

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS AT MEETING OF THE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF NEWCASTLE WEST HELD IN ÁRAS WILLIAM SMITH OBRIEN, NEWCASTLE WEST, CO. LIMERICK, ON WEDNESDAY, 15th September, 2021, AT 10AM.

PRESENT IN THE CHAIR:

Councillor L. Galvin, Cathaoirleach.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Councillors Collins, Foley, Ruddle, Scanlan and Sheahan.

OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE:

Director, Community, Tourism and Culture Directorate (Mr. G. Daly), Senior Executive Engineer, (Mr. J. Sheehan), Senior Planner, Planning, Environment and Place Making (Ms. N. O'Connell), Acting Senior Executive Engineer, Water Services (Mr. N. Boyle), Executive Engineer, Roads (Mr. P. Vallely), Executive Engineer, Housing (Mr. D. Toomey), Meetings Administrator, (Ms. M. Corbett), Clerical Officer, Ms. A. Lenihan).

APOLOGIES:

Councillor M. Collins.

At the outset of the Meeting, the Cathaoirleach welcomed everyone in attendance to the September Meeting of the District.

1. Adoption of Minutes

- (a) Circulated, copy of draft Minutes of Meeting of Municipal District of Newcastle West, held on 14th July, 2021.

Proposed by: Councillor Sheahan

Seconded by: Councillor Scanlan

And Resolved:

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

The Cathaoirleach welcomed the recently appointed Senior Planner, Planning, Environment and Place Making (Ms. N. O'Connell) to the Meeting.

With the agreement of the Cathaoirleach, Ms. O'Connell addressed the Meeting and gave an outline to the Members of her experience to date in various Local Authorities.

The Members welcomed the Senior Planner and they highlighted the following items:

- Economic future of the District
- Recommencement of monthly pre-planning Meetings which had ceased due to the Covid19 restrictions
- Shortage of housing
- Part 8 housing developments for towns and villages within the District

The Director, on behalf of Management and Staff also welcomed Ms. O'Connell to the Council.

2. National and Regional Shared Services

To receive update from Water Services on water shortages.

The Cathaoirleach welcomed the Acting Senior Executive Engineer, Water Services to the Meeting.

It was agreed by the Members that Councillor Galvin's Question No. 5 and Councillor Sheehan's Notice of Motion No. 15 would be taken as part of Item 2.

The Members raised a number of items with the Acting Senior Executive Engineer, which included the shortage of water during the recent spell of warm weather, the ongoing interruptions to water supply in a number of villages in the District, lack of prior notification when water supply is disrupted, and the length of time taken to repair leaks. The under investment of Irish Water, which is the responsibility of the Government, was also highlighted. The Members did acknowledge the work of Council employees in responding to queries when the Members were awaiting updates on water supplies from Irish Water.

The Acting Senior Executive Engineer outlined to the Members the current situation with regard to water supply in various villages in the District. He noted that a new booster pump is to be installed which should resolve the water problems in the Old Mill/Ballyine area. He stated that a large leak was found in Dromcollogher, which led to issues with the supply but this has been repaired by the relevant parties. Also a new borehole is to be drilled in Glin to improve the supply there. He also stated that a large leak was discovered in the Cratloe Abbeyfeale area, which had led to issues with the water supply but this has now been fixed. He also noted that there is a single source supply for the Abbeyfeale area and that there is ageing infrastructure in place in certain areas such as Mountplummer, Broadford where water mains replacement is required.

The Service Level Agreement which is in place between Irish Water and the Council and which was signed on behalf of the Council by the previous Chief Executive was also referred to by the Members. They expressed dissatisfaction with the current arrangement given the issues noted. It was proposed by Councillor Sheahan and seconded by Councillor Galvin that the Service Level Agreement between Irish Water and the Council be reviewed immediately and this Notice should be referred to the next Full Meeting of the Council. The Meetings Administrator agreed to forward this item to Corporate Services.

5. Question submitted by Councillor L. Galvin

I will ask at the next Meeting for an urgent meeting with Irish Water to discuss the severe water shortage during the drought and also that Water Services staff from the Council attend our next Meeting for much needed discussions.

REPLY: Please note that Irish Water have advised that they will be organising a clinic in the coming weeks and can meet Councillors to discuss this matter at the clinic.

Neal Boyle, Acting Senior Executive Engineer will attend the meeting on behalf of Water Services.

15. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor J. Sheahan

I will move at the next Meeting that that Irish Water immediately put in place the required investment to bring both water supply and wastewater treatment for the town of Glin to a first world standard to serve the residents of Glin.

The Motion was seconded by Councillor Galvin.

REPLY:

Please note below the response received from Irish Water in relation to water supply for Glin:

"We are progressing a project to drill a new Borehole to address risk of existing borehole failure. What we are doing is really to secure the water supply into the future".

Please note below the response received from Irish Water in relation to wastewater treatment for Glin:

"Irish Water, in partnership with Limerick City and Co Co is in the design phase of the Glin Wastewater Treatment plant project. The project consists of a new wastewater pumping station and a new wastewater treatment plant as well as interconnecting pipework. The date for completion of construction works is currently the end of 2025. We expect to submit a planning application to Limerick City and Co Co in 2022".

In proposing the Motion, Councillor Sheahan referred to the waste water treatment in the village of Glin and also interruptions to the water supply in Glin, where Corbry Estate and Riverview Manor Estate are particularly affected. He welcomed the response from Irish Water with regard to the new borehole and waste water treatment plant.

3. General Municipal Allocation (GMA)

On the proposal of Councillor Ruddle, seconded by Councillor Galvin, it was agreed to allocate €3,000 for flashing signage at Knockane Road, Newcastle West.

On the proposal of Councillor Ruddle, seconded by Councillor Galvin, it was agreed to allocate €500 to Friends of St. Ita's, Newcastle West for works at the hospital.

On the proposal of Councillor Ruddle, seconded by Councillor Galvin, it was agreed to allocate €650 to Newcastle West Farmers Market.

On the proposal of Councillor Galvin, seconded by Councillor Ruddle, it was agreed to allocate €1,000 for drainage works at Tournafulla.

QUESTIONS

4. Question submitted by Councillor L. Galvin

I will ask at the next Meeting for an update on the traffic management plan for Boherbue, Newcastle West.

REPLY: The Design Team for the Newcastle West Movement Plan are currently finalising revisions to the Plan in advance of the second Public Consultation (subject to the Government's most up to date Covid-19 Guidelines).

It is intended to circulate the revised Plan to Newcastle West Councillors in early October for review in advance of the next Public Consultation.

5. Question submitted by Councillor L. Galvin

I will ask at the next Meeting for an urgent meeting with Irish Water to discuss the severe water shortage during the drought and also that Water Services staff from the Council attend our next Meeting for much needed discussions.

This item was dealt with as part of No. 2 on the Agenda.

6. Question submitted by Councillor L. Galvin

I will ask at the next Meeting for (a) an update on the safety measures at Gleason's Cross, Cratloe (b) the safety measures for the bend up from Gleason's Cross on the Abbeyfeale to Athea Road (c) an update on the replacement of the broken railing at the top of Knocknaboul, Athea.

REPLY: Works on the above are due to commence subject to the agreement of the landowner. Contact has made with the landowner with regard to these works and once agreement is reached, works will commence shortly thereafter.

7. Question submitted by Councillor F. Foley

I will ask at the next Meeting for an update on speed ramps on St. Ita's Road, Abbeyfeale.

REPLY: This area was examined and due to it being a local primary road, speed ramps are not appropriate for this roadway.

However a speed detection signage will be installed in this location within the next 2 -3 weeks.

Furthermore, there is a possibility of a pedestrian crossing being located on this roadway within the next 12 months.

8. Question submitted by Councillor T. Ruddle

I will ask at the next Meeting if the private laneway from the side of the Courtenay School to the Desmond Complex in Newcastle West can be taken in charge by the Council as I have received a request on this matter from the Board of the Desmond Complex. The laneway is used by the public on a regular basis.

REPLY: This private laneway will be checked to ascertain the cost of works necessary to bring this laneway to an acceptable standard.

In order to take a roadway/laneway in charge there is a formal process under Section 11 of the Roads Act 1993, which includes advertising the intention in local newspapers and seeking submissions from the public.

9. Question submitted by Councillor J. Scanlan

I will ask at the next Meeting that the matter of confused house numbers at Daar River Walk and Daar River View, Newcastle West be addressed.

REPLY: The area in question is currently on the Council list for the taking in charge. Once the estate has been taken in charge, appropriate signage can be put in place. It is expected that the estate will be taken in charge within 6 to 8 months.

10. Question submitted by Councillor J. Scanlan

I will ask at the next Meeting that consideration be afforded to the taking in charge of the pathway which accesses The Desmond Complex and its' crèche facilities on the western side of the Courtenay Boys School.

REPLY: This private laneway will be checked to ascertain the cost of works necessary to bring this laneway to an acceptable standard.

In order to take a roadway/laneway in charge there is a formal process under Section 11 of the Roads Act 1993, which includes advertising the intention in local newspapers and seeking submissions from the public.

11. Question submitted by Councillor J. Scanlan

I will ask at the next Meeting what percentage of cyclists who visited/utilised our Green Way in July and August brought their own bikes.

REPLY: There are currently 8 counters at various locations along the Greenway providing numerical information on walkers and cyclists using the Greenway facility.

It is not possible to determine from these counters what percentage of cyclists brought their own bicycles to the Greenway and therefore the information sought is not available to the local authority.

Councillor Scanlan queried whether Lazy Bikes were in place providing bicycles along the Greenway. In replying, Director stated that as the process of completing due diligence on the loan agreed by Elected Members took longer than anticipated, this has delayed start up. He also noted that ten bicycle depots are in place at various locations along the Greenway.

NOTICES OF MOTION

12. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor L. Galvin

I will move at the next Meeting that this Council put in place a working plan during the holiday period when staff are on leave for all Council Departments. The current situation is a shambles from a day to day working point of view.

The Motion was seconded by Councillor Sheahan.

REPLY: All officials of the Council are committed to delivering services across all Departments as set out in our Corporate Plan and Customer Charter. Limerick City and County Council ensures leave has to be covered by the managers of each department to ensure adequate staffing is available to cover its functions and duties. Sick Leave and unexpected events can cause shortages and work may need to be prioritised at certain times. Senior staff will be reminded of the need to ensure that there is sufficient cover in place.

In proposing the Motion, Councillor Galvin stated that all staff are entitled to take leave but noted that there was some difficulty particularly during the summer months in getting items progressed as the relevant staff were unavailable. It was noted that in some cases, a number of senior staff members were on leave at the same time and given the current Covid 19 guidelines that are in place, staff are still working from home on occasion. It was noted that if someone is working from home, that they should be able to do the same work from home

as in the office but this was not the case in some instances. However, it was also noted that although some staff were on leave, they did resolve issues that arose when contacted.

In reply, the Director noted the comments of the Members and accepted that there should be adequate cover in place at all times. He will discuss the matter further with colleagues on Management Team.

13. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor L. Galvin

I will move at the next Meeting that an application be made to extend the footpath up to Fitzgerald farm and horse riding school in Abbeyfeale.

The Motion was seconded by Councillor Foley .

REPLY: Funding for the above will be sought under the next round of the 2021/2022 National Transport Authority's (NTA) Active Travel Scheme.

In proposing the Motion, Councillor Galvin stated that enhanced footpath access is required from the town of Abbeyfeale up to Fitzgerald farm and horse riding school. It was also noted that the success of the Greenway has also given a much welcomed boost to this business.

14. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor F. Foley

I will move at the next Meeting that a school warden be appointed to Templeglantine National School.

The Motion was seconded by Councillor Galvin.

REPLY: The request will be discussed with the School Principal, Transport Infrastructure Ireland and the Newcastle West Area Roads Engineer to determine what options are available and can be implemented at this location. The report of these matters will issue to elected Members in due course.

In proposing the Motion, Councillor Foley referred to the number of students attending the school and requested that funding be made available for a school warden. He noted that there are wardens along the N21 in Adare and in Newcastle West.

In replying, the Senior Executive Engineer agreed to progress this matter with the Road Safety Education Officer.

15. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor J. Sheahan

I will move at the next Meeting that that Irish Water immediately put in place the required investment to bring both water supply and wastewater treatment for the town of Glin to a first world standard to serve the residents of Glin.

This item was dealt with as part of Item 2 on the Agenda.

16. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor J. Scanlan

I will move at the next Meeting that our Authority provide a serviced area to accommodate those who visit locally with Camper Vans.

The Motion was seconded by Councillor Ruddle.

REPLY: The provision of serviced sites for campers and camper vans is currently being considered for the next revision of the City and County Development Plan (2022-2028) and a number of submissions have been received. Therefore it would be appropriate to refer this Notice of Motion to Forward Planning for consideration in the Development Plan.

In proposing the Motion, following on from the success of the Limerick Greenway, Councillor Scanlan highlighted the need for having serviced sites to accommodate camper vans while in the District.

17. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor J. Scanlan

I will move at the next Meeting that our Authority provide ground for a Dog Park in the Newcastle West area.

The Motion was seconded by Councillor Sheahan.

REPLY: The Council will consider the Demesne parklands as a possible location for a dog park for Newcastle West. The parklands will be reviewed to ascertain if a suitable location can be identified.

In proposing the Motion, Councillor Scanlan referred to the increase in the ownership of dogs in the District and stated that sites other with than the Demesne should also be considered.

The Members noted that this matter is worth exploring but expressed concern with regard to the possibility of a dog park becoming a burden on the Council. The issue of dog fouling was also highlighted.

The following items were also raised.

The matter of dereliction in vacant Council properties and the timeline for when these houses would be available for new tenants was also raised. Other matters referred to included Part 8 housing applications for town and villages, the lack of availability of housing and people being advised to present homeless to the Homeless Unit in Limerick. Also the delay in the inspection of housing grants applications was also noted. Following further discussion, it was proposed by Councillor Galvin and seconded by Councillor Scanlan that a person be appointed from the Housing Directorate to deal with housing matters in the Newcastle West District. In replying, the Director agreed to raise these items with the Director, Housing.

Clarification was also sought on the proposed development at Woodfield Manor, Newcastle West and the provision of social housing or affordable housing at this estate as per the Minutes of the July meeting. The Meetings Administrator agreed to seek clarification on this matter from the relevant Directorate.

An update was sought on the taking in charge of Rays Estate, Mountcollins along with an update on the proposed works at Wards Cross and Cryle View Junction, Abbeyfeale. An update on the proposed works for Relig Ide Naofa graveyard Abbeyfeale was also requested.

The Executive Engineer gave an update to the Members on Lee's Cross. He noted that tenders for survey works and the appointment of consultants is currently underway. He stated that once consultants are appointed a design for the junction can be progressed.

An update on Dore's Cross was also requested. In replying, the Executive Engineer confirmed that works will be carried out shortly. He also noted that hedge cutting notices are currently being issued to landowners in the District.

The Members referred to the concerns raised by members of the public with regard to cyclists using the Greenway and not alerting other users when they are passing them or directly behind them. Additional signage advising cyclists to ring bicycle bells was requested. Also a request for public toilets on the Greenway was discussed. It was agreed that any matters with regard to the Limerick Greenway be emailed directly to the Senior Executive Engineer, Tourism Directorate.

The proposed changes to the Jobs Club which is operated by West Limerick Resources was raised and in reply, the Director agreed to liaise with the Chief Officer, Limerick LCDC on this matter.

The Cathaoirleach stated that he had requested a Special Meeting of the Joint Policing Committee be held to discuss anti-social behaviour in Abbeyfeale. It was noted that a reply is awaited from the Superintendent's office on this matter.

It was agreed to hold the October Meeting of the District on Wednesday, 6th October, 2021, at 10.00 a.m., at Áras William Smith OBrien.

This concluded the Meeting.

Signed:

Cathaoirleach

Dated:

