

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS AT MONTHLY MEETING OF THE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT OF LIMERICK HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, DOORADOYLE AND ONLINE ON MONDAY, 21ST FEBRUARY, 2022 at 09:45 A.M.

PRESENT IN THE CHAIR: Councillor Catherine Slattery, Cathaoirleach

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Councillors Benson, Butler, Collins, Costeloe, 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:

Director, National and Regional SSC (Mr. K. Lehane), Meetings Administrator (Mr. M. Leahy), Senior Staff Officer, Corporate Services, Governance and Customer Services (Ms. A. Foley), A/Senior Executive Officer, Housing Support Services (Mr. R. Lowth), Homeless Operations Programme Manager (Ms. T. O'Connor), Head of Property and Community Facilities (Ms. J. Leahy), Administrative Officer, Property and Community Facilities (Ms. T. Knox), Senior Executive Engineer, Roads, Traffic and Cleansing (Mr. M. Richardson), Senior Executive Engineer, Travel and Transport (Mr. B. Kidney), Senior Executive Engineer, Active Travel (Mr. A. Finn), Assistant Planner, Travel and Transport (Ms. K. McDonnell), Co-op Student, Corporate Services and Governance (Mr. M. O'Flaherty), Assistant Staff Officer, Corporate Services and Governance (Ms. S. Carroll).

At the outset, the Cathaoirleach and Members extended their condolences and sympathy to the family and colleagues of Billy Kinsella, employee of Wexford County Council, who died tragically following an accident during the recent storm Eunice.

Members also extended their thanks and appreciation to Staff of Limerick City and County Council, and the outdoor workers in particular, for their work during the recent storms.

1. Adoption of Minutes

Circulated, copy of draft Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick held on 17th January, 2022.

Proposed by Councillor Collins;
Seconded by Councillor Kilcoyne;
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 25th January, 2022 setting out proposals to dispose of Freehold Interest of premises consisting of a dwelling house situate at 4 Mitchell 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.

(b) Circulated, report of the Head of Property and Community Facilities dated 2nd February, 2022 setting out proposals to dispose of the Former Garda Station, Mary Street, Limerick and the intention to bring a Section 183 Notice to Full Council in this regard, for approval.

Members raised a number of queries in relation to this Disposal regarding the potential possible uses for the building.

It was agreed to defer this item.

(c) Circulated, report of the Head of Property and Community Facilities dated 2nd February, 2022 setting out proposals to dispose of 3 Mount Vincent Place, O'Connell Avenue, 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 2nd February, 2022 setting out proposals to dispose of 3 no. Properties at Woolworth's Lane, 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 2nd February, 2022 setting out proposals to dispose of 35 Lord Edward 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.

There was a discussion by the Members in relation to the possible use of this building for housing related activity rather than disposal. The A/Senior Executive Officer, Housing Support Services and the Homeless Operations Programme Manager outlined the details of current homeless services and the new social housing scheme at location. It was agreed that a Briefing would be arranged for the Members at the next Operational Area Briefings on the proposed 'Clann Nua' step down housing project at this location.

(f) Circulated, report of the Head of Property and Community Facilities dated 2nd February, 2022 setting out proposals to dispose of Unit at Galvone Business Park, Galvone, 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.

(g) Circulated, report of the Head of Property and Community Facilities dated 2nd February, 2022 setting out proposals to dispose of 11 and 12 Clontarf Place (including 1-4 Wellesley Lane), 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. **Transportation and Mobility Directorate**

Limerick City and County Council Control of Dockless On-Street Bicycle Hire Bye-Laws 2022

Circulated, Report of the Senior Executive Engineer, Transportation and Mobility Directorate dated 16th February, 2022, together with the draft Limerick City and County Council Control of Dockless On-Street Bicycle Hire Draft Bye-Laws 2022.

The Senior Executive Engineer, Travel and Transport Members gave an overview to Members of the proposed Byelaws. The Members welcomed the proposals, stating this would be a very positive initiative for both residents and visitors to the city.

Proposed by Councillor O'Donovan;
 Seconded by Councillor Novak Uí Chonchúir;
 And Resolved:

"To approve the draft Limerick City and County Council Control of Dockless On-Street Bicycle Hire Bye-Laws 2022 to go on public display in accordance with the requirements of Section 200(1) of the Local Government Act 2001 as amended".

QUESTIONS

4. **Question submitted by Councillor S. Hartigan**

I will ask at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick for a progress report on the formulation of a Tree Strategy for Limerick City and County Council.

REPLY: The Limerick Tree Strategy is at draft stage and is currently undergoing internal review. It is anticipated that it should be finalised in Q2 2022.

5. **Question submitted by Councillor S. Hartigan**

I will ask at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick for a report on trees felled by Limerick City and County Council during 2021 to include the number of trees felled, the number of felling licenses applied for, the number of tree reports completed and the costs involved.

REPLY:

The Council wishes to advise that the Forestry Act 2014 provides an exemption for tree felling licenses in urban areas and also outlines distances from public roads where tree felling is exempted. The Council ensures that tree felling is minimised and is only carried out in exceptional circumstances, in particular where there is a safety concern.

The following table outlines the numbers and reasons for felling trees in the respective areas.

Location	No of Trees	Reason for Felling
Castleconnell	2	Birch - Health & Safety, Brittle Crindle

Rathlinn	1	Chestnut - Dead Tree, close to road and traffic
Rathlinn	1	Sambucus - Dead and leaning, dangerous
Condell Road	4	Ulumus - Suffering Elm Disease
Ashbrook	1	Ash - Dead and large cavity
Ashbrook	1	Large Ash - large cavity, one metre from road
Portland Est NCW	1	Ash- Fallen and removed
Portland Est NCW	1	Ash - severe ash die back
Cedarville Abbeyfeale	1	Ash severe ash die back
Radharc na Feile Abbeyfeale	1	Ash - severe ash die back
Russell Court Fr.Russell Road	1	Ash - severe ash die back
Athea	1	Ash - side of road, uprooted and danger to traffic
Ardagh	1	Alder - Hit by lightning, uprooted and removed
Total	17	

In relation to tree reports, the Council seeks tree reports as and when required. In 2021, there were no tree reports requested. The Council is embarking on a more proactive approach to tree management and is considering a systematic approach to tree inspection, which will result in the requirement for additional tree reports and general maintenance. This inspection and general approach to tree management is included as part of the Tree Strategy which is currently under preparation.

The Council has placed an increased focus on tree management and has dedicated a qualified member of staff for all tree maintenance matters.

6. Question submitted by Councillor S. Hartigan

I will ask at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick to outline in tabular form, notifications that Limerick City and County Council have made to the forestry service (as required under the Forestry Act 2014) of their intention to fell trees they believed to be exempted from the need to obtain a felling license, and the replies received from forest services.

REPLY: The Council felled seventeen trees in 2021 for safety reasons, due to the danger posed by the trees to members of the public as a result of disease and decay. The Council has the appropriate powers to fell trees for road safety and safety in general under the Road Act 1994 and Forestry Act 2014.

The Council made no notifications to the Forestry Service in this regard. Going forward the Council will notify the Forestry Service of its intention to fell trees where it is required.

7. Question submitted by Councillor C. Slattery

I will ask at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick can Limerick City and County Council list the structures and properties that they do not own but have entered into an agreement with the owners to upkeep these structures and properties.

REPLY: From a Roads perspective we have entered into a number of maintenance agreements with Irish Rail in respect of 2 No. bridges in their ownership as well as a number of at-grade barrier crossings (typically as a result of road improvement works).

The road structures owned by Irish Rail but requiring Council maintenance are

- The overbridge rail crossings approaching the Kilmallock Roundabout over the R509 Childers Road and R512 Kilmallock Road.

The Council have also an agreement in place to maintain a number of rail crossings and associated barriers include at-grade crossings at

- Lisnagry, Dock Road and Skehacreggaun.

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

I will ask at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick can Limerick City and County Council advise if there are any plans to connect the Old Ballysimon Road (V94AHR2) to the mains as the residents are still using septic tanks.

REPLY: There is a mains sewer line at this location. It is open to property owners to submit a connection application to Irish Water and this is a private individual issue.

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

I will ask at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick why rent assessments are taking so long to process. When a person updates their financial situation, documentation is sent into the Rents Department to that affect and it can take up to two years for the tenants rent to be updated resulting sometimes in arrears.

REPLY: The Rents Unit manages a total of 5465 accounts, which generated an income of €17m for the Council in 2021. In accordance with the terms the standard Letting Agreement, it is the responsibility of tenants to immediately advise the Council of any changes within the property, in terms of household composition or income, to enable the rent to be revised, either upwards or downwards, depending on the circumstances. However, not all tenants comply fully with this provision.

In 2017, the Rents Unit commenced a major exercise in trying to update household composition and income details for all tenancies. All tenants were written to and this, of course, generated a massive amount of correspondence. In the majority of cases, where all necessary proofs etc. were submitted, a timely response was forthcoming in terms of any changes accruing to amount of rent payable. However, in instances where necessary supporting documentation was not submitted, it was often the case that the Rents Unit had to pursue same through letters, phone calls etc. and, in some cases, this could be a lengthy process.

One of the benefits from the aforementioned exercise is that the majority of tenants are much more conscious of the need to advise the Rents Unit of household changes which may impact on their rent and, as a result, there is a steady stream of rent assessment forms

being submitted on a daily basis and every effort is made to process these as promptly as possible.

It would be very unusual for any case to take up to two years to be finalised. If any member wishes to raise any particular case, with the consent of the tenant, the individual circumstances of the case can be reviewed.

10. Question submitted by Councillor C. Sheehan

I will ask at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick for the Council to outline what plans they have to restore O'Dwyer Bridge on Athlunkard Street given the deteriorating condition of the paint on the bridge.

REPLY: We are currently compiling a tendering framework for the cleaning and restoration of a number of bridges in Limerick City including O' Dwyer Bridge.

Pending funding availability and subject to suitable weather conditions we hope to complete these works later in the year.

11. Question submitted by Councillor E. O'Donovan

I will ask at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick for an update on when the upgrade works will commence at the People's Park playground, as they are long overdue.

REPLY: In relation to the redevelopment of the People's Park playground, the work to date has comprised primarily of collating concepts for natural play and also ideas for accessible play equipment for children in wheelchairs that could be considered for inclusion in People's Park playground. A number of playgrounds have also been visited that have incorporated natural play and accessible play equipment. An example of the type of project that could be considered for People's Park is the Loughill playground.

The Council is developing a brief to that described above and will seek quotations from Consultants to design and deliver the new playground for People's Park. It is expected that Consultants will be appointed by the end of March and the project delivered by the end of this year.

12. Question submitted by Councillor E. O'Donovan

I will ask at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick that a bus shelter be considered outside St. Nessan's School.

REPLY: I wish to inform you that a permanent bus shelter will be incorporated into the detailed design as part of the Quinn's Cross to Raheen Roundabout Improvement Scheme. The bus stop and bus shelter will be located across from Saint Nessan's School (R510).

The Quinn's Cross to Raheen Roundabout Improvement Scheme will be available for public consultation as part of the Part 8 Planning process in the coming weeks.

13. Question submitted by Councillor E. O'Donovan

I will ask at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick to request that railings on footpaths surrounding properties on Lower Hartstonge Street and Parnell Street be removed as they have been there for many months and are obstructing footpaths with no work progressing on either property.

REPLY: Owners of roadside buildings at both of these locations are the subject of legal notices issued by Limerick City and County Council Dangerous Structures department.

Fencing was erected by the Roads Department to protect the public until the matters are resolved.

We are advised that the issue is likely to be addressed in the coming months depending on court dates available and\or action by property owners.

14. **Question submitted by Councillor E. Secas**

I will ask at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick if the Council can expedite the design completion for the location of the Columbarium Wall on the west side of the Kilmurray cemetery to ensure the Columbarian Wall is built in this cemetery in a timely manner. Given the continuing move towards the use of crematoriums, our communities are in real need of a suitable and respectful place for relatives to store the ashes of departed loved ones.

REPLY: The Council is finalising a design for the orientation and layout of a number of Columbarian Walls for Kilmurray cemetery. It is intended to tender for the provision of one wall in the near future, with a view to having the construction completed in Quarter Two 2022. The Council will seek funding for additional walls subject to demand and will provide additional Columbarian Walls subject to funding being secured.

15. **Question submitted by Councillor E. Secas**

I will ask at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick if a Contractor has been appointed for the Regional Public Lighting Project and if a definitive programme for the entire region involved in the Project has yet been finalised.

REPLY: Cork County Council as the Lead Authority for the South West Regional Public Lighting Energy Efficiency Project has recently signed a Contract with Le Cheile Consortium, a Design Build Contractor for the project with a Contract Date of 28 January 2022. The Contractor has submitted a 2.5 year programme, commencing in Cork in February 2022. Limerick is currently programmed to commence in August 2023 and be completed by May 2024.

16. **Question submitted by Councillor S. Kiely**

I will ask at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick if the Active Travel team can include the five schools in the Roxboro Road / Sexton Street area in the Safe Route to School initiative. There is a concentration of schools in the area and very few safety measures for the provision of cyclists.

REPLY: When the Safe Routes to School programme was first launched in March 2021, every school in Ireland was invited to submit an expression of interest to participate in the initiative. Only two of the five schools in the Roxboro Road / Sexton Street area applied to be part of the

Safe Routes to School programme, Scoil Íosagáin CBS, Sexton Street and St. Michael's Infant School, Sexton Street.

Both schools have been accepted onto the Safe Routes to School programme, but do not form part of the initial Round 1 cohort for 2021 – 2022.

We are currently working with eight other schools in Limerick who are on Round 1 of the programme. Once these schools have been supported then subsequent schools will be brought onto the programme from the existing waitlist. There are currently 29 Limerick schools on the waitlist.

At this time the Department of Transport and the National Transport Authority do not intend to add any more schools to the waitlist as there is considerable work to be done on the ground with those that applied in 2021.

Independent of the Safe Routes to School programme, the Active Travel department are currently preparing proposals for works along the Roxboro Road to help improve pedestrian access in the area. These works will be of benefit to all of the schools in the Roxboro Road / Sexton Street area, as it will be safer for children to walk to and from school.

17. **Question submitted by Councillor S. Kiely**

I will ask at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick if measures can be put in place to address the safety issue at the intersection of Carey's Road and Roxboro Road where buses sometimes sweep onto the footpath, possibly endangering pedestrians.

REPLY: Due to the adjacent topography at this junction, including the existing bridge and CIE boundary wall a suitable remodelling of this junction would be difficult to achieve.

While we are not aware of any accident history indicating bus collisions with pedestrians and have reviewed the RSA Collision Map at this junction we will review the junction to ensure any improvements possible are undertaken if required.

We have also have raised awareness of this issue with CIE regarding how their drivers approach this junction.

18. **Question submitted by Councillor D. McSweeney**

I will ask at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick for an update on the proposed upgrades of the Playground in the People's Park.

REPLY: In relation to the redevelopment of the People's Park playground, the work to date has comprised primarily of collating concepts for natural play and also ideas for accessible play equipment for children in wheelchairs, that could be considered for inclusion in People's Park playground. A number of playgrounds have also been visited that have incorporated natural play and accessible play equipment. An example of the type of project that could be considered for People's Park is the Loughill playground.

The Council is developing a brief to that described above and will seek quotations from Consultants to design and deliver the new playground for People's Park. It is expected that Consultants will be appointed by the end of March and the project delivered by the end of

this year.

NOTICES OF MOTION

19. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor S. Hartigan (to be referred to the Climate Action, Biodiversity and Environment Strategic Policy Committee)

I will move at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick that Limerick City and County Council introduce a formal process to evaluate the health of trees identified for removal, that includes a tree report by a certified arborist with photos of the tree during the growing season, photos of damage to the tree, photos of internal damage after felling and mapping of location of the trees.

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

20. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor D. McSweeney

I will move at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick that Limerick City and County Council put plans in place to improve traffic safety at Collophys Cross Junction, Patrickswell.

The Notice of Motion was proposed by Councillor McSweeney, seconded by Councillor Butler and agreed. In proposing the Motion, Councillor McSweeney referred to the recent car accident at this location. Members also requested that improvements be considered for the slip road towards the M20, and that pedestrian and cycling infrastructure in the area would be looked at.

REPLY: On review, the approach roads from the Church of the Blessed Virgin and the R526 to Croom are suitably staggered at this crossroad junction.

Pending on the availability of funding LCCC have plans to improve line marking and signage where necessary at Collophys Cross junction later in the year.

21. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor O. O'Sullivan

I will move at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick that Limerick City and County Council write to the Minister for Health in support of Vicky Phelan's call for the establishment of a Minister for Women's Health, and to seek an update on the progress of the Patient Safety Bill.

The Notice of Motion was proposed by Councillor O'Sullivan, seconded by Councillor Secas and agreed.

In proposing the motion, Councillor O'Sullivan highlighted the deficiencies in the health system and the need to fund further medical research for women's health issues and the need for the Patient Safety Bill to be prioritised. She stated that other countries had already established a Minister for Women's Health and that this should be seriously considered by the Government.

22. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor C. Sheehan

I will move at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick that the Metropolitan District supports the Irish Local Development Network (ILDN) and the trade unions, SIPTU & Forsa, in their opposition to the new model of employment services outlined in Pathways to Work which proposes to terminate current Job Clubs and Local Employment Services (LES) and that this Motion be sent to the Minister for Social Protection if adopted.

The Notice of Motion was proposed by Councillor Sheehan (C), seconded by Councillor Secas and agreed.

In proposing the motion, Councillor Sheehan (C) highlighted the crucial support and services provided by the current Job Clubs and Local Employment Services to our communities and the loss these would be to Limerick, if terminated. He also requested that the motion would be referred to the next Full Council Meeting.

23. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor E. O'Donovan

I will move at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick that a school street/zone be trialled with immediate effect at St. Pauls National School, Dooradoyle.

The Notice of Motion was proposed by Councillor O'Donovan.

Members expressed concern in relation to this motion, highlighting the need for detailed consultation and engagement with St. Paul's and St. Gabriel's Schools, residents and all stakeholders in the area and Limerick City and County Council, in relation to any proposals being considered.

24. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor S. Kiely

I will move at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick that the traffic management plan for Bloodmill Road and the surrounding area be examined and revised as a matter of urgency given the volume of traffic, the proposed new school and the recent residential developments in the area.

The Notice of Motion was proposed by Councillor Kiely, seconded by Councillor Slattery and agreed.

In proposing the motion, Councillor Kiely highlighted the difficulties experienced by residents in the area with increased traffic volumes, especially having regard to new housing developments that were recently completed in the area. The road was also being used as a shortcut by motorists to access the city.

Councillor Slattery proposed that the motion be amended to include "that a Strategic Traffic Masterplan be put in place for the area". This was agreed.

Members also requested that clarification be provided for Members on the Part 8 that had previously been approved for Bloodmill Road and an update on the possibility for traffic lights at the Parkway Roundabout.

REPLY: The draft Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (LSMATS) identifies a Strategic Bus Corridor linking the general Castletroy/Ballysimon area with Limerick City via Bloodmill Road and the recently constructed developer road through zoned lands in the Ballysimon area. Immediately north of this developer road the existing condition of the Bloodmill Road is very poor with a very restrictive culvert negatively impacting traffic movement. The Council is currently in discussion with local stakeholders with regard to realigning this section of Bloodmill Road to remove the restriction. Engineers will shortly be appointed to advance the road and culvert design. The Council will liaise with the NTA to advance the overall development of the strategic bus corridor and improve overall traffic movement along this corridor.

25. **Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor S. Kiely**

I will move at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick that we write to the Minister for Transport to ask that the Bike to Work Scheme be extended to include a provision to have bikes for dependent children included.

The Notice of Motion was proposed by Councillor Kiely, seconded by Councillor Novak Uí Chonchúir and agreed.

In proposing the motion, Councillor Kiely highlighted the success of the Bike to Work Scheme and the positive benefits of extending the scheme to include dependent children as well.

It was agreed to amend the motion to include “also write to the Minister for Finance”.

26. **Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor D. McSweeney (to be referred to the Climate Action, Biodiversity and Environment Strategic Policy Committee)**

I will move at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick that Limerick City and County Council increase the Burial Ground Maintenance Grant for 2022.

With the permission of the Cathaoirleach, it was agreed that the Notice of Motion would be taken at the Meeting.

The Motion was proposed by Councillor McSweeney, seconded by Councillor Sheahan (M) and agreed.

In proposing the motion, Councillor McSweeney highlighted the tremendous work carried out by Graveyard Committees and the need for additional supports.

REPLY: In 2021 the Council supported 136 groups in the maintenance and upkeep of 192 burial grounds.

Additional funding was allocated to the Burial Ground Maintenance Grant as part of the budget setting process for 2022. This will allow for an increase of approximately €100 per grant, from approximately €350 to €450. This increased grant amount will be issued to all burial ground committees.

15. Correspondence

Correspondence was noted and taken as read.

Any Other Business

The Cathaoirleach, on behalf of the Fianna Fail Members, congratulated Deputy Willie O'Dea, T.D. on his 40 years in politics.

This concluded the Meeting.

Signed:

CATHAOIRLEACH

Dated:
