

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS AT MONTHLY MEETING OF THE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT OF LIMERICK HELD ON MONDAY, 20TH SEPTEMBER, 2021 at 09:45 A.M. IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, DOORADOYLE, LIMERICK AND ONLINE.

PRESENT IN THE CHAIR: Councillor Catherine Slattery, Cathaoirleach

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Councillors Benson, Butler, Collins, Costelloe, Daly, Hartigan, Kiely, Kilcoyne, Leddin, McSweeney, Murphy, Novak Uí Chonchúir, O'Dea, O'Donovan, O'Hanlon, O'Sullivan, Secas, Sheahan (M), Sheehan (C) and Talukder.

OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE:

Meetings Administrator (Ms. L. Flannery), Senior Executive Engineer, Limerick Metropolitan District (Mr. A. Finn), Head of Property and Community Facilities (Ms. J. Leahy), Administrative Officer, Trade and Investment (Ms. C. Larkin), Senior Executive Engineer, Place-Making and Public Realm (Mr. K. O'Gorman), Executive Engineer, Active Travel (Mr. R. Gorey), Executive Engineer, Travel and Transport Strategy (Mr. J. O'Leary), Staff Officer, Corporate Services and Governance (Ms. E. Cousins), Assistant Staff Officer, Corporate Services and Governance (Ms. S. Carroll).

At the outset of the Meeting, Members extended their sympathy and condolences to Mr. Mark Leahy, Meetings Administrator on the passing of his father. Members also extended their sympathies to the family of Dr. Thomas Ryan, Freeman of Limerick who had passed away recently.

1. Adoption of Minutes

(a) Circulated, copy of draft Minutes of the Monthly Online Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick held on 19th July, 2021.

Proposed by Councillor Collins;
Seconded by Councillor Kiely;
And Resolved:

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

(b) Circulated, copy of draft Minutes of the Adjourned Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick held on 5th August, 2021.

Proposed by Councillor Kiely;
Seconded by Councillor O'Hanlon;
And Resolved:

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

2. Disposal of Land

(a) Circulated, report of the Senior Staff Officer, Housing Support Services dated 30th July, 2021 setting out proposals to dispose of Freehold Interest of premises consisting of a dwelling house

situate at 81 O'Dwyers 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 5th August, 2021 setting out proposals to dispose of Freehold Interest of premises consisting of a dwelling house situate at 187 Hyde Road, Prospect, 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 5th August, 2021 setting out proposals to dispose of Freehold Interest of premises consisting of a dwelling house situate at 53 O'Dwyers 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.

- (d) Circulated, report of the Head of Property and Community Facilities dated 6th September, 2021 setting out proposals to dispose of 21 – 23 Old Clare Street, 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 and Community Facilities dated 9th September, 2021 setting out proposals to dispose of Property at St. Peter Street, 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.

- (f) Circulated, report of the Head of Property and Community Facilities dated 10th September, 2021 setting out proposed exchange of property at 121 Mountain View, O'Malley Park and 44 O'Donoghue Avenue, Rathbane, 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.

3. Planning, Environment and Place-Making Directorate

A. Part 8 Procedure – Proposed Upgrade of Golf Links Road, Limerick

Circulated, Report of the Director of Service, Planning, Environment and Place-Making Directorate dated 14th September, 2021 and enclosed Chief Executive's Report dated 15th September, 2021 setting out details in relation to the proposed Upgrade of Golf Links Road, Limerick. The report had been prepared in accordance with Section 179 3(a) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and Part 8 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 (as amended) and noted that it was proposed to proceed in accordance with Section 5 of the report.

Members welcomed the proposed development and acknowledged the submissions received and the input of Officials and the residents in the area.

Members queried the time frame of the development and if funding was available.

The Senior Executive Engineer, Place-Making and Public Realm confirmed that a detailed design of the project would now commence. Funding was available for the scheme and an application would be submitted.

The report, as circulated, was noted by Members.

B. Part 8 Procedure- Limerick City Outdoor Dining Experience Project, Thomas Street and Bedford Row

Circulated, Report of the Chief Executive dated 16th September, 2021 setting out details in relation to the proposed Limerick City Outdoor Dining Experience Project, Thomas Street and Bedford Row, Limerick. The report had been prepared in accordance with Section 179 3(a) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and Part 8 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 (as amended) and noted that it was proposed to proceed in accordance with Section 5 of the report.

Members welcomed the proposed development, highlighting the importance of supporting businesses in the city centre and promoting tourism. Members also urged that any new infrastructure should be wheelchair accessible.

The report, as circulated, was noted by Members.

Ms. Nuala O'Connell, who had recently been appointed as Senior Planner, joined the Meeting at this stage. Members welcomed Ms. O'Connell and wished her well in her new role.

4. Physical Development Directorate

Part 8 Procedure – Proposed Mill Road Active Travel Scheme

Circulated, Report of the Senior Engineer, Transportation and Mobility Directorate dated 15th September, 2021 and enclosed Chief Executive's Report dated 15th September, 2021 setting out details in relation to the proposed Mill Road Active Travel Scheme, Limerick. The report had been prepared in accordance with Section 179 3(a) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and Part 8 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 (as amended) and noted that it was proposed to proceed in accordance with Section 5 of the report.

Members welcomed the proposed development, highlighting the importance of this infrastructure and acknowledged the input of residents groups in the area.

The report, as circulated, was noted by the Elected Members.

QUESTIONS

5. Question submitted by Councillor J. Leddin

I will ask at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick how many houses in Council ownership are currently boarded up and for how long these houses are unoccupied.

REPLY: Currently there are 112 category 3 & 4 houses in Limerick City and County the details of their length of time unoccupied is set out in the following table:

	Cat 3	Cat 4
Less than 3 months	4	0
3-6 months	3	0
More than 6 months	39	66
Total	46	66
Total	112	

No data is held on the number of units of the 112 that are boarded up as this is not done for every dwelling. Boarding up is based on an assessment of the need at the time the unit becomes vacant.

6. Question submitted by Councillor J. Leddin

I will ask at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick that Limerick Metropolitan Council undertake a comprehensive survey of all properties located in our Georgian area to determine ownership, occupancy and potential residential capacity subject to possible redevelopment.

REPLY: The Forward Planning Department have carried out land use surveys of the city centre. The most recent of which was carried out in November, 2019. The survey identified use and vacancy across floors in buildings. Separately, the Urban Innovation Department has currently carried out a building condition survey of buildings in the Georgian core.

The Urban Innovation Department will liaise with the Forward Planning Department to prepare an updated use and vacancy survey in the context of the identifying potential residential units in the city centre.

The Council are actively working on encouraging and supporting the redevelopment of historic buildings in the city centre through a number of programmes:

- The Urban Innovation Department (UID) manage the Living City Initiative – a tax incentive scheme designed to support the refurbishment of historic (pre 1915) properties. Since its relaunch in 2018 the UID have actively promoted the scheme through the holding of events and seminars as well as the production of promotional material and videos. Furthermore, the UID have liaised with auctioneers in the city to promote the scheme as part of the sales pack for properties within the qualifying area.

- To support this process the UID operate a “one stop shop” advice clinics for property owners and potential property owners that are attended by the Conservation Officer, Fire Officer, Area Planner as well as relevant staff from the Urban Innovation Department.

To date 48 applications have been received for residential development under the initiative. Commercial developments are certified directly by the Revenue Commissioners.

- The Urban Innovation Department is also working on developing solutions to some of the specific challenges faced by people redeveloping these buildings.
- Funding has been secured under the Urban Regeneration Development Fund to redevelop 2 existing Council owned properties for residential use. The projects are at preliminary design stage.
 - The +City xChange EU Project is examining methods that enhance the energy performance of historic buildings and potential financial mechanisms that could support these works.
 - In respect of fire safety, the Urban Innovation Department has secured funding from Enterprise Ireland under the Small Business Innovation Research to develop potential sensor based solutions to meet the requirements of the building regulations.

In both of these projects the Urban Innovation Department are working directly with property owners to develop solutions to these issues.

Other initiatives operated by the Council include:

- Conservation grants – The Planning Department through the Conservation Officer, administer a number of conservation grant schemes on behalf of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage on an annual basis. These schemes are advertised in the local press when the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage advise the Council.
- Property Services in the Council, sits within the Community, Tourism and Culture Directorate; they are responsible for operating the Derelict Sites Act and are actively engaging with property owners to bring properties out of dereliction. The Department are actively engaging with property owners to bring derelict properties back into use. A number of properties have been compulsorily acquired under the provisions of the Act.

7. Question submitted by Councillor C. Slattery

I will ask at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick, how many unoccupied houses owned by Limerick City and County Council are in Kennedy Park and when will they be refurbished and allocated to a person on the housing list.

REPLY: There are 3 houses in Kennedy Park that require major refurbishment works in order to be allocated. At present, the estimated date of completion of the works required is not available.

House 1 – Opening up works and survey has been completed. Issue to Tender in February 2022, Commence Works April 2022, Completion October 2022.

House 2 and 3 - Opening up works and survey to be completed by 29th October. Issue to Tender in March 2022, Commence Works April 2022, Completion November 2022.

All the above dates are subject to a receipt of approvals from DHLGH on foot of the Stage 3 and 4 submissions.

As all the properties are subject to a Stage 4 (post Tender) submission, if higher than anticipated tender costs are received it may result in value engineering exercises being required which will endeavour to reduce the overall cost. This may impact the delivery timeline should it arise. Given the size of the works packages other issues may arise which will be managed in the course of the project.

8. **Question submitted by Councillor C. Slattery**

I will ask at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick, funding was allocated to repair footpaths at Mount St. Lawrence Cemetery, was funding applied for to do the drainage works that need to be done before footpaths are repaired and if not why has funding not been applied for as drainage is an ongoing problem in this cemetery.

REPLY: Capital works are required to be undertaken within Mount Saint Lawrence (Old) Cemetery where currently the excess spoil from grave digging is temporarily stored, adjacent to existing burial plots.

The works will involve the construction of a new more visually appropriate temporary storage facility along with additional ancillary works i.e. surface water drainage and new footpaths. The Council will prioritise the drainage aspect of the works. It is expected that the works will be completed by the end of the year.

9. **Question submitted by Councillor C. Slattery**

I will ask at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick, can I have an update on what plans the Council have for the green area located off Mulcair Drive, Annacotty.

REPLY: Currently Housing Construction and maintenance are undertaking unit capacity checks. On completion of these checks, a Capital Appraisal will be prepared for submission to the DHLGH.

The proposed layout will be present to Elected Members for review prior to the submission.

10. **Question submitted by Councillor S. Benson**

I will ask at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick, the reason why bollards were removed along the cycle lane in Clonmacken and what safety surveys, if any, were carried out prior to removal.

REPLY: Segregation of shoulders and on road cycle lanes by means of kerbs and bollards to delineate a cycling area is a recognised traffic calming/management practice and meets safety requirements for such facilities, subject to onsite inspection to determine if any localised safety concerns arise. This site, following pre installation inspection was deemed suitable for this type of treatment.

The quantity of bollards installed at the time was at the upper limits of requirement. Following review of the scheme it was determined that the kerbing installed was providing adequate segregation and that the quantity of bollards could be reduced.

11. **Question submitted by Councillor S. Benson**

I will ask at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick, how many people are currently on the housing waiting list in Limerick and if this figure includes those in receipt of HAP and RAS. If not could a total figure be provided to include HAP and RAS.

REPLY: The Housing Waiting List details are:

General approved applications	2,342
Transfer applications	335
HAP	2,479
RAS	735

12. **Question submitted by Councillor S. Benson**

I will ask at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick, for an update on the Council's plan to introduce choice based letting which was supposed to be introduced over a year ago.

REPLY: Choice Based Letting (CBL) was piloted by Housing Support Services in 2019 on a number of test properties. Below are a few observations on the scheme.

- The System is suited to a points based Housing Allocations Scheme.
- Newspaper advert was the most successful method to advertise the properties.
- Aligning to other LCCC back office IT infrastructure such as i-house and Agresso, the IT infrastructure for a closed Choice Based Letting closed system would require an investment.
- Properties have still been refused on the pilot CBL scheme. Penalties do apply in this scenario.
- It is still resource intensive, which is not always visible.

CBL schemes are widely recognised as giving applicants greater choice of housing, reducing void periods, reducing letting times, increasing tenancy sustainment and dramatically reducing the difficulties associated with people refusing properties. It remains part of an overall solution available to the Housing Allocations Team that may be utilised in different parts of the County and different properties at any time.

13. **Question submitted by Councillor J. Costelloe**

I will ask at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick, in relation to the site at Sheep Street, how much progress has been made in the tendering process given the site has been derelict a number of years.

REPLY: The proposed development of the Sheep Street / Athlunkard Street site on King's Island which comprises the development of 8 no. new residential units has been tendered via public procurement competition through the summer of 2021. Tenders which returned in August 2021 are currently being assessed by the appointed Integrated Design Team consultants and a Tender Report is expected to issue to the Local Authority through September 2021. Upon receipt of the Tender Report and a recommendation from the appointed technical consultants, the Local Authority intends to progress a Stage 4 application to the Department of Housing Planning and Local Government seeking approval to award the construction contract.

14. **Question submitted by Councillor J. Costelloe**

I will ask at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick, following the discovery of one of the ancient gated entrances in our city at Sunny's Corner, have the Council liaised with the various bodies to do the necessary works to expose this and preserve it for future generations.

REPLY: The chronology of the area of St Ann's Court was that it lay immediately outside the earlier city wall. In the last quarter of the 12th century St. Peter's Cell, a nunnery, was founded and at the turn of the 13th century the city defences were expanded to the east to incorporate the precinct of same. By 1540 the nunnery buildings were ruinous and the area had become fallow. By the 17th century the site had been built on and in the mid-19th century at least half of the street was occupied by a leather tannery. The most recent development was built in the 20th century.

Prior to acquisition, a preliminary archaeological assessment had flagged these issues. The assessment recommended advance archaeological test trenching and a final design that would bring the line of the wall back into the public realm, with the layout reflecting its location. The most recent test trenching took place when the 20th century houses in St Ann's Court were demolished and the site was secured. The city wall extends SSE across the site just below ground level. It is up to 2m wide and there is a height of at least 2m surviving below ground level. At the rear of the footpath on the northern side of the road a faced break in the wall was identified. This is likely to be the northern side of the opening for Little Island Gate. No testing was carried out in the street. The outer face of the city wall was exposed at Sonny's Corner returning northward in line with the faced break. Further testing at a later stage in the road will confirm the width of the opening for the gateway.

The recent archaeological test trenching was carried out under licence from the National Monuments Service and copies of the final report will be submitted to that department. City defences are considered to be of national importance and are therefore designated as National Monuments (National Policy on Town Defences 2008) and protected under the National Monuments (Amendments) Act 1930-2014. Due to the presence of the defences all works on the site will require Ministerial Consent issued by the National Monuments Service. It is the intention that any final design will address and incorporate the line of the defences. In regard to exposing the gate which seems on the current evidence to actually

just be an opening in the wall defined by faced breaks, the original ground level is likely to be at least 2m below the current ground level, so it may not be practical to expose but its location will certainly be marked on the modern ground surface and it certainly will be preserved for future generations.

There is tremendous potential in any future development to highlight and re-establish the line of the wall and the location of the gate. As a member of the Irish Walled Towns Network Limerick City is very aware of the importance of its city defences. Since their deliberate destruction in the 18th century they have become fragmented. Redevelopment of this site has the potential to re-unite over 80m of the early 13th century defences.

15. **Question submitted by Councillor C. Sheehan**

I will ask at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick for an updated timeline on the construction for the flood defence projects in Corbally and Kings Island.

REPLY: Corbally is within the Limerick City and Environs FRS area. RPS Consulting Engineers are now appointed on this project (April 2021) and are currently undertaking scoping and preparation of survey and geotechnical tender packages. The current programme is completion of Stage I (Option Assessment, Scheme Development and Design) by February, 2024, Stage II (Planning / Development Consent) to continue to May 2025 and Stage IV (Construction) to run from September 2025 to February 2030, noting that there may be several construction projects associated with the scheme that may be of shorter duration within this window.

King's Island FRS received Planning Approval in May 2021 and it is expected that construction will commence Spring of 2022 with an estimated construction programme of 18-24 months.

16. **Question submitted by Councillor C. Sheehan**

I will ask at the Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick for an update on the procurement and installation of additional CCTV cameras in Garryowen.

REPLY: There are currently no arrangements being made for the procurement or installation of any new CCTV cameras on behalf of Limerick City and County Council in the Garryowen area.

No additional installations are being considered at this time pending a review of policy. In the event that additional infrastructure is to be considered then there are procedures included in the CCTV Policy which would have to be followed.

17. **Question submitted by Councillor A. Talukder**

I will ask at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick about the reopening time for the Limerick City Library.

REPLY: An extensive adaption of Barrow House has been underway for the past number of months. Some delays were experienced due to Covid restrictions during this period.

The challenge presented by the project was to adapt an existing building that was vacant for approximately 10 years into a suitable modern public library premises. Inevitably, a lot of complex issues arose.

The progress to date includes:

- A full re-design of two floors at Barrow House for Library purposes and a re-design of the two upper floors for office purposes.
- A schedule of electrical, mechanical and ventilation works, to ensure that the new Library space meets all functional, operational and safety standards, has been completed.
- Re-location of the extensive City Library book stock, music collection, furniture and equipment to Barrow House has been completed by the Library staff.
- We are currently completing the snagging stage for the building works in order to finalise the completion of the building contract and to ensure that the Library can open safely for public use.

When these necessary works have been completed and signed off, we will be able to confirm a date for opening.

The estimate for opening to the public at the moment is late October 2021. We will confirm an exact date closer to the time.

NOTICES OF MOTION

With the permission of the Cathaoirleach, it was agreed to take Items 18 and 23 together.

18. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor J. Leddin

I will move at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick that Limerick Metropolitan District Council invite the Regional Manager of Bus Eireann to give an update on their transport plans for Limerick and hear the views of Members.

The motion was proposed by Councillor Leddin, seconded by Councillor Slattery and agreed.

In proposing the motion, Councillor Leddin highlighted the new developments proposed across the city and the requirement for new bus routes and the need for an update to be provided to Members by Bus Eireann.

23. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor S. Kiely

I will move at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick that we request that a representative from the NTA come before the Council regarding bus services and route planning as soon as possible.

The motion was proposed by Councillor Kiely, seconded by Councillor O'Donovan and agreed.

In proposing the motion, Councillor Kiely highlighted the importance of a reliable bus service and in particular for school going children and the elderly.

19. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor J. Leddin

I will move at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick that Limerick Metropolitan District Council consider revised traffic plan to facilitate permanent pedestrianisation and safer streets that currently cannot cater for two way traffic and on street parking.

The motion was proposed by Councillor Leddin, seconded by Councillor Slattery and agreed.

In proposing the motion, Councillor Leddin highlighted the significant public realm works carried out in the city and the need for increased pedestrianisation in lanes and smaller streets.

20. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor C. Slattery

I will move at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick that the Council do a Feasibility Study on a large green area at the back of the Old Cork Road that runs the length of 4 housing estates to determine if a community facility such as a dog walking park can be established in the area.

It was agreed to refer this Notice of Motion to the Climate Action, Biodiversity and Environment Strategic Policy Committee.

21. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor E. Secas

I will move at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick that the Council provide CCTV cameras for the Castletroy Greenway and for the bottle bank at Plassey Credit Union in Castletroy to tackle and prevent antisocial behaviour and illegal dumping.

The motion was proposed by Councillor Secas, seconded by Councillor Sheehan (C) and agreed.

In proposing the motion, Councillor Secas commended everyone involved in the development of Castletroy Greenway. She highlighted a number of concerns in relation to anti social behaviour and dumping of rubbish.

REPLY: There are currently no arrangements being made for the procurement or installation of any new CCTV cameras on behalf of Limerick City and County Council.

No additional installations are being considered at this time pending a review of policy. In the event that additional infrastructure is to be considered then there are procedures included in the CCTV Policy which would have to be followed.

It was confirmed that an update on CCTV would be given at the December Meeting of Full Council.

22. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor E. Secas

I will move at the next Meeting that the Metropolitan District of Limerick Council call on the Government and Garda Commissioner to provide additional garda resources for Limerick, and specifically for the Castletroy area to tackle ongoing antisocial behaviour especially in the housing estates around the UL.

It was agreed to refer this Notice of Motion to the Joint Policing Committee.

24. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillors S. Benson and J. Costeloe

We will move at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick that this Council, begin the process of identifying funding options for the delivery of a much needed Community Centre in Garryowen, whilst working alongside stakeholders to progress plans for delivery.

It was agreed to refer this Notice of Motion to the Community, Leisure and Culture Strategic Policy Committee.

25. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor S. Hartigan

I will move at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick that driver feedback signs are adapted to log the speeds detected in order to identify how serious the problem of speeding is in particular areas and ascertain areas where speed reduction measures need to be introduced.

The motion was proposed by Councillor Hartigan, seconded by Councillor Benson and agreed.

REPLY: Driver Feedback signs are used as a traffic calming device in Limerick City and County Council and are not used to log traffic and speed data.

Limerick City and County Council adopted a Traffic Calming Policy in March 2018. This Policy requires that a speed survey is undertaken in the area of interest for a period of 24 hours or more. The 85th percentile of the observed speed is then compared to the posted speed limit in the area and a determination is made on whether traffic calming measures are warranted.

These speed surveys are carried out using mobile equipment that is set up for a number of days in the area of interest, primarily residential areas. Limerick Metropolitan District is currently in the process of training additional staff members in the use of this mobile equipment and intends to purchase another unit in the near future. This methodology is considered the most appropriate means of identifying areas where speed reduction measures are required.

It was agreed to refer this Notice of Motion to the Travel and Transportation Strategic Policy Committee for further discussion.

26. Correspondence

Correspondence was noted and taken as read.

This concluded the Meeting.

Signed: _____
CATHAOIRLEACH

Dated: _____