

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS AT MEETING OF THE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF NEWCASTLE WEST HELD IN ÁRAS WILLIAM SMITH OBRIEN, NEWCASTLE WEST, CO. LIMERICK, ON TUESDAY, 6TH MAY, 2025, AT 10AM.

PRESENT IN THE CHAIR:

Councillor L. Galvin, Cathaoirleach.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Councillors Collins, Foley, Ruddle, Scanlan and Sheahan.

OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE:

Director, Rural, Culture, Community and Tourism Development (Mr. S. Duclot), A/Senior Executive Officer, Municipal Districts (Ms. K. White), Meetings Administrator, Newcastle West (Ms. H. Supple), Senior Executive Engineer, Newcastle West Municipal District (Mr. J. Sheehan), Executive Engineer, Roads (Mr. P. Vallely), Senior Engineer, Environment and Climate Action (Mr. A. Finn), Senior Executive Technician, Environment and Climate Action (Mr. B. Henry), Executive Parks and Landscape Officer, Environment and Climate Action (Mr. M. Smalis), Senior Executive Technician, Active Travel (Ms. C. Gallagher), Senior Engineer, LA Housing Construction and Maintenance (Mr. B. Kidney), Administrative Officer, Strategy and Non LA Housing Construction (Mr. J. Hayes), Administrative Officer, Housing Support (Ms. K. O'Grady), Senior Executive Librarian, Libraries, Gallery and Museum (Ms. N. O'Neill), Clerical Officer, Newcastle West (Ms. A. Lenihan).

At the outset of the Meeting, Councillor Galvin welcomed everyone in attendance to the May Meeting of the District. The Cathaoirleach also welcomed Ms. Kathleen White, A/SEO for the Municipal Districts to the Meeting.

1. Adoption of Minutes

- (a) Circulated, copy of draft Minutes of Meeting of Municipal District of Newcastle West, held on 4th June, 2025.

Proposed by: Councillor Foley

Seconded by: Councillor Scanlan

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 Dromcollogher26 Commemoration Group to the Meeting. The Deputation consisted of Mr. Gerard Keyes, Chairperson, Ms. Eileen Twomey, Mr. Pat Lordan, Mr. Gerard Madigan and Mr. Ger Greaney.

Mr. Keyes addressed the Meeting and welcomed the opportunity to outline to the Members the facts and details of the events leading up to the Cinema Fire Disaster in Dromcollogher or "The Burning" as it has been referred to locally in Dromcollogher. He stated that forty eight men, women and children tragically lost their lives in the fire on the Sunday, 5th September, 1926. He referred to the showing of a film which was to take place in an upstairs loft area of a storehouse and that on that night a lighting candle fell upon a highly flammable nitrate film reel which flared immediately and burned furiously. He stated that within a short space of time the floor collapsed and the stairs and roof in the building fell in. He made reference to special permission which was obtained to allow a communal burial of all the victims in the Church grounds. Mr. Keyes also made reference to the Stardust fire in Dublin in 1981 which also claimed the lives of the same number of people and the impact that had on families, survivors and on Irish society as a whole.

He stated that as the 100 year anniversary of the Cinema Disaster in Dromcollogher approaches, a Commemoration is to take place on Saturday, 5th September, 2026, to mark this very significant event and to honour the memory of the forty eight people who died. He outlined to the Members the various events and initiatives planned in the days leading up to the anniversary and also on the Centenary Day which include a Formal Commemoration Ceremony with a Mass of Remembrance, Parade and procession and wreath laying ceremony. Mr. Keyes asked if support, leadership, guidance and funding could be provided to the Group to assist in the holding of this special and memorable event.

The Members thanked the delegation for their attendance and stated that further contact would be made with the representatives of Dromcollogher26 on the above matter.

The Senior Executive Librarian then addressed the Meeting and gave an update to the Members on the work which is ongoing and proposed to commemorate the Cinema Fire Disaster in Dromcollogher. She referred to an upgrade of Dromcollogher library which has gone to tender for a full redesign upgrade and is due to be made available shortly. She stated that Dromcollogher26 is planning to have an Archive Room and Information Centre at the rear of the library to house memorabilia from the burning.

Following discussion with the Members, it was agreed that the Meetings Administrator would arrange for the representatives of the Dromcollogher26 and the City and Culture Librarian to attend a Briefing in the District to further discuss 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 .

The Administrative Officer, Housing Support, provided a summary update on the Housing Delivery for the District. The Senior Engineer gave an update to the Members on Local Authority housing schemes in Broadford, Ardagh and Sycamore Crescent, Newcastle West, vacant housing and Energy Retrofit Works in the District. The Administrative Officer, Strategy and Non LA Housing Construction, also gave an overview of Affordable Housing in the District.

A discussion followed and the Members referred to a number of matters including an update on the Affordable Housing Castle Place housing development in Churchtown, Newcastle West, mortgage approval process for the scheme and the length of time taken to get houses into occupancy. Following discussion, it was agreed that the Meetings Administrator would write to the Minister for Housing in relation to the personal financing of Affordable Housing to be streamlined, to expedite the process. The Tenant in Situ Scheme was raised, the valuation process and funding for the scheme. An update was sought on the Cois Na Féile, Abbeyfeale, Mountcollins, and Sycamore Crescent, Newcastle West housing developments. Reference was made to the hold-up of the Sycamore Crescent, Newcastle West housing development due to Uisce Éireann issues and if an interim solution could be put in place for Sycamore Crescent, Newcastle West. In replying, the Senior Engineer stated that a temporary solution is being explored and will revert with an update to the Members.

The Members thanked all for the housing update and attendance at the Meeting.

5. Environment, Climate Action and Shared Services Directorate

To receive Update on the Part 8 for the new graveyard in Abbeyfeale.

The Senior Executive Technician, Environment and Climate Action, addressed the Meeting. He stated that as of September 2024, there is 77 new vacant burial plots within the existing cemetery, Reilig Íde Naofa, Abbeyfeale, separate to that which is contained within the lower section of the burial ground. He stated that this equates to approximately seven years remaining capacity for new graves.

He referred to Messrs. Feeney McMahon, Architects who have been appointed to design and carry out Part 8 planning, along with the preparation of tender documents for the new graveyard. He stated that a Preliminary Programme of Works which include a Preliminary design including AA, EIAR Screening, Bat Survey, Road Safety Audit is in progress and a Part 8 is to be completed by Q1 of 2026, and to be lodged by September 2025.

The Members referred to a number of matters including the number of spaces available in the existing graveyard, lack of enforcement in the graveyard and the delay in getting Part 8 to completion. The acquisition of land for the new burial ground was raised and if this land has been procured. In replying, the Senior Executive Technician stated that the acquisition of land for the burial ground is ongoing and that consultants have been appointed to progress the Part 8 procedure. In replying, the Senior Engineer stated that he will discuss progress of the Part 8 with the consultants with a view to accelerating the timeframe.

6. Environment, Climate Action and Shared Services Directorate

To Receive Update on the Newcastle West playground.

The Executive Parks and Landscape Officer, Environment and Climate Action, addressed the Meeting.

He stated that Limerick City and County Council's Parks Department undertook a review of the existing playground at the entrance to the Demesne Park at Newcastle West. Following the review, a Draft Masterplan was completed and the Executive Parks and Landscape Officer gave an outline of the proposals in the Draft Masterplan to the Members which includes a large play area for all age groups, sand and water play, outdoor gym, outdoor boot camp track, running track, extension to tennis club, extension to skate park, formal entrance to park, accessibility and inclusion and traffic diversion.

He referred to a number of matters including public consultation for the project in June 2025, and proposed funding for the project. He stated that it is anticipated that the preparation of Part 8 including necessary assessments would take place in Q2/Q3 2025 and the lodging of the Part 8 in September 2025.

He outlined the areas to be prioritised in the Draft Masterplan which include the play areas, traffic diversion, tennis extension and outdoor gym.

The Members welcomed the proposals and referred to the huge benefit this Park will have to the town and region but however expressed reservations with regard to the proposed road layout to the Demesne Park. The issue of anti-social behaviour at the Park, having a Park Manager in place and costing for the Project was raised.

Following discussion, it was proposed by Councillor Ruddle, seconded by Councillor Scanlan and agreed by all to progress the Plan to the next stage which is putting the Plan on public display, this being subject to traffic flow within the environs of the playground not being impacted.

7. Transportation and Mobility Directorate

To Receive Presentation on Proposed Safe Routes to School Works at Athea National School.

The Senior Executive Technician, Active Travel, addressed the Meeting.

She gave an overview of the proposed works which are to take place in the interest of safety at the front of Athea National School on the approach from Carrigkerry (R523). She stated that 164 students approximately attend Athea National School which is a mixed school and a staff of 28 work at the school.

She referred to Action 52 of Limerick's Road Safety Plan which promotes the continued roll out of Safe Routes to School Programme for Primary and Post Primary Schools in Limerick. She stated that the plans provides "front of school" treatment to schools to enhance and ensure safe access to school for walking and cycling.

She outlined to the Members the current issues which exist at present including the proliferation of parking on footpaths at school drop and collection times, visibility at existing pedestrian crossing blocked by parked cars, pedestrians crossing at undesignated area and disorderly congestion at the school front.

She referred to a Parents Survey which was carried out in January 2025 and a Speed Survey in March 2025. She stated that engagement has taken place with various stakeholders and to a three week advertisement which was placed locally of the intention to carry out traffic calming works with no submissions received to date, the deadline for receipt of submissions being Friday, 9th May, 2025. She made reference to an independent Road Safety Audit Report which is awaited and is expected to be made available this week. She stated that further discussion is to take place with the School Parents Association, Athea Community Council, homeowners directly impacted by the proposed works and Tidy Towns.

She gave an update to the Members on the proposed works near the graveyard which include improving existing car parking to encourage school Park n' Stride, footpath to be provided to make a safer access/egress from vehicles, traffic calming through chicanes to provide a gateway into the village and reinforces the existing 50kph. She stated that the proposed works at the front of the school include continuation of traffic calming towards the school, placing of pencil bollards, road markings and protection of footpaths from parking.

She outlined the next steps in the Programme which is to progress to Section 38 to be advertised by end of May 2025, with a four week following for non-statutory public consultation. She stated that ongoing detailed design is to take place during this period with the intention to commence works during the summer period and a two to three week build programme for the works is anticipated.

The Members referred to a number of matters including speed coming down from the graveyard direction during school hours and expressed concern at the placing of chicanes

which was expressed would potentially narrow the existing road carriages. The difficulty for heavy goods vehicles and agricultural machinery getting through the village was raised. The use of speed ramps was also discussed. Following discussion, the Members asked that the Senior Executive Technician liaise with contractors in the area to seek their views on this matter. It was agreed to progress the Project to public display with a view to receiving comments and observations from all concerned.

The Members thanked the Senior Executive Technician for attending the Meeting.

8. General Municipal Allocation (GMA)

On the proposal of Councillor Galvin, seconded by Councillor Collins, it was agreed to allocate €500 to Kilmeedy Community Development for Garda Commemoration Event.

On the proposal of Councillor Ruddle, seconded by Councillor Collins, it was agreed to allocate €600 to Kilmeedy Community Development for Garda Commemoration Event.

On the proposal of Councillor Collins, seconded by Councillor Galvin, it was agreed to allocate €500 to Kilmeedy Community Development for Garda Commemoration Event.

On the proposal of Councillor Foley, seconded by Councillor Collins, it was agreed to allocate €500 to Kilmeedy Community Development for Garda Commemoration Event.

On the proposal of Councillor Scanlan, seconded by Councillor Collins, it was agreed to allocate €600 to Kilmeedy Community Development for Garda Commemoration Event.

On the proposal of Councillor Sheahan, seconded by Councillor Collins, it was agreed to allocate €500 Kilmeedy Community Development for Garda Commemoration Event.

On the proposal of Councillor Foley, seconded by Councillor Galvin, it was agreed to allocate €1,000 to Tournafulla GAA for fencing.

On the proposal of Councillor Scanlan, seconded by Councillor Galvin, it was agreed to allocate €1,000 to Tournafulla GAA for fencing.

On the proposal of Councillor Ruddle, seconded by Councillor Galvin, it was agreed to allocate €500 to Tournafulla GAA for fencing.

On the proposal of Councillor Galvin, seconded by Councillor ^{SCANLAN}Galvin, it was agreed to allocate €1,000 to Tournafulla GAA for fencing. _{LG}

On the proposal of Councillor Collins, seconded by Councillor Foley, it was agreed to allocate €1,000 to Tournafulla GAA for fencing.

On the proposal of Councillor Collins, seconded by Councillor Ruddle, it was agreed to allocate €2,000 to Ashford Festival Group for the organising of the festival.

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On the proposal of Councillor Scanlan, seconded by Councillor Collins, it was agreed to allocate €500 to Ashford Festival Group for the organising of the festival.

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.

9. Question submitted by Councillor J. Scanlan

I will ask at the next Meeting that a speed survey be undertaken on the R520 through Ardagh Village.

REPLY: A speed survey can be carried out but traffic calming measures are already in place within Ardagh Village.

10. Question submitted by Councillor J. Scanlan

I will ask at the next Meeting what, if any horse control measures, are expected to be implemented in Newcastle West town.

REPLY:

The Veterinary Services Department enforces the Control of Horses Act 1996 and the related Bye-Laws in Limerick. The entire City and County of Limerick is designated a Control Area under this legislation. It is an offence to allow a horse to stray in a public area, or to keep a horse within the curtilage of a dwelling.

There is no bespoke plan in place for horse control in Newcastle West town. Veterinary Services responds to reports from the public of straying horses wherever they arise within the Control Area, and deploys the Pound service accordingly. So far in 2025, we have seized two horses in the Newcastle West Municipal District, albeit not from the town. Horses are held in the Pound for five days and, if not reclaimed, rehomed to a horse charity outside Limerick.

Persons concerned about straying horses in any locality should be advised to contact Customer Services and the matter will be investigated by Veterinary Services staff.

11. Question submitted by Councillor J. Scanlan

I will ask at the next Meeting when overhanging trees will be cut back at Woodfield Park, Newcastle West.

REPLY: Trees can only be cut between the 1st of September and the 1st of March. Limerick City and County Council will arrange an inspection of the trees and will assess the situation in accordance with the Tree Management Policy.

12. Question submitted by Councillor F. Foley

I will ask at the next Meeting for an update on the proposed resurfacing works on the Killarney Road, Abbeyfeale, from the Town Park to the Doctor's surgery.

REPLY: Limerick City and County Council are in the process of preparing a PARR report for review and approval by TII. We have also held preliminary discussions with TII regarding this scheme and provided high level estimates.

Any works to be completed on this proposed scheme will be subject to approval and the provision of funding by TII.

Councillor Foley referred to potholes on the Killarney Road from the Fire Station to Dalton's Cross and expressed urgency at getting resurfacing works carried out as soon as possible. In replying, the Senior Executive Engineer that works on this scheme is subject to the provision of funding from Transport Infrastructure Ireland.

NOTICES OF MOTION

13. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor T. Ruddle

I will move at the next Meeting that Limerick City and County Council identify a suitable site in Newcastle West town that they could purchase and source funding to construct a multi-purpose facility to accommodate (a) Men's shed (b) Snooker club (c) Theatre and Arts centre (d) Band practice facility.

The Motion was seconded by Councillor Sheahan.

REPLY:

The Rural, Community, Culture and Tourism Development Directorate have prepared a draft Integrated Urban Strategy for Newcastle West, with extensive consultation carried out in the town over the last number of months and many of the needs outlined in the Notice of Motion has been highlighted.

Shannon International Development Consultants completed a "Needs Analysis Study for an Arts and Cultural Centre in Newcastle West, County Limerick", and published their report in 2024. As part of that process, consideration was given to a number of sites within Newcastle West. The needs analysis report recommended provision of a small scale, multi-function, flexible facility or space that can be used for a range of creative activities.

The Rural, Community, Culture and Tourism Development Directorate will explore options

and feasibility and funding options for the development of a multi-purpose building in Newcastle West, which could accommodate, uses identified above, subject to available budget.

In proposing the Motion, Councillor Ruddle requested that the Council identify a suitable location for the provision of a multi-purpose facility in Newcastle West. A discussion took place on this matter and following discussion, it was agreed that an update would be given on the provision of a Theatre and Arts Centre at the earliest opportunity.

14. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor J. Scanlan

I will move at the next Meeting that a management plan be immediately implemented at The Demesne, Newcastle West, to keep our park safe and clean for its users.

The Motion was seconded by Councillor Collins.

REPLY:

Limerick City and County Council manage the Demesne through a combination of parties.

Arra Development complete weekly maintenance across the park, which includes strimming and litter picking. The group liaise with the local area office on any issues that are out of their control.

The Parks Department manage the main grass cutting and tree maintenance in the park. Grass cutting is completed fortnightly by a grass cutting contractor. The trees are monitored with maintenance carried out when required.

The Roads Department manage the walkways and surface water drainage.

A formal management plan will be drafted on foot of a meeting of all the relevant stakeholders involved in the management of the Demesne.

In proposing the Motion, Councillor Scanlan referred to the issue of anti-social behaviour at the Demesne Park and to the need for a Park Ranger at the Park. Consultation with the Gardaí on this matter was also raised and following discussion, it was agreed that the Meetings Administrator would organise a Workshop with the Gardaí to discuss anti-social behaviour at the Demesne Park and other policing matters in the District.

15. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor J. Scanlan

I will move at the next Meeting that a tourism promotion initiative be considered and put in place for Ballinruane Wood, Kilmeedy.

The Motion was seconded by Councillor Collins.

REPLY: This proposal will be considered as part of the Limerick on Foot initiative for 2026. The wood itself will need to be assessed and vetted for suitability for inclusion in the digital guide.

In proposing the Motion, Councillor Scanlan requested that a tourism initiative take place to promote Ballinruane Wood, Kilmeedy.

16. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor J. Sheahan

I move at the next Meeting that Limerick City and County Council commence Section 38 of the Road Traffic Act, 1994, to increase public car parking facilities in the following two estates in the Newcastle West Municipal District (a) Marian Place, Glin and (b) Corbry Estate, Glin.

The Motion was seconded by Councillor Galvin.

REPLY: The provision of car parking in lieu of green open space is contrary to government policy and therefore contrives the objectives of the Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028.

In proposing the Motion, Councillor Sheahan stated that every house is occupied in these estates with families living at home and having their own mode of transport. A discussion took place on green space in the estates, funding and access for emergency vehicles at these estates. Following the discussion, it was agreed that further discussions will take place with Forward Planning and Roads Department.

17. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor J. Sheahan

I will move at the next Meeting that Limerick City and County Council in consultation with An Garda Síochána immediately put a static speed camera in place at Clooneyscrehane on the R515 in the interest of road safety.

The Motion was seconded by Councillor Galvin.

REPLY: There are currently trials being undertaken nationally with respect to fixed speed cameras on both national and regional roads. Upon completion of these trials, the process and requirements with respect to the positioning of these cameras shall be examined.

The Road Number R515 for the Clooneyscrehane road on the Notice of Motion submitted was referred to and it was agreed that this Road Number should state the R522. In proposing the Motion, Councillor Sheahan referred to speeding on the R522 at Clooneyscrehane and if a fixed speed camera could be installed at this location in the interest of safety. A request to install a fixed speed camera on the regional road from Ardagh to Carrickerry was also raised. Following discussion, it was agreed that the Meetings Administrator would seek clarification on any trials being undertaken with regard to fixed speed cameras in the District.

The following items were also raised.

Reference was made to the contractor Electric Skyline Limited who are contracted by the Council to provide and maintain public lighting in the District and to two street lights which continue to remain out of order in Maiden Street, Newcastle West.

An update was sought on a Meeting which was to take place with Estate Management on a clean up of Sharwood Estate, Newcastle West and to a request for CCTV to alleviate littering. In replying, the Acting Senior Executive Officer stated that a Meeting has taken place with Estate Management and a voluntary clean-up is taking place.

An update was sought on the shed at the back of the Bank of Ireland building in Abbeyfeale. In replying, the Senior Executive Engineer stated that the shed is in the current ownership of Innovate, Limerick and a Meeting is to take place shortly with Innovate to discuss the use of this building.

It was agreed to hold the June Meeting of the District on Wednesday, 4th June, 2025, at 10.00 a.m., at Áras William Smith OBrien.

It was also agreed to hold the Annual Meeting of the District on Wednesday, 4th June, 2025, at 12.00 noon, at Áras William Smith OBrien.

This concluded the Meeting.

Signed:


Cathaoirleach

Dated:



