

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

PRESENT IN THE CHAIR: Councillor Catherine Slattery, Cathaoirleach

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Councillors Benson, Collins, Costelloe, Daly, Hartigan, Kilcoyne, Leddin, McSweeney, Murphy, Novak Uí Chonchúir, O’Dea, O’Donovan, O’Hanlon, O’Sullivan, Secas and Sheahan (M).

OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE:

Director, National and Regional SSC (Mr. K. Lehane), Director, Regeneration (Mr. J. Delaney), Meetings Administrator (Mr. M. Leahy), Senior Staff Officer, Corporate Services, Governance and Customer Services (Ms. A. Foley), Senior Planner (Ms. N. O’Connell), Assistant Planner (Ms. A. Leland), Administrative Officer, Property and Community Facilities (Ms. T. Knox), Senior Executive Engineer, Roads, Traffic and Cleansing (Mr. M. Richardson), Senior Executive Engineer, Recreation (Ms. C. Lynch), Assistant Staff Officer, Corporate Services and Governance (Ms. S. Carroll).

1. Adoption of Minutes

Circulated, copy of draft Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick held on 21st February, 2022.

Proposed by Councillor Collins;
Seconded by Councillor Costelloe;
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 A/Senior Executive Officer, Housing Support Services dated 18th February, 2022 setting out proposals to dispose of Freehold Interest of premises consisting of a dwelling house situate at 17 Colbert Avenue, Janesboro, 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.

Some Members expressed concerns in relation to this proposed disposal, highlighting that the property was in an important tourist location and the importance of it being utilised outside of normal office hours if possible, given its location and the tourism objectives for the area. They also queried what objectives had been met in relation to the Expression of Interest document that had been issued as part of the disposal process, and what options had been considered for the use of

the building.

The Administrative Officer, Property and Community Facilities confirmed that several Expressions of Interest had been received, but that concrete funding proposals were not included in most of the Expressions of Interests received. She also confirmed that as the building was a protected structure, that it would be a costly process to refurbish the building to return it back to a satisfactory condition. She explained that this was the reason it was so difficult to get a purchaser who could meet all the suggested criteria. She also confirmed that other properties for disposal in the area would be coming before the Members in due course, which might meet more of the particular tourism objectives being sought by some Members.

The Director, Regeneration also confirmed that regeneration funding was not available and that a community centre was not being considered for this location. Some Members also noted that the building had been derelict for over 30 years and was in a tourist area, and that it was important to try and get it restored and back into use, rather than leave it derelict for a further period of time.

3. **Planning, Environment and Place-Making Directorate**

Strategic Housing Development (SHD) Application to An Bord Pleanála at Clonmacken Gardens, Condell Road, Limerick

The Senior Planner gave a presentation to the Members on the proposed Strategic Housing Development (SHD) Application and briefed the Members on the content of the proposed application.

She confirmed that the development would consist of 165 no. residential units, on a site approximately 4.55ha in size. The breakdown of the units included 43 no. houses (42 no. 3-bed units and 1 no. 2 -bed bungalow), 42 no. duplex units (21 no. 2-bed ground floor units, 13 no. 3-bed upper floor units, 8 no. 1-bed upper floor units, along with 80 no. apartment units (17 no. 1-bed units, 61 no. 2-bed units and 2 no. 3-bed units).

The SHD also included proposals for the development of a crèche facility (438 sq. m), the provision of shared communal and private open space, car and bicycle parking, site landscaping, site services, vehicular and pedestrian access to Condell Road via the residential development under-construction adjacent to the development site.

Members welcomed the development and the additional housing units being proposed. They also stressed the importance of adequate pedestrian and cycling infrastructure being provided for this development and the new housing development adjoining the SHD location.

4. **Schedule of Municipal District Works for the Metropolitan District of Limerick**

Circulated, report of the Director of Services dated 15th March, 2022, setting out the background to the preparation of a Schedule of Municipal District Works and including the Draft Schedule of Municipal District Works 2022 for the Metropolitan District of Limerick.

The Members noted the contents of the proposed Draft Schedule of Municipal District Works 2022

and the Senior Executive Engineer, Roads, Traffic and Cleansing clarified some queries raised by the Members relating to the proposed Schedule.

Proposed by Councillor Daly;
 Seconded by Councillor Slattery;
 And Resolved:

“That the Schedule of Municipal District Works 2022 for the Metropolitan District of Limerick be adopted in accordance with Section 103A of the Local Government Act 2001 (as amended)”.

QUESTIONS

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

I will ask at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick how many houses in St. Mary’s Park have achieved the BER rating certificate.

REPLY: 157 no. houses in St Mary’s Park have been thermally upgraded to date under the Regeneration Thermal Upgrade programme. Of these properties, BER certificates have been attained for and issued to 120 no. properties. Access has yet to be arranged to the 37 residual properties. Of the 120 no. properties that have received a BER certificate, all bar 9 properties have achieved a C grade BER or better rating. C grade BER ratings were not achieved in properties that refused a gas central heating system.

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

I will ask at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick how many houses in St. Mary’s Park are left to complete in the thermal upgrade works and what timescale is envisaged to complete the works.

REPLY: There are approximately 90 no. houses in St Mary’s Park yet to have thermal upgrades completed. Of those 90 no. properties, construction works are currently ongoing on 39 no. properties under thermal upgrade contract no.’s 122 and 124. Works on one of those contracts is currently nearing substantial completion while works on the second contract is expected to complete in August / September 2022. The remaining 51 no. properties are scheduled to be thermally upgraded as part of 3 subsequent Thermal Upgrade contracts. The works have been scoped on the first of those 3 remaining contracts and Stage 3 approval (approval to proceed to tender) is awaited from the Department. Scoping is currently completing on the properties in the final two contracts. Subject to timely Department approvals, works on all three remaining contracts could commence before the end of 2022.

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

I will ask at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick how many people are on the Limerick City and County housing list in March 2022, how many people were on the housing list in September 2021 and how many people were on the housing list in January 2021.

REPLY:

March 2022	2145
September 2021	2326
January 2021	2333

Please note that this information is provided on a monthly basis in the Chief Executive's Report.

8. **Question submitted by Councillor E. O'Donovan**

I will ask at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick for details on the consultation that has taken place to date with residents regarding Safe Routes to Schools at the Model School, Limerick School Project and St. Pauls National School.

REPLY: Limerick City and County Council, in conjunction with the Green-Schools Safe Routes to School team, are currently preparing draft proposals for the Round 1 Safe Routes to School. These proposals are being prepared in consultation with each of the schools. When these draft designs are finalised it is proposed to consult with local stakeholders, including representatives from residents associations and parent's council, and other groups where applicable.

A key element of the Safe Routes to School programme is developing community support for Safe Routes to School measures, and each of the schools involved will act as a local champion for the proposed measures to ensure community buy-in for the proposals. The local authority and Green-Schools Safe Routes to School team will lead in the community engagement.

Following public consultation the proposals for each school will be finalised and it is envisioned that these projects would go to construction during the summer holiday months.

9. **Question submitted by Councillor E. O'Donovan**

I will ask at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick that Limerick Council will consider increasing the maintenance of open spaces in housing development grants in line with the increasing cost of private contractors for landscaping services.

REPLY: In general, it is acknowledged that the cost of maintaining open spaces has increased considerably over the years since this scheme was put in place. The idea behind this scheme is to assist residents in the maintenance of open spaces in their estates by providing funding towards grass cutting.

While there is merit in this proposal, the likely cost is beyond the available budget and a source of funding would need to be identified. The Council will consider increasing the amount of grant each applicant receives in 2022 subject to resources available to meet the demand.

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

I will ask at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick, what is the average waiting time, from time of application to approval, for disabled persons grant, mobility aid grant, housing aid for older people grant and housing adaptation grant for people with disabilities and what is the average waiting time for OT inspections, arranged through the Council for the purpose of these grants, where requested by applicants.

REPLY: The current turnaround time for the following grants, Mobility Aid Grant, Housing Aid for Older People and Housing Adaptation Grant is 8-10 weeks from application to inspection and approval.

We are seeing delays in relation to final payment as contractors are delayed with supplies and completing the work, which in turn delays the Council releasing the final payment. OT inspections are currently arranged as required and are undertaken within two weeks. Disabled Persons Grants cover works in relation to Local Authority Housing and would be subject to similar timelines as above. Disabled Persons Extensions may have a longer timeline as the Council need to investigate that there is no alternative option available other than an extension.

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

I am aware that an active travel needs assessment of the Condell Road is currently being tendered. I will ask at the next meeting for a timeline for this process and expected completion date for assessment and subsequent works, which will include a footpath from the new housing development at Moineir to the Clonmacken roundabout and more specifically, how long will it be before this footpath is installed.

REPLY: The Needs Assessment and Options Report that will be provided by the successful tenderer will require approval by the NTA before funding is allocated to it. Should approval be received, it is likely that a Statutory Procedure (Part VIII/Section 38) will be required prior to construction.

It is not possible to give a date for construction at this stage.

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

I will ask at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick, as part of the implementation of the draft LSMATS, if the Council will commit to liaise with the NTA, to prioritise bus service enhancement on the Condell Road, to serve the new and proposed housing developments, as well as Coonagh and the expansion of the TUS Campus at Coonagh Cross.

REPLY: The current Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (LSMATS) draft document does not deal with detailed operational issues such as specific bus service scheduling or timetabling.

The Council has been liaising with Bus Éireann locally and the NTA, as service contract provider, who are carrying out a review of Limerick City operations, which may include this route. The Council will make direct representation to the NTA regarding the matter raised.

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

I will ask at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick for an update on plans for delivery of the St. Mary's Park Community Centre.

REPLY: At the November 2021 St. Mary's Park Regeneration Committee meeting the Regeneration Department, LCCC, provided a synopsis of a 2015 St. Mary's Park Community Centre funding proposal submitted to the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government based on a €2.5M project line item within the Limerick Regeneration Framework Implementation Plan. It was agreed a Working Group would be formed in order to establish a Definitive Project Brief and progress a funding submission for a 2022 St. Marys Park Community Centre bearing in mind the Departments concerns of a need to address catchment area, possible risk of underutilisation, cost and if the condition of the existing building allows for incorporation into any future proposal. The Working Group consists of:

- 3 no. persons from Limerick Island Community Partners
- 3 no. persons from St. Marys Park Regeneration Committee
- 2 no. persons from the Regeneration Department, LCCC

The Working Groups 1st meeting was held in January 2022. It is to meet on the 3rd Thursday of every month and it is currently in the process of establishing provision requirements of a St. Mary's Park Community Centre. The Regeneration Department, Limerick City and County Council are in the process of procuring a condition survey for the existing Community Centre.

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

I will ask at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick for a full report on how the Limerick Regeneration Programme funds of EUR337 million committed were spent as announced by the then Taoiseach Mr. Brian Cowan, June 19th 2010.

REPLY: The Limerick Framework Implementation Plan (LRFIP), was launched in September 2013 and adopted by the Council in February 2014.

As adopted by the members of the Council, and sanctioned by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, the high-level cost originally attached to the implementation of Limerick Regeneration Framework in 2013 was €293m with €253m being earmarked for physical projects and €40m being set aside for social and economic supports. As of end of December 2021, approximately €181,217,209 had been expended on physical projects with €30,614,647 on social and economic supports.

NOTICES OF MOTION

15. **Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor E. Secas**

I will move at the next Meeting that the Metropolitan District of Limerick write to the Minister for Housing, Planning and Local Government to ask if any progress has been made on introducing comprehensive legislation on the operation of current and future retirement villages, as already exists in many other jurisdictions and call on the Minister to make a statement on the matter.

The Notice of Motion was proposed by Councillor Secas, seconded by Councillor Hartigan and agreed.

In proposing the motion, Councillor Secas highlighted the difficulties experienced by residents and the need to introduce legislation to provide a regulatory framework to ensure best practice standards in retirement villages.

16. **Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor S. Novak Uí Chonchúir (to be referred to the Travel and Transportation Strategic Policy Committee)**

I will move at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick that Limerick City and County Council establish a multidisciplinary suburban rail task force for Limerick, with a purpose to engage with the relevant stakeholders and agencies to develop a suburban rail strategy for Limerick and establish a channel of communication between the local authority, Iarnród Éireann, OPR and other relevant agencies.

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

17. **Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor S. Novak Uí Chonchúir (to be referred to the Economic Development, Enterprise and Planning Strategic Policy Committee)**

I will move at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick that Limerick City and County Council prepare a feasibility study on developing a programme of rates reduction and/or other financial compensation for traders based on streets that could be considered for trial or permanent pedestrianisation (in cases where traders would be negatively affected by the new measures).

It was agreed to refer this Notice of Motion to the Economic Development, Enterprise and Planning Strategic Policy Committee.

18. **Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor S. Benson**

I will move at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick that this Council carry out a capacity audit of Loughmore Canal and also examine the possibility of installing bunding around the culvert pipe at the canal.

The Notice of Motion was proposed by Councillor Benson and seconded by Councillor Kilcoyne.

In proposing the Motion, Councillor Benson highlighted issues relating to discharges and flooding experienced by landowners adjoining Loughmore Canal, which had been happening on a regular basis according to reports from local landowners who had been in contact with individual Members, and landowners believed that this issue was linked to the adjoining Raheen Business Park area.

Whilst Members noted the importance of Raheen Business Park for business and employment, they supported the Motion and expressed concern at the potential impact of pollutants on

livestock and plant life in the area. Following discussion by the Members, it was proposed by Councillor Hartigan to amend the Motion as follows:

“I will move at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick that this Council carry out a capacity audit of Loughmore Canal and work with relevant authorities such as Irish Water, EPA, National Parks & Wildlife Service, Local Authorities Water Programme, Inland Fisheries and the Industrial Development Authority to identify problems with discharge to Loughmore Canal and resolve the issue in a timely manner”.

This was agreed.

It was also agreed that a Briefing for Members should be organised for Members and an update be provided in relation to the issues involved.

REPLY: Monitoring works are currently ongoing at the Loughmore Canal. We have undertaken weekly sampling at three locations since the 1st February 2022, and this is programmed to continue for a further 2 weeks.

Following examination of all sampling results and our ongoing inspections, we will review the requirement of a capacity audit at this location.

With regard to your suggestion of installing a bund, unfortunately this is not presently considered a viable option. This would prevent the storm water from entering the canal, which will cause it to back up in the drainage network leading to potential flooding onto the public road. We will continue to investigate and review all practicable solutions, which may be required at this location.

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

I will move at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick that we examine the possibility of having a temporary library for the Castletroy/Annacotty community until a permanent solution is found for the provision of a library for the area.

As Cllr Kiely was not in attendance at the Meeting, it was agreed to defer this Notice of Motion to the April Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick.

This concluded the Meeting.

Signed:

CATHAOIRLEACH

Dated:
