

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS AT MEETING OF METROPOLITAN DISTRICT OF LIMERICK HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, MERCHANT'S QUAY, LIMERICK, ON MONDAY, 15TH MAY, 2017 AT 9.45 A.M.

PRESENT IN THE CHAIR: Councillor Michael Hourigan, Mayor.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Councillors Butler, Collins, Costelloe, Crowley, Daly, Gilligan, Hogan, Hurley, Keller, Leddin, Loftus, Lynch, McCreesh, Ó Ceallaigh, O'Dea, O'Hanlon, Pond, Prendiville, Secas and Sheahan.

OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE:

Director, Physical Development Directorate (Mr. K. Lehane), Meetings Administrator (Mr. C. O'Connor), A/Director of Service, Social Development Directorate (Ms. C. Kirby), Senior Executive Officer, Service Operations (Mr. J. Delaney), Senior Executive Officer, Social Development Directorate (Ms. P. Liddy), Administrative Officer, Corporate Services (Mr. T. O'Callaghan), Administrative Officer, Social Development Directorate (Ms. C. Farrell), Senior Architect, Social Development Directorate (Mr. S. Hanrahan), A/Senior Executive Officer, Community Support Services (Mr. D. Hennessy), Executive Planner, Social Development Directorate (Ms. S. Newell), Staff Officer, Social Development Directorate (Ms. E. Rea), Assistant Staff Officer, Public Interest Development (Ms. L. Ruttle).

At the outset the Mayor and Members extended their condolences to the family of the late John Devane, a native of Janesboro, whose work as a Solicitor had gained him a high level of respect in the city. A silence was observed in his memory.

1. Adoption of Minutes

Circulated, copy of draft Minutes of Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick held on 18th April, 2017.

Proposed by Councillor Sheahan;

Seconded by Councillor Collins;

And Resolved:

"That the draft Minutes, as circulated, be taken as read and adopted and signed".

2. Disposal of Land

Circulated, Report of the Senior Executive Officer, Property Services dated 3rd May, 2017 setting out proposals for the disposal of 4.414 acres of land at Rathmale, Mungret to The Trustees of Mungret Regional Football Club and the intention to bring a disposal notice in relation to same before the May Meeting of the Council. Members welcomed the proposed disposal on the grounds that it would assist Mungret Regional Football Club in drawing down funding and enhance their capacity to deliver facilities for their growing membership.

Circulated, Report of the Senior Executive Officer, Community Support Services, setting out proposals to dispose of the Freehold Interest of property at 8 Upper Careys Road and to bring a Section 183 Notice in relation to same to the Full Council for approval. Members noted the proposal, as circulated.

3. Annual Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick

Following discussion and a vote by show of hands, it was agreed that the Annual Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick would be held on 23rd June, 2017 at 6pm.

4. Taking in Charge of Estates – Declaration of Roads to be Public Roads

Circulated, Report of the A/Senior Planner, Planning and Environmental Services, dated 26th April, 2017 seeking approval to the taking in charge of listed estates in the District and the declaration of roads to be public roads.

Proposed by Councillor Butler;
Seconded by Councillor Daly;
And Resolved:

“That the estates below be taken in charge in accordance with Section 180 of the Planning and Development Act (2000-2015) and Section 11 of the Roads Act 1993”.

Bracken Crescent / Gardens, North Circular Road
Clonile, Old Cratloe Road
Eden Court, North Circular Road
Meadow Springs, Caherdavin
Silverbrook, Mill Road, Corbally
The Hermitage, Mill Road

5(a) Community Facilities Scheme 2017

Circulated, Report of the Chief Officer, LCDC, dated 20th April, 2017 giving an overview and details of the Community Facilities Scheme for 2017 and Assessment Criteria; Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government Communities Facilities Scheme Capital Scheme 2017 Guidelines and Application Form.

Members noted that the deadline for submission of applications, which had been set nationally, was 26th May, 2017.

(b) Limerick City and County Council Housing Programme 2017

The Senior Executive Architect presented an overview of the Council’s Housing Programme 2017 which included the following :

- An overview of Rebuilding Ireland – Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness – July 2016 from the national and local viewpoint, including targets, funding, delivery mechanisms and local project details.

- The role of Approved Housing Bodies (AHBs) in housing provision and their relationship with the Council.
- An overview of regeneration, rent pressure zones and vacant housing stock.
- A review of the Repair and Lease Scheme.
- The aims and key actions of the Council's housing policy.

Members welcomed the presentation and made the following points during discussion of this item :

- Emphasis should be placed on the construction of Council houses as the purchase or rent of property by the Council could put it in competition with the private market.
- Properties located on Mallow Street had the potential to be improved under the Buy and Renew or Repair and Lease Schemes.
- The increased involvement of AHB was noted and while AHBs had additional tenant supports in place the co-ordination of their activities with the Council was important.
- Every effort should be made to fast track the tender process involved in house construction.
- There were insufficient houses being built to meet supply and many of the sites designated for housing on the Development Plan were either landlocked, unserviced or tied up with NAMA. Other sites without such issues should be considered.
- Properties with distressed mortgages should be purchased by Councils and rented back to the occupants to avoid the involvement of vulture funds.
- Rent caps should be applied to areas of Limerick in acknowledgement of increasing rents in areas such as Dooradoyle / Rathkeale.

In response to issues raised by Members the Senior Architect, Social Development clarified the following :

- There were approximately 31 AHBs active in Limerick, many of these operated on a small scale and any contribution made by AHBs to the provision of housing units would be welcomed.
- AHBs needed land ownership to develop sites but conditions would be attached to any such transfer of lands from the Council.
- When purchasing houses the Council would not compete with first time buyers and would withdraw from any transaction where vacant possession was not available. Of the 200 houses considered for purchase in 2016, the Council purchased 50.
- The maximum number of Council houses considered on any site would be 40 and it was important that both public and private housing would be available, going forward.
- There was a three month lag in figures relating to rent pressure zones which may explain why Raheen and Dooradoyle were not yet included.
- A number of single properties, many of which had difficulties associated with them, were being looked at in the context of the Buy and Renew Scheme. Multiple properties could also be looked at and any information that the Members had in relation to properties that could benefit from the scheme would be welcomed.
- Increases in population and homelessness had been taken into consideration in the Council's plans.
- Part V discussions with private developers indicated a pick up in this market in the areas of Raheen, Castletroy and Newcastle West.
- In relation to the activation of land, four sites had been submitted to the Department under

the Local Infrastructure Housing Activation Fund Scheme with a view to the State providing the infrastructure to open up same. This included sites at Mungret and Greenpark.

Members requested that they be circulated with a copy of the presentation.

QUESTION

6. Question submitted by Councillor M. McCreesh

I will ask at the next meeting for an update regarding the traffic management study underway for the Dock Road and the plans to include the Raheen, Dooradoyle and Mungret areas as part of a greater traffic study for Limerick that was due to commence in 2017.

REPLY: A preliminary plan for improvement work on the Dock Road carriageway was prepared in 2016. Funding has not been made available to progress improvements on the Dock Road to date and the Council will be seeking the required funding from the DTTAS in 2018.

A wider land use planning study is required for the Dock Road area and it is hoped that this land use plan with complementary upgrade plans for the Dock Road can be progressed over the next 12 months. It will be necessary to fund this study from Development Levies and the Council will be looking to allocate a sum of €70,000 in 2017.

The National Transport Authority has confirmed that a strategic transport study (the Limerick Transport Strategy) will commence in Quarter 4 of 2017. The Raheen, Dooradoyle and Mungret areas will be considered as part of this strategic study.

NOTICES OF MOTION

7. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor M. Hurley

I will move at the next meeting that traffic wardens and litter wardens be deployed at regular intervals to patrol all residential estates in the immediate vicinity of University of Limerick where a large percentage of Limerick's Student accommodation is based, with effect from mid-September.

Following discussion it was agreed that this motion would be sent to the Travel and Transportation and Environment Strategic Policy Committees.

8. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor E. Secas

I will move at the next Meeting that Limerick City and County Council extend the 30km speed limit pilot scheme to other estates in the city especially where speeding is a big issue and residents request it.

The motion was proposed by Councillor Secas and seconded by Councillor Costelloe.

In proposing the motion Councillor Secas noted the need to change driver behaviour and make estates safer for vulnerable users. She pointed out that extending the 30 kmph speed limit to other estates would facilitate the enforcement of safer driving in these areas.

Members supported the motion and called for more 30 kmph speed limit signs to be erected in the pilot estates and for increased speed van and Garda presence to coincide with the introduction of 30 kmph limits. A view was expressed that there was no evidence to suggest that the 30 kmph limit was appropriate or effective.

Members noted that motions similar to this had been sent to Strategic Policy Committees for consideration and highlighted the need for consistency in this regard and it was proposed by Councillor Leddin, seconded by Councillor Hourigan, that a review of standing orders relating to the Metropolitan District take place, to include the review of how notices of motion should be dealt with.

REPLY: The Council is currently undertaking a general speed limit review in accordance with the provisions of the Guidelines for Setting and Managing Speed Limits in Ireland. The question of extending the 30 kmph speed limit to other estates is being considered as part of this review.

The Director, Physical Development noted that new approaches, such as table top pedestrian crossings at junctions that also act as speed ramps and also controls for cyclists, were being implemented to reduce traffic speed and increase safety.

9. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor S. Lynch

I will move at the next meeting that the Council allocate sufficient funding from the Budget of 2018 to upgrade and take in charge the road to Carrigogunnell Castle in Clarina, on the banks of the River Shannon.

The motion was proposed by Councillor Lynch and seconded by Councillor Gilligan.

In proposing the motion Councillor Lynch highlighted the historical significance of Carrigogunnell Castle, its links to U2 and location adjacent to the Wild Atlantic Way, all of which enhanced its potential as a significant tourist attraction. He highlighted the lack of signage or appropriate parking in association with the Castle, the need to upgrade and take in charge its approach road and the State's associated obligations under the Florence Convention.

Members supported the motion and emphasised the historical and cultural significance of the site and the need to fully develop its potential, in conjunction with the Council's Tourism Officer, for the benefit of the city and county.

REPLY: The question of the provision of funding for the taking in charge of roads and estates in 2018 is a matter for consideration by the Members of Council when agreeing and adopting the 2018 budget.

In this particular case, the road in question is 620 metres long by an average width of 3 metres. It serves four houses, some farmland and is also used as an

access to Carrigogunnell Castle, a ruined 13th Century Castle on private property.

The road is in poor condition, badly shaped with a rough, uneven surface. The cost of bringing this road up to standard for taking in charge is estimated at €36,000. This involves regrading the road with Clause 804 material followed by a double surface-dressing.

The option of upgrading and taking in charge this road will be considered as part of the Council's scheme in 2018, having regard to the funding available and the priority ranking of this particular request when compared to the priority ranking of other estates.

An alternative option is for the users of the road to apply for a Local Improvement Scheme whereby they would be required to pay just 20% of the cost of the works (equal to €7,200) and the Council would carry out the works when the scheme is approved.

However, it must be noted that if a local improvement scheme is applied in this area, then the Council would not subsequently take the road in charge and the road would remain in private ownership.

The Meetings Administrator acknowledged the views expressed by Members and undertook to bring same to the attention of the Economic Development Directorate and the Tourism Officer.

10. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor J. Costelloe

I will move at the next meeting that Limerick City and County Council write to the OPW to acquire the sites at Mary Street and Edward Street to develop and use as part of our housing stock, given we have such a lack of units throughout the city.

The motion was proposed by Councillor Costelloe and seconded by Councillor Prendiville.

In proposing the motion Councillor Costelloe noted that both sites were neglected with the Mary Street building in the Medieval Quarter of the city and detracting from same.

In seconding the motion Councillor Prendiville noted that these sites were earmarked for private development under the Minister's plans for 700 such sites around the country. He noted the ongoing need for Council housing and called for a mix of Council and private housing to be built on these sites.

Members supported the motion and noted the ongoing need for more houses to be built on available sites.

11. Correspondence

Correspondence, as circulated, was noted.

At the conclusion of the agenda, and with the permission of the Mayor, Ms. Lisa Ruttle, Assistant Staff Officer, Public Interest Development presented details of the Town and Village Renewal Scheme 2017 which included an overview of the scheme, selection criteria, key dates and types of projects to be considered. She noted that the Council was seeking expressions of interest from town or village groups with suitable projects for consideration under this competitive scheme.

Members noted the closing date for submissions of 26th May, 2017 and that emails in relation to the scheme had already been circulated. Members thanked Ms. Ruttle for her presentation and discussed its potential to apply to various projects in the District.

This concluded the Meeting.

Signed:

MAYOR

Dated:
