

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS AT MEETING OF METROPOLITAN DISTRICT OF LIMERICK HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, MERCHANT'S QUAY, LIMERICK, ON MONDAY, 15TH JULY, 2019

PRESENT IN THE CHAIR: Councillor James Collins, Cathaoirleach

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Councillors Benson, Butler, Costelloe, Hartigan, Kiely, Kilcoyne, Leddin (B), Leddin (J), McSweeney, Murphy, O'Dea, O'Donovan, O'Hanlon, O'Sullivan, Sheahan, Sheehan, Slattery and Talukder.

OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE:

Director, Service Operations (Mr. K. Lehane), Meetings Administrator (Mr. J. Clune), A/Director, Capital Investment, (Mr. J. Delaney), Head of Property Services, (Ms. J. Leahy), A/Senior Executive Officer (Mr. D. McGuigan), Administrative Officer, Corporate Services (Ms. F. McCormack).

1. Adoption of Minutes

Circulated, copy of draft Minutes of the following Meetings:

- (a) Monthly Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick held on 20th May, 2019.
- (b) Annual Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick held on 14th June, 2019.
- (c) Special Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick held on 20th June, 2019.

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

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

2. Schedule of Dates

The Meetings Administrator confirmed that this was discussed with Party Leaders and if Members wished to change the date and time of the meetings, it would result in a change to Standing Orders, which is a reserved function. Therefore, it was agreed that the Party Leaders of the Metropolitan District would meet in advance of the September Meeting of the Metropolitan District to discuss this matter.

It was proposed by Councillor O'Dea and seconded by Councillor Kiely, that the Meetings Administrator would convene a Meeting of the Metropolitan Party Leaders.

3. Disposal of Land

Councillor O'Dea informed the Cathaoirleach that due to his position as Chairman of Tait House and in accordance with Part 15 of the Local Government Act, it was inappropriate for him to be in attendance while Item 3(f) was being discussed.

- (a) Circulated, report of the Senior Staff Officer, Housing Support Services dated 28th May, 2019 setting out proposals to dispose of the Freehold Interest of premises consisting of a

dwelling house situate at 43 O'Dwyer Villas, Thomondgate, 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.

- (b) Circulated, report of the Senior Staff Officer, Housing Support Services dated 14th June, 2019 setting out proposals to dispose of the Freehold Interest of premises consisting of a dwelling house situate at 9 Hawthorn Court, Kennedy Park, 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.

- (c) Circulated, report of the Senior Staff Officer, Housing Support Services dated 18th June, 2019 setting out proposals to dispose of the Freehold Interest of premises consisting of a dwelling house situate at 25 Greenhills 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.

- (d) Circulated, report of the Senior Staff Officer, Housing Support Services dated 18th June, 2019 setting out proposals to dispose of the Freehold Interest of premises consisting of a dwelling house situate at 48 Singland 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.

- (e) Circulated, report of the Head of Property Services dated 1st July, 2019 setting out proposals to dispose of property at Former Southill Boxing Club, Galvone Industrial Estate, Limerick to Airmount Engineering Limited and the intention to bring a Section 183 Notice to the September Meeting of Council in this regard, for approval.

Following discussion on the proposed proposal and further information requested by the Members, given the background to the proposed sale and the criteria used in assessing the bids, it was then agreed to defer this item to the September Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick.

- (f) Circulated, report of the Head of Property Services dated 1st July, 2019 setting out proposals to dispose of property at 36 Cecil Street to Tait House Community Enterprise CLG and the intention to bring a Section 183 Notice to the September Meeting of Council in this regard, for approval.

Following discussion on the proposed proposal and further information requested by the Members, given the background to the proposed sale and the criteria used in assessing the bids, it was then agreed to defer this item to the September Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick.

- (g) Circulated, report of the Head of Property Services dated 4th July, 2019 setting out proposals to dispose of land at Galvone Industrial Estate to Limerick City Build (Regen) Limited and the intention to bring a Section 183 Notice to the September Meeting of

Council in this regard, for approval.

The report, as circulated, was noted by Members.

- (h) Circulated, report of the Head of Property Services dated 4th July, 2019 setting out proposals to dispose of properties at Galvone Industrial Estate, Former Provincial Flooring and former Advanced Heating and Plumbing to Tait House Community Enterprise CLG and the intention to bring a Section 183 Notice to the September Meeting of Council in this regard, for approval.

Following discussion on the proposed proposal and further information requested by the Members, given the background to the proposed sale and the criteria used in assessing the bids, it was then agreed to defer this item to the September Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick.

QUESTIONS

4. Question submitted by Councillor E. O'Donovan

I will ask the Council to confirm what action is currently being taken on poor parking practices throughout the city including parking on footpaths and parking at bus stops and to present a report on this matter.

REPLY: It is an offence to park a vehicle on a footpath. Where the traffic wardens encounter a vehicle parked on a footpath, it is issued with a fine immediately. Since January 2019, a total of 490 tickets have been issued for this offence.

It is also an offence to park in a bus stop. Where the traffic warden encounters an illegally parked vehicle it is immediately issued with a fine. In addition the Council has introduced colour coded macadam to more clearly identify bus stops in the core business district and improve public transport. Since January 2019, a total of 310 fines have been issued by the Council for this offence to date.

On a more general issue of poor parking practices, the Council's Traffic Wardens issue fines for parking on double yellow lines, pedestrian crossings and parking within 5 metres of a junction.

It is important to note that An Garda Síochána are very active in relation to all the above offences and work collaboratively with the Council on enforcement.

5. Question submitted by Councillor E. O'Donovan

I will ask the Council what actions are being taken to address littering and dog fouling across the city and to clarify if more public bins will be installed to address these issues.

REPLY: Limerick City and County Council has a co-ordinated approach to implementing the various provisions of the Litter Pollution Act / Waste Management Acts and the

Waste Presentation Bye Laws. It involves the Domestic Waste & Litter, Street Cleaning, Community Support, Environmental Awareness Teams, together with the Area Offices and other stakeholders including Community / Tidy Towns Groups / Residents' Associations and businesses

At an operational level, the Council continues to address the ongoing challenges of:

casual littering / indiscriminate deposit of household rubbish, dog fouling, the lack of evidence recovered, the operations of unpermitted waste collectors and increasing the number of households availing of approved refuse collection arrangements.

To date in 2019 enforcement activity has included:

- 1,910 domestic waste & litter inspections
- Issuing of 264 on-the-spot fines, including 8 dog fouling fines.
- 680 domestic waste & litter cases/complaints resolved.
- 40 cases referred for legal proceedings in respect of littering / dog fouling offences.
- The Council has also arranged for the clean-up of five severely littered sites in the City / County under the 2019 Anti-Dumping Initiative and will be overseeing similar works in other sites in its jurisdiction in the coming weeks.
- Dog Fouling awareness campaign on local radio/cinema in early 2019. The campaign will be re-run at a later date.

The Council are undertaking a review of existing litter bins in the City. It is our experience that a number of bins in the city centre are being used for illegal dumping. The review will identify these locations and the Council will remove these bins and relocate to a more suitable location in the Core Business District and places of greatest footfall.

6. Question submitted by Councillor J. Leddin

I will ask Limerick Metropolitan Council to consider the introduction of relevant bye-laws in collaboration with An Garda Síochána to prevent the use of scrambler bikes on public footpaths or privately owned lands.

REPLY:

The relevant legislation relating to the regulation of vehicles using public footpaths is the Road Traffic (Traffic and Parking) Regulations 1997, which are given effect by Section 35 of the Road Traffic Act 1994. Article 13 of the regulations provides that "a vehicle shall not be driven along or across a footway." Section 35 (5) of the Road Traffic Act 1994 makes it an offence to contravene a regulation. It is a matter for An Garda Síochána, as the Traffic Authority, to enforce the regulations in this instance.

Section 199 of the Local Government Act 2001, as amended, confers the power on local authorities to make bye-laws for or in relation to the use, operation, protection, regulation or management of any land, services or other such matter provided by or **under the control or management** of the local authority. In that context the Council has included bye-laws regulating the use of vehicles (including

motorcycles) in its existing Parks and Open Spaces Bye-Laws. However, the Council does not have the power to regulate the use of private land via bye-laws.

7. Question submitted by Councillor F. Kilcoyne

I will ask at the next meeting that the footpath going down the Church Road, Patrickswell be extended across Newboro and back toward Collops Cross as this area constantly has pedestrians on it which is quite dangerous with oncoming traffic.

REPLY: The proposed location requested is in a rural setting. It is a policy of the Council to maintain existing footpaths within the city, towns and villages of Limerick. Members will be aware that there is very extensive network of roads and footpaths in Limerick and these are subject to significant wear and tear. Regrettably, there is also a high rate of claims against the Council for slips, trips and falls on this network and this is reflected in the high cost of public liability insurance costs, which the Council must pay every year. In recent years the Council has invested considerable resources in the repair and maintenance of existing footpaths to mitigate the risk to users. However, it is also the case that there has been serious underinvestment in this service area for many years.

Having regard to the details set out above, it is not possible, regrettably to accede to requests to extend footpaths in non-built up / rural areas, as the focus of the Council is on maintaining the existing public realm within the resources available to it.

8. Question submitted by Councillor C. Sheehan

I will ask at the next meeting whether the Council have received the 2019 Disabled Persons Grant allocation and for a breakdown of the allocation.

REPLY:

Disabled Persons Grant Scheme

	Department Contribution 90%	LA Contribution 10%	Total (Department and LA Contribution)
2019	€1,275,000	€141,667	€1,416,667

Private Grants – Housing Adaptation, Mobility Aid and Housing Aid for Older People

	Departments Contribution 80%	LA contribution 20%	Total (Department + LA contribution)
2019	€3,351,160 million	€670,232	€4,021,392

9. Question submitted by Councillor C. Sheehan

I will ask at the next meeting whether the Council have made contact with the Department of Housing in relation to a cost rental scheme.

REPLY: Given the affordability challenge faced by the rental sector in Limerick and other parts of the country, the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government (DHPLG) is committed to the introduction of a not-for-profit, cost rental sector in Ireland. Together with delivering more affordable and predictable rents, cost rental will make a sustainable impact on national competitiveness and the attractiveness of our main urban centres as places to live and work.

In order to support local authorities in delivering affordable homes, including cost rental, €310 million is being made available from 2019 until 2021 under the Serviced Site Fund (SSF). The SSF will fund facilitating infrastructure, on local authority sites, for the provision of affordable housing including cost rental. At a funding rate of €50,000 per affordable home, at least 6,200 will be facilitated in total.

In May 2019, the Housing Development Directorate of Limerick City and County Council prepared masterplans and cost plans for a competitive bid application under the Serviced Sites Fund for 7 key sites in the City and County to deliver affordable housing including cost-rental. We are awaiting a decision on these applications from the DHPLG in the coming weeks and will notify the Elected Members of the outcome.

10. Question submitted by Councillor C. Sheehan

I will ask at the next meeting for an update and a detailed outline of the Councils planned housing maintenance for vacant houses in the Metropolitan area.

REPLY: Limerick City and County Council has committed to removing the current batch of Voids by June 2020, understanding that the return of properties, for various reasons, takes place on an on-going basis throughout the City and County.

To manage the issue, we have introduced a fast-track process that will see a pilot project being launched to return more of the properties in batches of 30.

The project will include a mix of properties from City and County areas.

The pilot will be completed in conjunction with the existing work programme of Operations and Maintenance and Design and Delivery, who look after the properties approved for Voids funding and properties approved under the Buy and Renew Scheme.

We are introducing a single point of contact to assess the returned property immediately. This will ensure that the vacated property enters a work stream based on a standard scope and timeframe, which is determined by an inspection of the property at the outset.

The above measures will be reviewed on a monthly basis to assess progress made with regular reporting on same to be included in our report to Council.

11. Question submitted by Councillor J. Collins

I will ask at the next Meeting for:

(a) a detailed listing of HAP payments by Limerick City and County Council to renters in the Limerick Metropolitan Area since its introduction in March 2017. The detailed listing to show:

****total HAP payments in quarters, beginning April 2017, through to June 2019.***

****total number of HAP recipients for each of the above quarters.***

****the total number of properties covered under the HAP payments per quarter, with the properties identified by region, i.e. X HAP recipients received €Y relating to Z properties in Limerick City North/Limerick City East/Limerick City West.***

(b)(i) A breakdown by quarter beginning April 2017, through to June 2019, and by metropolitan region - city north, city east, city west - of how many HAP renters have to make top up payments, in addition to the HAP payment, to meet the full monthly rent being charged by the landlord.

(ii) If the information in B(i) is available, a breakdown by quarter and city region of how what percentage of the monthly private rent is made up of top up payments/HAP payments.

REPLY:

The question outlined above will require a further period of time to prepare as it is a significant request and Housing Support Services do not have this level of financial data available locally. This is due to payments being processed via the HAP Shared Services Centre. HSS Centre have agreed to support our request but have indicated that it will take a number of weeks to prepare due to data required.

In the absence of the requested data, please see available data.

Currently Limerick City and County Council have 2,264 active Limerick HAP Tenancies that we monitor, review and maintain.

	April 2014 to end of 2015	2016	2017	2018	January 2019 to the end of June 2019
No. of HAP tenancies set up	1,140	628	703	557	257
No. of amendments	235	657	834	1,383	923
No. of cessations	103	268	299	432	228

12. Question submitted by Councillor J. Collins

I will ask at the next Meeting for the number of housing units by type (houses and apartments) in the Metropolitan Area where planning permission currently has been granted but development has yet to commence.

REPLY: There are 40 housing developments in the Limerick Metropolitan District with permission for a total of 2328 residential units.

The breakdown of the status of these housing developments is as follows:

- 1 housing development for 41 residential units is granted but is currently on appeal to An Bord Pleanála.
- 18 housing developments have commenced construction or are partially completed.
- 21 housing developments have yet to commence for a total of 877 residential units.

NOTICES OF MOTION

13. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor J. Leddin

I will move at the next meeting that Limerick Metropolitan Council identify and include potential suitable park and ride sites to facilitate those who wish to travel by alternative means as part of the Limerick Transport Strategy currently being prepared.

In proposing the Motion, Cllr Leddin referred to the need for a potential suitable park and ride sites to be identified in order for the public to travel by alternative modes of transport. This Motion was seconded by Councillor O'Donovan and agreed.

REPLY: The National Transport Authority (NTA), in partnership with Limerick City and County Council (LCCC) and Clare County Council (CCC), has commenced work to develop a new Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (MATS) for the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area.

The LSMATS will set out a series of actions and measures, covering infrastructural, operational and policy elements to be implemented in the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area over the next 20 years and will outline a framework to deliver the projects in a phased manner. The Strategy will take account of current and predicted population, National Planning Framework objectives, national transport policies, existing plans and strategies in the region and existing transport assets.

As part of the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (LSMATS) all major trip attractors will be considered. All transport modes will be considered and in addition, options including park and ride and park and stride bus connections will be examined.

14. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor J. Leddin

I will move at the next meeting that Limerick Metropolitan Council employ suitably qualified tradespeople who can facilitate the completion of maintenance works in Council owned houses thus reducing the amount of time that houses or apartments are left unoccupied.

In proposing the Motion, Councillor Leddin (J) referred to the number of vacant houses owned by Limerick City and County Council and the maintenance work required by private contractors in order to get them to a certain standard for reletting. This Motion was seconded by Councillor Sheehan and agreed. Members requested a report on the vacant houses and for housing officials to be present at the September meeting. Members expressed concern at delays in repairing houses and the length of time some of these properties were vacant. Following discussion, the Director, Service Operations agreed that a report would be prepared and presented to the Members at the September Monthly Meeting.

15. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor D. Butler

I call on the Limerick Metropolitan Councillors to join me in writing to the Minister of State with special responsibility for Local Government and Electoral Reform, to review the use of election posters in the interest of reducing the use of single use plastics while protecting the integrity of the democratic process.

In proposing the Motion Cllr Butler referred to the need for a review of the use of election posters and look to other countries on how we can reduce the use of single plastics during the election process. This Motion was seconded by Councillor Sheahan and agreed.

16. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor F. Kilcoyne

I will move at the next meeting that the new sewer line that is now in place in Patrickswell village be extended down the Clarina Road to Faha Demise and down the church road towards Lurriga and back the main road at Collopys Cross to Ballycurrane. Please note this was in the original sewer line plans for the Patrickswell area but not installed.

The motion was proposed by Councillor Kilcoyne, seconded by Councillor Leddin (J) and agreed.

Reply: Please note below the response received from Irish Water.

Thank you for your recent communication regarding the Metropolitan District Meeting on Monday 15th July requesting a response to the issues highlighted. Irish Water wish to advise that the extension of the wastewater network at this location is currently not on our Capital Investment Plan. The Capital Investment Plan is currently focused upon Drinking water and Environmental Compliances.

Where a potential customer is seeking an extension of the wastewater infrastructure, this can be accommodated by a connection agreement where the applicant becomes the customer and the driver for the extension, thus funding the sewer extension to meet their needs. A link to the application forms is attached for your reference, <https://www.water.ie/connections/get-connected/>

I trust you find the above information satisfactory. Thank you for contacting Irish Water.

17. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor C. Sheehan

I will move at the next meeting that the Council make space available at a suitable premises within the Metropolitan area for Limerick City Community Radio for a studio as they have to vacate their building Presentation Court, Sexton Street by the end of July.

Cllr Sheehan acknowledged the valuable service that Limerick City Community Radio provide to the community and the need for a suitable premises to be sourced in order for them to continue broadcasting. The motion was seconded by Councillor Kiely and agreed.

REPLY: In response to the Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor C. Sheehan and arising from the increased number of requests generally to provide facilities or property for community groups and organisations throughout Limerick, I advise that the Council decided to conduct an audit of existing facilities. This work has now commenced in partnership with the local development companies. This audit will identify the existing provision of facilities across Limerick City and County and inform a strategy that will seek to ascertain future needs. Limerick City and County Council already supports a large number of organisations through the lease of property but it is not possible to accommodate all requests. The audit will also seek to identify opportunities for groups to share facilities.

18. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor E. O'Donovan

I will move at the next meeting that this Council will fund a feasibility study to explore alternative parking methods in support of the staff, patients, and local residents adjacent to Limerick's hospital facilities.

In proposing the motion Councillor O'Donovan acknowledged the difficulty experienced by the local residents adjacent to the hospital and the urgent need for this issue to be addressed. This Motion was seconded by Councillor Leddin (J).

REPLY: It is a matter for the UL Hospital Group to consider the parking requirements for its staff, visitors and patients within the hospital campus. In recent months 2 hour pay and display parking has been implemented on Church Road adjacent to Raheen Church to provide parking for the Dooradoyle area. Additionally, double yellow lines have been painted in the residential areas around the location of the hospital to prevent parking at key areas and blocking access for residents.

As part of the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (LSMATS) all major trip attractors, such as the UL Hospital, will be considered. All transport modes will be considered and options examined for all such attractors, as in, park and ride, park and stride bus connection and cycle networks.

19. Correspondence

Correspondence was taken as read.

Councillor Costelloe complimented the Parks Department on the excellent flower displays in the city and surrounding areas.

This concluded the Meeting.

Signed:

CATHAOIRLEACH

Dated:
