

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS AT SPECIAL MEETING OF THE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT OF LIMERICK HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, DOORADOYLE, LIMERICK, ON MONDAY, 13th JULY, 2020 at 11.00 A.M.

PRESENT IN THE CHAIR: Councillor Sarah Kiely, Cathaoirleach

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Councillors Benson, Butler, Collins, Costelloe, Hartigan, McSweeney, Murphy, Novak Uí Chonchúir, 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/ Administrative Officer, Corporate Services (Mr. P. Williams), Assistant Staff Officer, Corporate Services (Ms. S. Carroll).

Apologies for his inability to attend were received from Councillor J. Leddin.

Following discussion, the Meetings Administrator confirmed that Standing Order No. 13 permits the calling of Special Meetings at the request of five Members and require that once a request is submitted the meeting must be convened by the Cathaoirleach within a period of seven days. He stated however if Members, prior to submitting a request contact him, he can discuss the item with the Cathaoirleach and determine if it can be placed on the agenda for the next scheduled statutory meeting.

1. Quad Bikes and Scramblers in Communities

Members highlighted the safety issues with respect to scramblers and quad bikes in the city and that they are putting other road users at risk.

The Cathaoirleach informed the meeting that she had arranged a meeting with Community Sergeant, Adrian Whelan, Roxboro Garda Station the previous week to discuss the issues. She informed the meeting that Sergeant Whelan confirmed that the Gardaí have powers under Section 41 of the Road Traffic Act 1994 to seize scramblers and quad bikes. He also believed that additional Council bye-laws are not required to deal with scramblers and quad bikes. The Cathaoirleach stated that he had confirmed that Gardaí are putting extra resources into tackling this issue.

Following further discussion, it was proposed by Councillor Collins, seconded by Councillor Slattery and agreed that the following be referred for inclusion on the agenda of the Meeting of the Joint Policing Committee to be held on 24th July, 2020 :

- Clarification on the powers of An Garda Síochána under Section 41 of the Road Traffic Act, 1994.
- Details of activities / number of seizures under the Act in the last twelve months.
- Proposed action plan for the next twelve months.
- What are consequences for underage users when scramblers are seized / consequences for those over 18 when scramblers are seized.
- Clarification that bye-laws are not required in relation to scramblers/electric scooters.

The Cathaoirleach then adjourned the meeting for five minutes.

2. Closure of Shannon Heritage Sites in the Mid West

The Cathaoirleach welcomed the employees of Shannon Heritage sites present in the Gallery. She stated that a letter had been circulated to Members from the Chief Executive Officer, Shannon Group in response to a meeting invite sent to the Shannon Group.

Members expressed disappointment that a representative of Shannon Group was not in attendance at the meeting.

Members fully supported the Shannon Heritage employees in attendance. Members emphasised the importance of King John's Castle and other Shannon Heritage sites remaining open after the 31st August. Members in particular emphasised the importance of King John's Castle as a tourist attraction as well as protecting the livelihoods of the affected employees and also the local small businesses that depend on these heritage sites being open all year round. Members also called for National Heritage Sites to be protected and not be thought of solely as business models and outlined the different approaches as to how King John's Castle could be operated, including the feasibility of the OPW or the Council taking over the running of King John's Castle.

The Director, Service Operations then addressed the meeting and stated that King John's Castle is a national monument, an icon of Limerick, and is an extremely important tourist attraction with c. 100,000 visitors in 2019.

Following further discussion in relation to concerns at the proposed closing date of 31st August, it was agreed to write to Minister Catherine Martin and Minister Patrick O'Donovan and request that an urgent meeting be arranged to discuss the issue.

This concluded the Meeting.

Signed:

CATHAOIRLEACH

Dated:
