

**Minutes of the December 2017 Municipal District of Ennis Committee Meeting
held at 10.30am on Wednesday 13th December, 2017,
in the Council Chamber, Áras Contae an Chláir,
Clare County Council, New Road, Ennis, Co. Clare.**

Present:

Councillors: J. Breen, A. Norton, T. McNamara, P. Murphy & M. Howard, P. Daly & J. Flynn.

Officials: Brian McCarthy, A/Director of Services, Eamon O’Dea, Senior Executive Engineer, Ann Reynolds, Meetings Administrator & Fiona Whelan, Staff Officer.

Apologies: Cllr. C. Colleran Molloy

Item No. 1. Minutes of the November Meeting of the Municipal District of Ennis Committee held on 14th November, 2017.

This item was proposed by Cllr. J. Breen, seconded by Cllr. T. McNamara and agreed by Members.

Matters Arising from Minutes – Our Lady’s Hospital, Ennis.

Following on from Notice of Motion No. 1 at the November meeting of Ennis Municipal District, members further appealed to the Chief Executive of Clare County Council to again re-consider the purchase of Our Lady’s Hospital, Ennis. On this occasion, some members sought the purchase with the intention of demolishing the buildings to free up the 16 acre site for a mixed use development. Other members felt that the protected building itself should be retained to recognise the history of mental health institutions in Ireland in the past.

Overall members agreed that the site is one of major opportunity and developers should be invited to work with the Council, possibly in a public/private partnership basis, or otherwise, to progress this matter. It was also agreed that the site could be included in the overall Master Plan for Ennis which was announced by the Chief Executive of Clare County Council this week.

Item No. 2. Notices of Motion.

No. 1. NOM submitted by Cllr. Paul Murphy was seconded by Cllr. M. Howard.

I am proposing that appropriate signage welcoming visitors to "Ireland's Friendliest Town 2018" and Purple Flag Awards of 2016 & 2017" is erected on all approach roads into Ennis as quickly as possible".

Eamon O’Dea, S.E.E., replied as follows:-

The “Failte Inis” tourism signs on the approach roads to Ennis have the Purple Flag Insignia on the sign. The Ennis MD Office are seeking the cost of a supplementary sign to

be installed under the Failte signs welcoming visitors to “Ireland’s Friendliest Town 2018”

Members welcomed this Notice of Motion and agreed that new signs are very important in highlighting Ennis and it’s recent Awards. We need to draw more foot fall into the town and such signs, on all approach roads and the motorway, would grab more attention. The fantastic achievements of Ennis should be highlighted and used to benefit the town.

No. 2. NOM submitted by Cllr. Ann Norton was seconded by Cllr. P. Murphy.

Can Clare County Council put in place an APP that people can pay for their parking in Ennis on line.

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

The ParkMagic Pay by App service has been available in Ennis for the last number of years .

All customers need to do is:

1. Download the ParkMagic app (ParkMagic Android App, ParkMagic iOS App)
2. Register (or sign in if you already have an account)
3. Select location and duration.
4. Confirm your choice.

The service is an alternative method of payment for parking.

The service was updated in 2017 with the removal of the requirement for Ennis users to display a window sticker on their vehicle. This allows anybody to sign up and pay for parking

in a matter of seconds. Full details are available at:

<http://www.clarecoco.ie/roads-and-transport/parking-facilities/pay-by-phone-parking/>

No. 3 NOM submitted by Cllr Mary Howard was seconded by Cllr. J. Flynn.

I request that the footpaths in Ashfield Park are repaired as a matter of urgency.

Eamon O’Dea, S.E.E., replied as follows:-

The MD Office will examine the footpaths in Ashfield Park and arrange any urgent repairs. We are awaiting confirmation from Virgin Media as to the extent of their works in the Gort Road before the MD Office considers footpath works at Ashfield Park.

Members supported the upgrading of footpaths and E. O’Dea recommended that we invite a representative of Virgin Media to an upcoming briefing and work with them to complete the works required to a satisfactory level.

No. 4. NOM submitted by Cllr. Johnny Flynn was seconded by Cllr. P. Daly.

I ask the Ennis Municipal District Executive, in light of recent submission by Residents of a signed petition, to respond to request to reduce speeding and improve road safety along the (Old) Limerick Road by carrying out the following ;

a) install traffic calming, such as speed bumps, to reduce speeding by drivers, particularly at peak times, using this narrow road as a short cut.

- b) reduce the speed limit from 50Kmh to 30kmh.
- c) consider if further traffic movement options, such as possible use of “one way “ system, are needed.

Eamon O’Dea, S.E.E., replied as follows:-

The MD Office intends to install “Slow” road markings once the line marking contractor will carry out works. The MD Office will carry out an assessment of the road network in the area to confirm if traffic calming measures are required. It should be noted that this location is similar to other road networks in residential areas in Ennis where traffic calming measures could be considered.

In regard to the reduction of speed limits from 50kph to 30 kph, the data from speed surveys in residential locations where pilot 30kph speed limits were introduced show no significant reduction in speeds. A major behaviour change by drivers and the provision of fixed traffic calming measures will be required to reduce the speed of the traffic. A traffic speed survey undertaken on the Limerick Road showed that the 85 percentile speed was under the Urban Speed Limit.

The altering of the traffic flow by use of one way systems requires a detailed examination of the road network in the area and should only be considered following a detailed traffic study. The introduction of a one way system may give the facility to a minority of drivers to increase their speed on the road.

E. O’Dea confirmed that this work cannot be done in isolation. An assessment will be done of the overall area and he will revert to members on this matter.

No. 5. NOM submitted by Cllr. James Breen was seconded by Cllr. P. Murphy.

I request that the L8298 at Leckaun and also Rushaun Road be included in the surface dressing programme for 2018.

Eamon O’Dea, S.E.E., replied as follows:-

The MD Office will inspect these roads and consider them for inclusion in the Roadwork’s Programme in 2018.

Members congratulated the staff of Ennis MD, and in particular the Roads staff, for their efficiency in finalising the Local Improvement Schemes with such a brief window at this time.

No. 6 NOM submitted by Cllr. Pat Daly was seconded by Cllr. J. Breen.

I request Ennis MD to upgrade the road outside Lynch’s house at Upper Drumbiggle Road.

Eamon O’Dea, S.E.E., replied as follows:-

The matter here relates to what area is part of the public road network that the local authority would normally maintain and what part of the house frontage is provided for sightline purposes until future road widening or footpath provision is carried out by the Local Authority. It might be prudent for part of the area to be converted into a grass margin thus reducing the area requiring maintenance.

E. O’Dea will further investigate the ownership of the property in this area and revert to members.

No. 7. NOM submitted by Cllr. Paul Murphy was seconded by Cllr. J. Flynn.

I am calling on the acting Director of Services for Rural Development to inform the elected members of Ennis Municipal District about the 50.4 acres of lands that was purchased by Clare County Council at Ballaghafadda, Clarecastle. I am proposing that a Masterplan be created for these lands given their close proximity to Clarecastle and Ennis as well as the national road network and to suggest possible ways of funding this project.

Leonard Cleary, Director of Rural Development, replied as follows:-

Clare County Council recently purchased 50.4 acres at Ballaghafadda, Clarecastle. This land is zoned as community and tourism. This represents an opportunity for a number of functions to be incorporated into the site. The Drumcliffe Burial Ground will shortly reach capacity and it is intended that a Burial Ground will be one of the functions at these lands. The next step is to prepare a master plan for the lands in terms of both site layout and range of functions. It is intended that this would be presented to elected members during Quarter 1 2018.

Members welcomed this Notice of Motion and the Director's response and look forward to the Master Plan for the proposed Amenities which will increase tourism and facilities for the entire area.

No. 8. NOM submitted by Ann Norton was seconded by Cllr. J. Breen.

Can Clare County Council fill the potholes in the centre of Barefield Village.

Eamon O'Dea, S.E.E., replied as follows:-

The MD Office is arranging to carry out large patch repairs at this location to eliminate the problem on the L4159 near its junction with the R458-27 adjacent to Hassett's Public House.

No. 9. NOM submitted by Cllr. Mary Howard was seconded by Cllr. J. Flynn.

That this Municipal District Requests Clare County Council to enforce the laws regarding Estate Agent Signage. I further request a report from the planning authority on the breaches of planning law on this matter in the Ennis area.

Brian McCarthy, A/Director of Services, replied as follows:-

Class 9 of Part 2 of Schedule 2 of the Planning & Development Regulations 2001, as amended, provides for planning exemptions with regard to advertisements relating to the sale or letting of any structure. These include that the signage does not exceed 0.6sqm in relation to a house, and 1.2sqm in relation to any other structure. Under the Regulations only one such sign is allowed to be erected on a property and same must be removed 7 days after the structure is sold or let.

To date the Enforcement Section of the Planning Authority has not received any formal complaints with regard to estate agent signage.

However in light of the issues as raised in this notice of motion, the Planning Authority intend to write to all estate agents operating within the town to remind them of their obligations under the Planning Acts and Regulations.

No. 10. NOM submitted by Cllr. Johnny Flynn was seconded by Cllr. M. Howard.

To meet the needs of animals and animal lovers that Ennis Municipal District follow the example of what Dublin City Council did in its St Anne's Park by providing a dedicated " Dog Park " in Ennis - this is a designated area in a public park where dogs may be let off lead at all times. It could be in the form of a small area for puppies and a bigger area for big dogs with both provided with water tap, bowl and an area with wood like chippings.

Brian McCarthy, A/Director of Services, replied as follows:

In supporting and appreciating the motion being very positive, unfortunately based on current programs of work and resources available, the council is not in a position to introduce the proposed initiative at this time in Ennis. Dog walking has many positive benefits and in view of the potential for Green infrastructure plans in Ennis and subject to resources such a proposal could be favorably considered as funding and opportunities for same become available.

No. 11. NOM submitted by Cllr. James Breen was seconded by Cllr. M. Howard.

That steps be taken to eliminate flooding at Drumcarron More, Loughville on the road leading to Bushy Park.

Eamon O'Dea, S.E.E., replied as follows:-

The MD Road Engineer and Supervisor will examine the location and provide a means of relieving a localised road flooding problem in a location where the adjoining lands are higher than the Bushypark Road. This will require the assistance of the adjacent landowner.

E. O'Dea is making contact with the landowner to resolve this matter.

No. 12. NOM submitted by Cllr. Pat Daly was seconded by Cllr. T. McNamara

I request Ennis Municipal District to invite a representative from Enterprise Ireland to an Ennis MD meeting with a view to exploring new business ventures in Ennis.

Brian McCarthy, A/Director of Services, replied as follows:-

Enterprise Ireland is the government organisation responsible for the development and growth of Irish enterprises in world markets. Their aim is to work in partnership with Irish enterprises of ten employees or more, to help them start, innovate, scale and win export sales in global markets. In this way, it's stated that they support sustainable economic growth, regional development and secure employment.

In view of the remit of Enterprise Ireland across the wider County, it may be appropriate and would be of significant value that as an initiative of the Ennis MD Members, and further to this notice of motion, that Enterprise Ireland be invited to meet not only the Ennis MD but the full Council. Such a meeting would potentially seek to obtain an insight and perspective from Enterprise Ireland on the role, opportunities and position of enterprise in the Ennis and environs area, but also provide an opportunity to explore economic and enterprise relationships between Ennis and the wider county and indeed region.

Members agreed that the invite to Enterprise Ireland and discussion on Ennis would be beneficial if it was arranged for a full meeting of Clare County Council.

Any Other Business.

- Members requested a meeting ahead of the scheduled Ennis 2040 Plan. Members need to consider a “shopping list” for Ennis as part of the discussions at the meeting on 18th January, 2018. Members need to discuss the needs of the town in advance of this.
A date to be confirmed by the Mayor of Ennis.
- Stones on Showgrounds Road, Ennis, need to be inspected and cut back where necessary.
- Members commented on Bus Eireann’s hourly service from Ennis to Galway whereby only one bus exits Ennis to Galway through the Gort Road with the remainder exiting via the Tulla Road. A request for this to be changed to four buses exiting via the Gort Road should to be sent to Bus Eireann. Ennis Municipal District should decide on a specific location for Bus Stops on both exit routes and agree them with Bus Eireann.
- Bus Eireann’s No. 51 service via Clarecastle. This has temporarily ceased due to the closure of Latoon Bridge. A further request to Bus Eireann to seek this service to re-commence immediately following the completion of the works.
- Acting Director of Services, Brian McCarthy, thanked all staff and members on a very successful 2017. This was especially important with the success of Ennis in 2017 with the Fleadh, Tidy Towns Award, Purple Flag Award and Ennis winning the Friendliest Town for 2018 together with continued success and enhancement of the areas in the MD through the work of communities. All this would not be possible without the cooperation and dedication of both the staff and Elected Members working in collaboration with the citizens, communities and all stakeholders in the Ennis MD area. He further wished members and staff a very Happy Christmas and New Year.
- The Mayor and members also thanked the staff for their cooperation and commitment during 2017 and concurred with the Director’s wishes for the Season ahead.

Mayor

Meetings Administrator

Date