

# Kelly: Vet paedophiles and drug dealers moving here

■ Pauline Scott

People moving to County Roscommon from other parts of the country who have criminal records should be the subject of Garda vetting, according to Cllr. John Kelly, who told councillors at Monday's meeting of Roscommon County Council that paedophiles and drug dealers are moving into the county and are not the subject of Garda vetting.

A motion from Cllr Kelly stated: "That Roscommon County Council call on the Minister for Housing to introduce legislation to prohibit freedom of movement of people from other parts of the country to rural Ireland if they have been involved in anti-social behaviour or have criminal records in the past and that in order to get rent allowance, proper screening, which includes Garda vetting, must take place."

Putting forward the no-

tice of motion, Cllr. Kelly said, "I feel that criminals have far too much freedom of movement. I don't think they should be able to move into other counties. I know it from my own day job that there are people arriving in our county from various parts of the country on a regular basis and they have baggage with them, they have been involved in anti-social behaviour, we have paedophiles moving to this county and drug dealers and there is no Garda vetting of people."

"If somebody has a criminal record and they wish to move to another part of the country, there should be Garda vetting," said Cllr. Kelly, who called on the Minister for Housing (Michael Finnan) to introduce legislation to restrict the movement of criminals.

Cllr. Michael Mulligan said that he had no trouble supporting the motion. "People are com-

ing in from outside and should be vetted by the local councillors and the Gardaí. We have all seen it at first-hand what we have coming into the county. We have some lovely people and some scumbags. In Ballaghaderreen we have four rival gangs fighting for turf and it's drug turf. They get rent allowance and free housing and these people must be vetted. They are coming from Sligo and Donegal and the devil knows where. We were a good law-abiding community for a number of years, but they should be vetted by the guards and the local councillors."

Cllr. Paula McNamara also fully supported the motion. "Decent people are welcome, but scumbags and people with records, we don't want them." Cllr. Sean Beirne suggested that the aim of the notice of motion was to get headlines and he said that everyone has freedom of movement in



Cllr. John Kelly.

the state. "Thankfully we live in a democratic society with freedom enshrined in our constitution," said Cllr. John Keogh.

Cllr. Luke 'Ming' Flanagan expressed concern over the trend whereby

prisoners who come to the end of their sentences in Castlerea Prison end up living in Castlerea and suggested that the problem would not be as widespread if letting agents were more responsible.

## Overlay plans for Ballinagare welcomed

Plans for a surface overlay in the village of Ballinagare were welcomed this week by councillor Liam Callaghan. Councillor Callaghan has said he highlighted condition of this road and is now pleased it is getting attention. Other roads in the area are also listed for resurfacing, such as Mullen, Gortnagoine, Carnakit, Castleruby, and Valeview.

## Byrne welcomes road allocation

The announcement of the Roads Scheme for 2010 was this week welcomed by Strokestown area councillor Valerie Byrne.

"Many of the roads in the Strokestown Electoral Area are in a very bad state of repair. Decisions made by local county councillors on the roads scheduled for improvement works for 2010 was agreed last week. Unfortunately this road works scheme can only go somewhat to improve the worst areas due to the amount of funding allocated from central government."

Cllr. Byrne has made representation for many of these works to be carried out and especially welcomed the allocation of €100,000 for the street in Elphin. "The street has badly deteriorated and I hope this allocation will restore it to a proper standard."

Cllr. Byrne also welcomed the reallocation for Reilly's Lane, Elphin. "This money was allocated last year but due to the cutbacks it was not possible for the work to be carried out. I have also asked Roscommon County Council to put in ducting for lighting when carry out this job." She also welcomed local roads surface dressing at Clooncullan, Grallagh and Lishugh. Cllr. Byrne is disappointed with the allocation for the Local Improvement Scheme. "This Scheme has been cut from €285,000 last year to €95,000 this year for the whole county. Marvellous work was carried out with this Scheme and it is a great pity it is reduced this year and it does not look good for years to come."

Footpaths allocation was also put in place with monies allocated to Elphin, Strokestown, Rooskey, Cloontuskert and Tarmonbarry.

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