Naughton, TD for her attention.

Kind regards  
Kathleen Griffin  
Minister Ryan's diary team



COMHAIRLE | CLARE  
CONTAE AN CHLÁIR | COUNTY COUNCIL

13<sup>th</sup> July, 2021.

**Our Ref: July 21-24/AR/MMcI**

Dear Meetings Administrator,

At the July meeting of Clare County Council the members passed the following resolution:

“Due to recent events, that the Department of Health provide funding to all communities throughout County Clare for defibrillators and training. There needs to be more than one covering each area.”

It was agreed that this resolution would be circulated to other local authorities.

Yours sincerely,

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***Ann Reynolds,  
Senior Executive Officer,  
Corporate Services Department,  
Finance and Support Services Directorate.***

**An Roinn Seirbhísí Corparáideach  
Stiúrthóireacht Airgeadais agus Seirbhísí Tacaíochta  
Áras Contae an Chláir, Bóthar Nua, Inis, Co. an Chláir, V95 DXP2**

**Corporate Services Department  
Finance and Support Services Directorate  
Áras Contae an Chláir, New Road, Ennis, Co. Clare, V95 DXP2**





COMHAIRLE | CLARE  
CONTAE AN CHLÁIR | COUNTY COUNCIL

13<sup>th</sup> July, 2021.

**Our Ref: July 21-23/AR/MMcI**

Dear Meetings Administrator,

At the July meeting of Clare County Council the members passed the following resolution:

“Now that we have an efficient and effective Covid Vaccination Programme, Clare County Council appeals to Minister for Health Mr Stephen Donnelly to seriously consider using our vaccination centres along with our vaccinators and pharmacists to administer the HPV vaccine.

We appeal to the Minister to use the centres as part of a "catch-up" programme as the HPV Vaccination Programme was not completed in some counties. We are requesting the Minister to offer the HPV Vaccine free of charge to ALL secondary school students.”

It was agreed that this resolution would be circulated to other local authorities.

Yours sincerely,

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***Ann Reynolds,  
Senior Executive Officer,  
Corporate Services Department,  
Finance and Support Services Directorate.***

**An Roinn Seirbhísí Corparáideach  
Stiúirtheacht Airgeadais agus Seirbhísí Tacalochta  
Áras Contae an Chláir, Bóthar Nua, Inis, Co. an Chláir, V95 DXP2**

**Corporate Services Department  
Finance and Support Services Directorate  
Áras Contae an Chláir, New Road, Ennis, Co. Clare, V95 DXP2**

Dear Meetings Administrator,

Please find attached a copy of letter that Members resolved would issue to Minister Niall Collins and to the Cork ETB at a meeting of Cork County Council on 12<sup>th</sup> July 2021.

Members requested that the letter be forwarded to Kerry, Limerick and Tipperary local authorities because part of the counties fall within the catchment area of Mannix College, Charleveille.

Regards,

Mairéad Lucey | Senior Executive Officer | Corporate Services  
Cork County Council

# Comhairle Contae Chorcaí Cork County Council

Halla an Chontae,  
Corcaigh T12 R2NC, Éire.  
Fón: (021) 4276891 • Faics: (021) 4276321  
Suíomh Gréasáin: [www.corkcoco.ie](http://www.corkcoco.ie)  
County Hall,  
Cork T12 R2NC, Ireland.  
Tel: (021) 4276891 • Fax: (021) 4276321  
Web: [www.corkcoco.ie](http://www.corkcoco.ie)



Niall Collins, T.D.,  
Minister of State at the Department of Further  
and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science,  
Marlborough Street,  
Dublin 1,  
D01 RC96

12<sup>th</sup> July, 2021

Dear Minister Collins,

At a recent meeting of Cork County Council, the Members resolved as follows:-

*“That Cork County Council calls on the ETB to consider expanding range of educational courses available at Mannix College, Charleville. Given the emphasis by government now on apprenticeships Mannix College is ideally placed to deliver courses for local requirements such as Engineering, Health Care, and Culinary and Hospitality skills.”*

I would be obliged if you would consider the above matter, and let me have your response in due course.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading 'Mairead Lucey'.

**MAIREAD LUCEY**  
**SENIOR EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

**From:** Department of Health  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 15, 2021 12:53 PM  
**To:** Customer Services  
**Subject:** HEA-MO-11767-2021

HEA-MO-11767-2021

15th July 2021

Dear Ms. Flannery,

The Minister for Health, Stephen Donnelly T.D. has asked me to acknowledge receipt of your recent correspondence regarding Campaign of Epilepsy Ireland.

Yours sincerely,

Miriam Rooney.

Private Secretary to the Minister for Health

**From:** Correspondence Unit  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 15, 2021 12:44 PM  
**To:** Customer Services  
**Subject:** FAO: LAURA FLANNERY, Corporate Services - DES-CU-03854-2021

Ms. Laura Flannery  
Meetings Administrator  
Corporate Services, Corporate Headquarters  
Limerick City & County Council  
Merchants Quay  
Limerick  
V94 EH90

PLEASE QUOTE REF NUMBER ON ALL CORRESPONDENCE.

Our Ref: DES-CU-03854-2021

Dear Ms. Flannery,

I refer to your correspondence to the Minister for Education, Ms. Norma Foley TD, in relation to Reasonable Accommodation at the State Examinations for students with epilepsy.

The State Examinations Commission is responsible for the administration, assessment and certification of the Junior Certificate and the Leaving Certificate examinations.

The State Examinations Commission is a non-departmental public body under the aegis of the Department of Education, consequently, it is not appropriate for the Minister to comment on the matters raised in your correspondence.

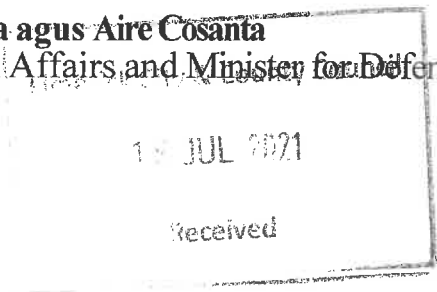
The contact details for the State Examinations Commission are as follows:

State Examinations Commission  
Cornamaddy  
Athlone  
Co. Westmeath  
Ph: 090-6442700  
e-mail: [info@examinations.ie](mailto:info@examinations.ie)

Yours sincerely,

Derek Newcombe  
Private Secretary

**Oifig an Aire Gnóthaí Eachtracha agus Aire Cosanta**  
**Office of the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister for Defence**



Ms. Laura Flannery  
Meetings Administrator  
Limerick City and County Council  
Corporate Services  
Corporate Headquarters  
Merchants Quay  
Limerick  
V94 EH90



8 July 2021

Reference No: DFA-MCO-04921-2021

Dear Ms. Flannery,

On behalf of the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister for Defence, Mr. Simon Coveney T.D., I wish to thank you for your letter of 17 June 2021 concerning Limerick City and County Council's Motion on the development of links with an African country.

Africa is the world's youngest continent, with a growing population and vibrant economies. The Government attaches great importance to deepening Ireland's partnerships with Africa and has set out a framework to deepen and expand Ireland's footprint in Africa over the coming years.

Ireland has a long history of engagement in Africa. In 2020, we marked sixty years of a diplomatic presence on the continent, which has now grown to 12 Embassies from Egypt to South Africa. This year, Ireland will open an Embassy in Morocco, with two further new Embassies to follow in francophone West Africa by 2025.

The Government's Strategy for Africa, '*Global Ireland: Ireland's Strategy for Africa, 2019-2025*', was launched in November 2019 and builds on Ireland's long history of engagement with Africa. It includes all countries on the continent in a single strategic approach engaging political, economic, cultural and development relations with Africa, placing partnership at the heart of Ireland's engagement with the continent.

For almost fifty years, Ireland has supported sustainable development in Africa. Today Ireland operates international development programmes in twelve African countries, working in close partnership with governments, international partners and civil society organisations to support the furthest behind first (in Ethiopia, Kenya, Liberia, Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe). Our development cooperation in Africa is guided by the priorities set out in the Government's international development policy, '*A Better World*': prioritising gender equality, reducing humanitarian need, climate action and strengthening governance. Ireland is working closely with African partners to support their response to the COVID pandemic, as part of €100 million being provided to support global public health in 2021.

The deep and wide-ranging partnerships between Ireland and African countries across the continent may provide a suitable avenue for Limerick City and County Council to consider closer links with an African country. Ireland's Ambassadors in Africa (located in Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, Liberia, Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia) have been informed of the motion by Limerick City and County Council and asked to reflect on potential opportunities for engagement in their countries of primary or secondary accreditation. Officials in the Department of Foreign Affairs (James Kilcourse, Tel.: 01-408 2492), with my support, are available to engage with you, with a view to further strengthening the ties between Ireland and Africa.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nora Delaney', written in a cursive style.

Nora Delaney  
Private Secretary to the Minister for Foreign Affairs

Oifig an Aire Coimirce Sóisialaí  
Office of the Minister for Social Protection



Case Number: REPS-2021-26424



Ms Laura Flannery  
Meeting Administrator  
Limerick City & County Council  
Corporate Headquarters  
Merchants Quay  
Co. Limerick.



16 July 2021

Dear Ms Flannery

I wish to acknowledge receipt of your correspondence to the Minister for Social Protection, Heather Humphreys TD, regarding a resolution adopted by Limerick City and County Council, in relation to Free Travel for people with Epilepsy.

Enquiries are being made and a further letter will issue to you as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely

  
Caroline Kilkenny  
Private Secretary

*The Minister is a Designated Public Official under the Regulation of Lobbying Act, 2015  
(details available on [www.lobbying.ie](http://www.lobbying.ie))*

Áras Mhic Dhiarmada, Sráid Scórais, Éide Átha Clímh 1, D01 WY03  
Áras Mhic Dhiarmada, Stone Street, Dublin 1, D01 WY03  
minister@wellfare.ie • 353 1 704 3000 • [www.welfare.ie](http://www.welfare.ie)



CC/LC/MC

Email: [pgmidwestacute@hse.ie](mailto:pgmidwestacute@hse.ie)

16<sup>th</sup> July 2021

Limerick City & County Council,  
Corporate Headquarters,  
Merchants Quay,  
Limerick

**Motion: That, Limerick City and County Council call on the UL Hospitals Group to take action now and lift restrictions in the Limerick Maternity Hospital so that women get the support they need throughout all maternity stages.**

Dear Councillors,

I wish to acknowledge receipt of your motion in relation to restrictions at University Maternity Hospital Limerick (UMHL).

I wish to acknowledge receipt of your representation in relation to visitor restrictions at UMHL.

We were pleased to announce last week an important step in the ongoing relaxation of COVID-19 access restrictions at University Maternity Hospital Limerick (UMHL), with partners now being permitted to accompany women for appointments in the hospital's Early Pregnancy Access Unit (EPAU) since Thursday July 8th. This is an important service that provides timely access to consultation with a midwife, an obstetrician and an ultrasonographer for women who experience irregularities during the first 12 weeks of pregnancy.

The further easing of restrictions comes just one week after the introduction of 45-minute visiting slots for partners of women on the hospital's ante-natal ward, M3, from 6-9pm daily. In recognition of the importance of maximising contact between parents and infants, while working to safeguard all patients, infants, partners and staff from the threat of COVID-19, UMHL has since late April been engaged in a gradual relaxation of the COVID-19 restrictions on access that have been in place at the hospital throughout the pandemic.

Since then, UMHL has introduced 45-minute visiting slots on the hospital's postnatal wards, M1 and M2, from 6pm-8pm daily. All mothers on M1 and M2 are offered this daily scheduled visit for their nominated partners, including on day of delivery.

We also offer the option to have nominated partners present for anomaly scans, and visiting for fathers/parents of babies in the neonatal unit. All nominated partners must adhere to the wearing of face masks, observe hand hygiene and social distancing. Temperature monitoring is in place at the main reception, along with the completion of a COVID-19 screening questionnaire.

Visiting on compassionate grounds continues to be facilitated, as it has been throughout the pandemic, and we also continue to support the attendance of birthing partners in the Labour Ward and Theatre.

The recent introduction of visiting on the antenatal ward M3 and now the facilitation of partners to accompany women for EPAU appointments are important steps in an ongoing process, and fulfil the objectives of the





Working together, caring for you

Ospidéal na hOllscoile, Luimneach,  
Bóthar Naomh Neasáin, Tuar an Daill, Luimneach V94 F858  
Tel: 061 301111 Facs: 061 301165

University Hospital Limerick,  
St. Nesson's Road, Dooradoyle, Limerick V94 F858  
Tel: 061 301111 Fax: 061 301165

national guidance on access to maternity hospitals, which seeks to balance the competing requirements for partners to be present and support women, while giving priority to the safety, welfare and privacy of all women and infants in our care, and our staff.

In taking decisions to implement or relax restrictions, UMHL has regard to three primary factors: the rate of COVID transmission within the local community, the number of staff in the hospital and the possibility of those staff becoming unwell, and the infrastructure of the hospital site. More recently, we particularly note the concerns nationally and internationally about the transmissibility of the Delta variant of the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus.

We continue to review the access situation at UMHL on a weekly basis, to plan for the safe, controlled and phased relaxation of restrictions, and to ensure all processes are safely introduced and managed.

I trust this clarifies the position, please contact me if you have any further queries.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Colette Cowan'.

**Colette Cowan**  
**Chief Executive Officer**  
**UL Hospitals Group**



University Hospital Limerick is a member of UL Hospitals Group which also comprises; Nenagh Hospital, Ennis Hospital, Croom Orthopaedic Hospital, University Maternity Hospital Limerick and St. John's Hospital (voluntary).



Coimisiún na Scrúduithe Stáit

State Examinations Commission

Corr na Madadh, Baile Átha Luain, Co. na hIarmhí.

Cornamaddy, Athlone, Co. Westmeath.

Ms Laura Flannery  
Meetings Administrator  
Limerick City & County Council  
Corporate Headquarters  
Merchants Quay  
Limerick



21<sup>st</sup> July 2021

Dear Ms Flannery,

I refer to your letter dated 14th of July with regards to the provision of Reasonable Accommodations for State Examinations for students with epilepsy.

The SEC provides a scheme of Reasonable Accommodations at the Certificate Examinations (RACE Scheme) to support candidates who might have difficulty in accessing the examinations due to their special educational needs. The scheme provides accommodations for candidates with a variety of complex needs including learning difficulties as well as permanent or temporary physical, visual, hearing, medical, sensory, emotional, behavioral or other conditions.

In 2019, the SEC introduced, on an interim, pilot basis, a limited provision for supporting Leaving Certificate and Leaving Certificate Applied candidates who experienced the death of a close relative during the period of the written examinations under the emergency provisions of the RACE Scheme. Under that arrangement, a candidate who experienced a bereavement of a close relative was allowed to defer up to three days of their examinations and to take the examinations that they missed at an alternative sitting of the examinations in July 2019. The purpose of this measure was to allow the bereaved candidate some time to prepare for and attend the funeral of their loved one without having to contend with the added pressure of a full set of examinations.

It is acknowledged that students also experience other forms of trauma and adversity, such as serious illness, around the time of the Leaving Certificate examinations. The issues arising here are complex and must be balanced against the absolute need to maintain integrity and public confidence in the examinations system. Following the interim, pilot measure in 2019, the Board of the SEC had commenced a comprehensive review of the broader issue of how best to support students experiencing all forms of trauma and adversity at examinations time. The review process, which has been interrupted due to COVID-19, included research into practices in other jurisdictions

as well as engagement with stakeholders and candidates. The SEC will be recommending this extensive review process as soon as it is feasible.

### **Accommodating Candidates with Epilepsy**

Under the existing provisions of the RACE Scheme, every possible effort will continue to be made by the SEC to accommodate candidates who experience accidents, or other trauma either immediately before or during the examinations. There are arrangements that can be made between the State Examinations Commission and the school in the best interests of an ill or injured candidate provided the candidate is able to proceed with their examination on the scheduled date. For candidates who suffer from epilepsy, these arrangements might include supervised rest breaks during the examinations; access to a smaller examination centre; and alterations to the start and end time of the examinations as long as the examination is taken on the date as on the published timetable.

### **Examinations 2022**

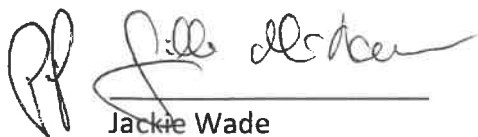
It is intended that an alternative set of Leaving Certificate examinations will be run in 2022, shortly after the main set of examinations. These examinations will be limited to certain students who are unable to sit the main set of examinations due to close family bereavement, COVID 19 illness and certain other categories of serious illness to be determined.

The advisory group on planning for State Examinations 2022 includes representatives of students, parents, teachers, school leadership and management bodies, the State Examinations Commission (SEC), the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment, the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science and the Department of Education, including the National Educational Psychological Service.

The SEC will issue further details regarding the 2022 examinations, with all arrangements guided by prevailing public health advice. There will be further engagement with stakeholders in advance of this.

I trust that this information is of assistance in clarifying the position.

Yours sincerely



Jackie Wade  
Corporate Affairs  
State Examinations Commission



Mrs. Laura Flannery  
Meetings Administrator,  
Limerick City and County Council,  
Corporate Headquarters,  
Merchants Key,  
Co. Limerick.

DEPREP– 2021 – 26424

July 2021

Dear Laura,

Ms. Heather Humphreys TD, Minister for Social Protection, has asked me to reply to your correspondence on behalf of the members of Limerick City and County Council regarding access to the free travel scheme for people who suffer with epilepsy.

The Free Travel scheme provides free travel on the main public and private transport services for those eligible under the scheme. These include road, rail and ferry services provided by companies such as Bus Átha Cliath, Bus Éireann and Iarnród Éireann, as well as Luas and services provided by over 80 private transport operators. There are currently approx. 1,003,000 customers with direct eligibility. The estimated expenditure on free travel in 2021 is €95 million.

In general, access to a free travel pass for those aged under 66 is linked to a person being in receipt of certain primary Social Protection payments such as Disability Allowance, Invalidity Pension, Carer's Allowance, Blind Pension and Partial Capacity Benefit.

Any possible extension to the eligibility criteria for free travel to include those diagnosed with epilepsy regardless of whether they receive a qualifying payment would have significant implications for the free travel scheme. It would be expected that any such decision would immediately lead to calls for all people who had a disability and/or significant health issues to be eligible for a free travel pass.

If the Free Travel scheme was to be extended to all people who had a disability and/or significant health issues, regardless of whether they receive a qualifying payment, a medical assessment process would be required for all such applications, significantly changing the nature of the scheme and requiring additional administrative processes to be put in place in order to adjudicate eligibility. Significant extra funding would also be required and accordingly, it could only be considered in the context of overall budgetary negotiations.

Under the Supplementary Welfare Allowance scheme, the Department may award a travel supplement, where the circumstances of the particular case so warrant. The supplement is intended to assist with ongoing or recurring travel costs that cannot be met from the client's own resources and are deemed to be necessary. Every decision is based on consideration of the circumstances of the individual case, taking account of the nature and extent of the need and of the resources of the person concerned.

I hope this clarifies the position.

Yours sincerely,

David O'Callaghan  
Pensions Policy and Free Scheme Unit

*The Minister is a Designated Public Official under the Regulation of Lobbying Act, 2015  
(details available on [www.lobbying.ie](http://www.lobbying.ie))*

An Roinn Iompair  
Department of Transport



Oifig an tAire Stáit | Office of the Minister of State

Ms. Laura Flannery  
Limerick City and County Council  
Corporate HQ  
Merchants Quay  
Limerick



3rd August 2021

Ref: DTTAS-MOSN-02620-2021

Dear Ms. Flannery,

Many thanks for your letter dated 28 June 2021 addressed to Minister for Transport, Eamon Ryan TD, in relation to Aer Lingus operations at Shannon Airport, the appointment of a Chairperson to the Board of the Shannon Group, and a request to meet the Minister to discuss these issues.

The letter was forwarded to this office and, in this regard, I am replying to you on behalf of Hildegard Naughton TD, Minister of State for Transport.

Unfortunately, the Minister does not have capacity to meet in the short to medium term. However, I trust that by outlining below the Minister's position on the areas highlighted in your letter will suffice.

Lána Liosain, Baile Átha Cliath, D02 TR60, Éire  
Leeson Lane, Dublin, D02 TR60, Ireland  
T +353 1 6041034 | [ministernaughton@transport.gov.ie](mailto:ministernaughton@transport.gov.ie)  
[www.Transport.gov.ie](http://www.Transport.gov.ie)



**Oifig an tAire Stáit | Office of the Minister of State**

At the time of Aer Lingus's acquisition by the International Airlines Group, certain connectivity commitments were made, one being to operate flights between Shannon and London Heathrow to a defined level.

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, *force majeure* provisions on these commitments have permitted the suspension of the operation of this route. Furthermore, these connectivity commitments expire in September 2022 and there is no facility to extend them. After this time, Aer Lingus will be free to utilise its London Heathrow airport slots as it wishes, and the operation of this route and its frequency will be a commercial decision for the company.

The closure of the Aer Lingus cabin crew base at Shannon Airport was an unfortunate development, and a consequence of the financial impact that COVID-19 has had on the aviation sector. Both Minister Eamon Ryan and Minister Naughton met with the CEO of Aer Lingus soon after their announced restructuring. At this meeting, we welcomed confirmation that there was no strategic intent to reduce operations at Shannon, and that restoration of services would depend on prevailing market conditions. The CEO of Shannon Group was also met to inform them of developments, to reiterate our support, and to acknowledge the important role played by Shannon Airport in regional development.

The resumption of non-essential international travel from 19 July, in conjunction with the introduction of the EU Digital COVID Certificate, are positive developments for the market that will facilitate the restoration of air services.





**Oifig an tAire Stáit | Office of the Minister of State**

Regarding the appointment of a Chairperson to the Board of the Shannon Group, Limerick City and Council members can be reassured that the Minister is very cognisant of the importance of this appointment. The Public Appointments Service provides an open, transparent, effective, and efficient process to identify suitable candidates for consideration by Ministers' for appointment to State Boards. This includes the position of Chairperson to the Board of the Shannon Group. Given the importance of this position, the initial in-depth selection process has been completed by the Public Appointments Service and they will shortly forward a shortlist of suitable candidates to Minister Ryan for his consideration. Minister Naughton will be liaising with Minister Ryan in this regard. Given the critical juncture Shannon Group is at, and the continuing challenges Shannon Airport in particular will face, the appointment of a suitably qualified Chairperson to the Board of the Shannon Group will be made as soon as possible.

I trust this letter serves to address the issues raised, and the Minister apologises for not being able to meet currently to discuss them. Please do not hesitate to contact this office again should there be any further matters raised in relation to the issues that have been addressed.

Yours sincerely,

Chris Smith

Private Secretary to Minister of State Hildegard Naughton

*The Minister of State is a Designated Public Official under the Regulation of Lobbying Act, 2015 (details available on [www.lobbying.ie](http://www.lobbying.ie))*



Mr. James Clune  
Limerick City and County Council  
Corporate Services  
Corporate Headquarters  
Merchants Quay  
Limerick

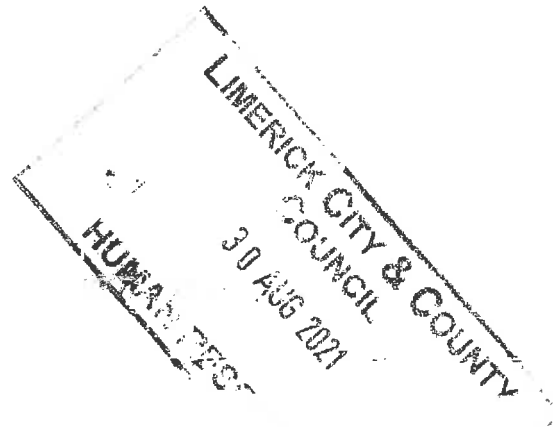
23rd August 2021

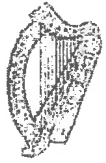
Ref: TTAS-MO-07612-2020

Dear Mr. Clune,

On behalf of the Minister for Transport, I thank you for your correspondence informing of the agreed resolution of Limerick County Council regarding a possible freight and passenger service from Limerick to Foynese. Please accept sincere apologies for the delay in responding. The Motion is noted.

As the Council will be aware, the National Transport Authority has carried out a review of the submissions received as part of last year's public consultation on the draft Limerick-Shannon Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy. The authority has also been examining further the potential for rail in the Limerick metropolitan area. The Department understands that the NTA intends to undertake a second round of public consultation in the coming months on a revised draft strategy.





Yours sincerely,

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**Naoise Grisewood**  
Private Secretary to Minister Ryan

*The Minister is a Designated Public Official under the Regulation of Lobbying Act, 2015 (details available on [www.lobbying.ie](http://www.lobbying.ie))*



COMHAIRLE CONTAE SHLIGIGH  
ÁRAS AN CONTAE COIS ABHAINN SLIGEACH

SLIGO COUNTY COUNCIL  
COUNTY HALL RIVERSIDE SLIGO

T +353 71 911 1111  
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E [info@sligococo.ie](mailto:info@sligococo.ie)  
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10<sup>th</sup> September 2021

To/ **Each Local Authority**

At the Ordinary Meeting of Sligo County Council held on 6<sup>th</sup> September 2021, the following resolution was agreed:

*"That SCC write to the Minister for Health and the Taoiseach requesting that without delay the work of Frontline workers be remunerated."*

*It was also agreed to circulate this motion to all other local authorities".*

Kevin Colreavy  
Meetings Administrator

Corporate Services Section  
Sligo County Council  
County Hall  
Riverside  
Sligo  
F91 Y763

Tel: 071-9111216  
e-mail: [meetings@sligococo.ie](mailto:meetings@sligococo.ie)



COMHAIRLE | CLARE  
CONTAE AN CHLÁIR | COUNTY COUNCIL

15<sup>th</sup> September, 2021.

**Our Ref: September 21-24/AR/MMcI**

Dear Meetings Administrator,

At the September meeting of Clare County Council the members passed the following resolution:

"Re Streetscape Enhancement Grant Scheme 2021, That Clare County Council call on Heather Humphries, Minister of Rural and Community Development to extend the date for works to be completed from 5<sup>th</sup> November, 2021 to allow successful applicants sufficient time to complete same".

It was agreed that this resolution would be circulated to other local authorities.

Yours sincerely,

---

**Ann Reynolds,**  
**Senior Executive Officer,**  
**Corporate Services Department,**  
**Finance and Support Services Directorate.**

An Roinn Seirbhísí Corparáideach  
Stiúrthóireacht Airgeadais agus Seirbhísí Tacaíochta  
Áras Contae an Chláir, Bóthar Nua, Inis, Co. an Chláir, V95 DXP2

Corporate Services Department  
Finance and Support Services Directorate  
Áras Contae an Chláir, New Road, Ennis, Co. Clare, V95 DXP2

## **Comhairle Contae na Mí**

Teach Buvinda, Bóthar Átha Cliath, An Uaimh,  
Contae na Mí, C15 Y291

Fón: 046 – 9097000/Fax: 046 – 9097001

R phost: [customerservice@meathcoco.ie](mailto:customerservice@meathcoco.ie)

Web: [www.meath.ie](http://www.meath.ie)

Uimhir Chláraithe 00172770



## **Meath County Council**

Buvinda House, Dublin Road, Navan,  
Co. Meath, C15 Y291

Tel: 046 – 9097000/Fax: 046 – 9097001

E-mail: [customerservice@meathcoco.ie](mailto:customerservice@meathcoco.ie)

Web: [www.meath.ie](http://www.meath.ie)

Registration No: 00172770

Corporate Services Department,  
September 16, 2021

### **Re: September 2021 Meeting, Meath County Council**

Dear Meeting Administrator

At its monthly meeting on September 6, 2021, members of Meath County Council adopted the following motion and requested that it also be forwarded to all other local authorities for information:

*“That Meath County Council calls on the Department of Agriculture to put in place a policy to control Japanese Knot Weed on agricultural land and private property and to take responsibility for the eradication of this invasive species. Local authorities across the country have already invested heavily to eradicate this weed from the sides of the roads.”*

Yours sincerely,

**Robert Collins**  
Meetings Administrator

Direct Line: 046-909 7053

Email: [robert.collins@meathcoco.ie](mailto:robert.collins@meathcoco.ie)



**Tithe an  
Oireachtais**  
Houses of the  
Oireachtas

**An Comhchoiste um Nithe a  
bhaineann le Míchumas**  
Teach Laighean  
Baile Átha Cliath 2  
D02 XR20  
Guthán: (01) 618 3575  
R/phost:  
[disabilitymatters@oireachtas.ie](mailto:disabilitymatters@oireachtas.ie)

**Joint Committee on Disability  
Matters**  
Leinster House  
Dublin 2  
D02 XR20  
Tel: (01) 618 3575  
E-mail:  
[disabilitymatters@oireachtas.ie](mailto:disabilitymatters@oireachtas.ie)

Ref: JCDM-i362

Laura Flannery  
Meetings Administrator  
Limerick City and County Council  
Corporate HQ  
Merchants Quay  
Limerick

Issued by email: [customerservices@limerick.ie](mailto:customerservices@limerick.ie)

21 September 2021

**Re: Limerick City and County Council adoption of motion supporting the campaign of Epilepsy  
Ireland**

Dear Ms. Flannery,

I am directed by the Chairman of the Joint Committee on Disability Matters, Mr Michael Moynihan, T.D. to acknowledge receipt of your correspondence received on 19 July 2021 regarding Adopted Motion to support the campaign of Epilepsy Ireland.

Your correspondence was brought to the attention of the Joint Committee at its private meeting on 9 September 2021 and it was agreed to acknowledge the letter and inform you that the Committee accepts the motion and are forwarding to the relevant Ministers, as referenced in the letter and highlighting the Committees acceptance of the motion.

I am attaching an information note from the State Examinations Commission in relation to Reasonable Accommodations Certificate Examinations – RACE.

If you have any queries please contact the undersigned, Mairead ODonovan, Clerk to the Committee at 01-6183575, who will be happy to discuss this with you.

Yours sincerely,

*Mairead O'Donovan.*

---

Mairead ODonovan  
Clerk to the Joint Committee on Disability Matters

*Cuirfear fáilte roimh chomhfhreagras i nGaeilge*



Coimisiún na Scrúduithe Stáit  
State Examinations Commission  
Corr na Madadh, Baile Átha Luain, Co. na hIarmhí.  
Cornamaddy, Athlone, Co. Westmeath

Mr. Michael Moynihan, TD  
Chairperson  
Joint Committee on Disability  
Dáil Éireann  
Dublin 2

[disabilitymatters@oireachtas.ie](mailto:disabilitymatters@oireachtas.ie)

16 August 2021

Dear Chairperson

The Minister for Education, Ms Norma Foley, TD, has asked the State Examinations Commission to respond directly to your letter of 22 July 2021, on behalf of Meath County Council and South County Dublin County Council, in relation to the provision of Reasonable Accommodations at the Certificate Examinations for students with epilepsy.

The SEC provides a scheme of Reasonable Accommodations at the Certificate Examinations (RACE Scheme) to support candidates with a complex variety of special educational needs including learning difficulties as well as permanent or temporary physical, visual, hearing, medical, sensory, emotional, behavioural or other conditions. The purpose of the scheme is to allow candidates who have special educational needs that interfere with their capacity to engage with the standard examination arrangements to demonstrate what they know and can do, without compromising the integrity of the assessment. This involves such candidates being held to the same standard as other candidates with regard to what the examination is intended to measure. In common with similar schemes which operate in other jurisdictions, the focus of the RACE scheme is on the need to remove barriers to accessing the examinations, while retaining the need to assess the same underlying skills and competencies as are assessed for all other candidates, and to apply the same standards of achievement as apply to all other candidates.

Access to the state certificate examinations is facilitated, in the first instance, by developing examination papers and other test instruments that are designed to be as accessible as possible to the broadest range of candidates, including those with special educational needs. All examination materials are reviewed in the course of their development with a view to eliminating inappropriate barriers, and careful consideration is given as to whether the means of assessment rely on a skill or competence that is not properly part of the focus of the assessment but which could exclude candidates with certain disabilities.



### **Range of Accommodations**

The range of accommodations provided within the scheme has been designed to ensure fairness when facilitating candidates in demonstrating their level of achievement of the objectives of the course concerned in a manner which is fair to all other candidates.

The range of accommodations available within the scheme includes:

- Access to a reader or reading assistant or use of an examination reading pen for candidates with learning or visual difficulties
- Use of a word-processor, or a recording device or, in very exceptional circumstances, access to a scribe for candidates with learning or physical difficulties
- A waiver from the assessment of spelling, grammar and punctuation in language subjects for candidates with learning difficulties
- Alternative format examination papers (enlarged; Brailled; etc.) for visually or physically impaired candidates.
- A modified oral or aural or an exemption from these tests for hearing impaired candidates
- Use of drawing aids in certain examinations
- Access to a special shared examination centre or, exceptionally, an individual centre

### **Eligibility for RACE**

Conditions of eligibility, including, for some accommodations, specific measurable criteria, apply to the various access arrangements which can be approved under the scheme and accommodations can only be provided in accordance with the principles and requirements of the scheme.

It is important to note that the existence of a learning or other difficulty does not automatically mean that a candidate requires accommodations to access the certificate examinations. For example, even though candidates may have some difficulty with reading, writing or spelling they may not require the provision of any special facilities if they can read the examination papers at the appropriate level and communicate what they know to the examiners.

### **Accommodating Candidates with Epilepsy**

Under the existing provisions of the RACE Scheme, every possible effort is also made by the SEC to accommodate candidates who experience accidents, serious illness or other trauma either immediately before or during the examinations. There are arrangements that can be made between the State Examinations Commission and the school in the best interests of an ill or injured candidate provided the candidate is able to proceed with their examination on the scheduled date. For candidates who suffer from epilepsy, these arrangements might include supervised rest breaks during the examinations; access to a smaller special examination centre; and alterations to the start and end time of the examinations as long as the examination can be taken on the date as on the published timetable.

### **Interim Pilot Provision in 2019**

In 2019, the SEC introduced, on an interim, pilot basis, a limited provision for supporting Leaving Certificate and Leaving Certificate Applied candidates who experienced the death of a close relative during the period of the written examinations under the emergency provisions of the RACE Scheme. Under that arrangement, a candidate who experienced a bereavement of a close relative was allowed

to defer up to three days of their examinations and to take the examinations that they missed at an alternative sitting of the examinations in July 2019. The purpose of this measure was to allow the bereaved candidate some time to prepare for and attend the funeral of their loved one without having to contend with the added pressure of a full set of examinations.

It is acknowledged that students also experience other forms of trauma and adversity, such as serious illness, around the time of the Leaving Certificate examinations. The issues arising here are complex and must be balanced against the absolute need to maintain integrity and public confidence in the examinations system. Following the interim, pilot measure in 2019, the Board of the SEC had commenced a comprehensive review of the broader issue of how best to support students experiencing all forms of trauma and adversity at examinations time. The review process, which has been interrupted due to COVID-19, included research into practices in other jurisdictions as well as engagement with stakeholders and candidates. The SEC will be recommencing this extensive review process as soon as it is feasible.

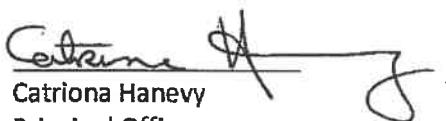
### **Examinations 2022**

On 30 June 2021, Minister Foley announced the adjusted arrangements that would apply to the 2022 Leaving Certificate and Junior Cycle examinations to take account of the disruption to learning as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. These arrangements include adjustments to the assessments similar to that applied by the *Assessment Arrangements For Junior Cycle and Leaving Certificate Examinations 2021*, as announced in December 2020. The revised arrangements for 2022 also include the intention to run an alternative set of Leaving Certificate examinations, shortly after the conclusion of the main set of examinations. These examinations will be limited to certain students who are unable to sit the main set of examinations due to close family bereavement, COVID 19 illness and certain other categories of serious illness to be determined with due regard for the principles of equity, fairness and integrity which govern all aspects of the examinations system. There will be no second sitting of the Junior Cycle examinations.

The SEC will issue further details regarding the 2022 examinations, with all arrangements guided by prevailing public health advice. There will be further engagement with stakeholders in advance of this.

I trust that this information is of assistance in clarifying the position.

Yours sincerely



Catriona Hanevy  
Principal Officer  
State Examinations Commission

