

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS AT MEETING OF THE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF NEWCASTLE WEST HELD IN ÁRAS WILLIAM SMITH OBRIEN, NEWCASTLE WEST, CO. LIMERICK, ON WEDNESDAY, 14TH JULY, 2021, AT 10AM.

PRESENT IN THE CHAIR:

Councillor L. Galvin, Cathaoirleach.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Councillors Collins, Foley, Ruddle, Scanlan and Sheahan

OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE:

Chief Officer, Limerick LCDC (Mr. S. O'Connor), Senior Executive Engineer, West Division, (Mr. J. Sheehan), Executive Engineer, Roads (Mr. P. Vallely), Director, Housing Directorate (Ms. C. Curley), Acting Senior Executive Planner, Housing Directorate (Ms. S. Newell), Staff Officer, Property and Community Facilities (Mr. J. Cregan), Meetings Administrator, Newcastle West (Ms. M. Corbett), Clerical Officer, Newcastle West (Ms. A. Lenihan).

At the outset of the Meeting, Councillor Galvin welcomed everyone in attendance to the July Meeting of the District.

The Cathaoirleach proceeded with the Meeting by welcoming the return of Ms. Norma Prendiville, Journalist, Limerick Leader to the Newcastle West Municipal District Meeting. In replying, Ms. Prendiville, thanked all the Members for their help and support. The Cathaoirleach on behalf of the Members wished her well on her return.

APOLOGIES:

Director of Service, Community Development Directorate (Mr. G. Daly).
Executive Engineer, Housing (Mr. D. Toomey).

1. Adoption of Minutes

- (a) Circulated, copy of draft Minutes of Meeting of Municipal District of Newcastle West, held on 2nd June, 2021.

Proposed by: Councillor Collins

Seconded by: Councillor Foley

And Resolved:

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

- (b) Circulated, copy of draft Minutes of Adjourned Annual General Meeting of Municipal

District of Newcastle West held on 23rd June, 2021.

Proposed by: Councillor Collins

Seconded by: Councillor Foley

And Resolved:

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

- (c) Circulated, copy of draft Minutes of Annual General Meeting of Municipal District of Newcastle West held on 30th June, 2021.

Proposed by: Councillor Collins

Seconded by: Councillor Foley

And Resolved:

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

It was agreed by the Members that Councillor Sheahan’s Notice of Motion No. 19 on the Agenda would be taken first and this would be followed by the GMA No. 6 on the Agenda.

19. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor J. Sheahan

I will move at the next Meeting that Limerick City and County Council take ownership of the footbridge in Athea village.

The Motion was seconded by Councillor Foley.

REPLY: The Athea footbridge is currently in private ownership and an application from the community to have footbridge taken in charge is required. The footbridge will be required to meet the necessary structural standards in order to be taken in charge. There are maintenance works proposed for action in 2021 subject to the funding being available.

In proposing the Motion, Councillor Sheahan acknowledged the work of Athea Community Council to date. He referred to the shortfall in funding for maintenance of the footbridge in Athea and requested that Limerick City and Council take ownership of the footbridge. The various funding streams for the footbridge were also discussed.

6. General Municipal Allocation (GMA)

On the proposal of Councillor Foley, seconded by Councillor Galvin, it was agreed to allocate €3,000 for upgrade works to the footbridge in Athea to Athea Tidy Towns.

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On the proposal of Councillor Collins, seconded by Councillor Galvin, it was agreed to allocate €1,000 for upgrade works to the footbridge in Athea to Athea Tidy Towns.

At this point, Councillor Foley left the Meeting.

2. Housing Directorate

To receive Update from the Housing Directorate for the Newcastle West Municipal District.

The Cathaoirleach welcomed the Director and Acting Senior Executive Planner, Housing, to the Meeting.

The Director stated that she had recently moved to the Housing Directorate and would endeavour to work with the Members with regard to housing matters in the District.

The Acting Senior Executive Planner gave an update to the Members on the acquisition of the unfinished housing estate at Cois Na Féile, Abbeyfeale, Co. Limerick. She stated that Limerick City and County Council issued publicly an Expression of Interest in April, 2021 and the deadline for submissions was 10th May, 2021. She also stated that it was established from this Expression of Interest that Cluid Housing, an Approved Housing Body, was identified as the preferred submission. She referred to a Meeting which took place on site with Cluid in June 2021 and stated that surveys including core test surveys and CCTV surveys are currently being carried out by Cluid at the site. She stated that it is the intention that Limerick City and County Council will now progress a formal transfer process subject to agreement on valuations and the Section 183 process.

The Acting Senior Executive Planner also gave an update to the Members on AHB Cluid Turnkey units at Woodfield in Newcastle West. She stated that the provision of social housing at this estate is the preferred option. She referred to discussions which are ongoing with Cluid at present to close the legalities and that Department approval is also required.

The Members referred to a number of items with regard to the unfinished housing estate at Cois Na Féile, Abbeyfeale, including footpath connectivity, compensation under Compulsory Acquisition process, expressions of interest, timeframe for the project and affordable housing needs.

It was agreed by the Members that Councillor Galvin's Question No. 10 and Councillor Galvin's Motion No. 14 on the Agenda would be taken as part of the update from the Housing Directorate.

10. Question submitted by Councillor L. Galvin

I will ask at the next Meeting for (a) a detailed update on the takeover of the Rays in Mountcollins and (b) the proposed new Council housing development in Mountcollins.

REPLY:

(a)

A report on this estate has been completed by the Newcastle West District Office and this has been forwarded to the Planning Department for consideration to be taken in charge in early 2021.

The Planning Department has advised that Rays Estate, Mountcollins is on the list of Estates for taking in charge which require funding under the Development Fund.

There is no cash security or bond associated with the Rays Estate.

The approximate costing to bring the estate to a proper standard is in the region of €50,000.

Councillor Galvin referred to the level of funding required to bring the estate to a proper standard and asked if temporary works could be carried out to the estate in the interim. In replying, the Executive Engineer stated that this is a private estate and a report has been forwarded to the Planning Section for consideration.

(b)

A capital appraisal for the scheme was submitted to the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DoHLGH) in November 2020 and LCCC received approval on the 21st December, 2020. The proposed development has Stage One approval for 4 No. units: 1 No. one-storey one-bed house, 1 No. one-storey two-bed house, and 2 No. two-storey three-bed houses. We are exploring a design option for the inclusion of an additional fifth housing unit which will be a one-storey one-bedroom house, provided it meets necessary criteria.

The new houses will form an extension to the existing residential development of Radharc an Ghleanna.

A design team comprising of a Civil and Structural Engineer, a Mechanical and Electrical Engineer, a Quantity Surveyor and a Health and Safety Consultant was procured and appointed in Q1/Q2 2021.

The project is currently being developed for the Stage 2 submission to the DoHLGH in July and subsequently the Part 8 planning application is intended to be submitted in Q3/Q4 2021. Adhering to the approved timelines the project will then be developed for tender and is projected to commence on site in Q3 2022.

Councillor Galvin referred to the length of time taken to get houses into occupancy and asked that family type houses be considered in smaller villages in the District.

14. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor L. Galvin

I will move at the next Meeting that this Council put in place Part 8 housing applications for the villages of the Municipal District of Newcastle West.

The Motion was seconded by Councillor Sheahan.

REPLY:

A workshop was held with the Elected Members of the Newcastle West Municipal District in Feb 2019 in relation to Council landbanks remaining in the District suitable for new-build social-rental homes. The following landbanks were approved in principle to proceed to make an application to the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage for Stage 1 funding:

- Sycamore Crescent, Newcastle West
- Ardagh
- Templeglantine
- Glin
- Athea
- Broadford
- Carrigkerry
-

Please note: The site at Mountcollins did not form part of the workshop as this site was already underway and in the process for funding approval.

A progress update as at July 2021 is as follows:

- Broadford (Stage 1 approved and progressing through the Part 8 process)
- Sycamore Crescent, Newcastle West (Stage 1 approved, in design development (pre-Part 8) for a Stage 2 application).
- Mountcollins (Stage 2 submission scheduled for 29th July 2021)
- Ardagh (Stage 2 submission scheduled for 13th July 2021)
- Glin (A site is progressing with Glin Homes for the Elderly, Stage 1 application in preparation under the CAS scheme).
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The remaining sites will progress to feasibility stage over the coming months.

In proposing the Motion, Councillor Galvin requested that the Council put in place Part 8 housing applications for villages in the District.

The Acting Senior Executive Planner stated that when an application is made to the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, it takes 75 weeks to get from Stage 1 to Stage 4 under this process. The Members expressed disappointment at the length of time involved. The Members also referred to a number of matters including an audit of the housing waiting list, sewerage capacity in towns and villages for new housing developments.

3. Disposal of Land

Circulated, report of Director, Housing Development Directorate, dated 2nd July, 2021, concerning proposal to dispose of Property at Glensharrold, Carrickerry, Co. Limerick.

Members noted the proposal.

4. Transportation and Mobility Directorate

To consider and approve 30kph speed limits in accordance with Speed Limit Bye Laws for National and Non National Roads for the estates:

- (a) Rathronan, Athea.**
- (b) Ellis Wood, Abbeyfeale.**

The Members approved the introduction of the above 30kph speed limits which were proposed by Councillor Sheahan and seconded by Councillor Galvin.

5. Community, Tourism and Culture Directorate

To consider Community Initiative Scheme for 2021.

Circulated, report of Administrative Officer, Urban and Rural Community Development, dated 24th June, 2021.

The Members agreed to allocate funding to the organisations as outlined in the report. This was proposed by Councillor Galvin and seconded by Councillor Sheahan.

6. General Municipal Allocation (GMA)

This item was taken earlier in the Meeting.

QUESTIONS

7. Question submitted by Councillor J. Scanlan

I will ask at the next Meeting what was the amount spent on Gleann Daire estate, Ardagh (b) what is the position with taking the estate in charge (c) an update on the number of properties where compulsory acquisition is underway (d) what was the value of the Bond provided by our Authority (e) what portion of the bond remains available for further works within the estate.

REPLY: To date €25,025.36 has been spent on Gleann Daire Estate, Ardagh. In addition, there is an outstanding commitment of €19,739.92. (b) When the

works that are required to bring the estate to taking in charge standard are completed the formal taking in charge process will be commenced (c) The Property & Community Facilities Department currently have no compulsory acquisition underway (d) The value of the bond attached to Gleann Daire, Ardagh PL 05/1141 was €50,000 (e) The balance of the remaining bond available for further works within the estate is €5,234.72.

8. Question submitted by Councillor J. Scanlan

I will ask at the next Meeting as to what progress has been made in addressing the numerous safety risks evident locally given the very poorly maintained public utilities infrastructure in several areas in Newcastle West town.

REPLY: A survey has been completed on the public utilities infrastructure in Newcastle West town. Any defects in third party utilities of Irish Water or Eircom are emailed to them. These companies are advised of the defects and that a repair is sought.

The Newcastle West District office is preparing a defects list for the town of Newcastle West. A programme of works will be prepared and the works will be prioritised over the coming years depending on funding.

9. Question submitted by Councillor J. Scanlan

I will ask at the next Meeting what was the total spend on retrofitting of the Houses Nos. 13 to 24 at Castlevue, Newcastle West and how much of this outlay was incurred on the air to water heating systems installed.

REPLY:

12 homes in Castlevue estate, Newcastle West received energy efficiency upgrades in 2020 as part of the energy efficiency / retrofitting programme for that year. All properties received new 'air to air' heat pump heating systems along with other energy efficiency works such as external wall insulation, attic insulation, new windows and doors, passive wall vent controls, mechanical extract fans from kitchen\shower\bathrooms and new Positive Input Ventilation (PIV) systems. In addition, opportunity was taken to address maintenance and other works in the properties as part of the main programme. These work items included installation of new smoke and carbon monoxide alarms, new fascia & soffit, full electrical check, external painting, BER assessment on completion and any other routine maintenance items identified during the works.

The aim of the programme was to improve the thermal efficiency of the homes whilst at the same time making the homes more comfortable to live in by improving air quality and reducing\eliminating ongoing maintenance issues.

Outturn costs for the air-to-air heating system accounted for 15% of the average cost of the upgrade works, just under €7,000 ex VAT, per unit. Average out turn cost amounted to just under €47,000 per unit ex VAT.

The efficiency of heat pump heating systems is significant, ranging between 300% and 400%. This means for every 1Kilowatt of electricity used, between 3 & 4 Kilowatts of heat are produced back into the home. Conventional heating systems operate with efficiencies between 75% to 90%.

10. Question submitted by Councillor L. Galvin

I will ask at the next Meeting for (a) a detailed update on the takeover of the Rays in Mountcollins and (b) the proposed new Council housing development in Mountcollins.

This item was dealt with as part of Item No. 3 on the Agenda.

11. Question submitted by Councillor L. Galvin

I will ask at the next Meeting for a detailed update on (a) Wards Cross and (b) the Cryle view junction Abbeyfeale.

REPLY:

(a)

Since the previous update on the scheme, our technical consultants, Barry Transportation, are proceeding with finalising the detail design, including design of the necessary water main diversion, discussions with Irish Water and access for the adjacent landowner.

It is necessary to undertake a CCTV survey and slit trench investigation of the existing drainage and water main to advance the discussions with Irish Water and the subsequent design. This is being procured at present and will be on the ground in the coming weeks.

Mid West National Road Design Office have procured Land and Property Valuation Services and there are discussions ongoing with the landowner to advance the acquisition of the lands, necessary for construction of the scheme. In order to come to agreement with the landowner there are some design issues to be resolved regarding access and this is being progressed with Barry Transportation and Transport Infrastructure Ireland.

(b)

LCCC developed a design, which aims to improve the sightlines at the Cryle View junction. TII Safety Section reviewed this design and were in discussions with LCCC with respect to proposed amendments. The necessary amendments were incorporated and on the 02/07/21 TII provided approval to LCCC to proceed to the next stage of the approval process.

Next stage

LCCC will organise a Road Safety Audit on the proposed design and incorporate any necessary changes prior to submitting a finalised Preliminary design report. Once accepted by TII it is expected that TII will make funding available to proceed with the works.

In order to expedite the scheme, while LCCC are awaiting approval we are examining delivery options once funding is made available. This will either involve the preparation of contract documents or the confirmation that LCCC have the resources to carry out the proposed works in house.

12. Question submitted by Councillor L. Galvin

I will ask at the next Meeting for signage to be updated at the Forge Cross, Templeglantine.

REPLY: The signage for the above mentioned area has been procured, purchased and placed at Forge cross in May 2021. The signage on all approaches to the crossroads has been inspected last week and is acceptable.

13. Question submitted by Councillor T. Ruddle

I will ask at the next Meeting can the Council investigate the level and severity of pyrite and mica damage to houses and buildings in the Newcastle West Municipal District and the remainder of the county. With this information to apply to the Department of Housing for a redress scheme for householders affected. This is the first step to accelerate a compensation scheme for the affected householders.

REPLY: At the July Council Meeting a Notice of Motion was passed calling on the Council to commence analysis required in accordance with the IS45 Protocol, and make the appropriate submission to the Department of Housing, Heritage and Local Government.

It is confirmed that Limerick City and County Council will initiate a process to seek to extend the grant scheme to Limerick. The detail of how the process will operate is currently being examined.

NOTICES OF MOTION

14. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor L. Galvin

I will move at the next Meeting that this Council put in place Part 8 housing applications for the villages of the Municipal District of Newcastle West.

This item was dealt with as part of Item No. 3 on the Agenda.

15. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor L. Galvin

I will move at the next Meeting that this Council replaces the chain link fence and wire in Reilig Íde Naofa Abbeyfeale and remove the trees from the drain. These are located to the rear of the newly constructed houses and the trees are causing an obstruction to water flow nearby resulting in significant water damage and flooding following periods of heavy rain.

The Motion was seconded by Councillor Sheahan.

REPLY: We will seek to quantify the works involved and subject to adequate funding within the operation and maintenance budget for cemeteries in the Newcastle West operational area either complete works in 2021 or over a phased period of a number of years.

- Remove and dispose of existing trees on cemetery boundary.
- Replacement of existing surface water drainage system at boundary with new.
- Replacement of existing damaged boundary fence with new.

In proposing the Motion, Councillor Galvin acknowledged the work of the Voluntary Group in maintaining the graveyard and requested that the Council replace the chain link fence and wire at Reilig Íde Naofa, Abbeyfeale.

A request was made for an onsite meeting at Reilig Íde Naofa Graveyard and the Meetings Administrator agreed to follow up on this matter with the relevant Directorate.

16. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor J. Scanlan

I will move at the next Meeting that an immediate clean up be undertaken at Castlevue Estate, Newcastle West with particular emphasis on the area next to house 12 and to the side of house 13 as well as in the area surrounding the ESB installation in that area.

The Motion was seconded by Councillor Sheahan.

REPLY: The illegal dumping at the above mentioned location will be removed.

17. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor J. Scanlan

I will move at the next Meeting that the front and rear garden areas of all Council owned untenanted property be properly maintained in the best interest of the general living amenity in Castlevue Estate, Newcastle West.

The Motion was seconded by Councillor Collins.

REPLY: Untenanted vacant properties are managed so as not to cause undue nuisance to adjoining properties. All units are renovated to a letting standard in advance of being relet. The maintenance of the unit while vacant is limited to necessary

immediate issues that require to be addressed and within the level of resources available.

18. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor J. Sheahan

I will move at the next Meeting that Limerick City and County Council carry out a full re-instatement of footpaths and road overlay at Churchview, Ballyagran, Co. Limerick.

The Motion was seconded by Councillor Scanlan.

REPLY: The road overlay and footpath works for the above area will be considered under the Road Programme of Works 2022.

19. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor J. Sheahan

I will move at the next Meeting that that Limerick City and County Council take ownership of the footbridge in Athea village.

It was agreed that this Motion be taken at the beginning of the Meeting.

The following items were also raised.

A request was made that a Deputation from the District meet with Transport Infrastructure Ireland to discuss the availability of funding for the Abbeyfeale Traffic Management Plan. It was agreed that the Cathaoirleach and Cllr. Foley would be the District nominees for attendance at this meeting and the Meetings Administrator will liaise with the relevant Directorate with regard to the meeting.

An update on the feasibility study for proposed junction improvement works at Lee's Cross was requested. In replying, the Executive Engineer agreed to follow up on this matter.

The matter of an amplification system for Municipal District Meetings was also raised.

The issue of GDPR was also raised by the Members and a request was made that the Data Protection Officer would be invited to attend a Meeting with the Members. The Meetings Administrator agreed to follow up on this matter.

It was proposed by Councillor Sheahan and seconded by Councillor Ruddle to hold the September Meeting of the District on Wednesday, 15th September, 2021, at 10.00 a.m., at Áras William Smith OBrien.

This concluded the Meeting.

Signed:

Cathaoirleach

Dated:
