

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS AT MEETING OF METROPOLITAN DISTRICT OF LIMERICK HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, MERCHANT'S QUAY, LIMERICK, ON MONDAY, 18TH SEPTEMBER, 2017 AT 9.45 A.M.

PRESENT IN THE CHAIR: Councillor Seán Lynch, Mayor.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

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

OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE:

Meetings Administrator (Mr. C. O'Connor), Administrative Officer, Corporate Services (Mr. T. O'Callaghan), Senior Engineer, Physical Development (Mr. V. Murray), Senior Executive Officer, Design & Delivery Services / Property Services (Mr. J. Delaney), A/Senior Executive Planner (Ms. K. Burke), Staff Officer, Property Services (Mr. J. Cregan).

At the outset of the meeting, the Mayor and Members extended their condolences and sympathy to the family of the late Jim McCarthy who had served on Limerick County Council. A silence was observed in his memory.

Members also congratulated the Limerick Under 21 hurling team on their All Ireland win.

1. Adoption of Minutes

Circulated, copy of draft Minutes of Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick held on 17th July, 2017.

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

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

2. Disposal of Land

- (a) Circulated, report of the A/Senior Executive Officer, Community Support Services dated 27th June, 2017 setting out proposals to dispose of the freehold interest of a dwelling house situate at 35 Greenhills Road, Garryowen and to bring a Section 183 Notice to Full Council in this regard, for approval. The report was noted by Members.
- (b) Circulated, report of the A/Senior Executive Officer, Community Support Services dated 27th June, 2017 setting out proposals to dispose of the freehold interest of a dwelling house situate at 8 Island Road, Assumpta Park and to bring a Section 183 Notice to Full Council in this regard, for approval. The report was noted by Members.
- (c) Circulated, report of the A/Senior Executive Officer, Community Support Services dated 8th August, 2017 setting out proposals to dispose of the freehold interest of a dwelling

house situate at 19 Galvone Road, Kennedy Park and to bring a Section 183 Notice to Full Council in this regard, for approval. The report was noted by Members.

- (d) Circulated, report of the Acting Director, Social Development dated 18th August, 2017 setting out proposals to dispose of 52 Galtee Drive, O'Malley Park in consideration of ownership of 208 Valley View, O'Malley Park being transferred to the Council and to bring a Section 183 Notice to Full Council in this regard, for approval. The report was noted by Members.
- (e) Circulated, report of the A/Senior Executive Officer, Community Support Services dated 29th August, 2017 setting out proposals to dispose of the freehold interest of a dwelling house situate at 28 Marian Avenue, Roxboro and to bring a Section 183 Notice to Full Council in this regard, for approval. The report was noted by Members.
- (f) Circulated, report of the A/Senior Executive Officer, Community Support Services dated 6th September, 2017 setting out proposals to dispose of the freehold interest of a dwelling house situate at 8 Ballyclough Avenue, Ballinacurra Weston and to bring a Section 183 Notice to Full Council in this regard, for approval. The report was noted by Members.
- (g) Circulated, report of the Head of Property Services dated 8th September, 2017 setting out proposals to dispose of the Council's Freehold (Ground Rent) Interest in the premises at 74, Clare Street and to bring a Section 183 Notice to Full Council in this regard, for approval. The report was noted by Members.

3. Community Initiative Scheme 2017

Circulated, report of the Administrative Officer, Social Development dated 5th September, 2017 setting out proposals for the expenditure of €30,000 under the Community Initiative Scheme 2017.

On the proposal of Councillor Daly, seconded by Councillor Hurley, it was agreed that the amount of €30,000 should be allocated as set out in the report, as circulated.

4. Limerick Heritage Plan 2017 - 2030

Circulated, copy of Limerick Heritage Plan 2017 – 2030.

Members welcomed the plan and noted the importance of having a Heritage Plan in place to facilitate the draw down of related funding. Members congratulated those involved in drawing up the plan which highlighted the rich heritage and sense of identity associated with Limerick.

5. Metropolitan GMA 2017

Circulated, report of the Director of Service, Customer Services, Culture and Arts dated 13th September, 2017 which sought approval of the District to payments in association with I.NY and Richard Harris International Film Festival and outlined programme information with regard to I.NY.

It was noted that while these allocations had previously been discussed by the District and provisional allocations agreed, the final agreement of the District was now sought. Concerns were raised by Cmhrl. Ó Ceallaigh in relation to the payment to I.NY and following a vote by show of hands it was agreed, on the proposal of Councillor Collins, seconded by Councillor Daly that the allocations as set out below should be made under the Metropolitan District of Limerick GMA 2017 :

I.NY	€50,000
Richard Harris International Film Festival	€30,000.

6. Joint Policing Committee

The Senior Executive Officer, Corporate Services outlined proposals included in the Joint Policing Committee Strategic Plan 2016 – 2021 for the establishment of Geographical Sub Committees of the JPC and noted that informal arrangements in this regard were already in place in the other Districts where the local Superintendent attended at District Meetings on a quarterly basis to discuss policing issues. He noted that, as there were two Superintendents associated with the Metropolitan District covering Limerick North and South Garda Divisions, it was proposed that, quarterly, following Metropolitan District Meetings, concurrent JPC Sub Committee meetings with the Superintendent in each Division would be held and District Members would be free to attend either meeting.

Members welcomed the proposal and acknowledged the work carried out by the JPC and the importance of having an opportunity to raise policing issues with the Gardai.

The Meetings Administrator requested that any queries or issues, to be put to the Gardai, be submitted in advance of the meetings and it was agreed that the first set of JPC Sub Committee meetings would be held on the 16th October, 2017 after the monthly District meeting.

QUESTIONS

7. Question submitted by Councillor E. Secas

I will ask at the next meeting if the Council has had any further talks with the owners of Parkway Valley site at the Dublin Road over its dereliction and future development.

REPLY: The site has been inspected and a notice is being prepared under Section 8(2) of the Derelict Sites Act, 1990, notifying the owner(s) of the Council's intention to enter it onto the Derelict Sites Register.

8. Question submitted by Councillor E. Secas

I will ask at the next meeting if the Council has reviewed its social housing units to ensure that all safety measures are fully functional and in place, such as early warning systems, including alarm and detection systems and means of escape including corridors, stairways etc.

REPLY: Limerick City and County Council has 5300 dwellings in its remit. The fire safety requirements differ depending on the type of building and its construction.

Housing Standards for Rented Houses Regulations apply to all houses let by a Housing Authority. The Regulations have been updated since 1st July 2017 and additional items have been included.

The requirements are that the following should be provided in all single houses:

- a fire blanket,
- smoke alarm on the ground floor and each upper floor landing if applicable

If the dwellings are part of multi-unit buildings then the following is now a requirement:

- smoke alarms as per above
- emergency evacuation plan and notice
- where the units are accessed via a common area, a common fire detection and alarm system is required
- emergency lighting required in the common areas
- fire blanket in each apartment

All Council houses which are allocated on a first time basis or a re-let are finished to the highest standards and include all of the above as a minimum.

The above requirements are a higher standard than previously required and to ensure that all Council houses are meeting current standards, Operations and Maintenance will shortly carry out an extensive and detailed survey of all its housing stock. This survey will include all areas of fire safety and a complete record will be prepared for maintenance purposes. Any deficiencies with regard to these regulations will be highlighted and rectified as soon as possible.

Limerick City and County Council have also a register of multi-unit dwellings where they are approached via an internal common area. This register makes account of the fire detection and alarm system along with the emergency lighting and the date of the last service of each system.

9. Question submitted by Councillor P. Keller

I will ask at the next meeting, in relation to air quality monitoring and in the event of a breach in the recommended air quality guidelines (especially at the Irish Cement, Mungret monitor),

What plan or action is activated, to counteract the breach, especially in relation to the more serious "Suspend" particulates, PM10 / PM2.5 / PM1; How often is the information collected or monitored, and by whom; Do the monitors themselves need servicing, if so, how often; Is it possible to install an additional monitor in close proximity to the children's playground and school in Mungret College.

REPLY: I wish to advise as follows in relation to the various queries as outlined above.

The three air quality monitors were installed to allow the public to access information on their local air quality. It should be noted that breaches of the air quality standards at any of the monitors could result from a range of factors including domestic fires, road traffic as well as industrial emissions.

The Council will endeavour to investigate, where appropriate, complaints received regarding air pollution from the public. The complaint will be referred to the EPA for investigation and enforcement where it is suspected the breach

comes from any industrial facility which is licensed by the EPA.

The Council will investigate where the breach is in relation to facilities regulated by the Council or in the case of breaches related to non compliance with relevant regulations such as the Solid Fuels Regulations, etc.

The data is uploaded to the internet automatically from monitor every 15 minutes. It is available through the website hosted by Turnkey Instruments Limited (www.airqweb.co.uk).

It is necessary to change the filters in the monitors every 3-4 months.

The monitor in Mungret is currently located at the OPW Offices at Temple Mungret House.

This location is approximately 750m from the playground / school and would be indicative of air quality at the playground and school.

10. Question submitted by Councillor C. Prendiville

I will ask at the next meeting for an update on the discussions with Bus Eireann and the NTA about organising a 'Car Free City' day or weekend with free public transport. This was proposed at the February Metropolitan meeting, and unanimously endorsed at the SPC level, but we have not heard any more. It is probably too late for this years European Week which is now upon us, but should be pursued for next years at least.

REPLY: I wish to advise that the following recommendation was considered and adopted by the Full Council at its Meeting on the 29th May 2017:

“That the Council contact Bus Eireann and the National Transport Authority (NTA) about organising a ‘Car Free City’ day or weekend, where public transportation would be free in order to encourage more people to use this vital public service, in order to help tackle pollution and climate change”.

The Council subsequently wrote to the National Transport Authority and Bus Eireann and the reply received from the National Transport Authority will be included as an item of correspondence on the Agenda for the full Council meeting to be held on the 25th September 2017.

11. Question submitted by Councillor C. Prendiville

I will ask at the next meeting for an update on my motion from the April Metropolitan meeting to amend our development plan to ban incineration, gasification, fracking, etc. This was sent to the Economic and Development SPC but that seems to have scheduled no meetings for May, June, July, August or September.

REPLY: The notice of motion as submitted by Councillor Prendiville at the Metropolitan Meeting on 18th April 2017 was placed on the agenda for the next meeting of the Economic Development, Enterprise and Planning SPC which was held on 12th

June 2017, to which he was invited. As the Councillor was not in attendance at the said meeting it was adjourned to the next meeting of the SPC, in accordance with normal practice.

The Question will appear again on the Agenda of the SPC at its next meeting scheduled for 9th October 2017.

12. Question submitted by Cmhlr. S. Ó Ceallaigh

I will ask at the next meeting, for the estimated cost to complete each of the regeneration projects in Limerick City.

REPLY: The Limerick Regeneration Framework Implementation Plan (LRFIP) adopted by the elected members of Limerick City Council on 24th February 2014 projects an overall budget for the physical regeneration project of €253 million, over the 10 year timeframe of the programme. The overall Regeneration Programme including social and economic expenditure totals €293 million. The average expenditure is €30 million annually. The estimated expenditure from 2018 to the completion of the programme is €173 million.

13. Question submitted by Cmhlr. S. Ó Ceallaigh

I will ask at the next meeting, how much the Irish Cement Oral Hearing cost Limerick City and County Council, in terms of consultants, staff and travel.

REPLY: As part of the appeal in relation to the development at the Limerick Cement Factory at Castlemungret, Co. Limerick, An Bord Pleanála decided to hold an Oral Hearing.

This 4-days hearing required the attendance of the Planning Authority, with the Senior Planner, the Senior Executive Planner and the Area Planner. The existing staff's salaries were covered accordingly.

In terms of external consultancy and assistance, the Planning Authority was represented by Leahy/Reidy Consortium and Senior Counsel. The final costs are not yet available.

14. Question submitted by Councillor M. McCreesh

I will ask at the next meeting that clarification be provided with regard to the unfinished road works on Lord Edward Street at the junctions with Meagher Ave/Caledonian Square and Wolfe Tone St. This is currently a very dangerous traffic concern.

REPLY: The Council's Traffic Section has met the contractor on site and has instructed removal of unauthorised white lining. Otherwise there are no safety concerns with these works. The contractor has a license in place for the progression of the works until the end of September. The majority of the works will be completed at that stage, but I understand that he will need to seek an extension of the license into October to complete the works outright. These works will involve a total resurfacing of the public road and permanent road marking will not be in place

until this work is done.

15. Question submitted by Councillor M. McCreesh

I will ask at the next meeting for an update with regard to the renewal of the lease of the Arthur's Quay car park. In a reply to question raised at the June Metropolitan meeting, it was stated that the Council would be in a position shortly to revert with proposals.

REPLY: The Council has held a lease on Arthurs Quay Multi Storey Car Park for the past 26 years with an option to purchase the car park into infinity. The Council has entered into a sub letting arrangement over the same period for the operation of the car park.

Due to complexities involved in the legal structure that was originally entered into, and the implications of redeeming the loan with the existing sinking fund, discussions have not yet progressed to the stage at which it can be presented to the Council. Negotiations are still ongoing. Both the Council's legal advisors and those representing Arthurs Quay Car Park are currently in negotiations to identify an acceptable outcome.

In addition, the Council is engaged with external property advisors and valuers to ensure the most optimal solution for the Council is achieved.

16. Question submitted by Councillor J. Leddin

I will ask at the next meeting if the Council plans to re-engage with the three principal owners of the derelict site at the junction of Rosbrien Road and Ballinacurra, opposite Punches to enable the provision of a temporary car park for school traffic with the arrival of St. Paul's School into the former Scoil Carmel campus.

REPLY: Under the Limerick City Development Plan 2010-2016, the current zoning matrix does not allow for land use as a temporary car park. This site may not be the most suitable site for the provision of a school car park. However, the Council will engage with the management of St. Paul's School to discuss potential alternative locations.

NOTICES OF MOTION

17. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor J. Leddin

I will move at the next meeting that the Council provide a list of all Council owned land within the Metropolitan District that is either zoned residential and or suitable for residential development, subject to zoning, to enable debate on fast-tracking the building of more social and affordable houses

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

In proposing the motion Councillor Leddin noted the lack of available housing units on the market and the corresponding increase in housing waiting lists and homelessness. He

acknowledged the ongoing work of the Council in this area but stressed that the Council had other lands, such as the former Guinness Site in Careys Road which was not being availed of and called for the development of such sites to be fast tracked.

Members supported the motion and the following points were made by Members during discussion of this item :

- The information referred to in the motion should be circulated to Members on a regular basis.
- Improvements in job creation will lead to further pressure on the housing market and increased rents.
- A significant proportion of those seeking accommodation did not qualify for social housing but had difficulty in renting or buying property.
- Efforts should be made to establish the extent of lands, suitable for housing, that was in the possession of other state agencies.
- There should be greater communication and co-ordination between the Council and Approved Housing Bodies.
- Twelve housing units were unoccupied in Bourke Avenue but because of design issues and the Part VIII process would not be available until 2019.
- Greater local autonomy was needed to progress the building works needed and analysis should be carried out of the current processes to identify and resolve delaying factors.
- There was a deficit in the construction labour market with many developers tied up in NAMA.
- Objections, under the planning process, could contribute to significant delays in private developers bringing housing units on line.

Members noted the recent engagement by the Minister with Local Authorities in relation to the availability of land for housing development and expressed disappointment that the Minister had not engaged with the Members in this regard nor had the Chief Executive updated the Members on foot of the consultation.

On the proposal of Councillor O'Hanlon, second by Councillor Leddin, it was proposed that a special meeting should be held to discuss housing issues and to receive a report on the meeting held between the Minister and the Chief Executive.

The Meetings Administrator noted that the information requested in the motion was available and would be circulated to Members.

18. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor E. Hogan (to be referred to the Local Electoral Area Briefings)

I will move at the next Metropolitan Area Meeting that an analysis be undertaken on the pedestal on the Daniel O'Connell Monument to ensure that the dyes used to colour the water have not damaged the stone.

It was agreed that this motion would be referred to the Local Electoral Area Briefings and Councillor Hogan requested that a reply to the motion be available at the briefing.

19. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor E. Hogan

I will move at the next Metropolitan Area Meeting that a Driver Feedback Sign be erected at the Ballinacurra side of the Dooradoyle Flyover to slow traffic in Ballinacurra which is currently speeding on the road.

The motion was proposed by Councillor Hogan and seconded by Councillor Butler.

In proposing the motion Councillor Hogan highlighted the speed of vehicles entering the Ballinacurra Road from the flyover and the need to reduce the speed limit at this location. She also highlighted the ongoing dangers experienced by residents of the Ballinacurra Road in entering and exiting their property by car.

REPLY:

Recent speed surveys at this location have been conducted which indicate that excessive speeding is taking place in both directions. A temporary driver feedback sign has been installed on the outbound lane. There is a VMS sign on the inbound lane which can be amended to include speed warnings at various times in the day. It is intended to replace this with a permanent driver feedback sign in the coming weeks.

Members supported the motion and highlighted the need for traffic calming measures at this location. Members also discussed the benefits of Driver Feedback Signs and the need for policy on the use of ramps. Members stressed the need for the Gardai to monitor speeding at this location and it was agreed that the motion would be brought to the next Joint Policing Committee Meeting. The issue of traffic hazards at the end of the bus lane at this location was also raised. The Senior Engineer noted that the works on the Ballinacurra Road had undergone a road safety audit and that the issues raised by the Members would have to be brought to the attention of the consultants that had carried out the audit.

20. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor C. Prendiville

I will move at the next meeting that this District write to the Minister for Finance and the Minister for Housing urging the government to allocate money in the upcoming budget for a "Regeneration Programme" targeting the 651 vacant properties in Limerick City Centre. Such a regeneration programme should involve bringing vacant units into public ownership and developing them as public housing to rent or to buy at social and affordable rates.

In proposing the motion Councillor Prendiville highlighted the benefits that would accrue from the regeneration of the vacant properties in Limerick City with the increased availability of social and affordable housing, the preservation of the city's heritage, less dereliction and an increase in the population living in the city.

Members generally supported the motion and the following points were made by Members during discussion of the motion :

- Particular focus was needed to provide accommodation for single vulnerable males who could not afford to rent accommodation.

- There were significant conservation and fire safety issues associated with the redevelopment of many of the buildings in the city, particularly in the Georgian Quarter. Consideration should be given to the practice adopted in cities such as London where the facade of these buildings was retained but the remainder modernised.
- Previous efforts and schemes in the area of city centre regeneration had failed and emphasis should be put on the construction of new housing units.
- There was legal protection for listed buildings and this could limit the extent and nature of the works carried out to them.
- The example of Cork City Council should be followed where up to 60 empty buildings had been acquired by CPO for redevelopment.
- A cost benefit analysis should be carried out before the actions proposed in the motion were carried out

21. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor C. Prendiville

I will move at the next meeting that we request a meeting with the operators of the Limerick City Bike Scheme to discuss issues regarding maintenance of the bike stands, and expanding the scheme.

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

In proposing the motion Councillor Prendiville noted a number of ongoing maintenance issues associated with the Bike Scheme and highlighted the need to discuss maintenance and funding issues with the scheme operators.

REPLY: I would advise the Members that the National Transport Authority (NTA) had awarded the contract for the operation of the Coke Zero Bike scheme to An Rother Nua.

An Rothar Nua is charged with the responsibility of maintaining the bikes and the bike stands, and transporting the bikes from location to location as may be required.

I would further advise the Members that, following a recent meeting with representatives of the NTA, the NTA has agreed to the extension of the existing Coke Zero Bike scheme to facilitate the provision of bicycle facilities at the under-listed locations in the near future.

- Colbert Station
- The junction of Sexton Street North and High Road
- LIT/Moylish

The National Transport Authority has also agreed to re-open one of the Coke Zero Bike stands located at King John's Castle.

Meetings are ongoing with the National Transport Authority in relation to the above matter. It is expected that all of the above will be operational by the end of Q1 2018.

The Senior Engineer, Physical Development Directorate undertook to bring the maintenance issues raised to the attention of the operators.

Members supported the motion and stressed the need to expand the bike scheme to the city suburbs to include areas such as U.L., the Regional Hospital, Corbally and Annacotty. Members also highlighted the need for more spaces for private bicycles in the city and commended the Beat the Street Initiative that was encouraging many young children to take more exercise and congratulated the team involved in its introduction.

22. Notice of Motion submitted by Cmhrl. S. Ó Ceallaigh

I will move at the next meeting that this District urges Bank of Ireland to keep its bi-lingual ATM services, and encourages all banks in the state to provide ATM services as Gaeilge.

It was agreed that this motion would be referred to the new Cultural SPC.

23. Notice of Motion submitted by Cmhrl. S. Ó Ceallaigh

I will move at the next meeting that this Council calls on local owners of vacant properties to engage with the Council's housing department, with the aim of making these properties available.

The motion was proposed by Cmhrl. Ó Ceallaigh and seconded by Councillor Costelloe.

In proposing the motion Cmhrl. Ó Ceallaigh noted that there were many reasons why properties were remaining vacant and that a number of such properties were in old Council estates.

REPLY: Limerick City and County Council are actively engaged in sourcing vacant properties and making them available for social housing. The mechanisms currently available for this purpose: are the 'Buy and Renew Scheme' and the 'Repair and Lease Scheme. LCCC advertised in all the local newspapers in June seeking vacant properties for inclusion under these schemes. This has resulted in an increase in expressions of interests for acquisition and leasing of properties which are currently vacant. LCCC is proactively engaging with property owners in order to bring these houses back into stock.

At the conclusion of the agenda and with the consent of the Mayor, the Senior Engineer, Physical Development Directorate informed the Members that the Part VIII associated with the proposed works on O'Connell Street was almost complete and a workshop to brief the Members in relation to same was sought. Members requested to be circulated with any relevant documentation prior to the workshop and it was agreed that the workshop would be held on 16th October, 2017 after the JPC Sub Committee Meetings and that an email to confirm times would be circulated.

This concluded the Meeting.

Signed: _____
MAYOR

Dated: _____