

**Minutes of the July 2019 Meeting of the Municipal District of Ennis Committee,
held at 10.30am on Tuesday 9th July, 2019,
in the Council Chamber, Áras Contae an Chláir,
New Road, Ennis, Co. Clare.**

Present:

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

Officials: Leonore O'Neill, Senior Executive Officer, Eamon O'Dea, Senior Executive Engineer, Bernadette Haugh, Meetings Administrator, Eugene Crimmins, Staff Officer and Sinead Armstrong Lynch A/ Assistant Staff Officer.

Apologies: Cllr. M. Nestor, Carmel Kirby, Director of Service Physical Development.

Item No. 1. Minutes of the May, 2019 Meeting of the Municipal District of Ennis Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 14th May, 2019.

This item was proposed by Cllr. Howard, seconded by Cllr. Daly and agreed by members.

Item No. 2. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of Ennis Municipal District held at 3.30pm on Tuesday 11th June 2019

This item was proposed by Cllr. Daly, seconded by Cllr. Norton and agreed by members.

Item No. 3. Matters Arising:

There were no matters arising.

Item No. 4. General Municipal Allocations Specific Projects

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

Item No. 5. Nomination for Town & Village Centre Paint Scheme 2019

Cllr. Daly proposed that Carmody St. / Mill Road should be put forward under the above scheme for 2019, the proposal was seconded by Cllr. Norton and agreed by members.

Cllr. Pat Daly noted that Carmody St. / Mill road area has a lot of businesses and it was an appropriate area for the scheme. Cllr. Flynn referenced the good work of fellow councillor Cllr. Norton and Tidy Towns in the town and that the budget of €10,000 through the scheme would be welcomed.

Item No. 6. Notices of Motion

No. 1 NOM submitted by Cllr. A. Norton, was seconded by Cllr. J Flynn

No. 1, No. 7 and No. 9 NOM's were joined for the purpose of discussion at the meeting

Can a another disabled parking space be put into The Friary Car Park close to the entrance to the church.

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

The Ennis MD Office is examining Francis Street and the Friary Car park to confirm where fully accessible parking spaces can be provided. This has to take account of the size of the parking area required and accessibility to Town Centre and the Friary.

Cllr. Norton welcomed the response by Eamon O'Dea, SEE and noted the locations proximity to the Friary and the Town Centre. Cllr. Flynn referenced that the site was close to a medical centre and would be an ideal mobility site.

No. 2 NOM submitted by Cllr. M. Howard, was seconded by Cllr. C. Colleran Molloy

While on the recent campaign trail a number of constituents remarked on the lack of places to stop and sit in John O'Sullivan Lee's Road. I am requesting this Municipal District provide for seating with in the woodland walk at this park.

Siobhán McNulty, SEO, Housing replied as follows:

Timber log seating has been ordered for Lees Road from a Supplier. It is intended that four seating installations will be provided through the woodland. The installation of the seating will be coordinated through Ennis MD.

Members welcomed the response of Siobhán McNulty SEO commenting on the number of elderly people that use the park in the mornings who would avail of the additional seating. Members sought an update on the automotive gate opening hours to John O'Sullivan Park, Lees Road.

Eamon O'Dea SEE, agreed to contacting Active Ennis and to revert back with an update in due course.

No. 3 NOM submitted by Cllr. J. Flynn, was seconded by Cllr. A. Norton

Progress report on longterm traffic problems.

I ask for a progress report on urgent roads issues that I have put on the official agenda by way of notice of motions over the last number of years which need to be progressed over the next few months, examples such as below

- 1) Corrovorrin Junction
- 2) Ballymacahill Cross
- 3) Shanaway Junction
- 4) Ballybeg road
- 5) Traffic calming speed bumps in St. Senans, Kincora/Shannon park areas.

Ann Cronin, SEE replied as follows:

In the Road Design Office priority is given to funded schemes eg SIG or LCS or to schemes which TII will fund due to accident patterns.

1) R352/Corrovorrin Junction, Ennis Initial assessment of possibilities has been undertaken and a roundabout is not an appropriate option. Consideration is being given to provision of a MOVA type signalised junction which would have sensors in the road surface to detect traffic and change the lights accordingly. The detailed design work will be commenced once the Road Design schedule of works for the 2019 roadworks programme have been completed. This will be in Q 4 of 2019.

Note that the previous Section 38 proposal by Ennis MD office (ETC at the time) was not accepted.

2) R352 Ballymacahill Cross, Tulla Road, Ennis. The Road Design Office was requested to apply for Low Cost Safety funding for a pedestrian crossing across the R352 at Ballymacahill Cross. This was granted for 2019 and design work has commenced. The traffic pattern will be assessed to check if full signalisation of this junction is required. Some improvements to pedestrian access along the Gaurus Rd will also be investigated.

3) N85/Shanaway Road Junction, Lehinch Road, Ennis – Design work has commenced and a Feasibility report will be forwarded to TII in the coming weeks. It is likely that we will seek funding to provide traffic signals at the junction.

4) Ballybeg Road, Ennis. The project has been included on the work list of the Road Design Office. The previous design will be reviewed to check for compliance with current standards and current conditions on site. The detailed design work required will then be determined.

R458/Drumbiggle Junction, Ennis. The Road Design Office was requested to apply for Low Cost Safety funding for a pedestrian crossing across the R458. Design work has commenced and three options are to be issued to the TII Regional Road Safety Engineer in early July. We plan to advertise the Section 38 during July and if it is approved work can commence in September 2019.

5) Traffic calming speed bumps in St Senans, Kincora/Shannon park areas.

Eamon O'Dea, SEE replied as follows:

The Ennis MD Office has previously carried out speed surveys and traffic count observations have been carried out at school times also. The outcome of these surveys is that traffic calming would not be warranted at this time. The Ennis MD office installed slow road marking in the area as concerns were raised by Residents and representation were made by Councillor J. Flynn and the Ennis MD councillors. Where isolated inappropriate driving behaviour occurs in a Residential Area this matter should be reported to An Garda Síochána.

The Members welcomed the detailed response provided by the Roads Design Office and noted the presence of representatives in the public gallery from Corrovorrin who continue to highlight matters of public safety in the area. Cllr. Daly questioned if a mini roundabout could be provided at the Corrovorrin junction.

Leonore O'Neill, SEO, clarified that mini roundabouts were no longer acceptable to TII and a roundabout in accordance with TII standards could not be accommodated at this location. Leonore O'Neill further clarified that signalled traffic lights would also be to the benefit of pedestrians and cyclists.

Eamon O'Dea, SEE noted pedestrian safety and that intelligent traffic light signalling was more appropriate to the site.

**No. 4 NOM submitted by Cllr. C. Colleran Molloy, was seconded by Cllr. P. Daly
No. 4 and No. 6 NOM's were joined for the purpose of discussion at the meeting**

That the Ennis Municipal District explain what exact steps are being taken to address the accumulation of caravans & mobile homes constituting the enormous (and growing) illegal encampment at Skehanagh off the Motorway, specifically identifying:

1. Council action under the environmental protection laws, as to littering and waste disposal in addition to the disposal of human waste and the generation of and disposal of wastewater and greywater to protect our vulnerable water supply;
2. Council action to seek its removal for trespass;
3. Council action to have the Gardaí remove for trespass.
4. Any other actions being taken by the Council to address this worsening situation.

Leonore O'Neill, SEO, replied as follows:

I can confirm that the encampments along the M18 Motorway at Skehanagh are unauthorised illegal encampments. Clare County Council did not facilitate, nor were we party to the occupation of lands at these sites.

1. Responsibilities under the above item fall under a number of agencies, the HSE are responsible under Sanitary Acts in relation to unsanitary conditions. In relation to litter and waste disposal, in order to issue fines or take successful prosecutions, it is necessary to identify the individuals involved. Where such individuals are identified, Clare County Council will take action as appropriate.
2. I can advise that the appropriate notices have been served by Clare County Council on persons occupying these sites. The notices have not been complied with and will be followed up legally. The Council have further reported the matter of trespass at the Skehanagh Roundabout to An Garda Síochána.

There was significant discussion on this particular matter. Cllr. Colleran Molloy referenced that in a week when so many people were visiting Clare to be greeted by such a large scale illegal encampment was concerning. She commended previous work by Clarecastle Tidy Towns in the area.

Members proposed a zero tolerance approach to dealing with this issue going forward. Members also raised concerns about the health and safety of children and queried the possible non attendance of school children. Members agreed that a multi agency approach is needed.

Cllr. Collieran Molloy queried the roles and powers of the HSE and Clare County Council with specific regard to environmental concerns associated with waste water at illegal encampments. She requested that an invitation to the September meeting of Ennis Municipal District be extended to Mr. Sean Collieran the new Chief Superintendent of An Garda Síochána.

Cllr. Daly queried if Clare County Council were contacting other Local Authorities to ascertain if persons were on the housing waiting list in Local Authorities in other counties.

In response to specific questions raised by Members Leonore O Neill, SEO, noted the following:

-With regard to the Skehanagh encampment, Clare County Council issued the appropriate notices, it was vacated last Friday and secured by council staff. She acknowledged the assistance of An Garda Síochána in this matter.

-With regard to securing sites with soil or bollards, solutions had to be mindful of access for the local land owner.

-With regard to waste water and the HSE and/or Council responsibility she will revert to the Council Environment section re: powers available to them. She noted that Environmental staff are currently surveying the site in an effort to identify material for potential enforcement /prosecution.

- Where persons are homed elsewhere, there are no powers to prevent persons vacating their homes to go on holidays. She advised that Clare County Council staff do liaise with colleagues in other Local Authorities where persons are suspected of being housing applicants in another county.

Leonore committed to explore a multi agency approach to include An Garda Síochána, the HSE and others. She further agreed to extend an invite to the new Chief Superintendent Mr. Sean Collieran to attend the September meeting of Ennis Municipal District.

Cllr. Collieran Molloy concluded discussion on this item by requesting that following from the vacation of the site in Skehanagh that a full costing of the clean up after the large encampment be provided for the next meeting of Ennis Municipal District.

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

Primrose Gardens, Clarecastle.

That road safety is improved at this location by providing "SLOW" and "STOP" road markings at the vehicular exit from this estate.

Eamon O'Dea, SEE replied as follows:

Line marking will be completed when the line marking contractor is in the Ennis MD.

No. 6 NOM submitted by Cllr. P. Daly, was seconded by Cllr. P. Murphy

I ask the Ennis MD to outline what measures it is taking to remove the illegal encampments on either side of the road between Clareabbey and Skehanagh Roundabout as well as the nearby slip road to Doora.

See NOM No. 4

No. 7 NOM submitted by Cllr. A. Norton, was seconded by Cllr. J Flynn

Can Clare County Council look at putting a small park on the undeveloped site at the corner of Francis St and the Friary car park.

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

The site at the corner of Francis Street and Friary car park is in private ownership and the Ennis MD Office, working with Ennis Tidy Towns, will approach the owner to discuss temporary use of the site while awaiting development.

Cllr. Norton welcomed the response by Eamon O'Dea, SEE, she highlighted its location and possible suitability for a small park and the work of Ennis Tidy Towns in providing a floral display at the site. Members however noted that the site in question is in private ownership and as such any proposals require the landowners engagement and consent.

See NOM No. 1

No. 8 NOM submitted by Cllr. M. Howard, was seconded by Cllr. Flynn.

Residents in Shannon Park have requested that we provide a "yellow box" at the entrance to their estate. The R352/Lifford Road is a very busy road and the residents of Shannon Park find it increasingly difficult to not just leave their estate but to also access it.

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

The provision of a yellow box marking on Lifford Road at the junction of Shannon Park which was previously requested by the Councillors has been provided last week.

No. 9 NOM submitted by Cllr. J. Flynn, was seconded by Cllr. A. Norton

Extra disabled parking spaces at Friary.

I ask Ennis Municipal District to urgently provide two disabled parking spaces along Francis Street adjacent to the Friary, HSE office and Doctors surgery . Also to consider possibly using vacant corner site to HSE office as a " Mobility Hub" from where people with accessibility issues could park up and use mobility scooters from which to get around Town Centre.

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

The Ennis MD Office is examining Francis Street and the Friary Car park to confirm where fully accessible parking spaces can be provided. This has to take account of the size of the parking area required and accessibility to Town Centre and the Friary.

See NOM No. 1

No. 10 NOM submitted by Cllr. C. Colleran Molloy, was seconded by Cllr. Murphy

In light of the ongoing fly tipping, antisocial behavior and the recent vandalism of graves at Clare Abbey, that a meeting of the following parties be arranged by the Ennis Municipal District:- Ennis Municipal District Councillors and officials, representatives from the OPW, the TII, the Gardaí, the Clarecastle Tidy Towns, adjacent landowners, and the families members whose ancestors' graves have been vandalized, so that a comprehensive resolution can be determined

No response required

Cllr. Colleran Molloy welcomed a concerned family member to the Gallery. She noted that Clareabbey is a point of heritage for the town of Ennis and environs and queried if it could be lit up as a possible tourist attraction. She said it was unfortunate there was an ongoing issue of littering, fly tipping and anti social behaviour associated with the site. She referred to the desecration of the grave of the local family who have been the subject of vandalism on 2 separate recent occasions.

Members agreed that the OPW should reconsider illuminating the site as a deterrent to antisocial behaviour. Members further called for a holistic coordinated approach to include An Garda Síochána, The OPW, TII, Clarecastle Tidy Towns, landowners and residents to address ongoing issues associated with Clareabbey.

Leonore O Neill, SEO noted that the area in question was within the remit of the OPW and she committed to facilitate a collaborative meeting as requested.

No. 11 NOM submitted by Cllr. P. Murphy

I am requesting that a VMS speed reading sign is provided on the approach to Doora Church from Lynch's cross, that traffic calming is also considered at this location and that road safety improvements are considered between Doora Church and School. I am pledging to support this request by allocating the balance of my discretionary General Municipal Allocation of €1079.14 in order to facilitate this request on behalf of the residents of Doora.

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

The speed VMS sign is ordered and shall be installed at the Lynch's Cross approach to Doora.

Cllr. Murphy welcomed the reply and asked if the section of road from Doora Church to Doora school could be examined from a similar perspective.

Eamon O'Dea, S.E.E committed to looking at the section of road at Doora Church to the School. However he advised that where speeding is observed, An Garda Síochána should be contacted.

No. 12 NOM submitted by Cllr. P. Daly

I request the Ennis MD to tar the Ballyduff Road, Barefield as promised previously.

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

This road is in the 2019 Surface Dressing Programme

Item No. 7. Correspondence

Item No. 8. Any other business