

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS AT MEETING OF LIMERICK CITY AND COUNTY COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, DOORADOYLE, LIMERICK, AND ONLINE, ON MONDAY, 11TH JULY, 2022, AT 3PM.

PRESENT IN THE CHAIR:

Councillor F. Foley, Mayor.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Councillors Benson, Carey, Collins (B), Collins (J), Collins (M), Collopy, Daly, Donegan, Egan, Galvin, Hartigan, Keary, Kiely, Kilcoyne, Leddin, McSweeney, Mitchell, Murphy, Novak Uí Chonchúir, O'Brien, O'Donoghue, O'Donovan, O'Hanlon, O'Sullivan, Ruddle, Ryan (E), Ryan (M), Scanlan, Secas, Sheahan (J), Sheahan (K), Sheahan (M), Sheehan (C), Slattery, Talukder, Teefy, Teskey.

OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE:

Chief Executive (Mr. P. Daly), Deputy Chief Executive and Director, Support Services (Mr. S. Coughlan), Director, Housing (Ms. C. Curley), Director, Community, Tourism and Culture (Mr. G. Daly), Director, Planning, Environment and Place-Making (Ms. N. Gallagher), Director, Transportation and Mobility (Mr. B. Kennedy), Director, National and Regional Shared Services (Mr. K. Lehane), A/Director, Economic Development and Enterprise (Mr. V. Murray), Senior Executive Officer, Regeneration (Mr. B. Troy), Meetings Administrator (Ms. L. Flannery), Administrative Officer, Corporate Services and Governance (Mr. M. Leahy), Senior Staff Officer, Corporate Services and Governance (Ms. A. Foley).

1. Adoption of Minutes

Circulated, copies of draft Minutes of the following Meetings:

- (a) Ordinary Meeting of the Council held on 23rd May, 2022.
- (b) Special Meeting of the Council held on 2nd June, 2022.
- (c) Special Meeting of the Council held on 17th June, 2022.
- (d) Special Meeting of the Council on 23rd June, 2022.
- (e) Special Meeting of the Council on 30th June, 2022.

Proposed by Councillor Sheahan (J);
Seconded by Councillor O'Hanlon;
And Resolved:

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

2. Declaration of Interest

The Meetings Administrator stated that, in line with Part 15 of the Local Government Act, 2001, as amended, and the Code of Conduct, she was inviting those present to notify the

Mayor of any declaration of interest in any item due for discussion at the Meeting. No such interests were declared.

3. Disposal of Land

- (a) Circulated, copy of Statutory Notice dated 27th June, 2022, concerning disposal of property at Forty Acres, Bruree, Co. Limerick.

Proposed by Councillor Sheahan (J);
Seconded by Councillor O’Hanlon;
And Resolved:

“That, in accordance with the provisions of Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001 (as amended), and Section 211 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended), the approval of the Council be and is hereby given to the disposal of property at Forty Acres, Bruree, Co. Limerick, to Tom Brady, for the sum of €251,000, subject to the covenants and conditions contained within the Contract, particulars of which were contained in Statutory Notice dated 27th June, 2022.”

- (b) Circulated, copy of Statutory Notice dated 27th June, 2022, concerning disposal of property at 30, Wingfield Orchard, Newcastle West, Co. Limerick.

Proposed by Councillor Sheahan (J);
Seconded by Councillor O’Hanlon;
And Resolved:

“That, in accordance with the provisions of Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001 (as amended), and Section 211 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended), the approval of the Council be and is hereby given to the disposal of property at 30, Wingfield Orchard, Newcastle West, Co. Limerick, to Henrijs Berkholcs, for the sum of €227,000, subject to the covenants and conditions contained within the Contract, particulars of which were contained in Statutory Notice dated 27th June, 2022.”

- (c) Circulated, copy of Statutory Notice dated 27th June, 2022, concerning disposal of property at Crawford Lane, Bruff, Co. Limerick.

Proposed by Councillor Sheahan (J);
Seconded by Councillor O’Hanlon;
And Resolved:

“That, in accordance with the provisions of Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001 (as amended), and Section 211 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended), the approval of the Council be and is hereby given to the disposal of property at Crawford Lane, Bruff, Co. Limerick, to Peter Crotty, for the sum of€53,000, subject to the covenants and conditions contained within the Contract, particulars of which were contained in Statutory Notice dated 27th June, 2022.”

- (d) Circulated, copy of Statutory Notice dated 27th June, 2022, concerning disposal of property at Drombanna, Co. Limerick.

Proposed by Councillor Sheahan (J);
Seconded by Councillor O’Hanlon;
And Resolved:

“That, in accordance with the provisions of Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001 (as amended), and Section 211 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended), the approval of the Council be and is hereby given to the disposal of property at Drombanna, Co. Limerick, to Stephen O’Doherty and Laura Griffiths, for the sum of €402,801, subject to the covenants and conditions contained within the Contract, particulars of which were contained in Statutory Notice dated 27th June, 2022.”

- (e) Circulated, copy of Statutory Notice dated dated 27th June, 2022, concerning disposal of property at Jesuit Lane, Limerick.

Proposed by Councillor Sheahan (J);
Seconded by Councillor O’Hanlon;
And Resolved:

“That, in accordance with the provisions of Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001 (as amended), and Section 211 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended), the approval of the Council be and is hereby given to the disposal of property at Jesuit Lane, Limerick, to Paddy O’Meara, for the sum of €70,500, subject to the covenants and conditions contained within the Contract, particulars of which were contained in Statutory Notice dated 27th June, 2022.”

- (f) Circulated, copy of Statutory Notice dated 27th June, 2022, concerning disposal of property at Mill Road, Corbally, Limerick.

Proposed by Councillor Sheahan (J);
Seconded by Councillor O’Hanlon;
And Resolved:

“That, in accordance with the provisions of Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001 (as amended), and Section 211 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended), the approval of the Council be and is hereby given to the disposal of property at Mill Road, Corbally, Limerick, to Lenida Developments Limited, for the sum of €55,000, subject to the covenants and conditions contained within the Contract, particulars of which were contained in Statutory Notice dated 27th June, 2022.”

- (g) Circulated, copy of Statutory Notice dated 27th June, 2022, concerning disposal of property at Montpelier, O’Briensbridge, Co. Limerick.

Proposed by Councillor Sheahan (J);
Seconded by Councillor O’Hanlon;
And Resolved:

“That, in accordance with the provisions of Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001 (as amended), and Section 211 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended), the approval of the Council be and is hereby given to the disposal of property at Montpelier, O’Briensbridge, Co. Limerick, to John Flynn, for the sum of €190,000, subject to the covenants and conditions contained within the Contract, particulars of which were contained in Statutory Notice dated 27th June, 2022.”

- (h) Circulated, copy of Statutory Notice dated 28th June, 2022, concerning disposal of property at Ballinamina, Kilfinane, Co. Limerick.

Proposed by Councillor Sheahan (J);
Seconded by Councillor O’Hanlon;
And Resolved:

“That, in accordance with the provisions of Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001 (as amended), and Section 211 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended), the approval of the Council be and is hereby given to the disposal of property at Ballinamina, Kilfinane, Co. Limerick, to Joseph and Nuala Young, for the sum of €1, subject to the covenants and conditions contained within the Contract, particulars of which were contained in Statutory Notice dated 28th June, 2022.”

- (i) Circulated, copy of Statutory Notice dated 28th June, 2022, concerning disposal of property at Martinstown, Kilmallock, Co. Limerick.

Proposed by Councillor Sheahan (J);
Seconded by Councillor O’Hanlon;
And Resolved:

“That, in accordance with the provisions of Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001 (as amended), and Section 211 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended), the approval of the Council be and is hereby given to the disposal of property at Martinstown, Kilmallock, Co. Limerick, to Mary Condon, for the sum of €1, particulars of which were contained in Statutory Notice dated 28th June, 2022.”

- (j) Circulated, copy of Statutory Notice dated 9th June, 2022, concerning disposal of 0.0086 hectares (86m²) of land at James Street, Limerick.

Proposed by Councillor Sheahan (J);
Seconded by Councillor O’Hanlon;
And Resolved:

“That, in accordance with the provisions of Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001 (as amended), and Section 211 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended), the approval of the Council be and is hereby given to the disposal of 0.0086 hectares (86m²) of land at James Street, Limerick, to the Representatives of Anthony Conway, for the sum of €1, subject to the covenants and conditions contained within the Contract, particulars of which were contained in Statutory Notice dated 9th June, 2022.”

- (k) Circulated, copy of Statutory Notice dated 28th June, 2022, concerning disposal of property at 66, Lower Carey’s Road, Limerick.

Proposed by Councillor Sheahan (J);
Seconded by Councillor O’Hanlon;
And Resolved:

“That, in accordance with the provisions of Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001 (as amended), and Section 211 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended), the approval of the Council be and is hereby given to the disposal of property at 66, Lower Carey’s Road, Limerick, to Vincent Kinsella, for the sum of €1, particulars of which were contained in Statutory Notice dated 28th June, 2022.”

- (l) Circulated, copy of Statutory Notice dated 29th June, 2022, concerning disposal of 1.06 acres of land at Galvone Business Park, Galvone, Limerick.

Proposed by Councillor Sheahan (J);
Seconded by Councillor O’Hanlon;
And Resolved:

“That, in accordance with the provisions of Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001 (as amended), and Section 211 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended), the approval of the Council be and is hereby given to the disposal of 1.06 acres of land at Galvone Business Park, Galvone, Limerick, to Limerick Polymers Production, for the sum of €182,000, particulars of which were contained in Statutory Notice dated 29th June, 2022.”

- (m) Circulated, copy of Statutory Notice dated 1st July, 2022, concerning disposal of King John’s Castle and Interpretive Centre, Limerick.

Proposed by Councillor Sheahan (J);
Seconded by Councillor O’Hanlon;
And Resolved:

“That, in accordance with the provisions of Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001 (as amended), and Section 211 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended), the approval of the Council be and is hereby given to the disposal by way of lease of King John’s Castle and Interpretive Centre to Discover Limerick DAC, for the sum of €10 per year rent, the length of the lease being 22 years and subject to the covenants and conditions

contained in the lease, particulars of which were contained in Statutory Notice dated 1st July, 2022.”

- (n) Circulated, copy of Statutory Notice dated 1st July, 2022, concerning disposal of property at 20 Nicholas Street, Limerick.

Proposed by Councillor Sheahan (J);
Seconded by Councillor O’Hanlon;
And Resolved:

“That, in accordance with the provisions of Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001 (as amended), and Section 211 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended), the approval of the Council be and is hereby given to the disposal by way of lease of property at 20 Nicholas Street, Limerick, to Discover Limerick DAC, for the sum of €10 per year rent, the length of the lease being 22 years and subject to the covenants and conditions contained in the lease, particulars of which were contained in Statutory Notice dated 1st July, 2022.”

4. Support Services

(a) Chief Executive’s Report

Circulated, Chief Executive’s Report for the month of May 2022.

The Report was noted by the Council.

(b) Appointment of Chairs to Strategic Policy Committees

Circulated, report of the Senior Executive Officer, Corporate Services, Governance and Customer Services, dated 28th June, 2022,

The report stated that at the First Annual Meeting of the Council held on 7th June, 2019, the Council appointed the following Members as Chairs of Strategic Policy Committees for a three-year term:

Councillor Michael Murphy - Home and Social Development SPC.

Councillor Joe Leddin – Travel and Transportation SPC.

Councillor Eddie Ryan – Economic Development, Enterprise and Planning SPC.

Councillor Kieran O’Hanlon – Community, Leisure and Culture SPC.

Councillor Jerome Scanlan – Climate Action, Biodiversity and Environment SPC.

As the three-year term expired in June 2022, a resolution of the Council was required to either re-appoint the existing Chairs or appoint new Chairs. Where two or more persons were to be appointed by a Local Authority, the Grouping System as provided for in Paragraph 18 of Schedule 10 of the Local Government Act, 2001, as amended, could apply if so desired.

Proposed by Councillor Sheahan (J);
Seconded by Councillor Sheahan (K);
And Resolved:

“That, the following Members be appointed as Chairs to the Strategic Policy Committees outlined for the remainder of the Council’s term of office:

Councillor Stephen Keary	Home and Social Development SPC
Councillor Saša Novak	Travel and Transportation SPC
Councillor Bridie Collins	Economic Development, Enterprise and Planning SPC
Councillor Michael Donegan	Community, Leisure and Culture SPC
Councillor Liam Galvin	Climate Action, Biodiversity and Environment SPC

(c) Proposed Schedule of Dates for Strategic Policy Committee Meetings

Circulated, report of the Senior Executive Officer, Corporate Services, Governance and Customer Services dated 23rd June, 2022, together with Schedule of proposed dates for Strategic Policy Committee Meetings up to May 2023.

The Schedule, as circulated, was proposed by Councillor Sheahan (J), seconded by Councillor O’Hanlon, noted and agreed.

(d) Limerick Market Trustees

Circulated, report of the Senior Executive Officer, Corporate Services, Governance and Customer Services dated 28th June, 2022, setting out details of the Council’s representation on the Limerick Market Trustees, together with list of current Members.

The report stated that the Council was required to consider the nomination of the Mayor of the City and County of Limerick, and the Cathaoirleach of the Metropolitan District of Limerick, together with a further 16 Members of the Council, as members of Limerick Market Trustees. The Council was required to make these nominations annually.

On the proposal of Councillor Sheahan (J), seconded by Councillor Collins (M), the following Members were appointed to the Limerick Market Trustees for the coming year:

Councillors F. Foley (Mayor of the City and County of Limerick 2022/2023), Councillor O. O’Sullivan (Cathaoirleach of the Metropolitan District of Limerick 2022/2023), Councillors Novak, Kilcoyne, O’Donovan, Daly, Collins (J), Sheahan (K), Slattery, Talukder, Ryan (M), Butler, Kiely, McSweeney, Sheahan (M), Murphy, Mitchell, Sheehan (C).

(e) Foreign Travel

Circulated, report of the A/Director, Economic Development and Enterprise, dated 1st July, 2022, seeking retrospective approval of foreign travel in respect of invitation received by the Mayor of the City and County of Limerick to attend a number of Civic and Economic Meetings in Austin, Texas, and Santa Clara, California.

Proposed by Councillor Galvin;
Seconded by Councillor O’Hanlon;
And Resolved:

“That, retrospective approval of the Council be and is hereby given to foreign travel in respect of attendance by the Mayor of the City and County of Limerick at a number of Civic and Economic Meetings in Austin, Texas, and Santa Clara, California, in accordance with Section 142(5) of the Local Government Act, 2001, as amended.”

(f) Strategic Policy Committee Reports

- (i) Circulated, report of the Chairperson of the Community, Leisure and Culture Strategic Policy Committee dated 20th June, 2022, in relation to meeting of the Committee held on 13th June, 2022.

The Report was noted by the Council.

- (ii) Circulated, report of the Chairperson of the Economic Development, Enterprise and Planning Strategic Policy Committee dated 30th June, 2022, concerning meeting of the Committee held on 20th June, 2022.

The Report was noted by the Council.

- (iii) Circulated, report of the Chairperson of the Home and Social Development Strategic Policy Committee dated 15th June, 2022, concerning meeting of the Committee held on 15th June, 2022.

The Report was noted by the Council.

- (iv) Circulated, report of the Chairperson of the Climate Action, Biodiversity and Environment Strategic Policy Committee in relation to meeting of the Committee held on 21st June, 2022, together with report of the Director, Planning, Environment and Place-Making dated 30th June, 2022, enclosing Draft Limerick City and Environs Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy.

The report was noted by the Council.

Recommendation 1:

“That, the Draft Limerick City and Environs Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy be referred to Full Council for approval to be placed on public display.”

On the proposal of Councillor O’Sullivan, seconded by Councillor O’Hanlon, the Council approved the placing of the Draft Limerick City and Environs Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy on public display.

Recommendation 2:

That, monies should be allocated at Budget time to provide for Ground Penetrating Radar Surveys to be carried out in all older rural burial grounds to establish availability of grave spaces.

On the proposal of Councillor Sheahan (J), seconded by Councillor Scanlan, the Recommendation was agreed.

- (v) It was noted that the Meeting of Travel and Transportation Strategic Policy Committee held on 27th June was adjourned to 12th July, 2022.

5. Housing

Affordable Housing

Further to the Special Meeting of the Council held on 23rd June, 2022 the Director of Services, Housing gave a PowerPoint presentation to the Members on affordable housing provisions contained in the Housing Delivery Action Plan.

She outlined how the Action Plan also sets a target of 1156 units for affordable housing over the next 5 years from 2022 to 2026, under various schemes including Local Authority Build affordable purchase; Local Authority Turnkey Affordable purchase; AHB Cost Rental; and LDA Affordable Purchase & Cost Rental.

The Members thanked the Director for her presentation and stressed the importance of delivery of these targets in the specified timeframe due to the current housing crisis that was impacting on so many people. They also agreed that following the recent adoption of the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028, that housing measures contained within this plan also needed to be achieved.

They also proposed that the Land Development Agency (LDA) should be invited to give a presentation to the Members on progress to date on the Colbert Quarter Scheme and also on proposed locations such as the Guinness Site as Members felt that these proposed developments were taking too much time to be progressed. Members were also unhappy with the delays being experienced with An Bord Pleanála in making decisions on housing developments and agreed that this was also a factor adding to delays.

The Chief Executive confirmed that a Working Group had been established between Limerick City and County Council and the Land Development Agency. This was being co-chaired between both himself and John Coleman in the LDA in order to progress developments quicker and he confirmed that the LDA would be invited to present to the Members at the September Meeting.

6. Economic Development and Enterprise

Development Fund Allocations 2022

Circulated, report of the A/Director, Economic Development and Enterprise, dated 29th June, 2022, setting out details of Development Fund Allocations for 2022.

The allocations were noted by the Council.

7. Community, Tourism and Culture

(a) Festivals and Events Grant Scheme 2022/2023

Circulated, report of the Arts Officer dated 24th June, 2022, seeking the Council's approval to recommended allocations under Limerick City and County Council Festivals and Events Grant Scheme 2022/2023.

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

"That, the approval of the Council be and is hereby given to allocations under Limerick City and County Council's Festivals and Events Grant Scheme 2022/2023, as recommended, and as set out in the report of the Arts Officer dated 24th June, 2022."

(b) Strategic Fund for Arts and Culture 2022

Circulated, report of the Arts Officer dated 24th June, 2022, seeking the Council's approval to recommended allocations under the Strategic Fund for Arts and Culture 2022.

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

"That, the approval of the Council be and is hereby given to recommended allocations under the Strategic Fund for Arts and Culture 2022, as set out in the report of the Arts Officer dated 24th June, 2022."

8. Conferences

(a) Participation by Members at Conferences

Details of the following Conference had been circulated electronically to the Members: European Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture Advisory Commission (EIFAAC) Symposium 2022 held in Killarney, Co. Kerry, on 20th/21st June, 2022.

On the proposal of Councillor O’Hanlon, seconded by Councillor Sheahan (J), the Council approved the attendance of the following Member at this Conference – Councillor S. Hartigan.

On the proposal of Councillor O’Hanlon, seconded by Councillor Sheahan (J), the Council approved the attendance of the following Member at a Conference already approved:

‘Velo City Conference 2022’ held in Ljubljana, Slovenia, from 14th to 17th June, 2022:
Councillor S. Novak.

(b) Report on Conference / Seminar / Meeting / Event

Circulated, report by Members who had participated at Conference / Seminar / Meeting / Event.

The report was noted by the Members.

QUESTION

The reply to the following Question on the agenda was circulated to all Members prior to the Meeting and the Question was therefore taken as having been dealt with:

9. Question submitted by Councillor C. Slattery

I will ask at the next Meeting if there are any plans to recruit more staff for the Rent Section of the Council as there are backlogs with rent assessments resulting in people whose circumstances have changed being hit with huge arrears in rent up to six months or more in some cases.

REPLY: The approved staff complement in the Rents Unit is adequate to deal with the workload arising. Similar to any other business unit within the Council, the pandemic has interfered to some extent with the normal workflow on an intermittent basis over the past two years.

Under the terms of the standard Letting Agreement signed by tenants, it is their responsibility in the first instance to advise the Council of any variations in income within the household, either up or down, so that their rent can be adjusted accordingly. This is clearly explained to them at pre-tenancy induction training. Some tenants appear reluctant to do this, particularly when there can be an upward revision to the rent accruing. In such situations, it may well be many months, or even longer, before the Council becomes aware of such a change in circumstances and, furthermore, there can be further delays caused by incomplete or inadequate documentary proof being submitted. This can lead in some cases to significant arrears having to be ultimately applied to the account. Individual tenants, or members on their behalf, should contact the rent account manager for their area with any concerns.

Suspension of Standing Orders: It was noted that the time was approaching 5.30 p.m. and on the proposal of Councillor O’Hanlon, seconded by Councillor Sheahan (J), Standing Orders were suspended in order to complete the agenda.

NOTICES OF MOTION

With the permission of the Mayor, it was agreed to take Notice of Motion No. 13 at this time:

13. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor B. Collins

I will move at the next Meeting that Limerick City and County Council call on the Minister for Social Protection, Heather Humphreys, TD, and the Minister for Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, Catherine Martin, TD, to find a solution which would allow artists with disabilities to be in receipt of the Basic Income for Artists payment without it affecting their disability supports and request the introduction of a Pilot Scheme for artists with disabilities, to co-exist for the duration for the Basic Income for Artists Pilot Scheme which would remove the weekly earnings limit and means test from those in receipt of disability supports.

On the proposal of Councillor Collins (B), seconded by Councillor O’Hanlon, the Motion was adopted by the Council.

10. Notice of Motion submitted by the Municipal District of Adare-Rathkeale – Councillors A. Teskey (Proposer), B. Collins, S. Keary, E. O’Brien, J. O’Donoghue, K. Sheahan

We will move at the next Meeting that the current bi-monthly meetings of the Full Council would revert to blended hybrid monthly meetings.

The Motion was proposed by Councillor Teskey and seconded by Councillor Keary.

REPLY: **Background:**

A similar Motion was also moved by Councillor Keary in 2016 and 2020. On both occasions, it was agreed that Meetings of the Full Council would continue to meet bi-monthly but that the SPC meetings would be held in intervening months to allow detailed discussion on any policy issues before they are referred to Full Council for approval.

Matters to be considered in regard to the Motion:

Existing Number of Meetings Annually

Based on the table below, every Councillor in his/her respective membership of the Full Council/Municipal or Metropolitan District/two SPCs currently attends **30 meetings** per year from those meetings alone as follows:

- Plenary Council Bi-Monthly, Annual and Budget Meetings 8
- Metropolitan / Municipal District Monthly and Annual Meetings 12
- SPC Meetings 10

In addition, Councillors attend Joint Policing Committee meetings, Local Community Development Committee meetings, various other sub-committee meetings as well as briefings and workshops.

Role of Municipal/Metropolitan District Councils

Municipal Districts now have an enhanced policy provision remit since 2014. Members can move Motions and Questions relevant to their District at their respective monthly meetings. It should also be noted that Standing Orders for Full Council provide that “Motions which relate to the business of the Metropolitan/Municipal District may only be submitted to the relevant District.”

Therefore, only matters of wider strategic application are generally decided at Plenary level and the Municipal Districts should continue to perform a range of functions relevant to their own District at their statutory monthly meetings.

Special Meetings of Full Council

An option available under existing Standing Orders is to hold Special Meetings to deal with Full Council business or any issues that may arise in the period between Council Meetings. In 2021, each Elected Member would have attended 9 Special Meetings of the Full Council. The Municipal Districts would also have held a number of Special Meetings.

Additional Resource Requirement:

The additional cost of Monthly Full Council Meetings requires consideration in light of tightening budgets. The additional draw on staff to administer additional Full Council Meetings and the associated additional SPC Meetings must also be considered.

Current Arrangements:

With the revised SPC arrangements now in place for over four years, it has been found that the five (5) SPC Chairperson’s reports are consistently provided as agenda items of each bi-monthly Full Council Meeting and policies agreed at SPC are considered for approval at Full Council Meetings.

Any change to Monthly Meetings would require a realignment of all meetings to synchronise with this change, including the current integrated series of Council Meetings / SPC Meetings to deal with policy matters of the Council. A

change to Monthly Full Council Meetings would require SPCs to change to monthly meetings also. It would also require a review of the current arrangements pertaining to issues dealt with each month at District Level.

The current system has worked effectively since the changes adopted in July 2016. The addition of a further five Ordinary Full Council Meetings and, by extension, five additional monthly SPC meetings, would further add to pressures on Elected Members on top of the existing large workload.

Having regard to the matters outlined above, it is proposed that Full Council Meetings would continue to be held on a bi-monthly basis in January, March, May, July, September and November, in addition to the Annual Meeting, Budget Meetings and Special Meetings as required.

The Members discussed the response to the Notice of Motion and differing views were expressed. The Chief Executive outlined that the executive works closely with the Members and indicated that there would be a concern if Plenary Meetings were adjourned, however that was not the case. The Members raised some concerns in relation to Municipal District Meetings. The Executive agreed to meet and conduct a review of the standing orders of Municipal District Meetings to consider streamlining delegated powers and report back to the Members in November.

11. Notice of Motion submitted by the Municipal District of Newcastle West – Councillors L. Galvin (Proposer), F. Foley, J. Scanlan, J. Sheahan, T. Ruddle

We will move at the next Meeting that responsibility for the maintenance and allocation of Council-owned property in the Newcastle West Municipal District is returned to the Municipal District with adequate staff to manage same.

The Motion was proposed by Councillor Galvin and seconded by Councillor Scanlan.

REPLY: (a) Maintenance of Stock

The maintenance of the social housing stock is arranged on an area basis being Metropolitan, Newcastle West, Adare-Rathkeale and Cappamore-Kilmallock. Stock within the Municipal District of Newcastle West is maintained through the Housing Maintenance Team in the District.

Each area has a direct labour team and uses contractors as required for particular services (plumbing, electrical etc.) This mix allows flexibility which can respond as required to the fluctuating level of maintenance requests.

Requests for maintenance are received through Customer Services, cases are created and logged and entered onto the Sugar CRM system. They are then allocated to the relevant area and team for action (Housing Maintenance).

As background, the level of cases in Newcastle West received per month and closure rate is shown below.

	January	February	March	April	May	June
Cases Created	109	124	108	108	101	87
Cases Closed	106	273	80	80	139	149

The maintenance budget for the District is broadly similar year-on-year and is balanced to the level of demand that is presented in the area and the number of units as a percentage of the overall housing stock.

The staffing and resource availability is adequate to the level of demand being experienced in the District.

(b) Pre-lets/Voids

Though not referenced in the Notice of Motion, pre-lets and voids are also returned through the District Office.

Some larger-scale returns are completed by Housing Construction once the scope of work has been established and if that is a more efficient method of return.

Again, use is made of the direct labour teams and contractors, depending upon the nature of works and volume of works on hand at any particular time. This blend is the most effective method for returns as it can make best use of the particular advantages of both approaches. Using contractors allows additional resources to be mobilised as required, while direct labour teams are very flexible and can respond at short notice as may be required.

The outline procedure is that on the return of the dwelling, it is firstly inspected to determine the level of works required. A cost estimate is then prepared and the dwelling is issued to the area for return works to be undertaken. A budget is also allocated for completion of the works. Using either direct labour or contractors is an operational decision based upon the workload at the time and the nature and extent of works required.

As at 6th July, there are fifteen units in the process of being returned by Newcastle West Housing Maintenance Team. Of these, five are currently on-site and works are progressing, one is in the procurement/design phase and nine have been returned and are to be inspected.

(c) Allocation of Houses

The allocation of houses is an Executive Function carried out in accordance with the Council's Housing Allocation Scheme. This function is done on a centralised basis to ensure appropriate expertise is available and has proven to be the most effective and efficient.

Conclusion

The maintenance of Council housing is carried out on a District basis, while the allocation of houses is carried out on a centralised basis. It is not recommended to change this operational method.

The Chief Executive confirmed he has full confidence in the Director and the team who are operating in the midst of a housing crisis.

12. Notice of Motion submitted by the Municipal District of Newcastle West – Councillors J. Sheahan (Proposer), F. Foley, L. Galvin, J. Scanlan and T. Ruddle

We will move at the next Meeting that where Irish Water apply for a road opening licence to Limerick City and County Council, they should be asked to pay a bond that will cover the cost of full reinstatement of the road within a short period of time to be determined.

The Motion was proposed by Councillor Sheahan (J) and seconded by Councillor Galvin.

Reply: Limerick City and County Council does indeed seek bonds from Irish Water contractors, depending on the application and location.

However, it is accepted that for some road openings (e.g. emergencies), appropriate and prompt reinstatement is not being addressed and a road opening licence needs to be in place immediately in line with agreed protocols for such openings.

Where the Council is satisfied that a utility such as Irish Water does not manage such an opening properly and where such works are not capable of being managed under the online Road Opening system, all options and measures need to be considered to ensure the public road is protected.

13. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor B. Collins

It was noted that this Motion had been dealt with earlier in the Meeting.

14. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor E. Ryan

I will move at the next Meeting that this Council seek to increase the Operation and Maintenance budget for Cemeteries in the amount of €100,000 per annum, to provide for

adequate repairs and maintenance on Ancient and Historic structures in Burial Grounds, in accordance with the adopted Burial Ground Strategy.

The Motion was proposed by Councillor E. Ryan and seconded by Councillor Scanlan.

REPLY: The Council adopted a Burial Ground Strategy at its Meeting of May 2021. For the first time, the Strategy attempted to qualify and quantify the masonry heritage assets that are extant in the Local Authority's graveyards through a preliminary survey. The Strategy recommended that a programme of detailed condition surveying, vegetation control and consolidation needs to be established. This will require a significant stream of funding for a period of years. Larger projects may be multi-annual, but there could be capacity to bundle smaller projects and address them within one financial year.

The 2022 budget allocation for Heritage Assets within Burial Grounds in 2022 is €15,000. At present, from the preliminary survey, there are nine structures in need of urgent attention to arrest their decline in order that they do not become a health and safety hazard, with a further 27 classed as fairly urgent.

The Community Monuments Fund was established by the National Monuments Service, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, in 2020 and it has provided funding towards works in Clonshire in 2020 and 2021 and towards works in Kilfinane and Ballynoe (Bruree) in 2022. To take maximum advantage from this funding stream, however, the Local Authority needs to provide match funding that would see a programme of works that would deal with the most urgent issues more rapidly.

15. Correspondence

The Correspondence circulated with the agenda was taken as read.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S ORDERS:

The Register of Orders made by the Chief Executive up to the date of the Meeting was available on SharePoint for inspection by the Members.

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT:

The Register of Decisions on Applications under the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended, was also available on SharePoint for inspection by the Members.

Signed:

Mayor

Date:
