

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS AT MEETING OF THE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF NEWCASTLE WEST HELD IN ÁRAS WILLIAM SMITH OBRIEN, NEWCASTLE WEST, CO. LIMERICK, AND ONLINE, ON WEDNESDAY, 7TH SEPTEMBER, 2022, AT 10AM.

PRESENT IN THE CHAIR:

Councillor M. Collins, Cathaoirleach.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Councillors Foley, Galvin, Ruddle, Scanlan and Sheahan.

OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE:

Director, Community, Tourism and Culture (Mr. G. Daly), Meetings Administrator, Newcastle West (Mr. M. Curran), Senior Executive Engineer, Newcastle West Municipal District (Mr. J. Sheehan), Executive Engineer, Roads (Mr. P. Valley), Senior Executive Engineer, Planning, Environment and Place-Making (Mr. K. O’Gorman), Executive Engineer, Mid-West National Road Design Office (Mr. R. Kennedy), Executive Engineer, Mid-West National Road Design Office (Mr. M. Healy), Administrative Officer, Property and Community Facilities (Ms. T. Knox), Senior Engineer, LA Housing Construction and Maintenance (Mr. C. Culloo), Senior Executive Engineer, Housing Maintenance (Mr. B. Bourke), Executive Architect, LA Housing Construction and Maintenance (Mr. D. Shorten), Clerical Officer, Newcastle West (Ms. A. Lenihan).

APOLOGIES:

Executive Engineer, Housing (Mr. D. Toomey).

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

1. Adoption of Minutes

- (a) Circulated, copy of draft Minutes of Meeting of Municipal District of Newcastle West, held on 13th July, 2022.
Proposed by: Councillor Ruddle
Seconded by: Councillor Galvin
And Resolved:
“That, the draft Minutes, as circulated, be taken as read and adopted and signed”.

- (a) Circulated, copy of draft Minutes of the Special Meeting of Municipal District of Newcastle West, held on 3rd August, 2022.
Proposed by: Councillor Galvin
Seconded by: Councillor Scanlan
And Resolved:

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

2. Disposal of Land

- (a) Circulated, report of Head of Property and Community Facilities, dated 25th August, 2022, concerning proposal to dispose of Former Department of Defence Facility on Sheahan’s Road, Newcastle West, Co. Limerick.

Members noted the proposal.

The drawing down of grants by the Newcastle West Scouts Group was also raised and in replying, Director stated that there are a number of funding streams available for the Group which could be explored.

- (b) Circulated, report of Head of Property and Community Facilities, dated 26th August, 2022, concerning proposal to dispose of 5 Gleann Dáire, Ardagh, Co. Limerick.

Members noted the proposal.

3. Transportation and Mobility Directorate

Proposed N21 Coolanoran Traffic Calming Scheme – Part 8 Planning for noting and discussion.

Circulated, report of Administrative Officer, Transportation and Mobility Directorate, dated 19th August, 2022.

The Executive Engineer gave an update to the Members on the proposed N21 Coolanoran Traffic Calming Scheme and report which was issued on 17th August, 2022, in accordance with Part XI of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and Part 8 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended).

He stated that the proposed traffic calming scheme is also being brought to the Adare-Rathkeale Municipal District in September 2022 for consideration and discussion by the Elected Members and that the formal Part 8 approval for this traffic calming scheme is to be brought to the Full Meeting of Limerick City and Council in September 2022.

The Executive Engineer stated that the N21 Coolanoran site was identified as a designated high collision location by the TII. He outlined to the Members the key features in the scheme which included resurfacing of the road within the scheme extents, introduction of cycle way in both directions, provision of kerbed build outs, drainage works, removal of diverge lane, extend hatching beyond proposed build outs and the provision of new road markings.

He stated that eight submissions had been received and gave a briefing to the Members on the submissions received.

The Members welcomed the proposed works and referred to a number of matters including residents gaining access to their properties in the vicinity of the Applegreen Service Station and timeframe for delivery of project. The Members also expressed disappointment that a representative from the TII was not available to attend the July Meeting of the Adare-Rathkeale Municipal District to discuss the N21 Coolanoran Traffic Calming Scheme.

The Members thanked the Executive Engineer for the presentation.

4. Planning, Environment and Place-Making Directorate

To receive Update on the Abbeyfeale Traffic Management Plan.

The Cathaoirleach welcomed the Senior Executive Engineer, Planning, Environment and Place-Making Directorate, to the Meeting.

The Senior Executive Engineer gave an update to the Members on the progress to date with regard to the Abbeyfeale Traffic Management Plan and to the level of funding which has been sought for the scheme. He stated that €1m has been sought from Limerick City and County Council, €8m from Transport Infrastructure Ireland and €6.5m from the Department of Transport, Pathfinder, for the development of the scheme.

The Senior Executive Engineer stated that a tender is to be issued in September 2022 for the demolition of Jack O’Riordan’s pub with demolition works to be undertaken in January 2023 and a completion date of April 2023 is expected.

He also referred to the introduction of a 30 kph speed limit from the Church to Killarney Road, allocation of on-street parking spaces, road signage rationalisation, removal of car parking between the Cellar Bar junction and the funeral home. He outlined the various phases in the scheme and referred to a vision for the town covering key themes and identifying specific interventions.

The Senior Engineer also made reference to liaising with the Working Group on finalising the Square for the Christmas period and the future holding of festivals during the summer

A discussion took place on a number of matters including the proposed housing development for Colbert’s Terrace, Abbeyfeale, car parking near Harnett’s Funeral home and funding for the scheme.

The Members requested that a further update be given on the Abbeyfeale Traffic Management Plan at the November Meeting of the District.

5. Housing Development Directorate

To consider Chief Executive's report prepared in accordance with Section 179(3)(a) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and Part VIII of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended), in relation to the construction of 10 No. Housing Units in O'Connor Park, Reerasta North, Ardagh, Co. Limerick.

Circulated, report of Chief Executive, dated 29th August, 2022, in relation to construction of 10 No. housing units in O'Connor Park, Reerasta North, Ardagh, Co. Limerick. The report has been prepared in accordance with Section 179(3)(a) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and Part VIII of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) and it is proposed to proceed in accordance with Section 6 of the report.

The Executive Architect addressed the Meeting and referred to the proposed development consisting of 10 No. housing units and ancillary site works comprising of a new vehicular junction with the R521, an access road, services, footpaths, parking, boundary treatment and landscaping units at O'Connor Park in Ardagh.

He stated that the scheme proposes to create a new junction from the existing estate to the R521 which links Newcastle West and Foynes. He also stated that the proposed development provides an opportunity to enhance connectivity in and around Ardagh village and that the development provides for a mix of residential uses to meet the housing need identified.

The Executive Architect referred to the public consultation process which has taken place and that one submission was received in respect of the proposed development.

The Members referred to the public display of proposed development, connectivity onto the R521, demand for housing in Ardagh, consultation with the Senior Planner and additional housing for future development.

Reference was also made to timeframe for completion of project, liaising with the residents in O'Connor Park, choice of location on housing accommodation list, dereliction in Ardagh village and car parking was also raised.

Following a lengthy discussion, the Members expressed concern on a number of matters including sewage capacity at the wastewater treatment plant in Ardagh, connectivity, exiting onto R521 through O'Connor Park and access road within the estate.

In replying, the Senior Engineer referred to the Chief Executive's report which stated that plans and particulars were placed on public display from Friday, 24th June, 2022 up to and including Friday, 22nd July, 2022 and only one submission was received. He also stated that a Connection Agreement has been made with Irish Water with regard to connecting to the sewer. He stated that consultation had taken place with the Housing Allocations Team where the size of the scheme is matched against demand for housing.

In response to the dereliction in Ardagh, the Director stated that work is ongoing on the list of derelict sites in Main Street, Ardagh. The Roads Engineer also proposed that footpaths be provided on the R521 to the traffic lights in Ardagh.

Following discussion, it was proposed by Councillor Scanlan, and seconded by Councillor Collins, that a Special Meeting be held to give further consideration to this matter.

6. General Municipal Allocation (GMA)

On the proposal of Councillor Foley, seconded by Councillor Ruddle, it was agreed to allocate to €500 to the Sexton Family Reunion.

On the proposal of Councillor Scanlan, seconded by Councillor Ruddle, it was agreed to allocate €2,000 to Broadford Walking Trail.

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On the proposal of Councillor Sheahan, seconded by Councillor Collins, it was agreed to allocate €1,200 to Broadford Walking Trail.

The Director referred to the Strategic GMA Fund and recommended the allocation of €6,000 to the Knights of Glin Interpretative Centre which was proposed by Councillor Sheahan and seconded by Councillor Collins.

QUESTIONS

The Cathaoirleach referred to Standing Orders where written replies to Questions shall normally be circulated by electronic mail in advance of the Meeting and shall not be for discussion.

A discussion took place on this matter and it was agreed that should any queries arise following circulation of the Replies to Questions to the Members, that the Members would liaise with the Meetings Administrator in advance of the Meeting.

Replies to the following Questions on the agenda were circulated to all Members prior to the Meeting and the Questions were therefore considered as having been dealt with.

7. Question submitted by Councillor L. Galvin

I will ask at the next Municipal Meeting (a) who is now the registered owner of the old dump, Knockbrack (b) who is responsible to keep the gated area clean.

REPLY: Knockbrack Landfill is in the ownership of Limerick City and County Council and the maintenance of same is the responsibility of the Environment Department.

At this point, Councillor Galvin left the Meeting.

8. Question submitted by Councillor L Galvin

I will ask at the next Meeting that a survey be done on the footpaths in Abbeyfeale where hedge growth is obstructing pedestrians.

REPLY: This survey will commence shortly.

9. Question submitted by Councillor L. Galvin

I will ask at the next Meeting that Limerick City and County Council carry out a road safety audit at the Knocknagorna junction on the Glin to Athea road.

REPLY: A survey has commenced and we have engaged with the relevant landowners.

10. Question submitted by Councillor J. Scanlan

I will ask at the next Meeting (a) when Graffiti will be removed from the dividing/boundary walls within the Wingfield Orchard and Ferndale Estates and (b) when footpath renewal will take place therein.

REPLY:

(a) We will remove this.

(b) This will be repaired in conjunction with works being carried out before the end of the year.

11. Question submitted by Councillor J. Scanlan

I will ask at the next Meeting that the trees fronting Properties 1 to 6 at Woodfield Park be cut back in the interest of safety locally.

REPLY: These works will be carried out in the coming weeks.

12. Question submitted by Councillor J. Scanlan

I will ask at the next Meeting when the broadband roll out will occur at Boola, Broadford.

REPLY:

Under the National Broadband Plan, high-speed broadband will be delivered to every premises in Ireland through a combination of commercial and state investment. For Limerick,

the State have determined that 78% of premises are in the commercial (Blue) area, an area in which commercial operators have indicated that they currently are or will shortly be providing a broadband service in that area. The remaining 22%, which equates to 21,131 premises including homes, farms, businesses and schools, are in the State Intervention Area (Amber), an area in which commercial operators do not and have no plans to provide a broadband service, and where the State has committed to ensuring access to high-speed broadband for all citizens.

The company delivering on this commitment on behalf of the State is National Broadband Ireland (NBI). The Boola, Broadford area of Limerick falls within the DA131 Meelin deployment area of the National Broadband Plan rollout. As of August 8th 2022, the latest information available from NBI indicated that the surveys in this area were still pending, and that the anticipated date for connection of properties in this area was somewhere between January 2025 and December 2026. NBI also noted on this date that they were “working with ComReg on trying to get access to a particular market product that could make a difference to areas currently in the latter parts of the build programme”, but that it would likely be 2023 before they know if that will come to fruition. Further information can be sought by emailing reps@nbi.ie, a dedicated inbox setup by NBI for councillors to contact directly for the latest information regarding their representation queries.

As an alternative while the main National Broadband Plan deployment is ongoing, Broadband Connection Points are rural locations within the State Intervention Area where a free high-speed (150Mbps) public broadband connection will be provided for both indoor and outdoor use by the local community, in an effort to support remote working and promote connected communities, and help communities to quickly access free public high-speed broadband in advance of the main deployment under the National Broadband Plan. Under this Programme, Limerick City and County Council has had 16 Broadband Connection Point locations approved across the county, the nearest to Boola, Broadford being 15km away at the Glenmore Community Centre (V42 YK77) in Strand, Co. Limerick, while The Old Schoolhouse (P56 K302) in Co. Cork is 11km away in the other direction.

13. Question submitted by Councillor T. Ruddle

I will ask at the next Meeting if the original Part 8 planning for Garryduff Cross, Newcastle West include public lighting? If it did when will it be installed. This is a very dangerous junction.

REPLY:

The condition regarding planning was that “Road lights shall be confined to the minimum that are necessary for road safety. They shall be cowled in such manner as to minimise light spill to the roadway”.

Recent discussions with Transport Infrastructure Ireland have indicated that this junction is unlikely to be lit in accordance with their current standards. TII see this junction as having being improved significantly from a safety point of view and is similar to junctions across the national road network that are not lit. The improvements that were put in place making it a

safer junction included for, adequate sights lines, right turn lanes and road markings.

14. Question submitted by Councillor T. Ruddle

I will ask at the next Meeting (a) how much did it cost to run the public toilet in The Square, Newcastle West last year (b) revenue generated from the public toilet last year (c) can a proper toilet be built here instead.

REPLY:

- (a) In 2021, the public convenience cost €38,013.30 to run.
- (b) In 2021, the revenue generated was €2,607.90.
- (c) Limerick City and County Council currently have a contract in place for the operation and maintenance of this facility.

NOTICES OF MOTION

15. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor L. Galvin

I will move at the next Meeting of the Municipal District of Newcastle West that Limerick City and County Council provide a disability access route (wheelchair accessible route) from the Barnagh Greenway Hub onto the Greenway. While wheelchair accessible toilets are provided at the Hub and disability trikes/wheelchair transporters are available for hire, the direct access route to the Greenway is not currently suitable for wheelchair users.

The Motion was seconded by Councillor Sheahan.

REPLY:

The Barnagh Greenway Hub is a privately owned facility and it is a matter for the owners to provide universal access for their patrons.

Limerick City and County Council has accessible access locations to the Limerick Greenway at the trailheads at Rathkeale, Ardagh, Newcastle West and Abbeyfeale. In developing these Greenway hubs and trailheads Limerick City and County Council are committed to ensuring universal access for all patrons.

16. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor L. Galvin

I will move at the next Meeting that (a) the Abbeyfeale branch of Limerick City and County Library be relocated to the building in The Square which formerly housed the Abbeyfeale Bank of Ireland branch (b) that a Tourist Information Centre/Office be set up in the same building (c) that a museum displaying artefacts and documentation pertaining to the history of Abbeyfeale and the surrounding area be located on site.

The Motion was seconded by Councillor Sheahan.

REPLY:

The former Bank of Ireland branch building at The Square, Abbeyfeale was acquired by Limerick City and County Council in June 2022. An Options and Feasibility Study will now be undertaken to determine the future use of the building.

These suggestions will be taken into consideration. There will also be further consultation with the Elected Members of the Municipal District of Newcastle West as part of the process of preparing the Options and Feasibility Study.

17. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor T. Ruddle

I will move at the next Meeting that a timeline for the upgrading of the Newcastle West playground be provided.

The Motion was seconded by Councillor Ruddle.

REPLY:

The Council proposes to undertake a number of work items at Newcastle West Playground. It is proposed to replace the existing fence with 1.2 metre high playground fencing, remove grassed areas within the playground and replace with tarmacadam and replace the bark mulch under the zip line. The Council also intends to power wash all of the playground equipment. This will provide a much needed upgrade in the short term. These works will be completed by the end of September 2022.

Once this upgrade has been completed, the Council will review to see if further improvements can be made in terms of any additional equipment for the playground.

In proposing the Motion, Councillor Ruddle requested that the playground in Newcastle West be upgraded and in replying, the Director stated that money has been allocated to the playground and works are to be carried out by the end of September.

It was agreed that the Meetings Administrator would liaise with the Senior Planner with a view to getting a Master Plan drawn up to expand the playground and tennis courts.

18. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor T. Ruddle

I will move at the next Meeting that a site be considered for a dog park in Newcastle West. There is an unprecedented demand for this given the tremendous success of the park in Mungret.

The Motion was seconded by Councillor Scanlan.

REPLY:

Following the success of the pilot Dog Park in Mungret Regional Park the Council will consider a site for a Dog Park in the Demesne, Newcastle West. However, in order to advance the project funding will need to be identified to deliver the fencing that would be required for the dog park. The funding required is expected to be in the order of €15,000 - €20,000.

19. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor J. Scanlan

I will move at the next Meeting that Council owned lands be provided for allocation as allotments in this Municipal area in the interest of sustainability.

The Motion was seconded by Councillor Collins.

REPLY:

The Council will consider Council owned lands for allotments. However, there are a number of issues to be considered before a decision can be made on allocating lands for allotments, for example, management and maintenance, administration and the cost of water and waste collection.

The matter will need to be reviewed, and if necessary, a policy document on Council provided allotments may be developed. The policy should set out and provide clarity on the various roles and responsibilities in relation to allotments.

This would provide direction to the Council on how we can assist communities by providing allotments in their locality.

In proposing the Motion, Councillor Scanlan requested that lands be provided for allocation as allotments and asked when the policy document would be made available. In replying, the Director acknowledged the need for a policy document and agreed to liaise with the relevant Directorate on this matter.

The following items were also raised.

The Members referred to the recently opened Knights of Glin Heritage Centre and acknowledged the achievements of all in the development of this project.

An update was sought on the recently Approved Housing Body purchased houses and when work would commence on these houses. In replying the Senior Engineer, agreed to seek an update on this matter for the next Meeting.

The Members also sought an update on a Meeting which was to be held with the Approved Housing Body on the unfinished housing estate at Cois Na Féile, Abbeyfeale and also asked if contact was made with the adjoining landowner with regard to anti-social behaviour taking

place on the adjoining land. In replying, the Senior Engineer agreed to revert to the relevant Section on this matter.

The provision of traffic lights at Woodfield Estate, Newcastle West, was acknowledged.

Reference was made to the installation of furniture on the Limerick Greenway. In replying, the Director stated that seating had been installed recently along the route. He stated that further seating is to be installed and agreed to seek an update on this matter.

An update was sought on the replacement of the bus stop sign in the village of Templeglantine and in replying, the Executive Engineer stated that Bus Éireann has been contacted with regard to replacement of the sign and a reply is awaited. He agreed however to follow up on this matter with Bus Éireann.

The condition of the seating at the Castle Demesne Park, Newcastle West was also raised.

The Executive Engineer, Roads stated that hedge cutting notices were issued to landowners in the District.

It was agreed to hold the October Meeting of the District on Wednesday, 5th October, 2022, at 10.00 a.m., at Áras William Smith OBrien.

It was agreed that a Private Workshop on Housing for the Members of the Municipal District of Newcastle West, would take place on Tuesday, 20th September, 2022, at 14.30 p.m., at Áras William Smith OBrien.

It was also agreed to hold a Meeting of the Joint Policing Committee (JPC) Sub Committee on Wednesday, 5th October, 2022, at 11.30 a.m., at Áras William Smith OBrien.

This concluded the Meeting.

Signed:

Cathaoirleach

Dated:
