

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS AT MONTHLY MEETING OF THE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF ADARE-RATHKEALE HELD IN ST. MARY'S NATIONAL SCHOOL, HIGH STREET, CROOM, CO. LIMERICK ON TUESDAY, 13TH MAY, 2025 AT 9.30 A.M.

PRESENT IN THE CHAIR:

Councillor A. Teskey, An Cathaoirleach.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Councillors Collins, Hartigan, Keary, O'Donoghue and Ward.

OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE:

Meetings Administrator (Ms. K. Butler), Senior Executive Engineer, Roads, Traffic and Cleansing (Mr. G. O'Connor), Executive Engineer, Roads, Traffic and Cleansing (Mr. J. O'Keeffe), A/Senior Executive Officer, Municipal Districts (Ms. K. White), A/Senior Engineer, Transport Strategy (Ms. N. McGarry), Clerical Officer (Ms. L. Lenihan).

APOLOGIES:

Director of Service, Planning and Place-Making (Mr. V. Murray).

At the outset of the Meeting the Cathaoirleach welcomed everyone to St. Mary's National School and thanked Mr. Emmett Murphy, Principal, for facilitating the May District Meeting at the school.

1. Adoption of Minutes

Circulated, copy of draft Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of the Municipal District of Adare-Rathkeale held on 8th April, 2025.

Proposed by Councillor Keary;
Seconded by Councillor Collins;
And Resolved:

"That the draft Minutes, as circulated, be taken as read, 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 interest was declared.

3. Disposal of Land

Circulated, report of the Head of Property Management dated 7th April, 2025 setting out proposals for the disposal of 0.0147 acres (0.0059 hectares) of land at Ballyadam, Askeaton, Co. Limerick and the intention to bring the Section 183 Notice to Full Council for approval.

The report, as circulated, was proposed by Councillor Collins, seconded by Councillor Keary and agreed.

4. Deputation from Croom National School Parents Association

The Cathaoirleach welcomed representatives from Croom National School to the Meeting. The Deputation consisted of Mr. Emmett Murphy, Principal, Mr. Pádraig Wallace, Deputy Principal, Ms. Triona O'Dea, Parents Association and Board of Management Member and Darren Feldon, Architect and Head of Design Team.

It was agreed Item 8 on the Agenda would be taken in connection with this item.

8. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor J. O'Donoghue

I will move at the next Meeting that Limerick City and County Council give a commitment to the completion of the section of road from the L1408 via Camogue Park to the rear of the extended boundary of Croom National School.

The Motion was proposed by Councillor O'Donoghue, seconded by Councillor Hartigan and agreed.

REPLY:

Limerick City and County Council fully support the expansion of Croom NS and the associated new entrance subject to appropriate planning permission. The Croom Distributor Road has been delivered to date through collaboration and funding from the following agencies:

Funding Sources on Croom Distributor Road Scheme	EURO
Limerick City and County Council	€ 2,561,930.21
Limerick & Clare Educational and Training Board	€ 750,000.00
Dept. of Transport	€ 1,350,000.00
	€ 4,661,930.21

While Limerick City and County Council support the principle of providing a new entrance to the school as per the current proposal, there is no further funding committed to this scheme.

Mr. Murphy gave Members a brief outline of the background to the educational facilities provided at St. Mary's National School. He advised the school currently does not have an assembly centre and access to sports amenities. He also outlined concerns in relation to access to the school and advised he had met with officials from Limerick City and County Council who informed him it would not be possible to upgrade the existing entrance to the school and alternative access would have to be found.

Ms. O'Dea, Parents Association and Board of Management Member, informed Members 40 metres of roadway is required from the current road infrastructure adjacent to the school property, however, the Department of Education have advised the Board of Management that they can only fund works associated with the school and boundary and not road access to the school. Ms. O'Dea advised Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board (LCETB) have generously donated a site to allow a safe access road to the school, however, she was of the opinion Limerick City and County Council have a duty of care to provide safe access for all to the school.

Mr. Murphy concluded by asking all Members to advocate and support the Board of Managements request to fund the construction of a new entrance for the safety of the staff and children of Croom National School.

Discussion ensued and Members advised they were unanimous in supporting this project. Councillor Keary added however the onus is on the Department of Education to provide safety measures for all entering the school adding the Minister for Education has a role in providing the remaining funding to deliver this project.

The A/Senior Executive Officer, Municipal Districts advised Vincent Murray, Director of Service, Planning and Place-Making was unable to attend the Meeting and read the following on his behalf into the record of the Meeting:

"I refer to Notice of Motion that has been submitted to the Council by Cllr. John O'Donoghue in relation to CROOM DISTRIBUTOR ROAD - Camoge Park to rear of extended boundary Croom National School and would advise you of the following additional information in relation to the information provided in the Notice of Motion response.

In relation to the next section of new distributor road, I have had meetings with the school principal Emmett Murphy and Councillors in relation to this proposed section of road of circa 50 odd metres that the school needs to permit them to commence construction on a large extension at the rear of the existing Croom National School. This section of roads also open up the adjoining lands that are currently zoned community.

- *There is a large school extension and upgrade works proposed to Croom National School of circa €5m.*
- *Significant lands have been acquired and have been transferred from the ETB to the Board of Management of the school to facilitate this new extension and upgrade works.*

- *I am advised that the developer who owns the land where this short section of road is proposed to be constructed has agreed in principle to consent to the construction of the road on his lands or to transfer this land free of charge so that the road can be constructed.*

In relation to the funding to build the road I have spoken with Active Travel and this road is not eligible for safe routes to school funding in 2025, however they have indicated that they would be open to put in an application in 2026 to cover the cost of the active travel elements (Footpaths & Cyclepaths).

This section of road would provide a direct access between the National School and the new Secondary School the as well as all the new adjacent housing and lead to a significant reduction in travel for school trips.

I have asked Active Travel to provide a costing for the construction of this road and they have estimated a cost of circa €300,000 to €350,000 for this short section of road.

I am currently examining how this section of road can be funded and whilst no funding is currently confirmed, I am hoping that it may be funded from a combination of sources including;

- 1. A contribution from Active Travel towards the provision of pedestrian and cycle facilities on the road for safe access to school (2026)*
- 2. A contribution from the new Development Contribution Scheme 2025-2030. (Maybe over 2 years)*
- 3. A contribution from the Department of Education (The school has advised that currently there is no money available from the Dept. of Education so this may not happen, however it should be noted they are making a huge contribution to Croom with circa a €5m investment at the school)*

I will move to bring a Memo to Management Board with The Transport Director to support the construction of this section of road to provide access to the rear of the national school which will allow the school to make a positive decision to move ahead with a planning application. In this regard and with the support of Management Board we can provide a letter to the school to support their planning application once funding is agreed.

This would be subject also to getting confirmation that the land for the road will be made available at no cost.

NOTE:

A number of people have identified that the remainder of the Distributor Road should be developer led, there is a current issue in Croom with Waste Water Treatment Capacity at the Waste water Treatment Plant and Uisce Éireann will not consent to any additional large scale housing developments until the plant has been upgraded”.

The Delegation thanked Members for the opportunity to discuss their concerns and they then withdrew from the Meeting.

5. Briefing from Tusla on the fostering process

The Cathaoirleach welcomed Ms. Jeanette Seymour from Tusla to the Meeting. Ms. Seymour gave Members a presentation on the fostering process advising foster carers are urgently required for all aspects of fostering as there are over 6,000 children currently in foster care in Ireland and over 3,000 foster carers. She advised Tusla foster carers are diverse and come from all walks of life and must possess the qualities and skills that can make a real difference to a child's life, giving them a safe and loving home.

Ms. Seymour concluded advising anyone who wishes to become a foster carer can complete an application form on the Tusla website. Once they submit an application form they will undergo an assessment to determine their suitability, this will include background checks and an interview. All applicants are then required to complete a foster induction course and training program prior to being approved as a foster carer. She advised applicants can apply on www.fostering.ie or by phoning 1800 226 771.

Councillor Teskey thanked Ms. Seymour for her presentation adding the fostering process is a huge success in Ireland and concluded by asking if Ms. Seymour could advise the Tusla agency that Members have been unsuccessful in meeting with them to discuss the behaviour of children under the age of 18 in the town of Rathkeale during the Christmas period. Ms. Seymour agreed to take the request back to the Department dealing with these issues adding Members also needed to contact An Garda Síochána to discuss their concerns.

6. Transport and Mobility Directorate

District Engineers Report

Circulated, report of the Senior Executive Engineer, Roads, Traffic and Cleansing dated 13th May, 2025 outlining details of proposed works, projects and future projects planned for the District.

The report, as circulated, was noted by Members.

7. General Municipal Allocation (GMA)

On the proposal of Councillor Collins, seconded by Councillor O'Donoghue it was agreed to allocate the following:

- €1,000 to Pallaskenry Tidy Towns.
- € 500 to Pallaskenry Senior Citizens.
- €1,500 to Crecora/Manister GAA Club.

On the proposal of Councillor Hartigan, seconded by Councillor Teskey it was agreed to allocate the following:

- €1,000 to Pallaskenry Playground.
- €1,000 to Pallaskenry Senior Citizens.
- €1,800 to Pallaskenry Tidy Towns.
- €1,000 to Patrick Sarsfield Homecoming Project.

On the proposal of Councillor O'Donoghue, seconded by Councillor Hartigan, it was agreed to allocate the following:

- €1,000 to Croom Mens Shed.
- €2,000 to Our Lady's Abbey National School, Adare.
- €2,500 to Croom Family Resource Centre.
- €2,500 to Creora/Manister GAA Club.

On the proposal of Councillor Teskey, seconded by Councillor Keary, it was agreed to allocate €3,000 to Rathkeale Church of Ireland.

On the proposal of Councillor Ward, seconded by Councillor Teskey, it was agree to allocate the following:

- €1,000 to Pallaskenry Playground.
- €1,000 to Pallaskenry Senior Citizens.
- €1,000 to Pallaskenry Tidy Towns.

NOTICES OF MOTION

9. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor J. O'Donoghue

I will move at the next Meeting that we write to the Department of Transport and ask that anyone using an e-scooter or an e-bike in a public place should hold a valid theory test that displays their knowledge on the rules of the road.

The Motion was proposed by Councillor O'Donoghue, seconded by Councillor Teskey and agreed.

In proposing the Motion Councillor O'Donoghue noted these modes of transport are designed with good intentions however some users appear to not have sufficient knowledge of the rules of the road to operate them safely, therefore, users should be required to take a valid theory test and be licenced to operate same.

REPLY: The concern for road safety is noted, especially with the increasing use of e-scooters and e-bikes. While encouraging better understanding of the rules of the road is a positive step, we would like to raise a few points for consideration.

Firstly, the enforcement of e-scooter/e-bike user behaviour in a public place is a matter for An Garda Síochána.

Secondly, the practicality of requiring all e-scooter and e-bike users to pass a theory test could present enforcement challenges, especially given the casual and spontaneous way many people use these modes of transport. It may also disproportionately affect those who rely on these affordable and sustainable options for commuting or short distance travel.

Finally, current legislation already treats many e-scooters as vehicles requiring insurance and licensing, though enforcement varies. Perhaps in tandem with / instead of introducing a new requirement for a theory test, we could advocate for better education campaigns and clearer guidance from the Department of Transport.

We would support a motion that encourages the Department to improve public awareness of the rules of the road for these vehicles, but would caution the introduction of regulatory burdens that may not be practical to implement.

10. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor A. Teskey

I will move at the next Meeting given the fact the Council has honoured its obligations with the Department of Social Protection in its two year contract at Bank of Ireland, this premises be offered now for use in the provision of Library Services in Askeaton.

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

In proposing the Motion Councillor Teskey requested the District write to Sonja Reidy, Senior Executive Officer, Limerick Metropolitan District requesting she communicate with the Property Department to transfer the use of the Bank of Ireland building in Askeaton to Limerick City and County Council's Library Services when it becomes vacant later in the year.

Following discussion Councillor Teskey requested the relevant staff dealing with the retrofit for both the Bank of Ireland in Askeaton and Rathkeale attend a future meeting of the District to discuss their future uses. The A/Senior Executive Officer, Municipal Districts agreed to follow up and revert to Members in due course.

REPLY: The Carnegie Library in Askeaton cannot offer an expanded library service on its current site. Accommodating a full passenger lift to the vacant second floor is not possible. Therefore, universal public access, which is essential for the Public Library Service, is not achievable.

The former Bank of Ireland building could provide an enhanced library offer.

- a. In terms of location, the bank site has more prominence, is more visible and accessible than the Carnegie Library.
- b. It is within walking distance to pre-schools, primary and secondary schools.
- c. It has secure gated grounds, allowing opportunities for outdoor Library activities.
- d. It is a well-maintained building, with an open plan ground floor enabling universal access. It has ample area on the ground floor to accommodate modern library facilities and functions with an existing disability access ramp at the entrance door.

The upgrade of the building completed in the last two years has enhanced its potential as a Library, after its use by Social Protection. However, if the building were to become available, its adaptation and fit-out as a modern public library would be subject to capital funding from the Department of Social Protection; and Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht.

11. A.O.B

- Councillor Teskey proposed a vote of sympathy for the following people:
Garda Kevin Flatley, Dublin who lost his life in the line of duty.
George Stacpoole, Adare.
James O'Donoghue, Askeaton who lost his life in a road traffic accident.
This was seconded by Councillor Collins and agreed.
- Councillor Collins requested Tom Enright, Ryder Cup Project Director be invited to a future meeting of the Municipal District.
- Councillor Teskey requested a visit to Fairhill Residential Caravan Park, Rathkeale to view the upgrade works currently taking place on the site.
- Councillor Keary requested Limerick City and County Council carry out maintenance works to clean up the area around the old hospital building in Foynes prior to the event taking place at the Foynes Flying Boat Museum in June this year.
- Councillor Keary requested an update on the Ballywilliam Housing Estate, Rathkeale for the next District Meeting.

- Councillor O'Donoghue requested the Executive follow up on the new reduced speed limits not being policed from Anhid Cross to Chawkes Cross.
- Councillor Collins asked for an update on the sale of the Shannon House, Foynes, Co. Limerick which does not hold a valid Publican's Licence. The A/Senior Executive Officer, Municipal Districts agreed to follow up and revert to Members in due course.
- The A/Senior Executive Officer, Municipal Districts advised Members The Cemeteries Section has requested a Private Workshop be convened with Members to discuss cemeteries funding and maintenance. The Cathaoirleach agreed to convene this workshop at 9am prior to the June Municipal District Meeting on Tuesday 10th June, 2025.

This concluded the Meeting.

Signed:

Cathaoirleach

Dated:
