

# **MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS AT SPECIAL MEETING OF LIMERICK CITY AND COUNTY COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, DOORADOYLE, LIMERICK, ON MONDAY, 18<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY, 2016, AT 3.00 P.M.**

## **PRESENT IN THE CHAIR:**

Councillor L. Galvin, Mayor.

## **MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Councillors Butler, Collins (J), Collins (M), Crowley, Daly, Donegan, Gilligan, Gleeson, Hourigan, Hurley, Keary, Keller, Leddin, Loftus, Lynch, McCreesh, McMahon, Mitchell, Neville, O'Brien, Cmhlr. Ó Ceallaigh, O'Donnell, Prendiville, Quinlivan, Ryan, Secas, Sheahan (J), Sheahan (K), Sheahan M), Teefy.

## **OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE:**

Chief Executive (Mr. C. Murray), Director, Transportation & Travel/ Environment (Mr. K. Lehane), Director, Regional Services (Ms. C. Curley), Director, Service Operations/Change Management (Mr. G. Daly), Senior Engineer, Transportation & Travel/Environment (Mr. D. Brennan), Senior Executive Engineer, Service Operations (Mr. T. McKechnie), Meetings Administrator (Mr. C. O'Connor), Administrative Officer, Corporate Services (Ms. T. Knox).

The Mayor stated that the purpose of the Special Meeting was to consider the submission of observations to the Office of Public Works (OPW) on the Draft Flood Maps for Limerick. He stated that a presentation would be given by the Senior Engineer, Transportation & Travel/Environment, on the CFRAM process. There would then be an opportunity for the Members to ask questions, seek clarification and make observations.

## **CATCHMENT FLOOD RISK ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT (CFRAM) PROGRAMME**

Circulated, report from the Director of Services for Transport & Travel / Environment dated 13<sup>th</sup> January, 2016, which stated that the EU Directive on the Assessment and Management of Flood Risks (commonly known as the 'Floods' Directive) came into force late in 2007.

The report stated that the aims of the CFRAM Studies were to:

- Assess flood risk.
- Identify viable structural and non-structural measures and options for managing the flood risks for localised high-risk areas.

- Work towards strategic Flood Risk Management Plan (FRMP) that sets out the measures and policies that should be pursued.

The report further stated that the Office of Public Works would prepare Flood Risk Management Plans following receipt of observations on the Flood Maps. The Members were being requested to consider the submission of observations on the Flood Mapping produced as part of the CFRAM process which it was noted was a Reserved Function.

The Senior Engineer, Transportation and Travel/Environment, addressed the Meeting and outlined the basis of CFRAM, which he said was founded on the following three elements:

- The Flood Review Group Report of 2004.
- The EU Floods Directive.
- European Communities (Assessment and Management of Flood Risks) Regulations, 2010.

He delivered a PowerPoint presentation to the Members under the following headings:

- Floods Directive/Process.
- Aims of CFRAM.
- Current position in the CFRAM Process.
- Consultations/Observations.
- Future Council Involvement.
- Observations during Briefing Session.

In response to queries from Members, he highlighted the aims of the CFRAM Studies which were to:

- Assess flood risk, through the identification of flood hazard areas and the associated impacts of flooding.
- Identify viable structural and non-structural measures and options for managing the flood risks for localised high-risk areas and within the catchment as a whole.
- Work towards strategic Flood Risk Management Plan (FRMP) that would set out the measures and policies that should be pursued to achieve the most cost effective and sustainable management of flood risk.

He stated that the initial stage of the process was the identification of Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment areas. It was noted that the Council was currently at the stage of the Flood Hazard Maps. After receipt of observations on the Flood Hazard Maps, the OPW would proceed with the next stage of the process which would involve the preparation of the Flood Risk Management Plans.

The Senior Engineer went on to state that under the relevant regulations, the Council could make observations in regard to the Flood Maps. The making of such observations, he pointed out, was a Reserved Function. It was noted that the latest date for the making of observations to the OPW on the Limerick maps was 20<sup>th</sup> January, 2016.

He concluded by advising that the Council was hereby requested to consider the Flood Mapping produced as part of the CFRAM process and decide if any observations on same were to be made to the OPW.

A general discussion took place on the matter. Members asked questions on several aspects of the presentation and the process involved, which were responded to by the Senior Engineer and the Senior Executive Engineer. The Members thanked the Senior Engineer for his presentation.

On the proposal of Councillor Sheahan (J), seconded by Councillor Gleeson, it was agreed that the following observations made by the Members would be submitted to the OPW in relation to the CFRAM process and the Draft Flood Maps:

- In some instances, there could be a need for channel improvements (e.g. dredging).
- Any channel works to be properly designed so that works upstream would not worsen matters downstream.
- In that context, Limerick had a particular interest in seeing that works intended to improve flooding risk upstream of the Estuary would not increase flood risks within Limerick City and County.
- Query as to whether the models had assumed all drains to be clear on the models and impact of blocked drains on predicted flood levels.
- Similar query for overgrown vegetation and trees on river banks and their impacts on the flood models.
- That the impacts of climate change ought to be taken into account in both the mapping and subsequent plans.
- That the CFRAM mapping be based on the best technical evidence.
- That lessons learned from the recent floods be taken into account.

That areas which were protected by embankments should have those embankments maintained and protected.

- That flooding protection and embankments be provided at Castleconnell and Corbally.

- Where flood relief works were carried out, that CFRAM Mapping should be revisited.
- That the mapping, predictions and subsequent plans in CFRAMS should take into account the worst case scenario on flood volumes at the Shannon at Parteen.
- That by-pass channels be considered upstream of flood locations where appropriate.
- That CFRAM maps should be extended to the whole county.
- That consideration be given to one Body to manage the Shannon.
- That appropriate planting, including species such as willows, should take place on floodplains.
- That the Council looked forward to making further observations at a later stage in the process.

The Senior Engineer confirmed that the above list included observations received during the Briefing Session held on 13<sup>th</sup> January, 2016, in the Council Chamber, Dooradoyle. He concluded by giving an update on the next stages of the process as follows:

- After the OPW had prepared the Flood Risk Management Plans, the Council would have a further opportunity to make observations on those Plans when they were published.
- The submission of observations would again be a Reserved Function.
- It was anticipated that the draft Flood Risk Management Plans would be published later in the year.
- The Regulations subsequently allowed for a Flood Risk Management Plan to be confirmed by the Minister for Finance.
- After such confirmation, the Plan would again be brought before Council to consider and to decide whether to adopt the Plan or otherwise.

Signed:

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**Mayor**

Date:

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