

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS AT MEETING OF THE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF NEWCASTLE WEST HELD IN ÁRAS WILLIAM SMITH OBRIEN, NEWCASTLE WEST, CO. LIMERICK, ON WEDNESDAY, 3RD APRIL, 2024, AT 10AM.

PRESENT IN THE CHAIR:

Councillor T. Ruddle, Cathaoirleach.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Councillors Collins, Foley, Galvin, Scanlan and Sheahan.

OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE:

Director, Economic Development, Enterprise and Tourism (Mr. G. Daly), Meetings Administrator, Adare/Rathkeale Municipal District (Ms. K Butler), Senior Executive Engineer, Newcastle West Municipal District (Mr. J. Sheehan), Executive Engineer, Roads (Mr. P. Vallely), Chief Officer, LCDC (Mr. S. O'Connor), Administrative Officer, Rural Development (Ms. E. Humphreys), Executive Engineer, Tourism (Mr. M. J. McNamara), Clerical Officer, Newcastle West (Ms. A. Lenihan).

APOLOGIES:

Meetings Administrator, Newcastle West Municipal District (Ms. H. Supple).

At the outset of the Meeting, Councillor Ruddle welcomed everyone in attendance to the April Meeting of the District.

1. Adoption of Minutes

- (a) Circulated, copy of draft Minutes of Meeting of Municipal District of Newcastle West, held on 5th March, 2024.

Proposed by: Councillor Sheahan

Seconded by: Councillor Collins

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

3. Economic Development, Enterprise & Tourism Directorate

To consider the Chief Executive's Reports pursuant to Section 179 3(a) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and Part 8 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 (as amended) in relation to the following:

The Development of the Limerick Greenway Hub at Abbeyfeale.

The Abbeyfeale Goods Shed and site will become one of the main Visitor Experiences and Service Centre Hubs on the Limerick Greenway. Development to include:

Refurbishment and renovation of the Abbeyfeale Goods Shed and change of use to commercial, community and tourism. Develop the building and site to include toilets, coffee dock, bike hire and public realm. Refurbishment and renovation of the water tower and existing platforms. Demolition of the Western Annex to the Goods Shed and construction of extensions to the East and West. The provision of on-site car parking to include universal access parking spaces and electric vehicle charging point spaces. Construction of a new building for toilet and storage facilities. Relocate and realign existing entrance and access road from the R524 including a new pedestrian footpath. The provision of a new access point, access road and carpark north of the Greenway. Works to include all site development works for the building and carpark including utilities, drainage, landscaping, public realm and associated accommodation works.

Circulated, report of Chief Executive, dated 28th March, 2024. The report has been prepared in accordance with Section 179 (3) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and Part 8 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 (as amended), in respect of the proposed development listed above.

The Director commenced by referring to the Chief Executive's Report on the Part 8 application and that the Council were seeking to submit an application for funding for this project under the Rural Regeneration & Development Fund (RRDF). A brief discussion took place and the Members referred to a number of issues including the timeframe for completion of the project, difficulties with lack of a sewerage system on the Railway Road, the proposed use of sewage tankering from the site and the possibility of having the public sewerage system extended from the NCT Centre to the Railway Bar in Abbeyfeale.

Following discussion Members were of the opinion the town sewerage system needed to be extended by Irish Water to include the Greenway Hub and requested this option be further examined.

The Director of Service responded saying Limerick City and County Council has explored multiple options with regard to sewage removal from the site however accessing the existing public sewer by gravity or pumping of sewage from the site were not feasible and concluded saying the matter would be kept under review during the design stage of the project. The Director outlined the stages involved in the project including detailed design and tendering.

The Members expressed full support for the project and the Part 8 Report for the Development of the Limerick Greenway Hub at Abbeyfeale was proposed by Councillor Foley, seconded by Councillor Galvin and agreed.

3. Rural, Community and Culture Directorate

To receive Presentation on the Draft Local Economic and Community Framework Plan 2023 – 2028 (LECP) – Review of Final Pre-Draft.

Circulated, Final Pre-Draft of Local Economic and Community Framework Plan 2023-2028, Rural, Community and Culture Development Directorate.

The Members welcomed the Chief Officer, LCDC and the Administrative Officer, Rural Development to the Meeting.

The Administrative Officer (Rural Development) addressed the Meeting and stated that the purpose of the Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) is to set out, for a six year period, the objectives and actions needed to promote and support the economic development and the local and community development of the area in partnership with other economic and community development stakeholders. She referred to the preparation of two-year Implementation Plans, the first Implementation Plan is for the years 2023 – 2026 and the second for 2026 – 2028.

She made reference to the overall aim of the Plan which is to promote well-being and quality of life of citizens and communities including all people living and working in the county. She referred to the key spatial plans at national and regional levels and that the Local Economic and Community Framework Plan identifies objectives from those plans for implementation locally. It also identifies local objectives under other national and regional policies in areas including social inclusion, rural development, urban regeneration, health and well-being, education, training and skills development, employment, enterprise and climate change. She referenced the Local Economic and Community Framework Plan which must be consistent with Local Authority plans particularly the Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028 and the Council's Corporate Plan 2019 – 2024.

The Administrative Officer stated that the preparation of the Local Economic and Community Framework Plan involved a public consultation process across Limerick City and County and

included online and physical meetings, area based and group workshops and stakeholder meetings. She stated that following the public consultation process the main issues identified include amenity, recreation, access to services, distribution of jobs, housing, enterprise space, environment and climate action, transport, dereliction, community, city centre and regeneration areas.

She referred to the High Level Goals identified in the Local Economic and Community Framework Plan which include People and Communities, Environment and Climate Action, Economic resilience, regeneration and development, and Innovation, technology and digitalisation.

She stated that the Local Economic and Community Framework Plan has been developed under the joint oversight of the Limerick Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) which is responsible for the community elements of the Plan and the Economic Development, Enterprise and Planning Strategic Policy Committee (SPC) of the Council which is responsible for the Economic elements of the Plan. She referred to the preparation and drafting of the Local Economic and Community Framework Plan which has been assisted by an Advisory Steering Group at all stages of development.

She outlined to the Members the various stages in the Preparation of the Local Economic and Community Framework Plan which include the Preparation of the Plan, Public Consultation, Developing Objectives and Outcomes and Finalising the Plan which includes a Presentation to the Members in the Municipal Districts, Implementation of the Plan and Monitoring and Evaluation.

She gave an overview of the statistics following a socio-economic analysis which included areas such as population, population diversity, ageing population, social deprivation, unemployment, education, residential and commercial vacancy. She stated that the key issue to be addressed is residential and commercial vacancy. Following the presentation she stated that it is intended to bring the Plan to Full Council for approval in May.

The Members thanked the Administrative Officer for the comprehensive Presentation but however expressed concern on statistics in some areas. A discussion took place on a number of matters including the high level of residential and commercial vacancy, travelling community, long-term unemployment and the importance of education and social inclusion. The necessity of having Limerick 2030 included in the Plan and the current status of the Abbeyfeale Town Centre First Plan was also raised.

4. Transportation and Mobility Directorate

To consider Draft Schedule of Works for the Municipal District of Newcastle West.

Circulated, report of Director of Services, dated March 2024, setting out the details of the Draft Schedule of Works for the Municipal District of Newcastle West 2024.

The Members welcomed the report and the funding which was made available for the various projects in the Schedule.

The Members expressed concern at the current condition of the roads in the District and to on-going issues with public lighting maintenance in the District.

The Members acknowledged the unprecedented weather conditions and referred to a number of issues including the volume of potholes on roads and resulting damage to vehicles as a result, the number of patching units in the District, opening of inlets, lack of funding compared to the level of funding allocated to Active Travel projects.

In replying, the Senior Executive Engineer gave an update to the Members on the issues raised and stated while the 2024 road maintenance funding allocation remained similar to the 2023 allocation the challenges faced in the delivery of the overall Schedule of Works remained challenging due to considerable increasing costs of road materials. He also added the unprecedented weather is proving a major factor in the condition of all roads in the District. The Executive Engineer also gave an update to the Members on the insurance claims process.

Following further discussion, the Members unanimously adopted the Schedule of Works 2024 for the Municipal District of Newcastle West.

5. General Municipal Allocation (GMA)

On the proposal of Councillor Sheahan, seconded by Councillor Ruddle, it was agreed to allocate €5,000 to Athea Community Council.

On the proposal of Councillor Foley, seconded by Councillor Sheahan, it was agreed to allocate €1,000 to Fleadh by the Feale, Abbeyfeale.

On the proposal of Councillor Galvin, seconded by Councillor Foley, it was agreed to allocate €1,000 to Fleadh by the Feale, Abbeyfeale.

On the proposal of Councillor Galvin, seconded by Councillor Foley, it was agreed to allocate €2,000 to Broadford Community Development Association.

On the proposal of Councillor Galvin, seconded by Councillor Foley, it was agreed to allocate €2,000 to Glengurt National School, Tournafulla, for Sensory Room.

On the proposal of Councillor Galvin, seconded by Councillor Foley, it was agreed to allocate €1,000 to drainage works at Mountcollins and Athea.

On the proposal of Councillor Collins, seconded by Councillor Scanlan, it was agreed to allocate €700 to Killeedy GAA for seating in playground area.

On the proposal of Councillor Collins, seconded by Councillor Scanlan, it was agreed to allocate €3,000 to roadworks in Ballyagran.

On the proposal of Councillor Ruddle, seconded by Councillor Scanlan, it was agreed to allocate €2,000 to drainage works in Kilmeedy.

On the proposal of Councillor Ruddle, seconded by Councillor Scanlan, it was agreed to allocate €500 to St. Patrick's Day parade in Broadford.

On the proposal of Councillor Ruddle, seconded by Councillor Scanlan, it was to agreed to allocate €500 to St. Patrick's Day parade in Castlemahon.

The Director referred to the Strategic GMA Fund and following discussion, it was agreed to allocate €15,000 to Newcastle West Dog Park (which includes €10,000 from GMA Tourism, Development and Promotion, Newcastle West), €51,500 to Newcastle West Town Park and €51,500 to Abbeyfeale Town Park, which was proposed by Councillor Sheahan, seconded by Councillor Foley.

QUESTIONS

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

6. Question submitted by Councillor L. Galvin

I will ask at the next Meeting for a detailed update on the Abbeyfeale Traffic Management Plan.

REPLY:

Advance Works Contract

O'Kelly Brothers has prepared a sample of stonework for walls and are scheduled to return to site to complete walls at rear of Main Street and plastering to gable wall of Heavenly Gifts after Easter. The contractor is setting up a meeting with ESB and EIR for diversion of services on Colbert Terrace. Vegetation has been removed at Colbert Terrace and demolition will commence in tandem with works to rear of main street.

Phase 1 Killarney Road and Grove Crescent

Section 50 application lodged with OPW to upgrade culvert on Grove Crescent Car Park. Applications have been lodged with Irish Water and ESB for Diversion Agreements. Tender documents are nearing completion and due to advertised in April 2024.

7. Question submitted by Councillor L. Galvin

I will ask at the next Meeting for a costing to be carried out for a handrail from the bottom of the Giants Garden, Athea to the graveyard.

REPLY: Limerick City and County Council do not maintain this area. It is currently being maintained by Athea Community Council.

8. Question submitted by Councillor J. Scanlan

I will ask at the next Meeting that a study of local traffic volumes be undertaken at the River Arra and Bridge of Tears roundabout in Newcastle West.

REPLY: A traffic survey will be conducted within the month.

9. Question submitted by Councillor J. Scanlan

I will ask at the next Meeting when the present system for car parking payment will be digitalised.

REPLY: A sign will be put in place within the month at the Churchtown Car Park and there is the facility to use Park Magic in the town.

10. Question submitted by Councillor J. Scanlan

I will ask at the next Meeting(a) when can I expect the footpath extension from Kerry Group premises towards the speed limit at Clooneyskehane to commence and (b) those at Coolaboy, The Square, Dromcollogher to be carried out.

REPLY:

- (a) There is a design in progress through the NTA and it is likely that the design will be completed in 2024 and it will be prioritised for construction under future NTA programmes.
- (b) This will be considered later in 2024 should funding become available.

11. Question submitted by Councillor F. Foley

I will ask at the next Meeting for an update on safety works at Lyons Cross, Abbeyfeale.

REPLY: This project is included under the General Maintenance Safety Scheme 2024.

12. Question submitted by Councillor F. Foley

I will ask at the next Meeting for an update on the footpath in Mountcollins on the Abbeyfeale side.

REPLY: Mountcollins Village is included under the NTA 2024 footpath scheme.

13. Question submitted by Councillor F. Foley

I will ask at the next Meeting for an update on the road resurfacing at New Street, Abbeyfeale.

REPLY: This project is included under the Schedule of Municipal District Works 2024 as an overlay scheme.

NOTICES OF MOTION

14. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor L. Galvin

I will move at the next Meeting that a pedestrian crossing be placed in the vicinity of the Town Park in Abbeyfeale.

The Motion was seconded by Councillor Foley.

REPLY: We have forwarded this request to TII for their observations and comments on this request.

In proposing the Motion, Councillor Galvin referred to the width of the roadway and public safety at this location and requested that a pedestrian crossing be placed near the Town Park in Abbeyfeale. In replying, the Senior Executive Engineer agreed to follow up on this matter with Transport Infrastructure Ireland.

15. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor L. Galvin

I will move at the next Meeting that immediate steps be taken to seek funding for drainage works from Harnett's Funeral Home up to Clash. This stream is known as the Glórach.

The Motion was seconded by Councillor Foley.

REPLY:

Under the Drainage Grant, the Roads Area District will procure a consultant to investigate flow data over a prolonged period to determine the proper pipe sizes to cater for future flows in this catchment. An assessment of the impact of future developments within this catchment will also be analysed. The existing pipeline is 900mm diameter and depending on the outcome of the study may require upgrading and funding will be sought then.

In proposing the Motion, Councillor Galvin referred to funding for proposed drainage works from Harnett's Funeral Home to Clash Road Abbeyfeale and requested a design and costing be prepared for these works. Following discussion, the Senior Executive Engineer stated that funding has been secured to carry out a design of the pipeline and consultants are currently being sought with a view to having design complete by end of 2024.

At this stage, Councillor Galvin left the Meeting.

It was agreed that Notices of Motion No. 16 and No. 17 on the Agenda would be taken simultaneously.

16. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor T. Ruddle

I will move at the next Meeting that the footpath at Kilmeedy be extended around the bend towards Ballingarry road where the L6041 from Kilmeedy joins the L6042 Ballingarry road.

The Motion was seconded by Councillor Sheahan.

REPLY: It is proposed that the current speed limit will be extended as far as this junction in 2024 and it could be considered if additional money is available from the NTA in 2024.

In proposing the Motion, Councillor Ruddle requested that the footpath be extended at the above location.

17. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor T. Ruddle

I will move at the next Meeting that the Council consider extending the speed limit from Kilmeedy Village L6041 before it joins the L6042 Ballingarry road as this would be in line with the recent upgrade of footpaths.

The Motion was seconded by Councillor Sheahan.

REPLY: It is proposed that the current speed limit will be extended as far as this junction in 2024.

In proposing the Motion, Councillor Ruddle requested that the Council consider extending the speed limit on the L6041 Kilmeedy Village before it joins the L6042 Ballingarry road.

18. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor J. Scanlan

I will move at the next Meeting that drainage works enabling road renewal be undertaken along the Glenduff approach to the windmills.

The Motion was seconded by Councillor Ruddle.

REPLY: Funding has been set aside in our drainage scheme 2024 and these works will be concluded during the summer of 2024.

In proposing the Motion, Councillor Scanlan referred to the appalling condition of the road and in replying the Senior Executive Engineer stated that road works have commenced at this location this week.

19. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor J. Scanlan

I will move at the next Meeting that car parking arrangements in Newcastle West town be reviewed.

The Motion was seconded by Councillor Sheahan.

REPLY: We will review parking arrangements throughout the town of Newcastle West.

In proposing the Motion, Councillor Scanlan referred to the reduction in car parking spaces in the town of Newcastle West and requested that additional car parking spaces be sourced in the town.

20. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor M. Collins

I will move at the next Meeting that Limerick City and County Council replace and repair the concrete steps and footpath locally known as the Mass Path from Maiden Street to Assumpta Park, Newcastle West.

The Motion was seconded by Councillor Scanlan.

REPLY: This project is included under the Schedule of Municipal District Works 2024.

In proposing the Motion, Councillor Collins referred to the dangerous condition of the concrete steps and footpath at the Mass Path, Newcastle West. In replying, the Senior Executive Engineer stated that repair works are to be carried out at this location under General Municipal Allocation.

The following items were also raised.

An update was sought on the provision of a light for Holy Cross cemetery in Athea. In replying, the Senior Executive Engineer agreed to seek an update from the relevant Directorate on this matter.

Reference was made to the ongoing issue of street lights not working in the District and to Enerveo who are contracted by the Council to provide and maintain public lighting for the District. Following discussion, the Director agreed to liaise with the relevant Directorate on this matter and revert in due course to Members.

An update was sought on the Newcastle West Town Centre Public Realm Plan and in replying, the Senior Executive Engineer agreed to seek an update from the relevant Directorate on this matter for the next Meeting.

An update was sought on the application made to Transport Infrastructure Ireland for traffic calming measures at Dalton's Cross, Abbeyfeale. In replying, the Executive Engineer agreed

to seek an update from Transport Infrastructure Ireland with regard to funding for these works.

Reference was made to a public liability incident regarding a burst tyre on the R515 and to the subsequent submission of an insurance claim for this incident. A request was made to have this matter followed up with the relevant Directorate.

Reference was made to the issue of speeding and the use of average speed cameras in the District.

Reference was made to a proposed future housing development at Cois Na Feile, Abbeyfeale and a query was raised on the surface water capacity for additional houses at this location. The Senior Executive Engineer agreed to follow up this matter with the Planning Department and revert in due course to Members.

It was agreed to hold the May Meeting of the District on Wednesday, 1st May, 2024, at 10.00 a.m., at Áras William Smith OBrien. With the permission of the Cathaoirleach, it was proposed by Councillor Ruddle, seconded by Councillor Foley and agreed by all that the June Meeting of the District would not take place until after the Local Elections which are to be held on the 7th June, 2024.

This concluded the Meeting.

Signed:

Cathaoirleach

Dated:
