

**Minutes of the January 2019 Meeting of the Municipal District of Ennis Committee,
held at 10.45am on Monday 14th January, 2019,
in the Council Chamber, Áras Contae an Chláir,
New Road, Ennis, Co. Clare.**

Present:

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

Officials: Carmel Kirby, Director of Services, Barry Conway, A/ Senior Executive Engineer, Leonore O'Neill, Senior Executive Officer and Fiona Whelan, Staff Officer.

At the outset of the meeting Cllr. J. Flynn proposed and Cllr. Clare Colleran Molloy seconded the Standing Orders be suspended to allow for the 10.45am start of the meeting.

Item No. 1. Minutes of the December 2018 Meeting of the Municipal District of Ennis Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 11th December, 2018.

This item was proposed by Cllr. A. Norton, seconded by Cllr. M. Howard and agreed by members.

**Item No. 2. Matters Arising.
Corrovorrin Junction.**

Members requested an update on the progress of proposed new layout at Corrovorrin Junction. B. Conway A/S.E.E., confirmed that the Council's Road Design Office is currently finalising a preliminary design for this junction. It is hoped that these plans will be finalised in February and that discussions will then take place with all stakeholders.

Turnpike Road.

B. Conway confirmed that a draft design for a proposed solution to illegal parking at the Turnpike has been completed. Discussions will now commence with businesses, residents, members of Ennis MD and the Roads Dept to resolve this issue.

Item No. 3. Presentation from Joe Arkins – Munster Fleadh 2019 Ennis.

Joe Arkins and colleagues from Comhaltas, gave a very detailed presentation on the proposals for Fleadh Ceoil na Mumhan 2019. This included feedback following the success of Fleadh na Mumhan in Ennis 2018.

Members congratulated the Ennis Branch of Comhaltas on their most informative presentation and welcomed the programme of events put in place in 2018 and the extended plans for 2019.

Item No. 4. Report on Christmas in Ennis 2018

Leonore O'Neill, S.E.O., presented a Report to members following the recent success of the Christmas in Ennis Initiative.

Members welcomed the Report on Christmas in Ennis 2018 and congratulated all staff of Ennis MD as well as the Chief Executive of the Council on what was one of the most successful initiatives ever in the town. It is hoped that plans for Christmas in Ennis 2019 will be continue during the year to ensure that the benchmark set in 2018 will not be reduced.

Item No. 5. General Municipal Allocations 2019

Leonore O'Neill, S.E.O., outlined a change in the process for funding under the GMA for Ennis MD 2019. All funding must now go through a formal application process. The closing date for applications for funding is Monday 25th February, 2019.

Item No. 6. Notices of Motion

No. 1 NOM submitted by Cllr. Ann Norton was seconded by Cllr. C. Colleran Molloy.

Can the Ennis Municipal District look at sweeping the road between Ballyallia Lake and the Ballyallia Cross especially during the Winter Months.

Barry Conway, A/S.E.E., replied as follows:

The road between Ballyalla Lake and the Gort Road (L-4162-50) will be inspected by the MD office and will be included in the street sweeping schedule as required and as resources allow.

Members queried if there was a change to the rota for road sweeping in the Barefield area. B. Conway confirmed that there had been no change, however, there did appear to be an increase in litter in some areas following the Christmas period. Elected Members appealed to members of the public to be more conscious of their responsibilities in relation to waste management.

No. 2 NOM submitted by Cllr. Tom McNamara was seconded by Cllr. J. Breen.

I call on Clare County Council to carry out an assessment of the condition of the section of the L4202 road south of O'Neills cross in Kilnamona that was severely damaged as a result of the very hot weather last summer and carry out repair works to same.

Barry Conway, A/S.E.E., replied as follows:

The L-4202 will be assessed by the Ennis MD office prior to the compilation of the 2019 schedule of municipal district works and any necessary repair works will be carried out in conjunction with the 2019 works programme.

B. Conway further confirmed that any possible temporary works would be carried out ahead of this road being included in the Schedule of Roadworks for 2019.

No. 3. NOM submitted by Cllr. James Breen was seconded by Cllr. M. Howard.

I am asking for the up to date position in relation to the realignment of the N85 at Kilnamona.

Seán Lenihan, Senior Engineer, replied as follows:

This project is ongoing and is now being managed by the Councils Project Management Office in consultation with the TII (Transport Infrastructure Ireland) and the Midwest Regional Road Design Office (MWRDO). The necessary survey work to inform the design has been procured and landowner consent has been sought to carry out some ground investigation works that are now required. Funding has been allocated in this year's National Roads allocation to progress the scheme and the next meeting of the Steering Group is scheduled for January 24th next. A further update can be provided thereafter.

C. Kirby confirmed that there is significant progress in relation to plans for this section of road. Currently landowners are being consulted and members will be updated further in due course.

No. 4 NOM submitted by Cllr. Clare Colleran Molloy was seconded by Cllr. A. Norton.

Due to locals' concerns about the one way vehicular traffic on Quin Bridge & the possibility that an imbalance may be occurring to cause a subsidence or leaning, that an examination be undertaken & assessment made as to the legitimacy of these concerns raised by residents in Quin.

Barry Conway, A/S.E.E., replied as follows:

A structural assessment has been carried out on the bridge on the R-469 in Quin. Based on the findings of this assessment, tender documentation was prepared by the road design section and specialist contractors have been appointed to carry out the necessary structural enhancements to the bridge. It is expected that works will commence in the coming weeks.

B. Conway further clarified that the underpinning and strengthening works being carried out on the bridge is as a result of an assessment on all bridges in the County. Members sought an update on the proposed footbridge which was originally considered in this instance and the cost of same. C. Kirby confirmed that the Road Design Office will be contacted further to confirm plans in this regard. It was further suggested that Droichead na Gabhar Bridge would also be considered for similar works.

No. 5 NOM submitted by Cllr. Pat Daly was seconded by Cllr. M. Howard.

I ask Ennis MD to erect 2 no. Promotional signs on the motorway coming into Ennis from either direction to include the suggested wording of recent awards including Ireland's Friendliest Place, Tidy Towns Award winners, host town for Fleadh Cheoil na hEireann 2016/2017, Retail Excellence Award winners, to promote Ennis as a visitor & shopping destination.

John Leahy, Senior Engineer replied as follows:

As part of Ennis 2040 and the promotion of Ennis, discussions will take place with all stakeholders including TII over the coming months and signage will be considered as part of that process.

No. 6 NOM submitted by Cllr. Paul Murphy was seconded by Cllr. C. Colleran Molloy.

What is the current situation and the likely construction period with regard to the outstanding/unfinished aspects of the Ennis South Flood Relief Scheme.

Seán Lenihan, Senior Engineer replied as follows:

These works were retendered in the latter part of the summer. Following suitability assessment and evaluation of all tenders received, the Tender Report was finalised the week before Christmas and is currently with the OPW for approval. Negotiations with affected landowners are being progressed in parallel.

The OPW previously confirmed that the necessary funding is secure and therefore, we would expect approval to appoint the successful contractor in the coming weeks with construction expected to commence on site in March 2019.

No. 7 NOM submitted by Cllr. Mary Howard was seconded by Cllr. J. Flynn.

Considering the success of the Christmas Train over the four days this December, I request Ennis Municipal District / Clare County Council consider purchasing one as it could be used for many other events throughout the year.

No response required

Following on from the very successful initiative during Christmas in Ennis 2018, members further queried the possibility of purchasing a similar train or a shared ownership of the Kilkee train which was accessible for all, including wheelchair users.

Leonore O'Neill confirmed that Ennis MD would contact Kilkee Chamber to discuss various options on the suggestion from members.

No. 8 NOM submitted by Cllr. Johnny Flynn was seconded by Cllr. A. Norton.

In light of ongoing public health & road safety concerns with the stretch of the M18 & the serious impact from M18 traffic on connecting Regional Roads in the Ennis District, I call for Traffic safety audits to be urgently carried out by Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII), with the aim of improving the layouts for safety, on the following junctions impacted by M18 traffic;

- 1) Junctions 13 (Tulla Rd) & 14 (Barefield)
- 2) Ballymachill Cross & Corrovorrin Junction
- 3) Shanaway road junction

John Leahy, Senior Engineer, replied as follows:

➤ **Junctions 13 (Tulla Rd) & 14 (Barefield)**

Following motion from December, 2018 County Council meeting, TII were requested to carry out a review of these junction locations.

➤ **Ballymacahill Cross (R352)**

Application for funding was submitted to the Department of Transport for a pedestrian crossing under 2019 Low Cost Safety Scheme.

➤ **Corrovorrin Junction (R352)**

A Low Cost Safety Scheme was designed and funded in recent years at this location. The scheme did not proceed as it was not approved. This is currently being reviewed by the Council's Road Design office.

➤ **Shanaway Road junction (N85)**

This junction is currently being reviewed and initial discussions have taken place with TII and some residents. Junction design options are being considered.

Members further discussed this Notice of Motion and the implications for these junctions since the Ennis By Pass motor way opened. Members raised health and safety concerns at these locations. The members were advised that most of these problem areas are as a result of the increased traffic from the motorway, and should be dealt with by the TII where applicable. Members suggested that safety audits should be carried out by the TII at these locations.

C. Kirby confirmed that the TII have given us a significant increase in funding for 2019 and suggested that we consider our options within this budget initially.

No. 9 NOM submitted by Cllr. Ann Norton was seconded by Cllr. P. Murphy.

Can road marking and signage be improved at Ballyallia Cross.

Barry Conway, A/S.E.E., replied as follows:

The Ballyalla junction on the R-458 will be surveyed by the MD office and an assessment made as to what improvements can be made to the signage and road markings that currently exist.

No. 10 NOM submitted by Cllr. Tom McNamara was seconded by Cllr. J. Flynn.

I call on Clare County Council to examine the cause of water pooling during heavy rain in the roadway and footpath in front of the houses at the Roslevan side of the new roundabout on the Tulla road at Cappahard

Barry Conway, A/S.E.E., replied as follows:

In conjunction with the construction of the new roundabout at the Cappahard junction completed in 2017, sixty five metres of new storm drainage was constructed immediately east of the roundabout. This drainage and the associated gullies have been cleaned and tested by MD staff and has been proven to be working well. Any instance of significant water ponding at this location since the construction of the new roundabout has been as a result of gullies becoming blocked with leaves or other debris/rubbish. The MD staff will endeavour to keep this road free from debris, as resources allow, particularly during periods of heavy rain.

No. 11 NOM submitted by Cllr. James Breen was seconded by Cllr. A. Norton.

That the road from Garnyngry Cross to Clonfeagh be surfaced dressed in 2019

Barry Conway, A/S.E.E., replied as follows:

The L-8308-0 between Garynagry and Clonfeagh is included in the draft 2019 Restoration Improvement programme. The 2019 schedule of municipal district works will be finalised in the coming weeks once grant allocations for regional and local roads have been received from the DTTaS

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

That the condition of the Mine Road in Doora be examined with a view to road surface prioritisation

Barry Conway, A/S.E.E., replied as follows:

The L-8174-0 in Doora was assessed in 2018 and included in the multi annual road works programme for Restoration Improvement works. A date for this work will be confirmed once grant allocations for regional and local roads have been received from the DTTaS.

No. 13 NOM submitted by Cllr. Pat Daly was seconded by Cllr. A. Norton.

I request Ennis MD to repair the Mill Wheel as it appears to be out of order at present.

Barry Conway, A/S.E.E., replied as follows:

The Ennis MD made a decision to divert water away from the Mill Wheel last year when it was observed that there was some damage to the turning mechanism. We are currently in contact with specialised contractors to determine what repairs/improvements are required and the overall cost of same. Thereafter, the ongoing maintenance of the Mill Wheel will need to be reviewed.

No. 14 NOM submitted by Cllr. Paul Murphy was seconded by Cllr. A. Norton.

I am requesting an update on what measures are being proposed to improve safety (particularly for pedestrians and cyclists) at Clareabbey Roundabout.

Ann Cronin, S.E.E., Road Design Office, replied as follows:-

A scheme to improve safety for cyclists, pedestrians and drivers at N85/R458 Clareabbey Roundabout is currently being designed by the Road Design Office and five different options are being evaluated.

Consultation has taken place with TII regarding the options and it is anticipated that a Feasibility Report with a recommended option will be submitted to TII in March 2019 along with a request for funding.

A road safety audit will also be required.

Measures considered include;

- narrowing of the circulating carriageway and the entries and exits of the roundabout
- provision of uncontrolled crossings
- provision of controlled crossings
- provision of widened paths to provide a two-way cyclepath/footpath around the west side of the roundabout
- all necessary alterations to services, drainage, signing and lining

When funding has been secured either a Part 8 or Section 38 process/approval will be required before construction work could take place."

No. 15 NOM submitted by Cllr. Mary Howard was seconded by Cllr. A. Norton.

In the interests of sustainability would Ennis Municipal District gardening section plant semi-mature Christmas trees (Nordmann fir, Fraser fir, Noble fir, Blue Spruce etc) in different locations around the urban area that can mature and be a permanent feature and appropriately decorated each Christmas.

William Freney, S.E.E., replied as follows:

Clare County Council currently erects Christmas trees at a number of locations in Ennis to enhance the townscape during the festive season. These locations are chosen to provide the maximum visual impact within the town and would not be suitable for the permanent planting of coniferous trees due to the existing streetscape, i.e. footpaths, proximity to buildings, overhead and underground services.

Clare County Council is committed to promoting biodiversity and sustainability within rural and urban environments around the county and the planting of non-native coniferous tree species would not be in keeping with best practice in achieving these goals.

Clare County Council in conjunction with the Tree Council of Ireland and Coillte will shortly be promoting National Tree Week which will run from the 3rd – 10th March 2019, by offering native Irish tree species to community groups and resident associations within the County for planting in public open spaces. Groups should register their interest with Clare County Council before Friday 1st March 2019 by contacting the Environment Section, Clare County Council on 065-6846331.

No. 16 NOM submitted by Cllr. Johnny Flynn was seconded by Cllr. C. Colleran Molloy.

I refer to my previous calls for a Town Bus Service for Ennis, the subsequent feasibility research study done in 2013, and ask has there been any progress in discussions with the National Transport Agency (NTA) and if so when can we expect a service to commence.

Barry Conway, A/S.E.E., replied as follows:

The NTA has confirmed that they are not in a position at this time, to give any commitments regarding when the services will be introduced. However, they confirmed that Ennis remains on their programme and they support the project in principle. They will continue to keep Ennis MD updated if and when there are any developments in their plans.

C. Kirby confirmed that Ennis MD fully supports a public transport service in Ennis. She confirmed that the response from the NTA is a positive one as we are on their programme and that we need to confirm the timescale of the plans. She further confirmed that this item is also being incorporated into the Ennis 2040 Plan and the National Spatial Strategy.

Item No. 7. Correspondence.

None

Item No. 8. Any Other Business.

Members raised the following issues.

- ***Road Markings*** at the junction for Doora Industrial Estate on the Quin Road, Ennis, should be examined under health and safety.
- ***Illegally parked Caravans.***

Members queried the legal process in dealing with illegally parked caravans. It was confirmed that the Council is liaising with all agencies to come to a resolution on this matter. Information in relation to specific cases could not be discussed in a public forum.

- ***Ennis Bus and Train Station.***

Following the recent IBAL results which outlined some problems at Ennis Bus and Train Station, members requested that Ennis MD write again to Iarnrod Eireann and Bus Eireann to seek a general improvement on this private site.

- ***March Meeting of Ennis MD***

The Standing Orders were suspended for the March Meeting of Ennis MD to allow the Ennis MD meeting be held at 2.30pm on Monday 4th March, 2019.

- ***A message of sympathy*** be extended to Eugene Drennan, Claureen, Ennis, following the recent passing of his wife Linda.

Signed: _____
Mayor of Ennis

Signed: _____
Meetings Administrator

Date: _____