

**Minutes of the July 2018 Municipal District of Ennis Committee Meeting
held at 4pm on Friday 15th June, 2018,
in the Council Chamber, Áras Contae an Chláir,
Clare County Council, New Road, Ennis, Co. Clare.**

Present:

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

Officials: Carmel Kirby, Director of Services, Eamon O’Dea, Senior Executive Engineer, Fiona Whelan, Staff Officer & Orla Shanagher, Assistant Staff Officer.

Apologies: Bernadette Haugh, Meetings Administrator.

Item No. 1. Minutes of the June Meeting of the Municipal District of Ennis Committee held on 12th June, 2018.

The Minutes of the June 2018 meeting of Ennis Municipal District were proposed by Cllr. A. Norton, seconded by Cllr. M. Howard and agreed by members.

Item No. 2. Ennis Street Arts Festival July 2018 - Presentation

This item was deferred to a later date.

Item No. 3. Proposed lease of the Mill House Building, Mill Road, Ennis.

This item was proposed by Cllr. T. McNamara, seconded by Cllr. J. Flynn and agreed by members.

Item No. 4. IBAL Sculpture

This item was proposed by Cllr. M. Howard, seconded by Cllr. J. Flynn and agreed by members. The sculpture should be in place by October 2018, the members thanked Siobhan Mulcahy, County Arts Officer, for her work on this to date. Cllr. A. Norton asked from a publicity point of view if RTE could be contacted to showcase the sculpture on The Angelus at 6 O’ Clock on RTE. Siobhan Mulcahy agreed to contact RTE to ascertain if this would be possible.

Item No. 5. Notices of Motion

NO. 1 NOM submitted by Cllr. P. Daly was seconded by Cllr. J. Flynn

I ask Ennis Municipal District to progress the construction of a roundabout (similar to the Cappahard roundabout on the Tulla Road) to service the Gort Road Industrial Estate and Phase 1 of the Ennis Inner Northern Relief Road (R352)

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

Clare County Council intends to provide a roundabout or other signalised junction on the R458 Gort Road when

(a) The Ennis North Inner Relief Road (ENIRR) is expanded to cater for traffic from either an expanded Shannon Commercial Property Development or a link road from the Tulla Road or both

Or

(b) A funding source is provided for improvement of junctions in urban areas.

The type of junction will depend on which is more appropriate according to DMURS and Design Guidelines and requirements for vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists.

Members welcomed this Notice of Motion. Members suggested that a Traffic Management Plan be put in place from the Gort Road, Industrial Estate to the Traffic Lights at the County Hospital. It was further suggested that this be included in the overall Master Plan for Ennis. Ballymacahill Cross and Shanaway Road also need to be addressed as part of any overall plans.

The Director of Services, Carmel Kirby, confirmed that a Mobility Plan will be prepared for Ennis town.

No. 2 NOM submitted by Cllr. M. Howard was seconded by Cllr. P. Murphy

The footpaths on the Lahinch Road are badly in need of repair, especially from the entrance to Shanballya up towards the entrance to Inis Grove. This section of footpaths has not been repaired in many years and is in a very unsafe state.

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

Works on the footpaths and the road surface on the N85 at the Lahinch Road had been deferred by the Ennis MD Office as a submission of a feasibility study to the TII for this road is due to be made this year. The Ennis MD Office would have proceeded with footpath replacement-repair on the north side of the road between the Shanballya and Woodlawn entrances in 2017 & 2018 however it did not seem appropriate to replace footpaths when the final design of a road improvement scheme funded by the TII may require the adjustment of these footpaths. The Ennis MD Office has identified sections of the footpaths that require repair and will proceed with repairs while awaiting outcome of the TII submission.

No. 3 NOM submitted by Cllr. T. McNamara was seconded by Cllr. J. Breen

I call on Clare County Council to surface dress the driveway of Phoenix Court, Kilrush Road as there is serious deterioration to the existing surface.

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

The Ennis MD Office carried out a number of large patch repairs on areas of the road network in Pheonix Court where local hollows on the road were causing difficulty for Residents. The roads in Pheonix Court are in good condition. The Ennis MD Office will forward a layout for parking in the Town Houses to the Residents for their approval before the MD Office proceeds with line marking and numbering of the parking spaces.

No. 4 NOM submitted by Cllr. J. Flynn was seconded by Cllr. J. Breen

Ennis Housing Crisis. Vacant houses back into use.

I ask that a pragmatic action plan be put in place by Clare County Council to get the large vacant housing stock in Ennis back into residential use. I am committed to proper and safe building standards but is the application of current building standards to vacant older houses in Ennis a contribution factor to the housing crisis with 1,072 people on the Council Housing list looking to be housed in Ennis and up to 100 adults and children in emergency accommodation. The County Clare Vacancy Study -Census 2016 identified that there was 1,160 vacant houses (majority I surmise built over 25 years ago) in Ennis and environs alone.

Siobhán McNulty, Senior Executive Officer, replied as follows:

At the time of reply there are 1099 on the housing list with a preference of Ennis; 585 applicants are currently in HAP accommodation with 514 remaining in need of accommodation. The Social Directorate welcomes proposals by owners’ and developers to address the above shop vacancy that exists in the County town. It should be noted that we are to shortly advertise for expression of interest from owners/developers for schemes of social housing units. The recent change in Planning legislation should encourage developers to address vacancy.

The 2016 census indicated 1,438 vacant properties in the Ennis Municipal district, in compiling the Vacant Homes Action Plan for Clare we identified that this figure is overstated. Having analysed the data we have determined there are 329 vacant properties (as per the Geo Directory database) to be inspected to ascertain their suitability for social housing. The story behind the vacancy can only be determined by field work, this is a slow and arduous task with little yield.

We welcome discussion with owners of these vacant properties and wish to advise of the various funding mechanisms available to return vacant stock to productive use - namely the "repair to lease" and "buy and renew" schemes (details of which are available of the Council and Department of Housing Planning and Local Government websites).

The Council are hopeful the impending expression of interest call will yield a better return and for now are focusing attention in this area.

Liam O'Connor, Administrative Officer, Housing, attended the meeting and outlined the various schemes currently available. He further urged property owners to make contact with the Housing Section in this regard.

No. 5 NOM submitted by Cllr. P. Murphy was seconded by Cllr. J. Flynn

I am requesting that a footpath be constructed from the Clonroad business Park down to it's meeting point with Clonroad.

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

The Council are in the process of purchasing lands to the north of the Clonroad Business Park and French Park access road in line with the County Development Plan infrastructure safeguards. The road network that will be constructed as part of the larger future development will include footpath and cycleways. There is an existing footpath between French Park and Clonroad which is available to pedestrians from Clonroad Business Park to use. This is located between 23 and 24 Clonroad.

E. O'Dea, S.E.E., confirmed that the inner relief road will be part of the overall plans for the area.

No.6 NOM submitted by Cllr. James Breen was seconded by Cllr. P. Murphy

I am asking for the progress report on all Notice of Motions submitted by me since last January.

Bernadette Haugh, Administrative Officer, replied as follows:

Since my appointment as Meeting's Administrator for Ennis Municipal District, I have been working with staff in Information Systems to extend the CRM system for the tracking of Notice of Motions to Ennis Municipal District. The system is currently being user tested by the staff of Ennis MD and a report will be available at our next monthly meeting.

Carmel Kirby, Director of Services, confirmed that the CRM system for Municipal Districts is currently at the trial stages within Ennis Municipal District and will be available as soon as possible. She further confirmed that this should negate the need for repeat Notice of Motions.

No. 7 NOM submitted by Cllr. J. Flynn was seconded by Cllr. P. Daly

St Senans/The Crescent and Kincora Park/Shannon Park Residential Estates traffic pilot scheme. On behalf of the 158 adult residents of St Senans, The Crescent, Kincora Park and Shannon Park who signed a petition I ask that Clare County Council put in place a pilot residential traffic safety initiative urgently be to include installation of speed bumps, reduction of speed limits, etc. The residents both retired and those with young families are concerned about the speed and frequency of traffic going through their estates including the traffic to St

Anne's which is a busy school. And that this initiative if piloted be monitored to assess its suitability to be rolled out elsewhere in residential estates throughout Ennis which suffer from through traffic using their neighbourhoods.

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

The Ennis MD Office will carry out required traffic and speed surveys to confirm concerns of residents so as a proposal can be drafted for submission for Low Cost Safety Scheme in 2019. The Ennis MD Office and the Roads Design Office are examining proposals for traffic calming in the Turnpike area in conjunction with the work being undertaken for traffic calming on the Clonroad Beg & St Flannan's Drive under the Low Cost Safety Scheme in 2018.

Cllr. P. Daly added that it is a "rat run" onto the Tulla Road from other roads. Cllr. J. Breen reminded the members of the Speed Limit Review. Cllr. J. Flynn said this matter needs to be addressed as a matter of urgency.

Correspondence

None

AOB

Cllr. J. Breen queried if temporary measures could be put in place at Upper Turnpike Road as the footpath is currently being blocked by vehicles.

E. O'Dea confirmed that materials have been ordered to address this issue.

Cllr. J. Breen queried if the River Fergus will be cleaned this year.

E. O'Dea advised that due to recent dry weather the water level is low resulting in lower river matter being visible. He further confirmed that Ennis Tidy Towns do an annual litter pick in the river.

Cllr. J. Flynn raised concerns regarding the condition of the embankment at Fíor Uisce as a result of broadband works.

E. O'Dea confirmed that he has already been in contact with the Broadband Company involved and requested that the matter be rectified.

Cllr. J. Flynn raised the issue of Anti Social behaviour in the Cloughleigh area. Cllr. Flynn further called on the Director of Services to re-establish the quarterly meetings for the Cloughleigh residents which had previously been in place. C. Kirby confirmed that she will discuss this with the Social Development Directorate

The issue of Road Safety was raised in relation to heavy goods vehicles being directed via Satellite Navigation Systems onto the narrow road from Drumcliffe to Ballyalla. It was queried if Satellite Navigation providers could be contacted to rectify this issue.

E. O'Dea will investigate this matter.

Cllr. M. Howard advised that there is currently a spelling error on the Purple Flag signs on the approach roads to Ennis which need to be rectified.

Cllr. C. Colleran Molloy wished to acknowledge the work that was recently done in relation to the clean up at Ballybeg Woods. It was confirmed that this was carried out by the private land owner and continues to be monitored by the Council. The Director of Service, Carmel Kirby, was publicly thanked for her role in this regard.

Signed: _____
Mayor of Ennis

Signed _____
Meetings Administrator.

Date: _____