

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS AT MEETING OF THE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF NEWCASTLE WEST HELD IN ÁRAS WILLIAM SMITH OBRIEN, NEWCASTLE WEST, CO. LIMERICK, ON WEDNESDAY, 2ND OCTOBER, 2024, AT 10AM.

PRESENT IN THE CHAIR:

Councillor L. Galvin, Cathaoirleach.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Councillors Collins, Foley, Ruddle, Scanlan and Sheahan.

OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE:

Director, Planning and Place-Making (Mr. V. Murray), Meetings Administrator, Newcastle West (Ms. H. Supple), Senior Executive Engineer, Newcastle West Municipal District (Mr. J. Sheehan), Executive Engineer, Roads (Mr. P. Vallely), Senior Executive Technician, Active Travel (Ms. C. Gallagher), Senior Executive Officer, Strategy and Non LA Housing Construction (Ms. S. Newell), Senior Engineer, LA Housing Construction and Maintenance (Mr. B. Kidney), Administrative Officer, Property Management (Ms. A. Crowe), Clerical Officer, Newcastle West (Ms. A. Lenihan).

At the outset of the Meeting, Councillor Galvin welcomed everyone in attendance to the October Meeting of the District.

1. Adoption of Minutes

- (a) Circulated, copy of draft Minutes of Meeting of Municipal District of Newcastle West, held on 4th September, 2024.

Proposed by: Councillor Ruddle

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. Deputation

The Cathaoirleach welcomed representatives from the Broadford Development Association to the Meeting. The deputation consisted of Ms. Mary Lee Geary, Mr. Michael Pierce and Mr. Micheál Reidy,

Ms. Geary addressed the Meeting and welcomed the opportunity to outline to the Members the current situation with regard to safety concerns at the Gamuisce bridge on the R515 at Broadford.

Mr. Reidy stated that the R515 at the Gamuisce bridge is a very busy roadway and a large volume of traffic traverse this roadway daily. He stated that children and adults from the locality use this roadway to walk to school and to access the local soccer club. He made reference to the bridge being very narrow and outlined to the Members the current safety concerns with regard to cars and pedestrians using this bridge simultaneously. The provision of a footbridge in the interests of safety to pedestrians including children and elderly people was raised. The acquisition of land at this location was referred to and in replying, Mr. Reidy stated that the land is privately owned but can be acquired from the landowners. The representatives from Broadford Development Association also acknowledged the excellent work carried out on the footpaths in Broadford this year.

The Cathaoirleach stated that further contact would be made with the representatives of Broadford Development Association on the above matter.

The Members thanked the delegation for their attendance. All the Members unanimously agreed that work is needed to be carried out to this bridge in the interest of safety. Following a detailed discussion on a proposed solution, it was agreed that a design and costing would be carried out to ensure safety of all users on this roadway and that in the interim, temporary safety measures would be put in place at this location. It was also agreed that a further update would be given to the Members on this matter.

4. Housing Development Directorate

To receive Update from the Housing Directorate for the Newcastle West Municipal District.

Circulated, report of Senior Executive Officer, Strategy and Non LA Housing Construction dated 3rd September, 2024.

The Senior Executive Officer, Strategy and Non LA Housing Construction provided a six monthly summary update on the Housing Delivery for the District. The Senior Engineer also gave an update to the Members on Local Authority housing schemes in Broadford, Ardagh and Sycamore Crescent, Newcastle West.

A discussion followed and the Members referred to a number of matters including housing projects in progress in the District, various timeframes and the number of outstanding

housing maintenance cases on Dynamics CRM. The success of compulsorily acquisition of property to bring properties from derelict into occupancy was acknowledged. The sewage capacity at wastewater treatment plants, securing contractors and the housing maintenance budget was also raised.

Following the September Municipal District Meeting, an update was sought on the disposal of property at 14 Bóthar Buí, Newcastle West, why this property was not retained by the Council and the cut off points where the Council do not consider a property viable to refurbish. In replying, the Senior Engineer, Housing Directorate stated that a number of properties were being refurbished in the District at the time and that when the property became available, the Council did not have sufficient staffing resources to refurbish this property.

The Members thanked the Senior Executive Officer and the Senior Engineer for the housing update and attendance at the Meeting.

5. Transportation and Mobility Directorate

To Consider Proposed Safe Routes to School works currently under Section 38 at Kells Cross, Dromcollgher.

Circulated, report of Senior Executive Technician, Active Travel, dated October, 2024.

The Senior Executive Technician, addressed the Meeting and gave a Presentation to the Members on proposed safe routes to school works under Section 38 at Kells Cross, Dromcollgher.

She stated that the proposed works are to take place from the junction R515 and R519, for 200m approximately passing Hazelwood College school entrance.

The Senior Executive Technician referred to the aims of the Programme which are to improve safety at the school gate, alleviate congestion and improve access. She outlined various issues in the vicinity of the school which include traffic moving through the junction of the R515 and R519 at speed, traffic moving through the set down area at speed and traffic coming into the school zone at high speed from the Kilmeedy direction.

She stated that to-date engagement has taken place with the Safe Routes to School Officer, the School Principal and nearby residents. She outlined to the Members the various traffic calming measures which are proposed at the R515/R519 junction.

In conclusion, the Senior Executive Technician gave an update to the Members on the next steps in the process. She made reference to commencement of works during the October mid-term break and that an anticipated two week build programme for the works is expected.

Following the presentation, the Members welcomed safety measures at this location but however raised a number of queries including what engagement had taken place with the Board of Management of the school, the number of students driving to school and the

provision of car parking within the school. Concerns were raised with regard to the layout of the junction, the need for a proper set down/drop off area, the provision for car parking and if there is any adjoining land available for car parking. Reference was made to the school bus service and to the use of the school bus service, which is to be encouraged.

The Director referred to the tight timeframes for delivery of the proposed works during the School Mid-Term Break in October.

Following discussion, the Senior Executive Technician agreed to revert to the Members on this matter.

6. General Municipal Allocation (GMA)

On the proposal of Councillor Collins, seconded by Councillor Scanlan, it was agreed to allocate €500 to Knockane Grotto Committee.

On the proposal of Councillor Collins, seconded by Councillor Scanlan, it was agreed to allocate €2,000 to Newcastle West Rugby Football Club.

Following a General Municipal Allocation (GMA) Workshop held with the Members prior to commencement of the District Meeting to discuss a review of the GMA application process, it was proposed by Councillor Collins, seconded by Councillor Ruddle and agreed by all, that GMA application forms would be submitted in advance of the District Meeting. It was also agreed that a revised application form will be circulated to all Members in the District.

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.

7. Question submitted by Councillor J. Scanlan

I will ask at the next Meeting when the trees and vegetation on the Old Mill side of Evergreen Court will be cleared, also those backing the nearby Grotto so as to enhance safety locally.

REPLY: The land referred to is Council owned land and Limerick City and County Council are in a position to have this cut within the next month.

8. Question submitted by Councillor J. Scanlan

I will ask at the next Meeting when public lighting at the entrance to the Liosán Development will be upgraded.

REPLY: The existing light no. 13 on Sheehan's Road has been upgraded to LED. The lights within the Liosán Development will be upgraded to LED as part Limerick

City and County Council's participation in the South West Region Public Light Energy Efficiency Project (PLEEP).

9. Question submitted by Councillor J. Scanlan

I will ask at the next Meeting when much needed safety measures will be put in place at the Old Camas Road junction at Clounsherick, Newcastle West.

REPLY: Works will be carried out at this location before the end of October.

10. Question submitted by Councillor L. Galvin

I will ask at the next Meeting for an update on the footpath connecting the Devon Hotel to the local G.A.A. field and also an update on the stacking lane at Dore's Cross, Templeglantine.

REPLY: The current proposal is with TII for approval to allow the scheme to progress to preliminary design. Limerick City and County Council have been in discussions with TII's Safety Implementation Team with respect to making funding available, while also exploring alternative funding options from TII. We will continue to follow up on this scheme and provide an update once available.

11. Question submitted by Councillor L. Galvin

I will ask at the next Meeting for an update on the Low Cost Safety Schemes for the following junctions (a) Dromtrasna L7114 (b) Broadford L7017 (c) Athea L7085.

REPLY: Temporary works will be carried out at these junctions to improve sightlines before the end of October and funding will be applied for through the Low Cost Safety Scheme 2025 from the Department of Transport.

NOTICES OF MOTION

12. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor T. Ruddle

I will move at the next Meeting that the Council put in place a Plan to encourage more people to vote in the Local Elections going forward, considering the low turnout of voters in Newcastle West town and the general Newcastle West Municipal District.

The Motion was seconded by Councillor Collins.

REPLY:

The Electoral Commission and Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage ran campaigns to promote voter participation prior to recent electoral events and will continue

to promote participation.

The Register of Electors Team, Corporate Services Governance and Customer Services Department ran an awareness campaign encouraging more people to register to vote.

The team will, pending resources, undertake to explore initiatives to promote public awareness in advance of Local Elections, with the possibility of visiting schools to promote pre-registration, taking a stand at the Limerick Show and a leaflet drop to raise awareness of the role a Councillor has in making decisions for their local area.

The team will also continue to engage with the Electoral Commission and Department to co-ordinate campaigns to increase participation.

In proposing the Motion, Councillor Ruddle referred to the marked Register of Electors and the need to encourage more people to vote at the Elections. Following discussion, the Members requested that the Register of Electors for the District be reviewed to ensure that records are accurate and kept up to date. The Members also made reference to anyone on the Register who has not voted for a number of years and if this could be addressed. In replying, the Meetings Administrator agreed to revert to the relevant Directorate on this matter.

13. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor T. Ruddle

I will move at the next Meeting (a) Can signage be erected to get cars to slow down in the Demesne car park next to Newcastle West Town soccer field (b) Can signage be erected at the entrance to the Demesne letting people know where there is car parking available.

The Motion was seconded by Councillor Collins.

REPLY: Signage will be erected at these locations within the next two weeks.

In proposing the Motion, Councillor Ruddle referred to the importance of having signage in place to direct members of the public to where car parking is located. The provision of car parking at the Community Centre car park and if this car park could be made available for the town was raised. It was agreed that the Senior Executive Engineer would discuss this matter with representatives of the Community Centre and revert to the Members on this matter.

14. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor J. Scanlan

I will move at the next Meeting that a Municipal wide survey be undertaken of trees affected by Ash Dieback to ensure connectivity and safety on our Regional and Local Roads.

The Motion was seconded by Councillor Collins.

REPLY:

Limerick City and County Council Roads Department do not implement any control measure to deal with the effects of Hymenoscyphus Fraxineus (Ashdieback) on roadside trees. It is up to the landowner or property owner to maintain trees and hedges along their property road boundaries as per Section 70 of the Roads Act.

In the context of public trees, the Council is taking a more proactive approach to tree maintenance as cases arise through the DYNAMICS CRM platform. When a case is submitted for a particular tree in a housing estate, the Council inspects all trees in the housing estate. If there are ash trees present, they are checked for evidence of ash dieback. These trees will be monitored and the Council will address on a case by case basis and may carry out remedial works where necessary.

In the longer term, the tree policy, recognises the potential danger of ash dieback. The policy proposes to assess the threat posed to public trees from it and develop an action plan to manage the threat to public trees. However, there is no budget allocated to deal with this issue going forward.

In proposing the Motion, Councillor Scanlan referred to the dangers associated with ash trees affected by Ashdieback and a discussion took place on this matter. The costs involved for landowners in having a Traffic Management Plan and tree surgeon in place to remove these trees was also raised.

15. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor J. Scanlan

I will move at the next Meeting that the footpaths along Bóthar Buí, Newcastle West, be upgraded.

The Motion was seconded by Councillor Collins.

REPLY: Footpaths at Bóthar Buí can be considered for NTA Works 2025 subject to Department approval.

In proposing the Motion, Councillor Scanlan referred to the need for footpaths along Bóthar Buí, Newcastle West and other locations in the District. An update was also sought on the petition which was submitted for the provision of traffic calming measures at Bóthar Buí and it was agreed that a site meeting would be arranged to discuss this matter further.

16. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor L. Galvin

I will move at the next Meeting that a safety audit be carried out in Collins Park, Abbeyfeale, in the following areas: (a) Parking especially the section from House No. 38 to 51 and House No. 60 to 77, (b) All footpaths within the estate, (c) Road markings (d) Signage (e) Rights of way, back yards to be upgraded and drainage issues to be addressed at House No. 32 to 37 and House No. 39 to 42.

The Motion was seconded by Councillor Sheahan.

REPLY:

A needs analysis on the public roads, road markings, footpaths and signage can be carried out at Collins Park by the Roads Department and a costing will be compiled subject to funding being achieved at earliest in 2025. Rights of way and upgrades to back yards will have to be investigated by the Housing Section.

In proposing the Motion, Councillor Galvin referred to the issue of car parking within Collins Park housing estate and the need for the emergency vehicles to be able to gain access to the estate when required. Councillor Galvin also made reference to drainage issues, condition of footpaths and provision of car parking within the estate.

In replying, the Executive Engineer stated that a survey will be carried out, a costing prepared and any proposed works is subject to available funding being available in 2025.

17. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor L. Galvin

I will move at the next Meeting that this Council identify a location for a bus stop at Barnagh and call on Bus Éireann to provide a bus stop at Barnagh Gardens and also call on the Local Link to provide a bus service from Athea to Abbeyfeale.

The Motion was seconded by Councillor Scanlan.

REPLY:

- (a) Active Travel will assess the potential for a bus stop at Barnagh.
- (b) Active Travel will liaise with Local Link in relation to the possibility of bus service from Athea to Abbeyfeale.

In proposing the Motion, Councillor Galvin requested that the Council ask for a local link service to be provided from Athea to Abbeyfeale and that contact be made with Bus Éireann with regard to having an official bus stop at Barnagh Gardens. Reference was also made to the expanding the age limit for children under the terms of the free travel scheme and the need for having free travel made available in rural areas.

The following items were also raised.

An update was sought on a costing to be carried out for the renovation of Daly's building on Main Street, Abbeyfeale. In replying, the Director stated that the Heritage Department are in the process of appointing a Quantity Surveyor to obtain costs for the necessary repairs to the building in accordance with the Preservation Order on the building.

An update was sought on the repair of the boundary wall at Reilig Íde Naofa, The Hill, Abbeyfeale, and in replying, the Director stated that tender documents are to issue this week. An update was also sought on the provision of a new burial ground for Abbeyfeale.

An update was sought on the western wall of the new graveyard in Templeglantine and the provision of footpaths in the graveyard.

It was agreed that an item would be placed on the November agenda to Discuss Housing Maintenance Budget in the District and that a breakdown of money spent on housing maintenance in the District would be sought from the relevant Directorate. In replying, the Senior Engineer, agreed to follow up on this matter.

The issue public lighting in the District was raised. In replying, the Senior Executive Engineer stated that Skyline, the new contractor for public lighting will be in place on the 1st December, 2024, but in the interim, the contractor LPK will manage emergency street lights which are out of order in the District.

The provision of continuous white lining in Feohanagh village was raised and in replying, the Senior Executive Engineer stated that these works are to be carried out shortly.

The 30km/h signage which was put in place at The Paddocks Estate, Newcastle West was acknowledged.

It was agreed that a Workshop on the Community Initiative Scheme would take place at 9.15 a.m., in Áras William Smith OBrien.

It was agreed that a Workshop on the Draft Budgetary Plan Budget 2025 for the Municipal District of Newcastle West would take place at 9.30 a.m., at Áras William Smith OBrien.

It was agreed to hold the April Meeting of the District on Wednesday, 6th November, 2024, at 10.00 a.m., at Áras William Smith OBrien.

This concluded the Meeting.

Signed:

Cathaoirleach

Dated:
