

Minutes of the Municipal District of Ennis Committee Meeting held at 10.30am on Friday October 7th, 2016, in the Council Chamber, Áras Contae an Chláir, Clare County Council, New Road, Ennis, Co. Clare.

Present:

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

Officials: Ger Dollard, Director of Services, Eamon O'Dea, Senior Executive Engineer, Ann Reynolds, Meetings Administrator, & Fiona Whelan, Staff Officer.

Item No. 1. Minutes of the September Monthly Meeting held on the 06.09.2016

Minutes of the Ennis Municipal District September 2016 monthly meeting were proposed by Cllr. T. McNamara, seconded by Cllr. P. Daly and adopted by members.

Item No. 2. Update on Proposed Pedestrian Crossing – Gort Road, Ennis.

Eamon O'Dea confirmed to the meeting that work will proceed on this project. The time-line has not been confirmed yet due to other works which are currently active around Ennis. Once an exact date is confirmed members will be notified, however, if this is not ahead of the November meeting of Ennis Municipal District, this will again be an Agenda item.

Item No. 3. Agree date for Budget Meeting

It was proposed by Cllr. A. Norton, seconded by Cllr. C. Colleran Molloy and agreed by members to hold the 2017 budget meeting for Municipal District of Ennis, on Friday 21st October, 2016, at 10.30am.

Item No. 4. Declaration of Public Roads under Section 11 of the Roads Act 1993 – Hillcrest, Tulla Road, Ennis & Ballaghboy Estate, Ballaghboy, Ennis.

This item was proposed by Cllr. P. Murphy, seconded by Cllr. J. Flynn and agreed by members.

Item No. 5. Notices of Motion.

No.1. NOM submitted by Cllr. J. Flynn. As this motion was not seconded it was not considered.

Ennis Town Team

With reference to proposals over the last five years that I have put on agendas at Ennis municipal district, Ennis town council and Clare county council meetings for the establishment and funding from rates of a "Town Team" for Ennis, that Ennis Municipal

District Elected members request the Council Executive to establish a "Town Team " for Ennis in early 2017 in order to build the attractiveness of Ennis as a destination for locals & visitors following on from the success of the Fleadh 2016 and post the Fleadh 2017 .

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

The Town Team concept was discussed as part of the Commission for Economic Development of Rural Areas (CEDRA) Working Group some time ago. It was agreed at that meeting that an engagement would take place with each Municipal District on the overall concept and the idea of establishing Town Teams at Municipal District level. A detailed consultation was held with all four Municipal Districts and the outcome of that process would indicate that the Elected Members do not see the necessity to establish Town Teams at Municipal District level.

- The key issues arising in relation to such an outcome would seem to be as follows:
- the lack of resources to fund Town Team structure;
- the existence of the Municipal District structure and the capability of that to meet any necessary requirements;
- the exclusion of village "teams" from the model;
- the existing arrangements that are already in place to engage with and consult with local groups as the need requires;

In relation to the Ennis Municipal District, it is clear that there is ongoing engagement with the business community on a variety of matters and also with the local community, e.g. Tidy Towns Committee, on a range of issues affecting Ennis. It is also the case that engagement sought at Municipal District level with the Elected Members has been facilitated where agreed by the Elected Members.

Members did not support this motion and commented that as this matter had already been considered in the past and was not deemed appropriate at the time. Members further commented that the eight members of the Municipal District of Ennis are elected by the public to represent the town of Ennis and the Municipal District of Ennis is an appropriate forum for the business of Ennis to be discussed and carried out. There is no need to have another forum doing the same job as the elected members.

No.2. NOM submitted by Cllr. T. McNamara was seconded by Cllr. A. Norton

In order to protect the Drumcliff springs and alleviate flooding in the area between Ballyealla lake and Drumcliff road I call on Clare County Council to clear the swallow hole (poulacorey) at the rear of Quealley's house.

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

The Council will examine the entrance to the swallow hole at Poulacorey Drumcliff to confirm what, if any, works are required or safe to carry out at this location. It should

be noted that this swallow hole is one of the inlet locations to the karst aquifer that is part of the Ennis Water Supply.

No.3. NOM submitted by Cllr. A. Norton was seconded by Cllr. C. Colleran Molloy
That Clare County Council look at finishing the footpaths around the village of Barefield as the NRA left them unfinished.

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

The Municipal District Office will carry out work on the surfacing of the footpath at the Barefield Roundabout in October. Any further footpath construction should be part of an overall village renewal plan.

Further to this Notice of Motion members queried the overall plans for works on footpaths in general. Members asked if it was up to the Council or voluntary committees to have plans in place if funding becomes available. This was particularly evident under the recent Town & Village Renewal Scheme when Clarecastle had a project ready which met the criteria and was put forward under Town & Village Renewal scheme.

G. Dollard, Director of Services, outlined the criteria, which is often restrictive, for some of the schemes which become available. There are also time restraints and deadlines to be considered. On this occasion, a significant scheme was required and it had been decided to put forward one scheme per Municipal District. Clarecastle had already a significant project proposal planned for the People's Park which met the current criteria. The proposal for this project was in place for a number of years before it was put forward under this particular scheme.

No.4. NOM submitted by Cllr. M Howard was seconded by Cllr. P. Murphy.

I request that Ennis Municipal District demands Clare County Council provide a budget to allow EMD confer civic honours to individuals or groups agreed by the members of Ennis Municipal District.

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

The re-organisation of Local Government resulted in the creation of a single local authority structure for County Clare, i.e. Clare County Council, with four Municipal Districts which form a component part of Clare County Council.

The creation of the new structure gave rise to a number of areas which had previously been dealt with at Town Council level now falling to be dealt with at County Council level. Examples would include twinning and the conferring of civic honours. My understanding of discussion at Corporate Policy Group level following the re-organisation process was that the conferring of civic honours would be dealt with by the full Council and the conferring of any such honours would require approval of the full Council.

I would suggest that the motion, if approved by Members of the Ennis Municipal District, needs to be discussed and considered by the full Council. The implications and issues arising, both for and against, would need to be fully considered prior to any formal decision being made.

Members who were also former members of the now abolished Ennis Town Council expressed their frustration at the fact that everything in relation to Ennis Town now has to be brought before a full Council meeting. It was suggested by some members that a single annual event/awards ceremony should be considered. Other members recommended that we need to move on with the current order of a single local authority and the business of the council and not get caught up on honoring some people over others.

G. Dollard reminded members that under the new order there is one local authority and that this discussion should be held at CPG level which the Mayor of Ennis is a member of. The Mayor of Ennis, Cllr. A. Norton, agreed to have this matter considered at CPG level and revert to members with the outcome.

No.5. NOM submitted by Cllr. P. Murphy was seconded by Cllr. T. McNamara.

I am requesting that Clarecastle Village is re-introduced to the weekly schedule of street-sweeping in Ennis Municipal District.

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

It is not possible for the Council to maintain a weekly street cleaning schedule in Clarecastle as the person whom normally carries out this duty is required to work full time with the works crews due to the level of resources available to the Supervisor in this area. A number of street litter bins are emptied on a daily basis as part of the litter bin emptying schedule in Ennis. It is regrettable that this service is not being provided however it is not possible to do so with the present level of resources available.

Members further expressed their frustration on this issue. It is important to assist voluntary groups who are already doing a lot of work for the upkeep of their local communities.

E. O'Dea, Senior Executive Engineer, informed members that the road sweeper had been provided under a particular system, however, there is currently no driver available due to the recent shortage of outdoor workers. This may soon be resolved and the situation can then be re-visited at that stage.

No.6. NOM submitted by Cllr. J Breen was seconded by Cllr. A. Norton.

In order to assist the visually impaired and people in wheelchairs, I am asking that the three permanent bollards on the footpath at the end of Parnell St. as you approach Carmody St., be removed without further delay.

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

The Council has examined the location and the three bollards are an obstruction to the footpath. These bollards can be removed however it is our opinion that cars will park on the footpath obstructing pedestrians similar to other locations on Parnell Street where bollards are not in place. We are examining other bollards to see what is feasible at this location.

It is near impossible to prevent the parking of vehicles on footpaths without some form of direct obstruction to the driver. The parking of vehicles on footpaths results in damage to the paving-structure of the footpath which results in increased maintenance and trip and fall incidents.

Members agreed that Ennis needs to improve it's accessibility for people with disabilities. Cork is a good example of a city which caters well for people with disabilities. A scheme should be introduced to introduce large buttons on all pedestrian crossings to facilitate the visibly impaired as well as others with various disabilities.

Members congratulated E. O'Dea, S.E.E., on the improvements that have already been made in this area.

No.7. NOM submitted by Cllr. C. Colleran- Molloy was seconded by Cllr. A. Norton

Further to letter of 22/9/2016 from an 88 year old gentleman whose disability requires his use of a wheelchair and who cannot safely travel from his home at "Ros Muire", Kilrush Road, Ennis, because of the "deplorable state of the footpath between his home and the traffic lights at the Kilrush Road and the Market," that Ennis Municipal District place immediate prioritization on ensuring that access is possible to the town for him and for all who need to travel safely by wheelchair."

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

The carrying out of work along this section of the Kilrush Road was delayed due to works that were required for the Fleadh Cheoil. The section of footpath has been examined and repair/replacement of sections at entrances is required and the work is being prioritised.

The Council will be examining footpaths in the Town to draft a list of repairs/modifications that are required to improve access for all.

No.8. NOM submitted by Cllr. P. Daly was seconded by Cllr. T. McNamara

I request Ennis Municipal District to arrange to widen a very narrow road, the Ennis side of Knockaneen, N.S., particularly as there is now 300 pupils in the school and traffic can be chaos at peak intervals.

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

A further information/revised plans request has been sent to the Commissioners of Public Works in regard to planning permission 16/625 Knockaneen National School. "The

planning authority has serious concerns regarding the scale of the proposed development as proposed in this instance. The subject site is located within a rural area, which is not served by public sewer, footpaths, cycle lanes and other essential services that would be required to cater for the scale of the development as proposed. In addition the road network in the area is not designed to cater for the anticipated school numbers, is narrow in parts with poor alignment and there is insufficient parking for collection and drop offs in the vicinity of the site. The proposed development would lead to significant traffic congestion in this area, would lead to unsustainable travel patterns over a wide area, and would result in over development of the site and would have a significant negative impact on the visual and residential amenities of the area." As a planning application is presently under consideration in relation to the school, improvements to the road would be premature pending the outcome of same.

Members generally supported this Notice of Motion and await the outcome of the current planning application.

No. 9. NOM submitted by Cllr. J. Flynn was seconded by Cllr. P. Daly.

Ennis Street Music performance locations - Spotai Ceol .

In recognition of the success of street music during the recent Fleadh , and with reference to previous proposals I put on agendas at Ennis municipal district and Ennis Town Council around the need for a busking code of practice and provision of "Spotai Ceol " (covered places on the main Town streets to play music from) , that Ennis Municipal District Elected members request the council executive to provide a number of Spotai Ceol in the streets of Ennis early in 2017.

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

As the Members will be aware, the Street Performance Bye-Laws were introduced in 2016 and have operated satisfactorily to date. The overall strategy in relation to the management of busking has been to commence on a "soft" basis and to progress the management regime over a period of time.

Experience elsewhere would suggest that the management of busking is problematic within the overall regulatory framework that currently exists. There is also the point of view of the spontaneous nature of the activity and an excessive level of regulation would remove many of the benefits of the activity. The sentiments of the motion can certainly be considered and incorporated into the revision process relating to the current Street Performance Bye-Laws. It is unlikely, given the Work Programme at present, that same would be in place for Fleadh 2017.

No.10. NOM submitted by Cllr. T. McNamara was seconded by Cllr. C. Colleran Molloy.

I call on Clare County Council to replace the existing post and railing fence at the Tulla end of the road widening at Spencilhill and replace it with a stone wall as was a condition of the land purchase.

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

The Spencilhill Cross Project was a Specific Improvement Scheme carried out by Clare County Council. There are a number of items including this fence and the improvement of the approach road from both directions that would be desirable to complete the works however there is no funding available under Specific Improvement Schemes at present.

Members expressed disappointment that the Council had not honoured the condition of the land purchase in this instance and requested that this matter be followed up.

No.11. NOM submitted by Cllr. A. Norton was seconded by Cllr. J. Flynn.

That I ask Clare County Council to clean the waters of Ballyalla Lake as it is been used successfully for triathlon

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

Ballyalla lake is part of an Special Area of Conservation and consultation would be required with both the National Parks and Wildlife Service and Fisheries Ireland. There may be an opportunity here for these agencies to examine Ballyalla Lake and see what is practicable to do as a conservation scheme in conjunction with Clare County Council and Local Voluntary Groups.

The Environment and Water Services department has confirmed that Clare County Council carries out monitoring of Ballyalla Lake during the bathing season of each year, the results are sent to the EPA. In the EPA Quality of Bathing Water Report of 2015 Ballyalla Lake is classified as having "Excellent" bathing water quality. This is based on a calculation of four years monitoring results (2012 to 2015). The results of monitoring of 2016 also indicate that the lake will maintain "Excellent" status.

Members supported this and recommended applying for funding possibly under the new Leader Scheme.

No.12. NOM submitted by Cllr. P. Murphy was seconded by Cllr. C. Colleran Molloy.

I am requesting that flashing speed signs are installed in the vicinity of Inis Clair (Kildysart road) and Beechwood (Lissane road).

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

Traffic surveys are being carried out at these two locations to confirm if the use of VMS speed limit signs would be of benefit at these location. The MD Office will confirm with the Traffic Corps as to the areas that they are recording significant speeding before we install VMS speed limit signs. There are two VMS speed signs to be installed on the Quin Road between the Quin Road Business Park and the Speed Limit at Bunnow.

No.13. NOM submitted by Cllr. J. Breen was seconded by Cllr. P. Daly.

I am again asking for the up to date position in relation to flooding at Cusack Road and that all the documentation relating to this matter be made available to this meeting.

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

This work had to be put on side by the Municipal District Office due to work commitments relating to the Ennis Market Project, Co ordination of Irish Water & Windfarm Cable Contracts and the work required for Fleadh Cheoil na h Eireann. There are a number of outstanding projects including the Cusack Road works that are on the MD Office immediate priority list.

No.14. NOM submitted by Clare Colleran Molloy was seconded by Cllr. A. Norton.
That Clare County Council address the hazardous condition of the Ballyhannon Road in Quin especially the bend at Dr. Hassetts and road surfacing to the Black Weir

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

The Council will examine this location to see what if any signage may assist drivers along this section of the Quin to Latoon on this local road L3148.

Members queried if this matter could be dealt with under the low cost safety scheme. E. O'Dea agreed to bring this to the attention of the Road Design Team and if needs be it could also be considered under Discretionary Maintenance works.

No.15. NOM submitted by Cllr. Pat Daly was seconded by Cllr. M. Howard.

I again ask Ennis Municipal District to seriously consider putting down a pedestrian crossing outside the Éire Óg grounds at Clonroadmore - up to 500 children use the academy at Éire Óg and the speed on this road is very dangerous.

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

The Council made an application to the Department of Transport (DOT) for a Low Cost Safety Scheme in Ennis and the Council received funding of €125,000 for work relating to the town centre area (one of three zones in the submission). The MD Office requested that a level of funding would be permitted to be used for the pedestrian crossing at the Gort Road with funding provided for this zone to be used to cover similar work in the town centre and this request was declined by the DOT. The design work and funding of a proposed pedestrian crossing has been deferred until this work zone is listed by the DOT for funding.

Members supported this Notice of Motion and acknowledged the perseverance of Cllr. Daly in relation to this matter.

Item No. 6. Any Other Business

- Two accidents had recently occurred in the Kilnamona Cross area. A crash barrier is required as a matter of urgency at these locations before a fatality occurs. E. O'Dea to follow up on this matter.

- Cllr. Pat Daly was congratulated on his recent election as President of the Association of Irish Local Government (AILG)
- Road works should cease on the Tulla Road, Ennis, from the 8th of December, 2016, to the 6th of January, 2017, which is the busy Christmas holiday/shopping period. A letter had already been received in relation to this matter from Quinn Property Management of Roslevan Shopping Centre.

The meeting then concluded.

Signed: _____
Mayor of Ennis.

Signed: _____
Meetings Administrator.

Date: _____