

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS AT MEETING OF THE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF NEWCASTLE WEST HELD IN ÁRAS WILLIAM SMITH OBRIEN, NEWCASTLE WEST, CO. LIMERICK, ON WEDNESDAY, 15TH JULY, 2015, AT 9:30 A.M.

PRESENT IN THE CHAIR: Councillor M. Collins, An Cathaoirleach.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Councillors Browne, Foley, Galvin, Scanlan and Sheahan.

OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE:

Acting Director, Travel and Transportation (Mr. V. Murray), Operations Manager, West and South Division (Mr. B. Kennedy), Executive Engineer, Roads (Mr. P. Vallely), Administrative Officer, Corporate Services (Ms. T. Knox), Administrative Officer, Community, Leisure and Emergency Services (Mr. D. McGuigan), Executive Planner, Economic Development and Planning (Ms. B. Quinn), Staff Officer, Corporate Services (Ms. N. O'Connor), Clerical Officer, Corporate Services (Ms. D. O'Kelly).

1. Adoption of Minutes

Circulated, copy of draft Minutes of Meeting of Municipal District of Newcastle West held on 3rd June, 2015.

Proposed by Councillor Galvin;
Seconded by Councillor Foley;
And Resolved:

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

Circulated, copy of draft Minutes of Annual Meeting of Municipal District of Newcastle West held on 23rd June, 2015.

Proposed by Councillor Galvin;
Seconded by Councillor Foley;
And Resolved:

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

2. Deputation

Deputation from Knockaderry Clouncagh Community Council

The Cathaoirleach welcomed representatives from Knockaderry Clouncagh Community Council. The Deputation consisted of Mr. Vincent Hanley, Mr. Liam Mullane and Mr. Sean Liston. Mr. Hanley circulated a report covering the main areas of concern in Knockaderry Clouncagh under the following headings:

- Resource Centre.
- Provision of Broadband.
- Clouncagh Creamery.
- Children's Playground.
- Roadway to GAA Field.
- Road Signage.
- Illegal Dumping/Littering.

It was stated that the estimated cost to carry out works to upgrade the Resource Centre would be in the region of €150,000. It was acknowledged that some of the items needing attention were outside the remit of the Council.

Members of the Deputation stated that the derelict site at the Old Creamery in Clouncagh could be used as an Incubation Unit or Heritage Museum, if funds were available. It was noted that this site could also be used for a playground.

Mr. Liston addressed the Meeting with regard to lack of signage and outlined where signs were required.

The Deputation stated that they would like Limerick City and County Council to work with them and would appreciate the Council's expertise in addressing some of the issues raised. The Cathaoirleach and Members thanked the Deputation for their presentation and the Deputation then withdrew from the Meeting.

It was agreed that the Operations Manager would look at the proposals set out by the Deputation and would revert back to the Members before replying to the Deputation.

3. Corporate Services and Change Management

Draft Polling Scheme 2015 – Revised Dáil Constituencies

Circulated, Report of the Senior Executive Officer, Corporate Services dated 8th July, 2015 with attached Draft Polling Scheme and summary list of proposed changes. The Senior Executive Officer's Report noted that it was necessary to prepare a new Polling Scheme as a result of the changes to the Dáil Constituencies and the establishment of Limerick City and County Council. The Draft Scheme was on public display for five weeks and the closing date for receipt of submissions to the Draft Polling Scheme 2015 was 14th August, 2015.

Members noted the contents of the Senior Executive Officer's Report dated 8th July, 2015.

4. Community, Leisure and Emergency Services

Newcastle West Pool Feasibility Report

It was agreed to defer this item to the September Meeting of the Municipal District and that the Chief Executive would be invited to that Meeting to discuss the Report.

5. Community, Leisure and Emergency Services and Economic Development and Planning

Limerick Local Economic and Community Plan

Circulated, Report of the Director, Economic Development and Planning dated 7th July, 2015 enclosing copy of the Draft Socio-Economic Statement and High Level Goals for the Limerick Local Economic and Community Plan.

The Administrative Officer, Community, Leisure and Emergency Services and the Executive Planner, Economic Development and Planning, briefed the members on the background to and purpose of the Local Economic and Community Plan.

It was noted that the Plan was being developed jointly by the Local Community Development Committee and the Economic Development and Planning Strategic Policy Committee and would cover a 6 year period.

Members were advised that the document before them was not the final Plan, but a draft Socio-Economic Statement, including High Level Goals, derived from a Socio-Economic Analysis of Limerick City and County prepared by Dr Eileen Humphreys (UL) and Bernadette Quinn on behalf of the Local Community Development Committee. Members were invited to consider the document, and if they wished to make observations they were advised that they could do so in writing to Bernadette Quinn before 23rd July, 2015.

Members were informed that all submissions and observations would be considered by the Advisory Steering Group and where relevant the Socio-Economic Statement and High Level Goals could be amended accordingly.

The Administrative Officer, Community, Leisure and Emergency Services, confirmed that the Local Economic and Community Plan process would revert back to the Municipal Districts on two more occasions in 2015.

Members noted the contents of the report and thanked them for the presentation.

6. Economic Development and Planning

Taking in Charge of Estates - Declaration of Roads to be Public Roads

Circulated, Report of the Director, Economic Development and Planning dated 15th June, 2015.

On the Proposal of Councillor Scanlan, seconded by Councillor Collins, it was agreed that this item would be deferred to the next Meeting.

QUESTIONS

7. Question submitted by Councillor L. Galvin

I will ask at the next Meeting if the small section of footpath at the entrance to the church in Athea village can be repaired.

REPLY: Works on this footpath will be carried out as part of the 2015 Roads Programme for the Newcastle West Municipal District.

8. Question submitted by Councillor L. Galvin

I will ask at the next Meeting for the up-to-date position regarding provision of graveyard in Abbeyfeale.

REPLY: The Council has been actively pursuing a suitable site for the development of a new cemetery for Abbeyfeale for some time. Unfortunately it has proven difficult to identify a suitable site due to ground conditions in the Abbeyfeale area. The Council is currently considering all options for the provision of cemetery in this area.

9. Question submitted by Councillor L. Galvin

I will ask at the next Meeting if Limerick City and County Council has a policy that covers the cutting and collection of grass in Housing Estates by Contractors.

REPLY: The Council awards an annual grass cutting contract which stipulates that the areas detailed in the contract are to be cut on a fortnightly basis. It is the policy not to collect the grass but to let it biodegrade at the site of cutting. This achieves a considerable cost saving and is environmentally the most desirable option.

Members stated that the policy of not collecting grass when cut was leaving estates in a dreadful state and that drains were in danger of becoming blocked from loose grass. The Members asked, if possible, could the contractor in question be requested to collect the first cut of grass of the season. The Operations Manager, West and South Division agreed to make contact with the Senior Executive Officer, Environment in relation to this matter.

10. Question submitted by Councillor J. Scanlan

I will ask at the next Meeting what funds were allocated for Cemetery upkeep and maintenance within the Newcastle West Area and also what income was generated from the sale of graves within the area for 2013, 2014 and 2015.

REPLY: The amounts allocated for Cemetery upkeep and maintenance within Newcastle West Area are as follows:

2013	€48,000
2014	€48,000

2015 €35,000

Burial Ground Committees also carry out maintenance works in cemeteries and the Council supports these committees through payment of a burial ground grant. It is estimated that approximately 30 such grants will be provided in the area in 2015 at a cost of €10,000.

In addition to these resources, the Council is also supported by FÁS and West Limerick Resources in the upkeep and maintenance of cemeteries in the Newcastle West area. These works are carried out by Community Employment Schemes, TÚS Schemes and Rural Social Schemes.

All monies receipted for the sale of graves in Newcastle West area are allocated to a general burial fees income code. I estimate that approximately €40,000 was generated in 2014 from the sale of graves in the Newcastle West area.

11. Question submitted by Councillor J. Scanlan

I will ask at the next Meeting the cost of the railing placed along the riverbank walk between the Courtney Bridge and North Quay.

REPLY: This railing along the Arra River was erected as part of a Public Enhancement Scheme in 2014. This scheme was 75% funded by the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government with the Council responsible for the 25% balance. The railing cost €15,000 to erect.

12. Question submitted by Councillor J. Scanlan

I will ask at the next Meeting if the parking space, outside what was a former nightclub, along South Quay Newcastle West, which was recently denoted Loading Bay, can be reinstated for ordinary parking use.

REPLY: The Newcastle West Parking Bye Laws 2013 allow for a loading bay at South Quay. The amending of this loading bay to ordinary parking can only be considered in a review of these Bye Laws.

13. Question submitted by Councillor M. Collins

I will ask at the next Meeting if the wall at 'Fullers Folly' accessing the river from Bridge Street can be repaired, made safe and the gate reopened when completed.

REPLY: The area of ground in question is not registered to Limerick City and County Council and the Council has been unable to establish the registered owner. In the meantime the gate will remain closed in the interest of public safety.

A number of other issues were raised in relation to the wall and Councillor Collins stated that he would make enquiries from local people to try and establish the registered owner.

NOTICES OF MOTION

14. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor J. Scanlan

I will move at the next Meeting of the Municipal District of Newcastle West that Limerick City and County Council provide adequate lighting at Feenagh Cemetery so as to ensure that property stored in it is protected from vandalism.

Councillor Scanlan, in proposing the Motion, stated that there was a need for lighting at Feenagh Cemetery.

The Motion was seconded by Councillor Sheahan.

REPLY: The budget provided by the Council in 2015 does not provide for the improvements as requested above. The Council will consider this request in the context of the 2016 works programme for cemeteries, subject to the necessary resources being made available for such improvement works.

15. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor J. Scanlan

I will move at the next Meeting of the Municipal District of Newcastle West that the National Roads Authority be requested to provide safety measures at Lacey's Cross and at Upper Barnagh along the N21 in the immediate interest of public safety.

Councillor Scanlan, in proposing the Motion, stated that there was a need for safety measures to be put in place as a matter of urgency.

The Motion was seconded by Councillor Foley.

REPLY: A road safety inspection was recently carried out on the N21 by the National Roads Authority. No particular safety issues were highlighted at either Lacey's Cross or Upper Barnagh.

The Members requested that contact be made with the National Roads Authority with a view to finding out who carried out the Safety Inspection.

16. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor L. Galvin

I will move at the next Meeting of the Municipal District of Newcastle West that measures be put in place to stop the traffic eroding the bank fronting the hedge at Curtin's bend, Church Road, Templeglantine.

REPLY: This matter has been investigated and the existing signage in this area will be improved to alert oncoming traffic of the bend ahead.

17. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor L. Galvin

I will move at the next Meeting of the Municipal District of Newcastle West that funding be provided to repair and preserve the Cistercian Church, Fairy Street, Athea.

REPLY: Templeathea Church and graveyard are Recorded Monuments, LI034-004001/002, protected under the National Monuments Act (Amendments) 1930-2004. They are contained within the medieval civil parish of Rathronan ("Mount Temple belongs to Rathronan") and there are historical references to the church in 1410, 1418 and 1586. In 1645 it is again recorded that the chapel of Mount Temple belongs to the rectory of Rathronan. It is not recorded as a Cistercian foundation but probably functioned as a secondary church in the large parish of Rathronan.

The graveyard was vested in the Burial Board for Newcastle West Sanitary District in the 1880s and subsequently in the Local Authority. The building is dated to the late medieval period. It is quite complete though lacking its gables and in relatively good repair. It is being taken over by ivy and vegetation but from a preliminary inspection there is no section of the building showing stress.

There is a limited budget available for all works required in graveyards throughout the county. A relatively small amount of this budget is allotted to conservation projects. It would not be a justified use of the available funding to carry out significant works to this building, having regard to the state of the building relative to many others which are showing immediate signs of distress.

In the medium term it may be possible to work with the local community, using best practice, to control the vegetation currently accumulating on the building.

18. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor S. Browne

I will move at the next Meeting of the Municipal District of Newcastle West that funding be reinstated to erect a bridge on the Oolagh River and remove a concrete slab from the river which prevents salmon and trout from entering the prime spawning river for the Feale.

Councillor Browne, in proposing the Motion, stated that there was a need for the slab to be removed as this was having an adverse affect on fishing in the river. It was causing an economic and ecological problem.

The Motion was seconded by Councillor Galvin.

The Operations Manager, West and South Division, stated that a meeting on site would be arranged with the anglers and Executive Engineer, Roads to discuss the matter.

REPLY:

This matter had been investigated and our records show that this area was private property.

19. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor M. Collins

I will move at the next Meeting of the Municipal District of Newcastle West that €15,000 be allocated from the General Municipal Allocation to Westfest Festival Committee to assist in the running of the 2015 event.

Councillor Collins in proposing the Motion for the allocation of €15,000 from the General Municipal Allocation to Westfest Festival Committee stated that the festival which had been running for four years had generated great goodwill in the community and was of immense economic and social benefit to West Limerick.

This was seconded by Councillor Scanlan and agreed.

REPLY: The recently submitted accounts of Westfest have been examined by our Finance Department and they have no objections in this regard. Allocation of the General Municipal Allocation is a matter for Members of the Municipal District. If it is agreed by the members that funding be allocated to Westfest, arrangements can be made to allocate the relevant funding from General Municipal Allocation.

20. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor M. Collins

I will move at the next Meeting of the Municipal District of Newcastle West that €15,000 be allocated from the General Municipal Allocation, to Newcastle West Chamber of Commerce and Newcastle West Community Council, to fund a feasibility study which will research and coordinate all clubs, organisations, residents groups and interested parties with a view to establishing a Development Association for Newcastle West, that will act as a united voice for all. A steering group has been established to coordinate this study.

Councillor Collins in proposing the Motion to allocate €15,000 from the General Municipal Allocation fund to carry out a feasibility study stated that it was very important to have a united voice for Newcastle West. It was good to see smaller groups come together to have a co-ordinated approach to community and economic planning and set up a Development Association for Newcastle West.

This was seconded by Councillor Scanlan and agreed.

REPLY: Limerick City and County Council acknowledges the expression of interest by the Newcastle West Chamber of Commerce and the Newcastle West Community Council towards the development of community representatives structures with a view to achieving a more co-ordinated approach to community and economic planning at local level. It is noted that this initiative is being led by local stakeholders, and that a steering group has been established to co-ordinate this study. Allocation of the General Municipal Allocation is a matter for the Members of the Municipal District, however the Head of Finance has expressed that he would welcome further clarity of this funding. If it is agreed by the Members that funding be allocated to setting up this Development Association, arrangements can be made to allocate the relevant funding from the General Municipal Allocation.

The Members asked that an item be included on the September Agenda in relation to the General Municipal Allocation 2016.

This concluded the Meeting.

Signed: _____
Cathaoirleach

Dated: _____