

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS AT MEETING OF METROPOLITAN DISTRICT OF LIMERICK HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, MERCHANT'S QUAY, LIMERICK, ON MONDAY, 19TH NOVEMBER, 2018 AT 9.45 A.M.

PRESENT IN THE CHAIR: Councillor Daniel Butler, Mayor.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Councillors Collins, Costelloe, Gilligan, Hogan, Hourigan, Hurley, Keller, Loftus, Lynch, McCreech, Ó Ceallaigh, O'Dea, O'Hanlon, Pond, Secas and Sheahan.

OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE:

Director, Service Operations (Mr. K. Lehane), Meetings Administrator (Mr. J. Clune), Head of Property Services, (Ms. J. Leahy), Acting Senior Executive Officer (Mr. D. McGuigan), Acting Senior Executive Officer (Ms. M. Donoghue), Head of Digital Strategy (Mr. M. Bilauca), Administrative Officer (Ms. F. McCormack).

At the outset the Mayor congratulated all involved in "Light Up Limerick" on what was a fantastic event. The feedback was very positive and he welcomed the national coverage that it received.

Members expressed their condolences on the passing of Teresa McInerney, former employee, who had worked in County Buildings, O'Connell Street for many years.

Condolences were also expressed to the family of Anne O'Connor nee Punch, formerly of Punch Solicitors.

Members also conveyed their condolences to the family of Mícheál Ó Súilleabháin who had passed away recently and referred to the significant impact he had on the cultural and musical life of Limerick. Members in particular highlighted his contribution to the University of Limerick and the significant role he played in the promotion of Irish arts and culture around the world.

Congratulations were extended to the Irish Rugby Team on their victory against the All Blacks at the weekend.

Members also extended their congratulations to the Limerick Hurling Team on their win against Wexford and Cork in the Fenway Hurling Classic in Boston.

1. Adoption of Minutes

- (a) Circulated, copy of draft Minutes of Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick held on 15th October, 2018.

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

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

- (a) Circulated, copy of draft Minutes of Draft Budgetary Plan Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick held on 15th October, 2018.

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

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

2. Disposal of Land

Circulated, report of the Acting Senior Executive Officer, Housing Support Services dated 1st November, 2018 setting out proposals to dispose of the Freehold Interest of a dwelling house situate at 13 North Cloughaun Road, Garryowen, Limerick and the intention to bring a Section 183 Notice to Full Council in this regard, for approval.

The report, as circulated, was noted by Members.

3. Service Operations Directorate - 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 6th November, 2018 seeking approval to the taking in charge of the following estates :

Ashbrook Crescent, Lawn and Gardens, Ennis Road
River Glen, Old Cork Road
Salmon Weir, Annacotty

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

“That the following estates be taken in charge in accordance with Section 180 of the Planning and Development Acts 2000 (as amended) and Section 11 of the Roads Act 1993”.

Ashbrook Crescent, Lawn and Gardens, Ennis Road
River Glen, Old Cork Road
Salmon Weir, Annacotty

4. Question submitted by Councillor J. Leddin

I will ask at the next meeting how many applications have been approved, how many declined, under Government’s Rebuilding Ireland Home Loans and how many applications have been made over the last two years.

REPLY: Figures up to 31/10/2018 regarding Rebuilding Ireland Homeloan since introduction of the scheme in February 2018 for all of Limerick City and County.

1.	Number of applications received	138
2.	Number applications approved	27
3.	Number of applications refused	51

Note: The balance of 60 applications include applicants awaiting decision, applications cancelled or withdrawn and applications where we are still awaiting further information.

5. Question submitted by Councillor J. Leddin

I will ask at the next meeting how many times has the CPO legislation been used to acquire land or property in the last four years.

REPLY: Six residential properties were acquired by CPO by Limerick City and County Council to take the said properties out of dereliction.

Land was acquired by CPO during 2018 to construct a slipway on the western side of the existing pier at Ringmoylan, Pallaskenry, Co. Limerick.

6. Question submitted by Councillor S. Lynch

I will ask at the next meeting for a timeline on when the legal issues are going to be resolved in relation to the taking in charge of Steamboat Quay.

REPLY: Limerick City and County Council is currently engaged with property owners in Steamboat Quay, to resolve issues around roads and public open spaces, following a request from businesses and residents in Steamboat Quay to take the roads and public spaces in charge. It is difficult to put a timeline on when these matters will be resolved, but the Council will be endeavouring to resolve the matter in 2019.

7. Question submitted by Councillor M. McCreesh

I will ask at the next meeting that following a parliamentary question to Minister Eoghan Murphy seeking the amount of unpaid development levies due by local authority (39297/18), Limerick City and County Council (LCCC) was listed as having €4,392,782 for development levy debtors as at 31/12/2016.

Could you please now provide a breakdown of the development levies included in this amount for Limerick City and outline how much of this figure will be recovered.

REPLY: While every effort will be made by the Council to collect €4,392,782 referred to in the question above, a bad debt provision of €3,187,163 has been made leaving net short-term debt of €1,205,619. This provision is a prudent measure in line with best accounting practice.

The Council pursues outstanding contributions through continuous active debt management.

8. Question submitted by Councillor M. McCreesh

I will ask at the next meeting can the process of tracking offset arrangements for development contributions be outlined with regard to ensuring the implementation of agreed offsets.

REPLY: Offsets refer to works which a developer does over and above what is required by the term of the planning permission and which benefit the local authority and for which the developer seeks a reduction on the contributions due to the value of the works done.

There are a number of aspects of the offset process, which have to be managed to ensure satisfactory outcome to any offset proposal.

The cost of works which are to be offset against development contributions to be agreed by parties prior to those works commencing. This offset agreement between the Council and the developer should be given effect by signing of a legal agreement between both parties. This agreement to cover cost of works, arbitration (if needed) and Council access to works during construction.

No new offset proposals have been received since the inception of Planning and Environmental Services in early 2016 and no offset proposals are currently being monitored by the department.

9. Question submitted by Councillor M. McCreesh

I will ask at the next meeting how many offset arrangements are currently being tracked for development levies.

REPLY: Offsets refer to works which a developer does over and above what is required by the terms of the planning permission and which benefit the local authority and for which the developer seeks a reduction on the contributions due to the value of the works done.

No new offset proposals have been received since the inception of Planning and Environmental Services in early 2016 and no offset proposals are currently being monitored by the department.

10. Question submitted by Councillor J. Costelloe

I will ask the Council how many voids there are in the Metropolitan area and how many are currently being refurbished.

REPLY: There are currently 107 Voids in the Metropolitan area which can be categorised as follows:

58 require major refurbishment while the remainder are casual vacancies. Most casual vacancies require minor works which are undertaken on an on-going basis by our Housing Maintenance staff.

At present 33 properties in the Metropolitan area have been approved for Voids funding.

This work is on-going, with 13 homes completed and the remainder either ready to go on-site or with works being specified and costed.

It is the intention of Limerick City and County Council to submit additional properties for Voids funding.

11. Question submitted by Councillor J. Costelloe

I will ask the Council, following the recent announcement of €1.4 million funding for the refurbishment of vacant Council properties, I would like to know the status of this funding and what the plan is to fast track these refurbishments.

REPLY: Limerick City and County Council have received funding to carry out works on 70 Void properties in the City and County

The current status of works is as follows:

Area	Approved	Complete	On-site	Works Scheduled (Tender Work Complete)	Tender Stage	Pre-Tender
Rathkeale NCW	25	4	7	2	8	4 – spec'd
Cappamore Kilmallock	12	6	1	2		3 – spec'd
Metro	33	13		2		18 – spec'd
	70	23	8	6	8	25

The works are being carried out by a mix of direct labour and contractors to fast-track the delivery of additional homes.

It is the intention of Limerick City and County Council to submit additional properties for Voids funding.

NOTICES OF MOTION

12. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor J. Gilligan (deferred from the October Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick)

I will move at the next meeting that this Council appoint a named official to have the “Wild Geese” fountain at City Hall repaired.

The motion was proposed by Councillor Gilligan and seconded by Councillor O’Dea.

In proposing the motion, Councillor Gilligan highlighted the importance of restoring this feature to its original design and the significance of the Wild Geese Associations around the world.

Members supported the motion and emphasised the importance of maintaining our historical culture in Limerick.

REPLY: The pumping mechanism of the Wild Geese Fountain at City Hall was out of order for the past few weeks awaiting a new electrical part. This has now been received and installed. The fountain is again operational.

The maintenance and repair of the Wild Geese fountain is the responsibility of the Facilities Section of the Property Services Department. Any queries in this regard should be addressed to Jayne Leahy, Head of Property Services.

The Head of Property Services stated that, through the Culture and Arts Department, an email has been issued to the designer William H Turner. Ms Leahy also stated that if Elected Members had pictures of the original design to submit same to the Property Section.

13. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor J. Gilligan

I will move at the next meeting that this Council clean what remains of the historic Walls of Limerick of all vegetation and repair same to recognised standards.

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

The Acting Senior Executive Officer, Capital Investments stated that funding would need to be sourced and applied for to carry out this work as full stabilisation works are expensive. The Acting Senior Executive Officer stated that a programme of works of vegetation removal is being co-ordinated by the Executive Archaeologist that will assist in maintaining these structures and a Steering Group has been formed within the Council representing Archaeology, Roads, Architects and Parks. It is the intention in 2019 to focus on the Island Road stretch and to continue with works at the Linear Park. Ms Donoghue assured the Members that the City Walls are recognised as an integral and unique part of the City’s heritage and it is the intention of all departments to maintain and care for them subject to funding.

The Acting Senior Executive Officer agreed with the Members in respect of enhancing and promoting the medieval heritage and stated that this is an objective in the Draft Tourism Strategy.

In proposing the motion Councillor Gilligan referred to the importance of maintaining the historic walls of Limerick and that these walls should be restored to recognised standards. Cllr Gilligan expressed disappointment with the response and indicated that he will be requesting further updates on progress.

14. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor J. Loftus

I will move at the next meeting that Limerick City and County Council call on the Government, to give back control and operation of all water services to City and County Councils throughout the State.

The motion was proposed by Councillor Loftus and seconded by Councillor O'Hanlon.

Following discussion by the Members, the Director, Service Operations briefed the Members on the rationale for the establishment of Irish Water and the emphasis on greater focus and investment. He also referred to the upgrading of Waste Water Treatment Plants in line with EU Standards for Discharge. The Director, Service Operations referred to the Workshop held by Irish Water with the Members of the Metropolitan District and that water sampling is ongoing and that the water treatment standards which are set out are being met.

15. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor M. Hurley

I will move at the November meeting of the Metropolitan District that this Local Authority participates in the WiFi4EU Scheme to promote access to wireless connectivity in public places between 2018 and 2020, commencing with this District.

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

In proposing the motion, Councillor Hurley welcomed the initiative and encouraged Local Authorities to get on board as the voucher system is operated on a first come, first served basis.

Head of Digital Strategy, Mihai Bilauca, informed the Members that the WiFi4EU initiative promotes free access to Wi-Fi connectivity for citizens in public spaces including parks, squares, public buildings, libraries, health centres and museums in municipalities throughout Europe.

Mr Bilauca stated that the WiFi4EU initiative provides municipalities with the opportunity to apply for vouchers to the value EUR 15 000. The vouchers are to be used to install Wi-Fi equipment in public spaces within the municipality that are not already equipped with a free Wi-Fi hotspot.

The call for applications was launched on November 7th. The Council has applied through our ICT Department for 4 vouchers under the WiFi4EU scheme, one for each metro/municipal council.

Mr Bilauca suggested that the installation of Public WiFi will be prioritised based on two criteria:

- the town population
- the technical feasibility of the installation. In some locations it could be easier and faster to access existing communications infrastructure (e.g. the Council WAN Network or the Smart CCTV infrastructure).

Mr Bilauca assured Members that they will be notified in due course how many vouchers will be assigned to Limerick City and County Council and will continue to apply in the subsequent calls, if needed.

16. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor E. Hogan (to be referred to the Environment Strategic Policy Committee)

I will call on Limerick City and County Council to place Recycle Bins at strategic points throughout the City for recycling plastic bottles.

It was agreed that this Notice of Motion be referred to the Environment Strategic Policy Committee.

17. Correspondence

Correspondence was noted.

Members referred to notification in relation to the General Municipal Allocation.

The Director, Service Operations confirmed that a meeting would be arranged in December to agree the breakdown within the allocated funding.

This concluded the Meeting.

Signed: _____
MAYOR

Dated: _____