

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS AT ONLINE MEETING OF THE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF NEWCASTLE WEST HELD IN ÁRAS WILLIAM SMITH OBRIEN, NEWCASTLE WEST, CO. LIMERICK, ON WEDNESDAY, 5TH MAY, 2021, AT 10AM.

PRESENT IN THE CHAIR:

Councillor F. Foley, Cathaoirleach.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Councillors Collins, Galvin, Ruddle, Scanlan and Sheahan

OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE:

Director, Community Development Directorate (Mr. G. Daly), Senior Executive Engineer, West Division (Mr. J. Sheehan), Executive Engineer, Roads (Mr. P. Vallely), Acting Executive Engineer, Housing (Mr. D. Toomey), Senior Executive Officer, Corporate, Governance and Customer Services (Ms. L. Flannery), Meetings Administrator, Newcastle West (Ms. M. Corbett), Clerical Officer, Newcastle West (Ms. A. Lenihan).

APOLOGIES:

At the outset of the Meeting, Councillor Foley welcomed everyone in attendance to the May Meeting of the District and proceeded with the Meeting by confirming all the Elected Members present.

The Meeting Administrator outlined to the attendees that Standing Orders apply to all Online Meetings and the revised Standing Orders that were adopted to allow the Meeting Administrator to facilitate the recording of the meeting for the purposes of taking Minutes if required. However, this recording shall only be used for this purpose and will be deleted once the Minutes are agreed. No other recording of the Meeting and its proceedings by any person, including Elected Members and attending members of the public and media are allowed. In addition, she confirmed that the Councillors Code of Conduct applies and that Members are aware of the need to show respect and courtesy to colleagues and that qualified privilege applies in relation to comments made at meetings. She also thanked everyone for their co-operation on these matters.

1. Adoption of Minutes

- (a) Circulated, copy of draft Minutes of Meeting of Municipal District of Newcastle West, held on 7th April, 2021.

Proposed by: Councillor Galvin

Seconded by: Councillor Ruddle

And Resolved:

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

2. Operations and Maintenance Services Directorate

To consider report on the Declaration of Public Road at:

Lots Road, Templeglantine East, Co. Limerick.

Circulated, report of Senior Executive Engineer, Operations and Maintenance Services, dated 30th April, 2021, setting out details with regard to the Declaration of Public Road at Lots Road, Templeglantine East, Co. Limerick.

It was proposed by Councillor Galvin, seconded by Councillor Foley and agreed by all the Members that Lots Road, Templeglantine East, be made a public road in accordance with Section 11 of 1993 Roads Act.

3. General Municipal Allocation (GMA)

On the proposal of Councillor Foley, seconded by Councillor Galvin, it was agreed to allocate €750 for Memorial Plaque in Abbeyfeale.

On the proposal of Councillor Foley, seconded by Councillor Galvin, it was agreed to allocate €1,000 for works at Castlemahon Community Field.

On the proposal of Councillor Galvin, seconded by Councillor Foley, it was agreed to allocate €750 for Memorial Plaque in Abbeyfeale.

On the proposal of Councillor Galvin, seconded by Councillor Foley, it was agreed to allocate €1,000 for works at Castlemahon Community Field.

On the proposal of Councillor Sheahan, seconded by Councillor Foley, it was agreed to allocate €1,000 for works at Castlemahon Community Field.

On the proposal of Councillor Sheahan, seconded by Councillor Foley, it was agreed to allocate €750 for road safety works at Ballyguiltene National School, Glin.

On the proposal of Councillor Ruddle, seconded by Councillor Galvin, it was agreed to allocate €2,000 for works at Castlemahon Community Field.

On the proposal of Councillor Ruddle, seconded by Councillor Galvin, it was agreed to allocate €2,000 to Dromcollogher Development Association for new Town Park.

On the proposal of Councillor Ruddle, seconded by Councillor Galvin, it was agreed to allocate €2,000 to Corrandeel Housing.

On the proposal of Councillor Collins, seconded by Councillor Foley, it was agreed to allocate €1,000 to Ferndale Residents Association.

On the proposal of Councillor Collins, seconded by Councillor Foley, it was agreed to allocate €2,000 for works at Castlemahon Community Field.

On the proposal of Councillor Scanlan, seconded by Councillor Galvin, it was agreed to allocate €1,500 for works at Castlemahon Community Field.

The number of organisations who have been allocated funding under GMA Special Projects was noted and it was stated that the Council should promote this support more with regard to these projects.

QUESTIONS

4. Question submitted by Councillor L. Galvin

I will ask at the next Meeting (a) how many littering fines were issued in the past 12 months for the Newcastle West District (b) how many dog fouling fines were issued in the past 12 months for the Newcastle West District (c) how many Litter Wardens have we in this District (d) how many dog wardens have we in this District (e) how many dog licences were issued in this District for 2020 and for 2021 to date (f) what revenue was collected from each of the above for 2020.

REPLY:

(a) 12 littering fines were issued in the past 12 months for the Newcastle West District.

(b) No dog fouling fines were issued in the past 12 months for the Newcastle West District.

(c) There is 1 Litter Warden for the District.

(d) There are 2 Dog Wardens for the District.

With regard to items (e) and (f), it is unfortunately not possible to break down the licence numbers and payments by Municipal District. The following are the County wide figures for 2020 and 2021.

2020 – 8424 licences issued and €188,860 income collected.

2021 – 2566 licences issued and €59,480 income collected to date.

The following are the estimated figures for the Newcastle West Municipal District based on population figures.

2020 - 1264 Licences issued and €28,329 income collected.

2021 - 385 licences issued to date and €4,249 income collected to date.

In litter fines, €300 was collected and there was no money collected in dog fouling fines.

Councillor Galvin expressed dissatisfaction at the response received with regard to the number of dog fouling and litter fines issued in 2021. Concern was expressed with regard to the rise in incidents of illegal dumping and dog fouling in recent months. Where fines were issued, the type of offence and percentage paid was also raised. The roaming of dangerous breeds of dogs on the green areas in housing estates was also an area of concern. Following discussion by the Members, it was agreed that a representative from the Planning and Environmental Services would be invited to attend the June Meeting to discuss these matters.

5. Question submitted by Councillor T. Ruddle

I will ask at the next Meeting that this Council does all it can to put resources into reducing waiting time for housing grants applications and to fast track the assessment and approval of grants in emergency situations such as leaking roofs. Essential repairs have to be made priority.

REPLY: As applications for Private housing grants are received, it is considered appropriate for the emergency nature of the works to be highlighted e.g. where it is deemed that the house cannot be lived in or is causing severe concern. We will endeavour to process the application as a priority.

Irrespective of the circumstances, all documentation must be included with the application in order to satisfy Department of Housing audit requirements. Currently Level 5 restrictions mean that inspections have reduced. However, with external inspections, works are progressing on private homes classed as emergency.

As applications are received they are checked and registered on the system. An acknowledgement letter is sent to each applicant.

6. Question submitted by Councillor T. Ruddle

I will ask at the next Meeting how many litter fines were issued for illegal dumping in the Newcastle West Municipal District in (a) 2018 (b) 2019 (c) 2020.

REPLY: (a) Eight
(b) Seven
(c) Sixteen

7. Question submitted by Councillor T. Ruddle

I will ask at the next Meeting that the Council consider a pedestrian crossing for the school and hall in Castlemahon. The school has a multi million euro extension for completion by September and there is also a new school/community field being developed. There is excessive speed in this location and it is difficult to cross the road.

REPLY: The completion of a speed survey and a pedestrian count survey will be required at the above location with regard to the provision of a pedestrian crossing. These surveys will be carried out within the next few weeks.

Councillor Ruddle asked that the pedestrian count survey be carried out at school finishing time. In replying, the Senior Executive Engineer agreed.

8. Question submitted by Councillor J. Sheahan

I will ask at the next Meeting when full road restoration from Tinakilla Cross, Ballyhahill to Wallace's Cross, Tullyleague will take place following the laying of the gas line to Kerry Plc which includes the L6093, L6094, L6095 and the link road L60942 which was decimated by construction traffic.

REPLY: These roadways can be considered under the next Roads Programme.

9. Question submitted by Councillor J. Scanlan

I will ask at the next Meeting as to what response has come from the Board of Management of S.M.I Boherbui, Newcastle West as regards resolving the traffic congestion in the school vicinity.

REPLY: A reply has been received from the Board of Management S.M.I., Boherbui, Newcastle West with regard to traffic congestion. The Board has made a number of suggestions including highlighting the need for a pedestrian crossing, a one way traffic flow system and the construction of a drop off area on the Knockane Road. It has been noted that planning and agreement is necessary with regard to the suggestions.

Limerick City and County Council officials will arrange a meeting with the Board of Management.

Councillor Scanlan referred to traffic congestion along Boherbui and asked for an update on the Newcastle West Public Realm and Traffic Movement Plan. In replying, the Senior Executive Engineer agreed to seek an update on this matter.

10. Question submitted by Councillor J. Scanlan

I will ask at the next Meeting for (a) a copy of the needs assessment undertaken by our Authority to demonstrate the need for the proposed Part 8 Housing Development at The Forge Broadford (b) what consideration if any was given to the compulsory acquisition of the adjacent unfinished development (c) when do we expect commencement of the local community housing units at Nunan's corner in the village.

REPLY:

The needs assessment in determining the number and a suitable bed-type mix for the proposed Part 8 at the Forge, Broadford is based on the Approved Housing Waiting List. A breakdown of the approved Housing Waiting List is provided below. The Capital Investment Directorate are phasing the scheme in the event that the unfinished estate adjacent to the Council-owned site should become available in the future. Phase 1 will consist of 11 units (2 No. 1 Bed units, 1 No. 4 Bed unit, 6 No. 2 Bed units, 2 No. 3 Bed units) and Phase 2 will consist of 7 units (5 No. 1 bed units, 2 No. 2 Bed units).

Breakdown for Broadford is:

No. of beds	No. of Applications approved
1 bed	14
2 bed	14
3 bed	4

- a) The Property and Community Facilities Department is aware of the unfinished housing estate. A site inspection has been completed and a Derelict Sites case opened. The site, which is secured, is on the market for sale. Recent contact was made with the agent for the owner who advised that there was no progression in the sales process from any interested parties. The Derelict Sites case will now be progressed.
- b) Limerick City and County Council are awaiting a draft Stage 1 CAS application for Nunan's Corner from the agent acting on behalf of the Approved Housing Body. Once received by Limerick City and County Council it is obliged to review within 2 weeks prior to formally submitting to the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage for scheme and budget approval. Once a Stage 1 application is received by Limerick City and County Council the timeframe under the CAS programme starts and the CAS timeline to progress through the 4 stages of approvals to commencement on site is 75 weeks, as set down in Circular 18/2019.

11. Question submitted by Councillor J. Scanlan

I will ask at the next Meeting what progress we have made on the matter of placing reduced speed limit signage within The Paddocks Estate in Newcastle West.

REPLY: This estate is currently in the process of being taken in charge by the Council. Once the taking in charge process is complete, the installation of 30kph signage will be carried out.

NOTICES OF MOTION

12. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor L. Galvin

I will move at the next Meeting that the Government Department of Housing finance the refurbishment of category 3 and 4 houses immediately after the programme of works are submitted by Councils.

The Motion was seconded by Councillor Sheahan.

In proposing the Motion, Councillor Galvin requested that the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage provide finance with immediate effect for the refurbishment of category 3 and 4 houses after submission by the Council. The Meetings Administrator agreed to discuss this Notice of Motion with the Council's Housing Directorate with regard to contacting the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

13. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor L. Galvin

I will move at the next Meeting that this Meeting invite the Head of Planning to discuss planning around Forestry particularly when it comes to felling or thinning trees.

The Motion was seconded by Councillor Ruddle.

In proposing the Motion, Councillor Galvin referred to the issue of the forestry companies not being able to achieve sightlines when entering and exiting forestry lands. Following discussion by the Members, it was agreed that the Meetings Administrator would invite a representative from the Planning and Environmental Services to the next Meeting of the District.

14. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor T. Ruddle

I will move at the next Meeting that Irish Water be requested to immediately find funds to upgrade the Newcastle West Waste Water Treatment Plant. The current lack of capacity should never have been allowed to happen to the largest town in Limerick County.

The Motion was seconded by Councillor Sheahan.

REPLY:

Below is the response received from Irish Water.

The "Newcastle West Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) upgrade project is included in the 2020-2024 Irish Water Investment Plan and funding has been allocated to the project.

The project is at a very early stage (concept design) it is anticipated it will be post 2025, before the WWTP project is completed. This will be subject to funding and other approvals including statutory processes".

In proposing the Motion, Councillor Scanlan requested that priority be given to upgrading Newcastle West Waste Water Treatment Plant. An update on the requested meeting with Irish Water was also raised and the Meetings Administrator agreed to follow up on this request with the Council's Water Services Department.

15. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor J. Sheahan

I will move at the next Meeting that Limerick City and County Council explore a walk that is colloquially known as the Four Crosses walk in Glin to become a Sli na Slainte walk especially the part that's on the N69.

The Motion was seconded by Councillor Foley.

REPLY: As the area noted above is on a National Primary route a submission on the above proposal will be made to Transport Infrastructure Ireland for their consideration.

However, it is our opinion that creating a walking route and encouraging pedestrians to walk along the busy N69 route would represent a safety concern as it would necessitate the pedestrians crossing the N69 at a location with poor sightlines.

16. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor J. Scanlan

I will move at the next Meeting that the general public amenity and roadway off Sheehan's Road, Newcastle West towards Filtertek, The Council's Machinery Yard and Dawn's Laundrette be enhanced.

The Motion was seconded by Councillor Foley.

REPLY: Currently this roadway is swept on a fortnightly basis and the road surface is in relatively good condition.

However, further improvement works on this roadway could be considered under a Community Involvement Scheme for 2022.

In proposing the Motion, Councillor Scanlan requested that the entire area leading towards Filtertek be enhanced. A discussion followed and in replying, the Senior Executive Engineer stated that improvement works will be considered at this location and that a meeting would take place on site with the relevant stakeholders.

17. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor J. Scanlan

I will move at the next Meeting that (a) public lighting and litter bins be provided along the Limerick Greenway on both short sections immediately on either side of Station Road (b) that a native tree planting programme be put in place to compliment the amenity where this is possible.

The Motion was seconded by Councillor Ruddle.

REPLY: As part of the current programme of works on the Limerick Greenway, ducting has been provided at the locations referred to in order to facilitate public lighting in the future. On completion of the current work programme this proposal will be considered subject to funding.

The Council will examine a suitable location for a bin at Station Road where both sections referred to meet the public road. Along other sections of the greenway, it will be necessary that users take their litter home having regard to the "Leave No Trace" principle.

On completion of the current work programme for the Limerick Greenway, the Council will examine opportunities to enhance biodiversity on the Greenway and will consider a native tree planting programme where possible.

18. Correspondence

Correspondence as circulated was noted by Members.

The overgrowth/scrub to be cut back and cleared away at the entrance to Grove Road from the Hill Road, Abbeyfeale was referred to. In replying, the Executive Engineer stated that the area will be cut back when hedge cutting commences in the District. A request was also made that the trees be left in place.

The Members acknowledged the work that took place at the Hill Road, Abbeyfeale.

An update was sought on the request for a meeting to be arranged with the Chief Executive to discuss various housing matters in the District and that the Council revert back to having one Director of Service for the Housing Directorate. In replying, the Director stated that the concerns of the Members were raised with the Chief Executive and it was agreed that the Director would further liaise with the Chief Executive on this matter.

An update was sought on the installation of traffic calming measures/signage at the approach to Dromcollogher/Broadford GAA grounds. In replying, the Executive Engineer stated that a contractor is awaited and improvements to existing signage and road markings will be carried out as appropriate.

The substantial amount of money paid out by Irish Public Bodies for insurance claims in Limerick City and County Council was referred to. The responsibility for vehicles parking on footpaths was also raised.

The Members wished to thank Minister S. Harris, Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, Minister N. Collins, Minister of State and congratulate Limerick Institute of Technology on receiving university status. It was agreed that the Meetings Administrator would forward a Letter of Congratulations to the President of Limerick Institute of Technology.

The area at the front of Desmond Hall was raised and the Members have asked that following representations received by members of the public, could the grounds of Desmond Castle be open to the public with seating provided given current Covid-19 restrictions and need for people to meet outdoors. It was also noted that Minister of State, P. O'Donovan T.D. has responsibility for the OPW who manage the Desmond Hall. It was agreed that the Meetings Administrator would contact the Minister and the OPW with regard to this request.

An update was sought on the installation of seating and parklets in the town of Newcastle West and if any applications had been received. In replying, the Senior Executive Engineer stated that the installation of three parklets in The Square is currently being considered and one application from a business owner for table and chairs has also been received. The Senior Executive Engineer also noted the application process and different funding streams available.

An update on the request for a pedestrian crossing on the R522 from the Pike towards Dromcollogher National School was also requested. In replying, the Executive Engineer agreed to arrange an onsite meeting to discuss this matter further.

The possibility of holding face to face Monthly Meetings was also raised. In replying, the Director of Service stated that the current guidance is that Meetings be held online however further guidance from Corporate Services on this matter would be sought.

An update was sought on the Rebuilding Ireland Home Loan Scheme. In replying, the Meetings Administrator advised the Members that this matter had been referred to the Housing SPC for discussion and that an update on this would be sought.

The approval by Transport Infrastructure Ireland for the necessary funding for the design, construction and implementation of the N21 Ward's Cross Road Safety Improvement Scheme was welcomed by the Members. The development and sourcing of funding for Road Safety Designs for all junctions in the District was also referred to.

An update on the N21 Newcastle West Roads Scheme and the N21 Abbeyfeale Roads Scheme was requested. In replying, the Meetings Administrator agreed to seek an update on this matter.

It was agreed to hold the June Meeting of the District on Wednesday, 2nd June, 2021, at 10.00 a.m., at Áras William Smith OBrien.

It was agreed to hold the Annual Meeting of the District on Wednesday, 2nd June, 2021, at 11.45 a.m., at Áras William Smith OBrien.

This concluded the Meeting.

Signed:

Cathaoirleach

Dated:
