

Minutes of the Municipal District of Ennis Committee Meeting held at 10.30am on Monday, 10th April, 2017, in the Council Chamber, Áras Contae an Chláir, Clare County Council, New Road, Ennis, Co. Clare.

Present:

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

Officials: G. Dollard, Director of Services, E. O'Dea, Senior Executive Engineer, A. Reynolds, Administrative Officer and P. O'Connell, Assistant Staff Officer.

Item No.1. Minutes of the March 2017 Monthly Meeting held on 3rd March, 2017

Minutes of the Ennis Municipal District March 2017 monthly meeting were proposed by Cllr. M. Howard, seconded by Cllr. T. McNamara and adopted by members.

Matters Arising

Cllr. A Norton complimented LEO and Ennis Municipal District Office on the Bia Fest held in the Ennis Market building on Saturday, 8th April 2017. It was a very successful event which showcased the market building.

Cllr. A Norton complimented Cllr. P Daly for bringing the AILG conference to Ennis.

Item No. 2. Speed Limit Bye Laws

It was confirmed that the Draft Speed Limit Bye Laws have been dealt with by separate meeting with the acting Director of Services and will come before the full Council for adoption.

Item No. 3 & 4 2017 Budget Allocations & Community & Arts Grants

The following allocations were agreed for Festivals and Events:-

Consairtín	€1,000
Association For Nigernian Community in Clare	€500
Ennis Fashion Week	€500
Foundation Ministries	€500
Polska Eire	€1,000
Clarecastle Regatta	€2,000
Clarecastle Show Society	€2,000
Clare Women's Network Festival of Feminisms 2017	€1,000
Total	€8,500

The following allocations were agreed for Community & Arts Grants:-

Michael Cusack Memorial Statue	€1,000
Clarecastle & Ballyea Heritage & Wildlife Group	€250
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Clare Walks Ltd t/a Mid Clare Way	€500
Kilmaley Meitheal Co. Ltd	€1,000
Rape Crisis Midwest	€500
Kilmaley Voluntary Housing/Day Centre	€1,000
Clarecastle Mens Shed Association	€500
Ennis Fairtrade Steering Committee	€500
Clarecastle Community Gardens	€500
Garden of Eden Projects Ireland	€500
Garden of Eden Projects Ireland	€500
Susan O'Grady (Advocacy course L.I.T.)	€1,000
Banner Spokes	€500
Banner Beekeepers Association	€1,800
Ennis St. John's Community Games	€1,000
Total	€11,300

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

Item No. 5. Update on Rocky Road Property

A detailed report and map on Rocky Road was circulated to all present. Public right of way was discussed, members expressed concern in relation to Private Property signs on gates and piers at Rocky Road and asked if planning permission was sought to erect these gates and piers. It was confirmed that the Council auctioneers are in ongoing contact with the vendor.

Item No. 6. Ennis Paint Scheme

Members were advised that following the success of the 2016 Paint scheme a 2017 scheme is being considered but a budget source is yet to be identified. It was agreed that this is a very positive initiative and a great way to support businesses. Members highlighted the need to look at 2nd and 3rd storeys in 2017 and the poor state of repair of Our Lady's Building, Gort Road at the entrance to the town. It was noted that the matter had been referred to Rural Development, Derelict Sites Section for examination.

Item No. 7. Notices of Motion

No.1. NOM submitted by Cllr. C Colleran Molloy seconded by Cllr. M Howard

That traffic calming such as VMS signal be installed before the Aisling estate as one descends the Shanaway Road towards the Lahnich Road to discourage the ongoing excessive speeding in the area.

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

The Municipal District will carry out traffic surveys on the Shanaway Road to determine the level of excessive speeding at this location and examine suitable measures that can be put in place.

Following a discussion, it was agreed that 50km signs will be erected on each side of the road.

No.2. NOM submitted by Cllr. J Breen seconded by Cllr. J Flynn

That the laneway between Kincora Park and St. Joseph's Hospital, Ennis, be swept on a regular basis.

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

This laneway is included in the Kincora Park schedule for the road sweeper and this area is normally swept once a month.

No.3. NOM submitted by Cllr. M Howard seconded by Cllr. P Murphy

That this Council consider developing walking routes along the access routes developed during the construction of the Ennis Western Relief Road (N85) and the Ennis by-pass.

Tom Tiernan, A/DOS Physical Infrastructure replied as follows:

There is already a good quality fully lit pedestrian footpath along the N85 from Claureen to Clareabbey. From Clareabbey onwards, the off-carriageway access routes aren't continuous and it would be very difficult to establish connectivity between some sections. There are no funding streams available at present to review the routes or to design upgrades and signage which might be required. As indicated above, continuity and connectivity would be significant issues to overcome with major cost implications. Our primary focus at present is in relation to achievement of the West Clare Railway Greenway objective and the likelihood of achieving this would not be helped by diluting our focus with initiatives such as this at present - notwithstanding what benefits the proposal in this NOM might bring.

Members requested an update on the West Clare Railway Greenway Project.

No.4. NOM submitted by Cllr. T McNamara seconded by Cllr. J Breen

I call on Clare County Council to address the flooding caused to roads in the catchment area of the Shallee river and in particular the Maurices Mills Road L4222 between the old creamery and the Corofin road.

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

The Municipal District Road's Crew recently cleared road drainage outlets in this area improving the removal of surface water from the road.

Historically when the Shallee River has a moderate winter flow and there is heavy rainfall over a short period causing flash flows on the Shallee River. This can cause flooding of part of the Maurices Mills road at Caherbannagh.

The Shallee River discharges into a swallow hole on the upstream side of the Maurices Mills road and flows underground and rises in the stream 100metres downstream. There is a pair of overflow culverts at a higher level crossing the road that assist the flow during flash river flows. During heavy rainfall the Shallee River backs up at the swallow hole resulting in the Maurices Mills road flooding.

The Council is not in a position to alter this system without a full evaluation of the outcome to downstream flow and possible flooding of lands or properties as a result of the alteration of the flow pattern at the Maurices Mills Road overflow culverts.

It was noted that if the river was cleaned, it would help prevent flooding in the future.

No.5. NOM submitted by Cllr. J Flynn seconded by Cllr. A Norton

In light of goals set out in the County Clare Council Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) 2016-2021 Plan that Ennis Municipal District look at the feasibility of setting up a working group with the HSE, Clare Sports Partnership and others to progress the achievement of "Ennis Healthy Town" status to WHO standards.

Monica Meehan, Senior Executive Officer, Rural Development replied as follows:

The County Clare Local Economic and Community Plan 2016 - 2021 is framed around five themes including the theme of 'Quality of Life, Health and Wellbeing'. The plan contains an action to '**support the improvement of the Health and Wellbeing of the population of the County**' and the associated indicators for this action are:

Clare 'Healthy Ireland' Working Group established
Action Plan developed
Action Plan Implemented

The HSE, Health Promotion Unit is the lead agency responsible for implementing this action and the stated partner is Clare Sports Partnership. It will be a matter for the Clare 'Healthy Ireland' Working Group led by the HSE to decide on the content of the action plan which could include an action to achieve 'Healthy Town' status for Ennis.

The Local Community Development Committee has established a Community Implementation Team for the purpose of monitoring progress on the delivery of all 'community' actions contained within the LECP. The next meeting of the Community Implementation Team is scheduled to take place on the 6th April where an update on the above action should be available.

I will forward this motion and reply to the HSE representative on the LCDC (who is also a member of the Community Implementation Team) in order to make them aware of this request.

No.6. NOM submitted by Cllr. P Daly seconded by Cllr. P Daly

I request the Ennis M.D to investigate the possibility of increasing business in the Ennis Market by researching similar markets in the Mid West region.

Ann Reynolds, Administrative Officer, replied as follows:

The Ennis Municipal District has completed extensive research on markets in general and will continue to do so in developing plans, standards and best practice for Ennis Market. There have been a number of consultations with market management in Limerick, Cork and Waterford in addition to online research of national and international markets. The potential of the market as a multi-purpose facility is clearly evident with many ideas emerging for the use of the space.

There have been a number of successful events and markets at Ennis Market to date, e.g. Halloween event with visiting school children, turning on of Christmas lights event, and the Christmas Market. In consultation with the Market Advisory Committee, work is ongoing to further develop and promote market trading, and develop a schedule of events at Ennis Market; thereby increasing footfall into the newly developed market area. Applications are being actively sought for additional high quality food and craft traders. A number of events have been scheduled to take place in the market building i.e.:

- Biafest - on Saturday 8th April the Local Enterprise Office hosts an event to celebrate Clare's Artisan food producers. Up to twenty food producers will showcase their food and there will be a number of food demonstrations on the day.
- "Art for All" Exhibition - on Saturday 27th May a number of local amateur artists will showcase their artwork in Ennis Market.
- Fleadh Nua concert- on Sunday 28th May Fleadh Nua will host an afternoon concert in Ennis Market.
- Discussions are taking place re Fleadh TV broadcast from Ennis Market during Fleadh 2017

The Market Advisory Committee is continuing to explore all ideas and develop plans for the operation and use of the facility and promotion of the market area.

No.7. NOM submitted by Cllr. P Murphy seconded by Cllr. A Norton

In advance of the upcoming drive to have Ennis crowned as the Supervalu 2017 Tidy Towns winner, I wish to be briefed on what options, if any, are available to the Director of Services to compensate the loss of the Gateway Scheme”.

Jason Murphy, Senior Executive Officer, Human Resources replied as follows:

Gateway is a labour activation scheme launched by the Department of Social Protection in 2013. The scheme is aimed at providing short-term quality and suitable working opportunities for those who are unemployed and on the 'Live Register'. Gateway participants are an additional resource involved in non-core, primarily in the community, which is recognised and acknowledged. The programme is expected to accommodate participants across the Local Government sector.

Participants are placed on a 22 Month contract with Clare County Council and while work areas include administration the primary focus is on outdoor activities across the County. There were a total of 64 participants at the height of the programme. The current situation is that while Clare County Council has requested new entrants we have been advised that the programme is currently being reviewed.

On a separate matter, Clare County Council has run a number of confined competitions over the last 12 months and the Gateway participants were invited to apply. 6 participants have been successful at recent interviews and have received offers of permanent employment. In September 2016 Clare County Council ran a confined General Operative competition and the Human Resources Department is currently in the process of filling vacancies at this grade.

Gerard Dollard, Director of Services, added that Ennis Chamber may be in a position to further assist through the Social Employment Scheme, and all residents and businesses will be encouraged to put in a concerted effort to secure the Tidy Towns Award.

No.8. NOM submitted by Cllr. C Colleran Molloy seconded by Cllr. P Murphy

On the Doora Exit (#12) off the motorway that the road be marked to warn & appropriate warning signals be installed to alert motorists of the high water levels on each side of the road.

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

The Municipal District will install Soft Verge Warning Signs (W135) on the L4114 between the M18 Killow Junction 12 and Doora Village to caution drivers regarding the road edge. This is similar to signs used between Whitegate and Portumna. The L4114 will require road surface treatment in this section every 5 years due to the ground conditions, high water table and traffic loading.

No.9. NOM submitted by Cllr. M Howard seconded by Cllr. A Norton

How many claims for injury/damage, personal or otherwise, directly related to horizontal speed ramps or other traffic control measures in the Ennis area have Clare County Council, Ennis Town Council and the Ennis Municipal District Council received over the past 5 years?

How many of these claims have been successful, how many went to court and how many are current/pending?

Seamus Halpin, Senior Staff Officer, Roads, replied as follows:

The Council has no record of claims relating to horizontal speed ramps or other traffic control measures in the Ennis area.

The Council's insurers have advised generally that there are very few of this type of claim and that these would relate to low valued vehicle damage rather than personal injury. Given the low frequency and low value, and in an insurance context, these types of cases would not be given their own category in terms of identification and quantification.

No.10. NOM submitted by Cllr. T Mc Namara seconded by Cllr. P Murphy

When the environment section of Clare County Council have fully investigated the illegal dumping of waste and cannot find anyone responsible they contact the area office to remove it to landfill. What process has the area engineer in place to insure that this waste is removed to landfill. For example the rubbish that is dumped behind house no 48 Ard Caoin, Gort Rd, Ennis for the past 2 years and there has been sightings of rats in the vicinity. I request this waste to be removed to landfill immediately.

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

The Municipal District Office is tasked by the Council to arrange clean up of dumping locations for the Environment Section of the Council. This location has not been completed and arrangements are being made for removal of the rubbish. The Municipal District Office is compiling the list of outstanding requests for removal of dumped material or severe littering from the Public, Tidy Towns Groups and the Environment Section of the Council. This will require the Roads and Maintenance Crews to be tasked for at least 2 to 3 days per month on this duty. It should be noted that the Gateway Scheme Operatives (10,000 hours per year) finished in February and the MD Office are expecting two General Operatives to start in April to replace Retired Staff.

No.11. NOM submitted by Cllr. J Flynn seconded by Cllr. J Breen

That Ennis Municipal District of Clare County Council request a progress report on the implementation of Clare Household Waste Bye Laws in the district and consider use of Drones to combat the scourge of illegal dumping, which in some cases appears to be a well organized criminal activity.

John O'Malley, A/Senior Executive Engineer, Environment

Clare County Council continues to use the waste by-laws to focus efforts on specific areas, estates or streets/properties within County Clare which have been identified as being of particular concern with regard to littering or illegal dumping of waste. We are working in cooperation with the waste collection companies who are now legally obliged to work with the local authority and provide information regarding who does or does not have a waste collection service in operation at any given time. This approach has yielded significant benefits with regard to improving the uptake of kerbside collection services amongst the general public.

The Waste Regulation & Enforcement Unit of Clare County Council is considering including the use of drones in their methods of combating illegal dumping in the county. We are investigating the potential of working along with the Civil Defense organization in County Clare who already have a drone at their disposal. There are significant operational, legal and data protection issues to be determined, especially with the presence of Shannon Airport in the locality, and these will be examined in the near future.

With regard to all illegal activity relating to waste/dumping, Clare County Council Environment Section will act on information received and would appeal to anyone with knowledge of such activity to pass on whatever information they may have to Clare County Council, anonymously if preferred. Please contact the Enforcement Team directly at (065) 6846331 or alternatively, information can be communicated through the Anti Litter Hotline 1800 606 706 or by email to enviroff@clarecoco.ie.

Members expressed the need to use smart technology to help combat this issue and stated that mobile criminal's should lose their licence.

No.12. NOM submitted by Cllr. P Daly seconded by Cllr. J Breen

I ask the Ennis M.D to again look at the vacant, derelict site in the Buttermarket, with a view to purchasing it for accommodating employees parking within the town of Ennis.

Gerard Dollard, Director of Economic Development replied as follows:

Following discussion with the Elected Members of Ennis Municipal District, a strategy has been agreed to address issues regarding car parking in the town of Ennis. Part of this strategy includes the provision of additional off street car parking spaces within a two year period.

In that regard, the Council is examining a number of sites in the Ennis area that might be suitable for the provision of additional off street car parking. The site, the subject of this motion, is part of the assessment currently being undertaken by the Council.

No.13. NOM submitted by Cllr. P Murphy seconded by Cllr. J Flynn

I am requesting that whatever works that are required to repair the road in College Grove (in front of house 72 and 73) are carried out at the earliest opportunity. Also,

what is the council's position in regard to the movement/subsidence of the front boundary wall of house no. 72?

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

The Municipal District Office was aware of subsidence in the road at College Grove however the Irish Water watermain contract was due to carryout pipeline works in the area. The M.D. Office has arranged with the contractor working on behalf of Irish Water to dig out the area of subsidence on the road and fill it with appropriate material and put a new asphaltic road surface in the area of the subsidence. The MD Office understood that this work was to be carried out later last year or early in 2017, however the surfacing contractor was not available as they were carrying out works on the cable duct works for WRCE.

The area of subsidence extends into the public open space on one side of the road and there is evidence of subsidence on a section of the footpath at this location. The external wall of the house is a matter for the owner of the property.

No.14. NOM submitted by Cllr. J Breen seconded by Cllr. P Murphy

That this council enter Consultations with the business people in the town of Ennis with a view to permanent pedestrianisation of the streets

Gerard Dollard, Director of Economic Development replied as follows:

As Members will be aware, the County Council has recently adopted its County Development Plan for the period 2017-2023. The next step is to prepare a statutory Local Area Plan for the town of Ennis and this will be progressed during the course of 2017.

The Members will also be aware of a Feasibility Study on the potential of Parnell Street as Heritage & Cultural Quarter which also includes the redesign of O'Connell Square to enhance civic use, pedestrian comfort and a better setting for the monument.

The implementation of the Parnell Street/O'Connell Square Plan, together with the preparation of the Ennis Local Area Plan, will provide the platform for a detailed consideration by all relevant parties of any proposals regarding pedestrianisation in Ennis.

A discussion ensued and it was agreed that consultation with traders should commence.

Item No. 8. Correspondence

None

Item No. 9. Any Other Business

Cllr. J Flynn expressed concern in relation to the black cables being used in Ennis by SIRO. Light poles are also being used and all other cables are underground. It was agreed to follow up with SIRO in relation to these cables.

Cllr J Breen asked that traffic lights in Ennis be synchronized. E. O'Dea advised the meeting that this is currently being looked at.

The meeting then concluded.

Mayor

Meetings Administrator

Date