

# Green light for €20m civic offices in Roscommon

The Government has sanctioned construction of new civic offices in Roscommon town, with an estimated construction cost of €20 million.

The news was announced on Monday last by the Minister for Housing and Local Services, Michael Finneran TD. The new office block will be located in the town centre on the vacant three-acre site at Church Road, Roscommon, site of the town's former fire station, and will be the new headquarters for Roscommon County Council. The civic offices will be a multi-storey

building and will have a substantial underground car park.

"This is a flagship project for the County of Roscommon and will add greatly to the existing Government Offices at Convent Road and the new Property Registration Authority Offices under construction on the Sacred Heart Home Road," said Minister Finneran.

The project will go to tender this summer with construction commencing later this year. It is expected that there will be in the region of 100 persons employed in the construc-

tion phase over a period of 18 to 24 months. The offices, when completed, will accommodate all existing County Council staff in Roscommon Town and will provide modern facilities for the visiting public.

Minister Finneran concluded by expressing his thanks to Roscommon County Manager, Mr. Frank Dawson and his Executive for their on-going consultation and in particular the officials in the Minister's own Department for their constructive approach to this important development for Roscommon.



The site of the new €20m civic offices in Roscommon town. Picture: Andrew Fox.

## Manager hails development

A clearly delighted County Manager, Mr. Frank Dawson said on Tuesday that he was honoured to be able to welcome the go-ahead for a €20m Council HQ in Roscommon town.

Speaking at a civic reception for various high-achieving individuals – held in Roscommon Arts Centre – Mr. Dawson took the opportunity to refer to the Government's 'green light' for the project.

Noting that the new Council HQ would be a "centre of excellence" Mr. Dawson said that Minister Michael Finneran had strongly supported him (the County Manager) in bringing the project to fruition. Acknowledging that "the seeds had been sown" by his predecessor, Mr. John Tiernan, the County Manager said that he wished to welcome a project which would be a "catalyst for revival and change." The new HQ would involve investment of about €20m, create 100 jobs "directly and hundreds indirectly."

Full coverage of the civic reception in our next issue.



Picture: Mick McCormack

## New offices show the benefit of having a Minister – Leyden

News that the Government has sanctioned €20 million new civic offices for Roscommon County Council was welcomed this week by Senator Terry Leyden, who said that it shows the advantage of having a Minister or Minister of State.

"I welcome the announcement by the Minister of State, Deputy Finneran, of an allocation of €20 million for civic offices for Roscommon County Council in Roscommon town, which will create 100 jobs during construction of the multi-storey building. It is a great boost to the industry, as well as the staff, the County Manager and all those who serve as councillors, as I did when I initiated the project many years ago, to see it coming to fruition.

"That is the advantage of having a Minister or a Minister of State. Having the Minister of State in the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government ensured the project

would be pushed forward. We will now have tremendous offices located in the town. As far as I know, it is the last county to receive new civic offices. It is a wonderful day for Roscommon town and the country that the Government can approve the spending of €20 million in difficult times.

"The old courthouse, now the headquarters of Roscommon County Council, will be reconverted to provide full courthouse facilities for the family court, as well as facilities for barristers, judges and the public. It is a great day for Roscommon town. That is why every county wants to have a Minister. As a former Minister of State in County Roscommon, I know the benefits of having a Minister in the county. Therefore, I welcome the decision announced by the Minister of State."

## Kelly: Make sure tender goes to local builder

The new €20m civic offices in Roscommon town should be built by a local builder – and Housing Minister Michael Finneran should help ensure that this is the case.

That was the strong plea voiced by Labour Party Councillor John Kelly this week, when he told the Roscommon People that it is essential that the contract for the major project "goes to a local."

Cllr. Kelly said that he very much welcomes the Government's announcement that a €20m project is to proceed in Roscommon town, namely new civic offices. However he is adamant that 'outsiders' should not be granted the tender for the project but that, instead, a local contractor based in Co. Roscommon should be employed.

"I am calling on Minister Finneran to use his influence to have the goalposts changed when it comes to how the tendering process works. There is no level playing field and smaller builders lose out. We need this contract to stay within the county and not go to outsiders. We don't want outsiders to get this job and (to) import their manpower. Too often such contracts go to the old brigade from the Galway tent (a reference to the perception that Fianna Fail fund-raisers at the Galway Races were supported by so-called 'big builders'.)

"The mechanism involving in such tendering processes is designed to suit huge companies. We have our own big builders in Co. Roscommon. Let's keep this project in the county and make it a win-win situation."

Cllr. Kelly stressed that he welcomes the announcement by the Government and also news that funding is being provided for Elphin Fire Station.



The site of the new €20m civic offices in Roscommon town. Picture: Andrew Fox.

## Kilduff welcomes new offices

The announcement that a headquarters for Roscommon County Council is to be built at a cost of €20 million was welcomed this week by Cllr. Paddy Kilduff.

"I want to sincerely welcome the recent announcement by Minister Michael Finneran that Roscommon County Council is to receive a new €20m headquarters located on the site of the old fire station in the middle of Roscommon town. This is excellent news for the local economy and the county in general. Minister Finneran

must be highly commended for ensuring the construction phase of this significant project got sanctioned during a period of limited resources.

"It highlights yet again the benefits of having effective representation at Government level. I also want to thank the current County Manager, Mr. Frank Dawson, the previous county manager Mr. John Tiernan and the council executive for keeping this project to the fore and pursuing it with vigour.

"I am particularly delighted

that this announcement coincides with the first year of a Fianna Fáil/Independent alliance-led Council in the county and I am really looking forward to some lively debate in the new facility in 2012. I have no doubt that this facility will significantly enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the council. With all executive and administrative staff in the one location, the facility can only serve to improve the delivery of services to the public throughout the county."