

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS AT MEETING OF METROPOLITAN DISTRICT OF LIMERICK HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, MERCHANT'S QUAY, LIMERICK, ON TUESDAY, 20TH MARCH, 2018.

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'Hanlon, Pond, Prendiville, Secas and Sheahan.

OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE:

Director, Physical Development (Mr. K. Lehane), Meetings Administrator (Mr. C. O'Connor), Director, Regional Services (Ms. C. Curley) Senior Executive Officer, Design and Delivery Services (Mr. J. Delaney), Head of Marketing and Communications (Ms. L. Ryan), Culture and Arts Officer (Ms. S. Deegan) and Administrative Officer, Corporate Services (Mr. J. Clune).

At the outset, the Mayor and Elected Members praised the excellent work carried out by council staff, army, civil defence, St John of God, staff in hospitals and all front line staff in dealing with the recent severe weather conditions. Members also congratulated Na Piersaigh hurlers on their excellent performances getting to the All Ireland Club final, Limerick Hurlers on their exciting national league quarter final win and the Limerick rugby players who helped Ireland win the Grand Slam.

Members congratulated all involved in organising and participating in the Saint Patrick's Day Parade, International Band Championship and the fireworks display which made Saint Patrick's weekend such a success in the city, in spite of the extremely cold weather. Disappointment was expressed at the level of coverage by the national media for the International Band Championship.

A vote of sympathy was passed for Jamie Higgins, Mungret and Gearoid Sheehy, Ballynanty on their recent tragic deaths. Members observed a minutes silence in their memory.

1. Adoption of Minutes

Circulated, copy of draft Minutes of Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick held on 19th February, 2018.

Cmhlr. Ó Ceallaigh requested that the minutes be amended as follows:

In relation to the question on the Mayoral Chain at Agenda Item No. 6, to note that he agreed to the question being amended by the removal of the word allegedly, subject to legal advice confirming this.

In relation to the works at Ferrybank at Agenda Item No. 7 he had asked why false promises had been given for over a year in relation to the works proceeding and he had not received a response to this query.

Proposed by Councillor Butler;
Seconded by Councillor Collins;
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 Acting Senior Executive Officer, Community Support Services dated 19th February, 2018 setting out proposals to dispose of the freehold interest in a dwelling house at 2, Hawthorn Court, Kennedy Park, Limerick and to bring a Section 183 Notice to Full Council in this regard, for approval.

The report, as circulated, was noted by Members.

- (b) Circulated, report of the Head of Property Services dated 8th March, 2018 setting out proposals to dispose of land at Unit 3, Mungret Street Enterprise Centre, Limerick to The Trustees of St. Francis Boxing Club, by way of 25 year lease, and the intention to bring a disposal notice in relation to same before the May Meeting of the Council.

The report, as circulated, was noted by Members.

- (c) Circulated, report of the Head of Property Services dated 12th March, 2018 setting out proposals to dispose of land at Mungret College to Patrick and Aine Glackin, Mungret College and the intention to bring a disposal notice in relation to same before the May Meeting of the Council.

The report, as circulated, was noted by Members.

- (d) Circulated, report of the Head of Property Services dated 12th March, 2018 setting out proposals to dispose of land at Mungret College to Karina Healy, Tiny Friends Creche, Mungret College and the intention to bring a disposal notice in relation to same before the May Meeting of the Council.

The report, as circulated, was noted by Members.

- (e) Circulated, report of the Head of Property Services dated 9th March, 2018 setting out proposals to dispose of land at 24-25 Nicholas Street, Limerick to Conradh Brewing Company Ltd. t/a Treaty City Brewery and the intention to bring a disposal notice in relation to same before the May Meeting of the Council.

The item was deferred.

3. Service Operations Directorate

(a) Planning and Environmental Services

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

Circulated, report of the A/Senior Planner, Planning and Environmental Services dated 7th March, 2018 seeking the District’s approval to the taking in charge of estate at Coolbane Wood, Castleconnell and the declaration of roads to be public roads.

Proposed by Councillor Pond;
Seconded by Councillor Secas;
And Resolved:

“That the estate at Coolbane Wood, Castleconnell be taken in charge in accordance with Section 180 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and Section 11 of the Roads Act 1993”.

(b) Extinguishment of Public Right of Way

Circulated, report of the Senior Executive Engineer, Operations and Maintenance Services seeking approval to Extinguish the Public Right of Way at Gloster’s Lane, Thomondgate.

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

“That, the Metropolitan District of Limerick hereby makes an Order extinguishing the public right-of-way at Gloster’s Lane in accordance with Section 73 of the Roads Act 1993”.

(c) Part 8 Procedure – Wallers Well, Limerick

Circulated, Report of Director of Service, Service Operations dated 16th March, 2018 enclosing the Chief Executives Report setting out details of proposed residential development (13 units) at Wallers Well, Roxboro. The Chief Executive’s Report had been prepared in accordance with Section 179(3)(a) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and Part VIII of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) and noted that it was proposed to proceed in accordance with Section 5 of the report.

Members welcomed the earlier proposed scheme but requested that, in future, documentation in relation to Part 8’s be circulated to allow Members to adequately examine the plans. In response, the Meetings Administrator stated that, due to the urgency of the housing crisis, the report was circulated as soon as it was received so that the development could be considered at the March Meeting.

(d) Schedule of Works for the Metropolitan District of Limerick

Circulated, report of the Director of Service, Physical Development dated 9th March, 2018 setting out the background to the preparation of a Schedule of Municipal District Works and including the Draft Schedule of Municipal District Works 2018 for the Metropolitan District of Limerick.

Proposed by Councillor Secas;
Seconded by Councillor Gilligan;
And Resolved:

“That the Schedule of Municipal District Works 2018 for the Metropolitan District of Limerick be adopted in accordance with Section 103A of the Local Government Act 2001 (as amended)”.

4. Culture & Arts Directorate

GMA – Festival Funding 2018 in relation to investment in Riverfest 2018

A presentation to the Elected members by Ms. Sheila Deegan, Culture and Arts Officer and Ms. Laura Ryan, Head of Marketing and Communications outlined the following key points:-

- The Council’s Cultural Strategy, adopted by the Members, is committed to growing large scale festivals.
- Riverfest is Limerick’s largest civic festival with 85,000 attending in 2017.
- River activity was increased in 2017 to include 16 individual water activity events.
- The Festival site was expanded to Howley’s Quay in 2017.
- Riverfest Limerick’s social media campaign generated 1,062,956 paid impressions.
- Riverfest won 3 Irish Events Industry awards and was shortlisted for the Chambers Ireland Festival award in 2017.
- Riverfest programme currently includes multiple strategic partnerships including Bon Secours Hospital Great Limerick Run, Dolans Warehouse, King John’s Castle and additional partnerships proposed in 2018 include Swimmable Limerick and Croí Glas.
- Additional programme that GMA funding of €30,000 might facilitate include double zip wire, audience survey, street performers, extreme water sports demonstrations and potentially, outdoor movies.

Members welcomed the success of Riverfest and suggested that additional activities could be added in the future including extending the zip wire from King John’s Castle to the Treaty Stone, outdoor cinemas, the establishment of a sports arena for water related activities and promoting Limerick as a triathlon venue. Members expressed disappointment that not all businesses support the festivals in the city and highlighted the lack of flags and green bunting on some city centre premises during the Saint Patrick’s Festival weekend. In response to queries in relation to Limerick being included as a destination on the Wild Atlantic Way route, Laura Ryan informed the meeting that there was an opportunity to leverage the brand for the

wider catchment area and discussions were ongoing regarding Limerick as a pilot city as a Gateway for the new Wild Atlantic Way Region. Members also suggested that there should be pedestrian access from Howley's Quay to King John's Castle during the festival. In this regard, the gate on Sylvester O'Halloran Bridge should remain open.

Members noted that the funding approved as part of the budgetary process was increased in 2018 from €116,107 to €148,000. Concern was expressed by some Members on the request to the General Municipal Allocation (GMA) funding as they believed that the primary objective of this funding should be to assist in establishing new festivals for the city. Members also expressed disappointment at the lack of national funding and in particular, festival funding from Fáilte Ireland. Following further discussion in relation to funding of festivals in the City, it was agreed to invite Fáilte Ireland to the April Metropolitan Meeting.

On the proposal of Councillor Hurley and seconded by Councillor Collins, Members approved funding of €30,000 GMA funding for the 2018 Riverfest Festival.

5. Presentation on Richard Harris Film Festival

Zeb Moore, Festival Organiser, Richard Harris Film Festival and Rob Gill, Chairman of the Board of Directors gave an overview to the Members of the festival which included the following points:-

- The festival had grown from a one day to a five day event and screenings were now held on the city's main cultural venues including Millennium Theatre, Belltable, University Concert Hall and Limetree Theatre.
- The film festival was in its sixth year and was now IFTA affiliated.
- In 2017 there were 28 films shown and 3,000 attendees.
- Richard Harris Film Festival was now represented at many major international film festivals.
- The longer-term plan was to scale the festival so that it was either self-financing or have its costs defrayed by a title sponsor.

Members welcomed the festival as an opportunity to showcase Limerick as a destiny for independent film production. Members noted in particular the benefit of the Council decision to purchase Troy Studios, which provided the opportunities for film production in Limerick, and enabled Limerick to be Ireland's film capital. In this regard, Mr. Moore referenced upcoming potential film projects that were being finalised for location in Limerick.

Members noted how last year's investment of €30,000 paid off and were unanimous in their support of the Film Festival. It was agreed that, following on from this presentation and in line with normal protocol, the request for funding would be referred to the appropriate channel for consideration.

QUESTIONS

6. Question submitted by Councillor J. Leddin

I will ask at the next Meeting that the Council provide an update on what level of communication, if any, is taking place between Limerick City and County Council and Dunnes Stores regarding their empty properties on Sarsfield Street and O'Connell Street and what actions are planned.

REPLY: "Limerick City and County Council has provided notice of intention to the owners of the Dunnes Store site situated at Sarsfield Street, Limerick of proposed entry onto the register of Vacant Sites. The submission returned by Dunnes Stores is currently under consideration."

In respect of the property on O'Connell Street Dunnes Stores received planning permission in October 2017 for the change of use from retail to licensed restaurant use.

7. Question submitted by Cmhlr. S. Ó Ceallaigh

I will ask at the next meeting how many parking fines were issued for illegal parking in Loading Bays, Taxi Ranks and Bus Stops in the Metropolitan District in 2016 and 2017.

REPLY: The number of fines issued are as follows:

OFFENCE	NO. ISSUED 2016	NO. ISSUED 2017
Parking a vehicle other than goods vehicle being used for loading or unloading in a loading bay	979	1,096
Goods vehicle loading or unloading in a loading bay over 30 minutes	169	270
Parking a vehicle in a taxi rank	200	239
Parking a vehicle wholly or partly with roadway markings at an omnibus/ stopping/ place /stand	60	83

8. Question submitted by Cmhlr. S. Ó Ceallaigh

I will ask at the next meeting how many vacant local authority houses there are in the Metropolitan District.

REPLY: At the 12th February 2018, the number of vacant properties in the Metropolitan area was 28, the breakdown is as follows;

Properties offered awaiting acceptance	1
Properties where licences have been signed with voluntary associations but tenant is not yet in occupation	2
Properties with works yet to be completed	13
Properties recently returned awaiting works	11
Properties vacant and available for letting (allocation in progress)	1
Total	28

9. Question submitted by Councillor M. McCreesh

I will ask at the next Meeting for the Council to provide details of the funding allocation made in 2017 to replace the old SOX bulbs (when needing repair through failure) with the new LED street lights. How much of this allocation was spent in 2017 replacing the old bulbs.

REPLY: The allocation for Public Lighting Maintenance made each year by the Council is for the maintenance of the entire stock of public lighting including SOX, SONs, CFLs, Halogens, and LEDs as well as switch gear, lighting columns and outreach brackets.

Therefore, there is not a specific allocation targeted towards SOX Bulb replacement only. The Budget in 2017 for Public Lighting for Energy Costs, repairs and Renewals was €1,800,000

Philips the dominant manufacturer has announced that it will phase out the production of SOX Bulbs from July 2019 due to the growth in use of the more energy efficient LEDs. There are still some supplies of SOX replacement Bulbs available but stocks will be limited going forward. Therefore, over the next few years Councils will have to look at replacing their network of SOX Lanterns with LEDs.

In 2017 the Council carried out works on over 2100 SOX Lanterns, of these the Bulb was replaced in approx. 1,385 and 715 SOX Lanterns were replaced with new LED lanterns at a cost of circa €225,000

10. Question submitted by Councillor M. McCreesh

I will ask at the next Meeting for the Council to provide a current status of the proposed schedule to complete Phase 2 of the refurbishment work in the Watergate Flats Complex. Has all the required funding been provided. Maintenance issues in Tara Court have been placed on hold for the last number of years with the expectation that the refurbishment work would address most of the serious issues.

REPLY: The deep retrofit of the 100 unit Watergate Flats complex is being delivered on a phased basis. Phase 1 (56 units) was completed in 2017. This work has

significantly enhanced the performance, comfort levels and visual amenity of these buildings. Part-funding has been confirmed by the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government for Phase 2 of the project i.e. 44 units. Part-funding has also been committed by the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) under the Better Energy Communities Programme 2018. It is envisaged that work will commence on Phase 2 this year.

Operations and Maintenance, Service Operations are responding to routine maintenance requests from tenants in Tara Court.

NOTICES OF MOTION

11. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor J. Leddin

I will move at the next Meeting that Limerick City and County Council invite expressions of interest for the development of social and affordable houses on the Guinness site Carey's Road as part of our house building programme.

The Mayor informed the Meeting that this item would be forwarded to the Home and Social Development Strategic Policy Committee.

12. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillors E. Secas and J. Leddin

We will move at the next meeting that this Council calls on the Chief Executive:

(i) to take the lead in making Limerick City and County Council a Disability Friendly Council, to promote a campaign to make the public and the business community aware of the dangers caused by obstacles, such as cars parked on footpaths, bicycles chained to railings and other thoughtlessly placed items that impede the use of our footpaths for wheelchair users and people suffering from visual impairment.

(ii) to consider the roll out of a Limerick City and County Council "My Way" campaign and to consult with all major stakeholders, including Disability Federation of Ireland and the Irish Council of the Blind, regarding the possibility of holding an annual "Make Way Day" in Limerick City and County.

The Motion was proposed by Councillor Secas and seconded by Councillor Hurley.

REPLY:

Limerick City and County Council has appointed two Access Officers, Geraldine Dollard and Aoibhe Reidy to oversee the delivery of the Council's responsibilities under the Disability Act 2005. In the main, their role is to help customers with disabilities to access the Council's services, buildings, and information.

Quarterly meetings are being held with representatives of the Disability Federation of Ireland (DFI) and the following actions have been agreed for 2018.

- Limerick City and County Council has agreed a work placement programme with Employability Limerick and 4/5 persons with disabilities will be hosted on an 8 week work experience programme in the Council over the Summer.
- Limerick City and County Council are working closely with DFI to identify ways the Council can support and promote the Make Way Day. A date has not be identified yet and DFI are drawing up proposals at present.
- The Council will organise Awareness training (on the needs of customers with disabilities) for Limerick City and County Council frontline staff over the coming months.
- A disability section on Limerick.ie will be set up and updated regularly.

In addition to the above specific initiatives, the Access Officers are working closely with the members of the DFI and others who raise issues in relation to access to services and facilities in the City and County. Contact has been made with the Area Engineers in relation to obstructions on footpaths in the City and County towns.

Members noted the need for increased awareness of this issue and Councillor Hurley suggested that this could be discussed in detail at a Strategic Policy Committee (SPC) Meeting. The Mayor noted that he had also raised this issue in a previous Notice of Motion and the Meetings Administrator informed the meeting that a reply had been received from the Office of the Minister of State for Mental Health and Older People, which was included with the correspondence for this meeting.

13. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillors E. Secas

I will move at the next Meeting that the Council bring forward for consideration the road improvement scheme for the R445 road from the Kilmurray Roundabout eastwards, which was developed by Consultant Engineers Mott McDonald in 2016.

The Mayor informed the Meeting that this item would be forwarded to the Local Electoral Area Briefings.

14. Notice of Motion submitted by Cmhlr. S. Ó Ceallaigh

I will move at the next meeting that more detailed responses, and more frequent updates be given to local representatives on the MyLimerick system.

The Motion was proposed by Cmhlr. Ó Ceallaigh and seconded by Councillor Costelloe.

Cmhlr. Ó Ceallaigh referred to ongoing issues with the communication around the MyLimerick system. In particular, he stated that the status of the query was frequently incorrect and there appeared to be a lack of accountability. In this regard he asked that the system be examined to see if it can be upgraded so that it is interactive and also, that a review is carried out of the practice of closing cases with the status commitment given, as this means that there was no follow up to ensure that the action was carried out.

Following further discussion the Meetings Administrator noted the issues raised and agreed to discuss them with relevant staff and revert to the Members with an update once the review was complete.

15. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor J. Pond

I will move at the next Meeting that the Council immediately start the process of taking in charge Chesterfield Grove Estate in Castletroy View.

The Mayor informed the Meeting that this item would be forwarded to the Local Electoral Area Briefings.

16. Correspondence

Correspondence was noted.

At the conclusion of the Agenda, The Mayor welcomed Mr. Dean Strang who was the defence attorney in the Netflix documentary 'Making a Murderer' series and was a guest lecturer on University of Limerick's Law Programme. The Mayor welcomed Mr. Strang to Limerick, acknowledged the positive publicity his presence had generated and made a presentation to him on behalf of the Council.

This concluded the Meeting.

Signed: _____
MAYOR

Dated: _____