

Minutes of the Municipal District of Ennis Committee Meeting held at 3.30pm on Tuesday December 1st, 2015, in the Council Chamber, Áras Contae an Chláir, Clare County Council, New Road, Ennis, Co. Clare.

Present:

Councillors: P. Daly, J. Flynn, M. Howard, C. Collieran Molloy, A. Norton, J. Breen, P. Murphy and T. McNamara.

Officials: Ger Dollard, Director of Services, Eamon O’Dea, Senior Executive Engineer, Catherine O’ Hara, Meetings Administrator & Fiona Whelan, Staff Officer.

Item No. 1. Minutes of the November monthly meeting held on the 5th of November, 2015.

It was proposed by Cllr. M. Howard and seconded by Cllr. T. McNamara that the Minutes of the November monthly meeting, held on the 5th of November, 2015, as circulated, be agreed and adopted.

Item No. 2. Nomination of representative to the Rural Water Monitoring Committee.

It was proposed by Cllr. T. McNamara, seconded by Cllr. A. Norton and agreed by members that Cllr. Paul Murphy be elected onto the Rural Water Monitoring Committee.

Item No. 3. Nomination of representative to the Ennis Market Liaison Committee.

It was proposed by Cllr. J. Breen, seconded by Cllr. A. Norton and agreed that Cllr. Pat Daly, Mayor of Ennis, would be the representative to the Ennis Market Liaison Committee.

Item No. 3 (a) Minutes of the Budget Meeting held on the 5th of November, 2015.

It was proposed by Cllr. M. Howard and seconded by Cllr. P. Murphy that the Minutes of the Budget meeting, held on the 5th of November, 2015, as circulated, be agreed and adopted.

Item No. 4. Community and Arts Grants

It was proposed by Cllr. J.Flynn, seconded by Cllr. T. McNamara that the following Community & Arts Grants be awarded:-

- Clare Peace Park Initiative €5,000
- Ennis Boxing Club €500

Item No. 5. Pedestrianisation in Ennis – Christmas Period 2015.

G. Dollard informed the meeting that following the advertisement of the proposed dates for the pedestrianisation O'Connell Street, four submissions had been received. These submissions have now been considered. As these days are considered key shopping days in Ennis in the lead up to Christmas, and in the interest of pedestrian safety it was agreed that O'Connell St Ennis will be pedestrianised for Christmas 2015 similar to what was in place for the same period in 2014. O'Connell St Ennis will therefore be pedestrianised on the following dates and times:

- Saturday, 19th December 2015 from 12.00 noon to 6.00 p.m.
- Sunday, 20th December 2015 from 2.00 p.m. to 6.00 p.m.
- Wednesday, 23rd December 2015 from 12.00 noon to 6.00 p.m.
- Thursday, 24th December 2015 from 12.00 noon to 6.00 p.m.

It was also agreed that in the event of extreme weather conditions these dates may be re-considered.

Item No. 6 Notices of Motion.

Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. C. Colleran Molloy was seconded by Cllr. P.Murphy.

That the Ennis Municipal District allocate funding for repair of the paths at Knocknamana Heights, Clarecastle, which is long overdue.

Eamon O'Dea, Senior Executive Engineer, replied as follows:

Repair works are required to sections of the footpaths at Knocknamana heights and this has previously been requested by the Municipal district Councillors. This work will be considered along with other footpaths in the Clarecastle area subject to funding in 2016.

Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. M. Howard was seconded by Cllr. A. Norton

That the large pothole on the pedestrian crossing at Cusack Road (Claureen Bridge) be properly repaired as previous repairs have not been adequate.

Eamon O'Dea, Senior Executive Engineer, replied as follows:

The poor structural condition of this road has resulted in water ponding in the carriageway after heavy rain resulting in damage to the patched area. The Council will carry out a more substantial repair at this location and this section of the Lahinch-Cusack Road is being considered for works in the 2016 road works programme subject to other agencies having completed works in the area.

Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. A. Norton was seconded by Cllr. J. Breen

That Clare County Council removes the bunting from the streets of Ennis which was put up for the 2013 Hurlers as it is taking from the Christmas lights.

Eamon O'Dea, Senior Executive Engineer, replied as follows:

The Council will contact the group that erected the bunting to arrange its removal.

Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. P. Daly was seconded by Cllr. C. Colleran Molloy.

I ask Ennis Municipal District for an update on the proposed drainage works drainage works at Kildysart Cross, Clareabbey, particularly as serious flooding occurs there regularly.

Tom Tiernan, Senior Engineer, replied as follows:

The current position is that we are continuing to await approval to the scheme from the OPW. Negotiation with land owners is well advanced and almost concluded. I understand from recent liaison with the OPW that they have a couple of final queries they wish to raise with us before finalising their position on the matter. I expect to receive details of same very shortly and to be in a position to respond shortly thereafter. I remain hopeful that the scheme will receive approval early in 2016.

Members acknowledged Eamon O’Dea, Senior Executive Engineer, and his team, for all of the work done in relation to flood prevention over the last number of years which they agreed has certainly saved the town from subsequent and further flooding.

Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. T. Mc Namara was seconded by Cllr. A. Norton

I call on Clare County Council to introduce a “no right turn” in relation to traffic flow at the junction of Circular Road and Mill Road as there has been a noticeable increase in the build up of traffic at this junction as a result of the narrowing of the road to accommodate the new cycle lane.

Eamon O’Dea, Senior Executive Engineer, replied as follows:

This is the junction of two Regional Roads and it would not be appropriate to place a “no right turn” at this location. The road width on Circular Road at the junction of Mill Road is in accordance with the requirements of the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS). Provision of a no right turn at this location would require traffic to proceed to the Maid of Éireann Roundabout and proceed to do a 360 degree turn and proceed up Mill Road. Traffic proceeding to the town centre area can alternatively use Old Mill Road and exit at the traffic lights at Cornmarket Street-Woodquay junction.

Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. P. Murphy was seconded by Cllr. A. Norton.

I am requesting that Ennis Municipal District spearheads an initiative to enhance the local tourism product by incorporating some of the attractions that the Clarecastle area has to offer, i.e. Killone Abbey and Clareabbey, Port of Clare, Clarecastle, The Military Barracks, Killone / Newhall lake and Ballybeg lake, Heritage –Pilgrim trails, the Castle Antique Centre, the Fergus slob-lands and potential river- walks.

Ger Dollard, Director of Services, replied as follows:-

County Clare has an abundance of diverse attractions spread throughout the county. In line with the promotion of tourism generally, the Council would be happy to engage with any group in the promotion of projects in their area. Additional opportunities to support and develop initiatives may be available through the forthcoming LEADER programme. While the new County Library project is the project identified for funding under CEDRA other funding opportunities may present through OPW or other funding streams. As for any funding proposal it would be important that any project proposer would have a clearly identified project for which funding is being sought. He added that the Council would be prepared to meet with the Development group in Clarecastle to assist with defining the project and seeing how best to progress same.

Members supported this notice of motion and would welcome any support which would bring further tourism to County Clare and which highlight our tourist attractions. Members agreed that joined up thinking should be used between organisations to make things happen.

In relation to the Clare Abbey roundabout, the members agreed that this and indeed all roundabouts on the approach to Ennis should be utilised to showcase tourist attractions in both Ennis & Clarecastle.

G. Dollard informed the meeting that the Clare Abbey roundabout is already being considered under a permit for arts scheme through the Arts Office in conjunction with OPW and that it is hoped that a temporary installation will be in place in advance of the Fleadh in August 2016 which will be part of a more permanent installation on the roundabout. He advised that there are a number of issues to be resolved regarding any installation on the roundabout to realise this including consultation with the TII, tendering, selection and planning process all of which take time.

Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. J. Flynn was seconded by Cllr. M. Howard.

The world wide importance of the Lisdoonvarna Matchmaking festivals should be used to position Clare as the Romantic County along the very successful Wild Atlantic Way (WAW). That Ennis Municipal District can assist in this by recognising one of Ennis's great romantics namely 'Honest' Tom Steele with a piece of sculpture depicting him seated on the Steeles Rock located in the River Fergus near the Courthouse. It was from here that he vainly serenaded across the river Miss Crowe of Abbeyfield House (the old Garda Station building). The OPW could also be consulted to become part of the project by having a stained glass window depicting Miss Crowe.

Siobhan Mulcahy, County Arts Officer, replied as follows:

The location of a piece of sculpture at this location in the River Fergus raises a number of engineering and safety concerns. It may be more appropriate and effective to use a suitable plaque or relief art work to draw attention to the site. The County Arts Officer will make the suggestion for the stained glass window to the art management section of the OPW

Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. J. Breen was seconded by Cllr. M. Howard.

I am asking this Council what measures will be put in place to dispose of refuse for business premises during the Fleadh Cheoil, 2016.

Paul Moroney, A/Senior Engineer, replied as follows:

The responsibility for waste management in accordance with legislation falls on each business individually. This legislative requirement will not change during Fleadh Cheoil 2016.

As arrangements for the Fleadh are finalised details of traffic management and any restrictions on traffic will become clearer. There may be implications for waste collections in areas which are subject to traffic control during the event. It is too early to finalise these details at the moment. However Clare County Council Environment Section is liaising and working with the Green Fleadh subcommittee of the Fleadh Executive Committee to deal with these issues. We are also working with the Ennis MD Area Engineer Eamon O Dea in respect of this item.

Members further discussed the issue of waste management in Ennis and the environs including the storage of wheelie bins in the laneways of Ennis, and illegal dumping / fly tipping which continues to be a very serious issue.

G. Dollard informed members that waste management would be a core part of the Event Plan for the Fleadh in Ennis and acknowledged that the members of Clare Co Council allocated €50,000 in the 2016 budget to cover costs incurred as a result of the Fleadh in Ennis. He added that this plan is currently being compiled and must be done as part of the application to obtain a Statutory Event Licence by Comhalts for hosting the Fleadh in August 2016.

In relation to the storage of wheelie bins in the town he acknowledged that this is an ongoing issue in the town. Mr Dollard added that the arrangement in the Temple Gate carpark which was carried out by the Council, has proved to be a successful solution and a further review will be considered by the Clare County Council's environmental officer on a case by case situation. In some instances he advised that solutions may be difficult but this is a priority issue to be resolved in advance of the Fleadh in 2016.

Members agreed to re-visit this issue in April 2016 and asked that the matter be included on the agenda for discussion when more information will be available in relation to the plans going forward.

Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr C. Colleran Molloy was seconded by Cllr. M. Howard.

In the interests of pedestrian safety, that an electric light be installed on an existing electric pole to allow for lighting between Silver Grove and Kilone Grove in Ballybeg.

Eamon O'Dea, Senior Executive Engineer, replied as follows:

The Council has examined the location, however there is no budget for the provision of public lighting. Previously the Council had a Community Lighting fund where the works could be co-funded by the Community and the Council and there has been no funding in this area for a number of years.

Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. M. Howard was seconded by Cllr. P. Murphy.

Consequence to my motion at last June's meeting of Ennis Municipal District Re; Improvement to road to Ballybeg Woods Carpark. I request that this road be included in the upcoming road works programme.

Eamon O'Dea, Senior Executive Engineer, replied as follows:

The Council recently carried out patching works on this road. This road is a local tertiary road and the only means of funding works would be by a CIS scheme which the Council would be willing to contribute to as a landowner on the road.

Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. A. Norton was seconded by Cllr. J. Flynn

That Clare County Council look at the entrance and environs of Waterpark House on the Drumbiggle Road with a view to carrying out remedial works to improve street lighting and alleviate flooding on the road.

Eamon O'Dea, Senior Executive Engineer, replied as follows:

The Council has examined the public lighting at the entrance and environs of Waterpark House and deem that there is adequate street lighting currently in place. The localised ponding of water at Waterpark after heavy rain dissipates to very small puddles. The Council has a second road sweeper in operation in the Municipal District over the past month to remove leaves and clean gullies thus reducing the impact of falling leaves on road drainage.

Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. P. Daly was seconded by Cllr. J. Breen

I call on the Municipal District of Ennis to compete the upgrading of the road outside the Ennis Golf Club down to the cross at the bottom of the Showgrounds Hill.

Eamon O'Dea, Senior Executive Engineer, replied as follows:

This will be considered along with other roads in the urban area in preparing the road works programme in 2016.

Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. T. Mc Namara was seconded by Cllr. J. Breen

I call on Clare County Council to clear the side drains and under road gullies on the link road between the Kilrush Road and Inch Bridge ie L4164 to alleviate the accumulation of surface water on this road.

Eamon O'Dea, Senior Executive Engineer, replied as follows:

This road is on the work list for the Municipal District Roads Crew. Drainage along this road is not helped by persons dumping rubbish adjacent to drainage outlets.

Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. J. Flynn:

Lees Road Dumping: In order to combat the illegal dumping along Lees Road that Ennis Municipal District in association with the landowners cut down/back the hedges , which currently obscure the actions of these anti-social individuals , along the Lees Road. The road verges should also be tidied up in terms of fallen rocks from boundaries.

Eamon O'Dea, Senior Executive Engineer, replied as follows:

This work was done week ending November 27th. This road is a county lane where two cars have to give way to pass and is heavily used by drivers as a route from the N85 Lahinch Road to the R458 Gort Road resulting in the road edge margin being continuously adjusted exposing the lower stones of the walls. There is no specific sign in the Traffic Signs Manual to caution drivers of the road width and the Council is examining the use of the other hazard sign and a supplementary plate on this section of road.

Members voiced their anger in relation to fly tipping and pleaded with the Council to become more proactive in dealing with the perpetrators and queried the possibility of using cameras.

Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. J. Breen was seconded by Cllr. A. Norton.

That immediate steps be taken to eliminate flooding opposite the four houses at Oak Park on the Drumcliffe Road.

Eamon O'Dea, Senior Executive Engineer, replied as follows:

The Council will examine the location and carry out works to eliminate the flooding at Dredhagower Road.

Any other business

- Members acknowledged the response from the National Transport Authority in relation to the Green bus service in Limerick. It was proposed by Cllr. J. Flynn, seconded by Cllr. M. Howard and agreed by all members that we write again to the NTA and positively recommended the continuous of this service.
- Cllr. J. Breen asked for a barrier close to his residence on the N85 to be repaired/replaced as a matter of urgency and considered it to be a breach of health and safety regulations.
- Cllr Breen also advised that there is an issue with a flashing light at Kilnamona National School which needs to be fixed as a matter of urgency..
- Members noted that free parking in all public car parks on Saturday afternoons from 2pm was in place but felt it needed to be advertised better. The members suggested

that more signage or VMS advertising might be considered as people need to be encouraged to visit and shop in Ennis.

- G. Dollard advised that a letter regarding CCTV at Dromard, Lahinch Road, Ennis had been received as part of the consultation process for community CCTV schemes. He advised that Clare County Council supported this initiative in principal but as this is a private estate it was a matter for the Gardaí to ensure that the proposed scheme met the criteria determined by the Garda Commissioner under S 38 of the 2005 Garda Síochána Act. He noted that if, at a future date, that Clare County Council was taking in Charge this estate, that CCTV would not be part of the services etc been taken in charge.

Under Section 38 of the Garda Act 2005, the Gardaí can give permission for a Community CCTV in this estate. On the proposal Cllr. J. Flynn, seconded by Cllr. P. Daly, the Elected Members this matter was proposed by Cllr. J. Flynn, seconded by Cllr. P. Daly and agreed to support the scheme once it is confirmed that the relevant criteria as set down by the Garda Commissioner is being complied with.

The meeting then concluded