

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS AT MEETING OF THE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF ADARE-RATHKEALE HELD AT ÁRAS SEÁN FINN, NEW LINE ROAD, RATHKEALE, CO. LIMERICK ON WEDNESDAY, 11TH MAY, 2016, AT 9.00 A.M.

PRESENT IN THE CHAIR: Councillor R. O'Donoghue, An Cathaoirleach.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Councillors Keary, McMahan, O'Brien and Sheahan.

APOLOGIES:

Councillor Teskey.

OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE:

Director, Regional Services (Ms. C. Curley), Operations Manager, South and West Division (Mr. B. Kennedy), Acting Senior Planner (Mr. S. Duclot) Conservation Officer (Mr. T. Cassidy), Regional Waste Plan Co-ordinator (Ms. P. King), Meetings Administrator (Mr. T. O'Callaghan), Administrative Officer (Mr. D. Hennessy), Staff Officer (Ms. K. Butler), Assistant Staff Officer (Ms. E. Buckley).

Councillor Sheahan opened the Meeting by saying he was saddened by the death of Kevin McMahan who had worked as an engineer in Rathkeale for the previous 11 years and extended a vote of sympathy to his wife and family. He spoke kindly of Kevin and noted that he had been a unique gentleman of whom he had many happy memories.

All Members joined in extending their sympathy to Kevin's family and stressed that Kevin had been held in high regard and was a man of principal who would be sadly missed.

The Director, Regional Services paid tribute to Kevin on her own behalf and on behalf of the staff and extended sincere sympathy to his wife and family.

On resumption of the Meeting and with the Cathaoirleach permission, it was agreed that Item No. 2 would be taken at this stage of the Meeting.

2. Deputation from St. Joseph's Boys National School and St. Anne's Primary School

The Cathaoirleach welcomed representatives from St. Joseph's Boys National School and St. Anne's Primary School which consisted of Ann McMahan, Mairead O'Sullivan, Noel Harnett, Michael McNamara and Triona Giltenane. Ms. McMahan outlined the road safety issues for children attending the national schools in Rathkeale and noted that October to late February represented the holiday period in Rathkeale and schools were open during most of this period. She raised issues in relation to the volume of traffic and speeding in Thomas Street, Fairhill and Newline Road. She pointed out that she had written to the Gardaí on this issue and circulated copy of a letter she had received from the Chief Superintendent in reply which recommend a number of measures to be implemented.

She noted that St. Joseph's Boys National School operated a Junior School Warden Scheme and that, while the school were eager to continue with same, the safety of the children had to be taken into consideration. In response to an enquiry from Members, Ms McMahon noted that 40% to 50% of pupils were dropped off at the school by car with this figure increasing in wet weather.

The Members indicated their agreement with the points raised by the deputation and made the following points while discussing same.

- That this issue had been ongoing for some time and that similar issues were in place in many other schools. It was suggested that a list of all such issues be drawn up and a plan put in place to address same.
- There was an onus on parents to park safely when dropping off and collecting children from school and the school should write to parents in relation to same. Ms. McMahon noted that, while parents had been written to in this regard as part of the enrolment process, dismissal time was still an issue, with parents arriving at the same time and she undertook to write to parents again on this matter.
- Many schools had been allowed to expand without issues in relation to traffic calming, set down areas, pedestrian crossings and the general safety of pupils arriving at and departing from the school being addressed.

On the proposal of Councillor McMahon, seconded by Councillor Keary it was agreed that the District would write to the Minister for Education and Skills requesting funding for a range of road safety measures required, in association with the schools in the District.

The Operations Manager, South and West Division, indicated that €35,000 had been allocated to the installation of a pedestrian crossing at Newline Road and noted that a raised crossing would cost an additional €4,000 to €5,000. Following discussion Members agreed that the allocation of €11,000 for 'Rathkeale Footpaths' in the Development Fund would be used to provide two ramps on Thomas Street.

Director, Regional Services stressed that the Council would do its best to deliver a solution, within its remit, and noted that the Gardaí also had a role to play in monitoring and prosecuting any breaches of the law.

3. Corporate Services

Annual Meeting and June Monthly Meeting of Municipal District

Members agreed that the Annual Meeting would take place on the 1st June, 2016 at 9 a.m. with the Monthly Meeting to be held at the conclusion of the Annual Meeting.

4. Community Support Services

Mr. D. Hennessy, Administrative Officer, Community Support Services outlined details of the Tenant Purchase Scheme 2016 and undertook to circulate the Members with a copy of same.

In response to queries from Members, Mr. Hennessy clarified the following:-

- Any decision in relation to antisocial behaviour would be based on convictions rather than hearsay.
- Tenants with no income other than social welfare would not qualify.
- Any works carried out to a property by the tenants would be assessed by an independent valuer and in cases of disagreement would be sent to an appeals process.
- Clarification would be sought from the Department as to whether tenants, who would not normally qualify under the terms of the scheme but had cash amounts that would enable them to purchase the house, would qualify.

Members noted that there were vacant houses in NAMA estates within the District. The Director, Regional Services indicated that any such property should be brought to the attention of Pat Dowling, Director of Home and Community.

5. Planning & Environmental Services

(a) To receive update on Harte's Thatched House, Coolrahee, Askeaton, Co. Limerick.

The Conservation Officer noted that, while a valuation had been received from the purported owner in relation to this property, a valuer appointed by the Council had put a lower value on same. Correspondence with the purported owner had not been returned and efforts were ongoing to renew contacts.

It was noted by Members that this property was now effectively a derelict site and suggested that the Council should take possession of same and liaise with the local Men's Shed Group who had indicated an interest in taking on the restoration of the property as a project.

At the request of Members the Conservation Officer gave an update on the restoration of the two cottages in Adare damaged by fire and noted that works were to commence within the coming weeks.

A discussion took place in relation to the sourcing of reed that might be used to restore these cottages. It was noted that reed was being imported from Poland, Turkey and China, with claims that this reed was more durable than local reed. Members indicated that, while it would be unfair to be unduly restrictive in this regard, they would support the use of local reed where possible.

Members noted that invoices in relation to the Fire Brigade charges associated with attending at this fire had been issued and a request was made that these charges be struck off in any instances where the property owner had been unable to obtain affordable fire insurance.

The Director, Regional Services noted that a certain level of receipts were included in the budget under this heading but undertook to consider the request and revert to the Members in relation to same.

Members raised issues in relation to materials to be used in this project, fire insurance and the application of fire regulations to the project. The Conservation Officer noted that it was a matter for the consultants, employed by the property owners, to ensure the design allowed for fire prevention and the prevention of fire spread and that the Dorset Protocol would be employed in this regard.

Members requested that Item Nos. 5(b), 5(c), 5(d); Item 6 and Item No. 13 be dealt with at the next Meeting.

7. General Municipal Allocation

On the proposal of Councillor Sheahan, seconded by Councillor O'Brien agreement was reached for the spending of €100,000 on Special Projects as set out below:-

Municipal District of Adare-Rathkeale – Special Projects		
1.	Foynes Air Show 2016	€30,000.00
2.	Askeaton	€25,000.00
3.	Shanagolden	€10,000.00
4.	Croom	€25,000.00
5.	Loughill	€10,000.00
TOTAL		€100,000.00

8. Sewerage Treatment Plant in Askeaton

Circulated, report from Irish Water dated 14th April, 2016 and 5th May, 2016 setting out update on the provision of a new sewerage treatment plant in Askeaton. The report was noted by the Members.

9. Flooding Issues

To receive update on proposals to address the flooding issues in Foynes, Askeaton and Ballysteen.

In relation to Foynes, the Operations Manager indicated that it was hoped work would commence that month and finish within the year.

In relation to Askeaton, the Operations Manager indicated that the design for flood alleviation measures had been completed and a report submitted to Office of Public Works (OPW) in relation to same. He noted that no funding had been allocated for these works.

In relation to Ballysteen, the Operations Manager indicated that the Office of Public Works (OPW) had completed a cost benefit analysis on works at this location and had decided not to proceed with same. Following discussion, the Operations Manager undertook to verify that the OPW accepted responsibility for flood defences at this location.

1. Adoption of Minutes

Circulated, copy of draft Minutes of Meeting of the Municipal District of Adare-Rathkeale held on 11th April, 2016.

Proposed by Councillor Sheahan;

Seconded by Councillor O'Brien;

And Resolved:

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

QUESTIONS

10. Question submitted by Councillor R. O'Donoghue

I will ask at the next Meeting for an update on vacant council properties in the Adare-Rathkeale District, as previously requested, and the findings in relation to utility bills at suspected vacant properties.

REPLY: There are very few vacant houses in the Adare-Rathkeale Electoral Area. From previous experience, the Council has found utility bills to be of little evidential value. Should members provide details of those properties that they suspect to be vacant/abandoned to the estate Management Unit, Community Support Services, appropriate investigations will be made.

11. Question submitted by Councillor S. Keary

I will ask at the next meeting when the Executive Summary on the Foynes to Limerick Road Upgrade, showing the rationale for choosing the Orange Route, is going to be made available to the Elected Members of Limerick City and County Council and to the general public.

REPLY: The full Route Selection Report (including specialist reports and drawings) is nearing completion and is scheduled to be published by the end of this month (May 2016).

The Elected Members of Limerick City and County Council will be advised, in advance, of this publication date.

It is intended to make the Route Selection Report available on the project website: www.foyneslimerick.ie

12. Question submitted by Councillor S. Keary

I will ask at the next Meeting for the current status of the Planning Application by Cadence EnviroPower for the Proposed Gasification Plant at Limerick City and County Council's, Gortadroma Land Fill Site.

REPLY: The Council is not aware of any Planning Application having been made to An Bord Pleanala nor of any application to An Bord Pleanala for a decision as to whether the proposed development would constitute strategic infrastructure development.

14. Correspondence

Correspondence was noted.

The following items were discussed at the conclusion of the Agenda with the consent of the Cathaoirleach.

A Workshop update on the Proposed N21 Adare Western Approach Improvement Scheme to be held on Thursday, 26th May, 2016 at 9.00 a.m. at Áras Seán Finn, New Line Road, Rathkeale, Co. Limerick.

Superintendent Tom O'Connor to be invited to the July Meeting of the Municipal District of Adare-Rathkeale.

Signed: _____
Cathaoirleach

Dated: _____