

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS AT MEETING OF THE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF NEWCASTLE WEST HELD IN DESMOND HALL, THE SQUARE, NEWCASTLE WEST, CO. LIMERICK, ON WEDNESDAY, 7th JUNE, 2017, AT 10.00 A.M.

PRESENT IN THE CHAIR: Councillor J. Sheahan, An Cathaoirleach.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Councillors Browne, Collins, Foley, Galvin.

An apology for his inability to attend had been received from Councillor Scanlan.

OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE:

Director, Service Operations (Mr. G. Daly), Senior Executive Engineer, Operations West (Mr. B. Noonan), Meetings Administrator, Corporate Services (Ms. T. Knox), A/Director, Social Development (Ms. C. Kirby), Senior Executive Architect, Social Development (Mr. S. Hanrahan) Executive Engineer, Roads (Mr. P. Vallely), Senior Staff Officer, Newcastle West (Ms. M. Corbett), Clerical Officer, Corporate Services (Ms. D. O'Kelly).

At the outset, the Cathaoirleach welcomed Members and Staff to Desmond Hall for the Monthly Meeting of the Municipal District. He stated that it was a historic occasion as it was the first time that Councillors had met there.

The Director joined with the Cathaoirleach in welcoming everyone to the Meeting and referred to the unique heritage attraction of Desmond Hall. He added that it was hoped to raise awareness of the Castle by holding the Meeting at the venue while at the same time raising awareness of the Newcastle West District. He referred to the Town and Village Renewal Scheme, the Clár Programme, Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme and the commitment of the Council to promote the town and District.

A report on visitor numbers from 1998 to date on Desmond Hall was circulated to Members. It showed an increase in numbers from 1,016 in 1998 to 10,023 in 2016. It also outlined that the projected visitor figure for 2017 was in excess of 12,000.

1. Adoption of Minutes

Circulated, copy of draft Minutes of Meeting of Municipal District of Newcastle West held on 3rd May, 2017.

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

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

2. General Municipal Allocation (GMA)

On the proposal of Councillor Foley, seconded by Councillor Collins it was agreed to allocate the following:

€2,000 to Ardagh Hall Committee.

€300 to Tournafulla Tidy Towns.

€3,000 to footpaths in Abbeyfeale.

On the proposal of Councillor Galvin, seconded by Councillor Collins it was agreed to allocate €5,000 to Abbeyfeale for Christmas Lights.

3. Social Development Directorate

Limerick City and County Council Housing Programme 2017

The Cathaoirleach welcomed the A/Director, and the Senior Executive Architect from Social Development Directorate to the Meeting.

The Senior Executive Architect gave a presentation on the Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness. He informed the Members that it was a five-year plan with five key Pillars, which were as follows:

- Address Homelessness.
- Accelerate Social Housing.
- Build More Homes.
- Improve the Rental Sector.
- Utilise Existing Housing.

He stated that there was a significant need for housing in Newcastle West from the figures available to May 2017. There were 193 people on the Housing waiting list, by area of preference, for Newcastle West with 81 for Abbeyfeale and 4 for Mountcollins.

He explained that the projected target for 2018-2021 for Social Housing would be approximately 1,600 which would be attained through the ten funding programmes set by the Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government. He informed Members that of this projected target 60% would be from new build.

He also stated that the main aims of the Action Plan were as follows:

1. Balanced development across City and County in accordance with housing need.
2. Maximise re-use of existing vacant housing stock in the city, towns and villages of Limerick.
3. Utilise investment in housing to deliver wider benefits.
4. Influence Government policy.
5. Outcomes rather than outputs.

The main key actions were noted as follows:

- Balanced Incremental Development – multiple small/medium scale projects developed

rather than large scale redevelopment.

- Maximise all the avenues for delivery.
- Use the powers available to Limerick City and County Council to encourage urban consolidation and growth.

Information was also provided to the Members under the following headings:

- Social Housing Construction.
- Role of Approved Housing Bodies.
- Regeneration Programme.
- Rent Pressure Zones.

He outlined the details in relation to the Repair and Lease Scheme and Buy and Renew Scheme and stated that the Council would actively target property owners and developers to avail of these schemes.

Members thanked him for his presentation and requested that vacant properties in towns and villages in the District be looked at and the owners contacted. They also raised the issue of the proposal to build a Social Housing Scheme on an available site at Mountcollins. It was stated that unless the sewage system was upgraded this development and similar developments in other towns and villages would not materialise. Contact should be made with Irish Water in relation to the upgrading of sewage systems.

The Director, Service Operations stated that it was their intention to identify vacant properties in towns and villages in order that these could be made available for Social Housing. He also stated that the Council would take a very strict view of owners of derelict sites who did not show a willingness to engage with schemes to renew or repair these properties. He also stated that a more forceful approach would now be taken with those who did not comply.

The A/Director, Social Development advised Members that a Presentation would be arranged for them at the July Meeting of the District in relation to Housing Loans. Members welcomed this.

4. Service Operations Directorate

(a) Taking - in- Charge-Of Estates – Declaration of Roads to be Public Roads

Circulated Report, A/Senior Planner, Planning and Environmental Services, dated 11th May, 2017 setting out proposal to take in charge estate at Ard Moyle, Carrigkerry.

The Director, Service Operations stated that some technical issues had arisen in relation to the taking-in-charge of this estate and it was agreed that this item would be deferred to a future Meeting.

(b) Provision of new Graveyard in Abbeyfeale

The Senior Executive Engineer stated that the first phase of percolation tests was due to be carried out on the 3 sites that had been identified on the 12th June, 2017. He stated that the Council was liaising with the HSE in relation to suitability of these sites. It was hoped that reports would be available for the July Meeting.

QUESTIONS

5. Question submitted by Councillor L. Galvin

I will ask at the next Meeting if the trees on the left-hand side entering the town from Newcastle West at Mountmahon, Abbeyfeale can be replaced.

REPLY: The Parks Department will assess the requirements on the ground and will revert to Councillor Galvin with proposals.

6. Question submitted by Councillor L. Galvin

I will ask at the next Meeting for an update on road repairs adjacent to pumping station at the back of properties on Bridge Street, Abbeyfeale.

REPLY: This road is not a public road. It is in private ownership and Limerick City and County Council have a right of way across this roadway.

7. Question submitted by Councillor L. Galvin

I will ask at the next Meeting for an update on progress in relation to resurfacing of the road at Mountmahon and Killarney Road, Abbeyfeale.

REPLY: Operations and Maintenance Services have made applications to Transport Infrastructure Ireland via their National Road Maintenance Geo App to fund repairs to the existing surface on the N21 at Mountmahon, Abbeyfeale and on the Killarney Road, Abbeyfeale adjacent to the service stations. Transport Infrastructure Ireland have indicated that works at Mountmahon will form part of an overlay on the N21 at this location in 2018. The funding application for the Killarney Road is with Transport Infrastructure Ireland for their consideration.

Members expressed concern at the delay in repairing the roads at Mountmahon and at Killarney Road, Abbeyfeale. They stated that these issues had been raised previously and that they had been brought to the attention of the TD's in the area. They asked that a letter be sent to the TD's in this regard.

8. Question submitted by Councillor J. Scanlan

I will ask at the next Meeting when the collapsed storm water grid between Boyle Sports and Dooley's Super Value at Bishop Street, Newcastle West will be reinstated.

REPLY: Works in relation to the above item will be carried out next week.

9. Question submitted by Councillor J. Scanlan

I will ask at the next Meeting when the footpaths at Church View, Ballyagran are likely to be reinstated.

REPLY: The footpaths at Church View, Ballyagran have been surveyed, and will be included in the schedule for footpath repairs subject to funding.

10. Question submitted by Councillor J. Scanlan

I will ask at the next Meeting for an update in relation to the Council acquiring the derelict property at 47 Sharwood Newcastle West, Limerick.

REPLY: Limerick City and County Council purchased 47 Sharwood, Newcastle West under the Housing Acquisition Programme. This house is scheduled for refurbishment which will commence in June 2017.

11. Question submitted by Councillor F. Foley

I will ask at the next Meeting for an update in relation to funding (a) for the upgrade to traffic calming measures on the Killarney Road, Abbeyfeale; (b) the resurfacing work to be carried out at Mountmahon to the Garda Station, Abbeyfeale.

REPLY: Operations and Maintenance Services have made applications to Transport Infrastructure Ireland via their national road maintenance Geo App to fund repairs to the existing surface on the N21 at Mountmahon, Abbeyfeale and on the Killarney Road, Abbeyfeale adjacent to the service stations. Transport Infrastructure Ireland have indicated that works at Mountmahon will form part of an overlay on the N21 at this location in 2018. The funding application for the Killarney Road is with Transport Infrastructure Ireland for their consideration.

12. Question submitted by Councillor F. Foley

I will ask at the next Meeting if the soft spots on the Killarney Road, Abbeyfeale can be repaired as the road surface is deteriorating.

REPLY: Operations and Maintenance Services (Newcastle West Area Office) is currently surveying the defective areas and preparing a report on the repair works required. This report will be forwarded to Irish Water for their attention.

NOTICE OF MOTION

13. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor L. Galvin

I will move at the next Meeting that this District calls on Irish Water to repair the fence at the public sewage treatment plant in Tournafulla as a result of damage caused by Storm Darwin.

In proposing the Motion, Councillor Galvin stated that this fence urgently needed to be repaired. He asked that an update be given again on the matter.

The Motion was seconded by Councillor Foley.

REPLY: An assessment of the condition of the fence and identification of works required is currently in progress. A submission for funding will be made to Irish Water in respect of required works.

14. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor L. Galvin

I will move at the next Meeting that this District calls on Irish Water to repair river bank at the sewage treatment plant in Abbeyfeale, where the Abbeyfeale anglers have fishing rights and right of way.

In proposing the Motion, Councillor Galvin stated that Irish Water needed to repair the river bank and to re-instate access and right of way at this location. He also asked that a safety audit be carried out.

The Motion was seconded by Councillor Foley.

REPLY: Irish Water is currently examining an Assets Needs Brief submitted in respect of the above works and a response is awaited. The Members will be updated as soon as a decision has been made by Irish Water.

15. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor J. Sheahan

I will move at the next Meeting that this District calls on Transport Infrastructure Ireland to improve the signage identifying Newcastle West, our county town when travelling and exiting the M7 motorway.

In proposing the Motion, Councillor Sheahan stated that the signs for Newcastle West needed to be improved on the M7 Motorway.

The Motion was seconded by Councillor Collins.

16. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor J. Sheahan

I will move at the next Meeting that Members of the Municipal District of Newcastle West sit on the Consultative Group for the Great Southern Greenway as ex-officio members.

Councillor Sheahan in proposing the Motion said it would be beneficial for all Members of the District to sit as ex-officio members on the Consultative Group for the Great Southern Greenway. He added that as part of the Group the Members would be kept up to date with progress in relation to the Greenway while at the same time it would allow them the opportunity to contribute ideas/suggestions in relation to its development.

The Motion was seconded by Councillor Galvin.

REPLY: The Great Southern Greenway Consultative Group has been set up to optimize the potential of the Great Southern Greenway in relation to tourism development in towns and villages both on and adjacent to the route.

It will allow stakeholders air their views and ensure that all members are well informed about issues and enhancement projects pertaining to the Great Southern Greenway.

The membership is currently made up of representatives from Limerick City and County Council, West Limerick Resources, Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport, Hotel Industry Federation, Great Southern Trail Company and West Limerick Tourism. Currently, both the Newcastle West and Adare/Rathkeale Municipal Districts have nominated one representative.

The above Notice of Motion if successful would also have to be offered to the Adare/Rathkeale Municipal District which could potentially lead to 12 Members from the 2 Municipal Districts.

We would however, consider 1 additional Member from each Municipal District to increase the District representation on the group.

The Director, Service Operations stated that as there were many stakeholders involved it was important to get a balance of representation on the group.

Councillor Sheahan stated that he was not happy with the response and proposed that all Members of the Municipal District of Newcastle West sit as ex-officio members on the Consultative Group. This proposal was seconded by Councillor Galvin.

It was agreed that this Motion should also be referred to the Members in the Municipal District of Adare-Rathkeale for their consideration.

Other Matters Raised

At the conclusion of the Agenda and with the permission of the Cathaoirleach, the following items were raised:

- Issue of CCTV for Newcastle West.
- Issue in relation to restoration of roads and laying of watermain subsequent to Gas Network Ireland laying pipes for the connection to Kerry Group in Listowel.

The Director, Service Operations advised Members that agreement had been reached in relation to the purchase of Fullers Folly, Newcastle West subject to contract.

Following a short discussion, on the proposal of Councillor Galvin, seconded by Councillor Sheahan it was agreed to allocate €5,000 from the GMA Tourism and Recreation Fund, to carry out a feasibility study on use of this property.

Plebiscite - Renaming of "The Square" Newcastle West

The Meetings Administrator updated the Members on results of the plebiscite. It was noted that the count took place on Wednesday, 24th May at 10am at Áras William Smith OBrien in the presence of the Mayor and the results were as follows:

- 20 Against.
- 6 in favour.
- 1 invalid/spoilt vote.

It was agreed to hold the July Meeting of the District on Wednesday, 12th July, 2017 at 10.00 a.m. at Áras William Smith OBrien.

This concluded the Meeting.

Signed:

Cathaoirleach

Dated:
