**Minutes of the January 2022**

**Meeting of the Municipal District of Ennis,**

**held online at 10:30am on Tuesday 11th January 2022**

**Councillors:** A. Norton, P. Daly, P. Murphy, M. Howard

**Officials:** Carmel Kirby, Director of Services, Leonore O’Neill, Senior Executive Officer, Barry Conway A/Senior Executive Engineer, Niamh O’Connor, Administrative Officer & Meetings Administrator

**Apologies:** Cllr. Mark Nestor, Cllr. Johnny Flynn, Cllr. Clare-Colleran Molloy

Chair, Cllr. A. Norton, opened the first meeting of 2022 wishing everyone a happy new year.

All Members extended their sympathies to Cllr. Clare Colleran Molloy and her family on the death of her mother, Dolly Colleran. Leonore O’Neill echoed these sympathies on behalf of the staff of the Municipal District. The meeting was adjourned for 15 minutes as a mark of respect to the late Dolly Colleran, RIP.

**Item No. 1. Minutes of the December 2021 Meeting of Municipal District of Ennis held on 7th December 2021**

*This item was proposed by Cllr. P. Murphy, seconded by Cllr. M. Howard and agreed by all Members.*

**Item No. 2. Matters Arising**

None

**Item No. 3.** **Notices of Motion**

**No. 1 Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. M. Howard**

Frank Healy Park. Ballaghboy /  R469

Each week well over 200 adults and children use these soccer grounds.

Under health & safety grounds I am requesting that Ennis MD consider installing street lights and a footpath linking it with the shop/ garage to the west or Ennis side.

**Barry Conway, A/Senior Executive Officer, responded as follows:**

*Frank Healy Park is located approximately 1km east of the existing footpath network on the R469 Quin Road. To construct a footpath/cycle path over this distance would require land acquisition, construction of considerable embankments and the diversion of large culverts which form an integral part of the Fergus Drainage Network. While the proposal certainly has merit, the constraints involved mean that it is not a project that could be undertaken by the district as part of its annual works programme.*

*I suggest that this project would be considered as part of future transport planning for the town and the MD office will liaise with our colleagues in the design office in this regard.*

*This item was seconded by Cllr. P. Daly and agreed by all Members.*

Cllr. M. Howard briefed the meeting on her attendance at Frank Healy Park and witnessing young people having to walk on the grass verge to get to the shop. She requested the site be assessed particularly in terms of public lighting, and that consideration be given to doing work this year or next year. Cllr. P. Daly supported the motion, recommending that EMD apply to the department for funding. Cllr. P. Murphy recommended that it be considered as part of future transport planning for the town.

**No. 2 Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. A. Norton**

Can I have a report on the cycle route from Ennis to Barefield, Ennis to Ballyallia and Ballyallia to Crusheen.

**John Gannon, Senior Executive Engineer, responded as follows:**

*The design stage for the cycle routes approved under the NTA Active Travel Programme 2021 will commence in Q1 2022.*

*This item was seconded by Cllr. P. Murphy and agreed by all Members.*

Cllr. Norton stated she was happy with the response and highlighted the importance of having shovel ready projects if funding becomes available.

**No. 3 Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr.**  **J. Flynn**

In the interest of health and safety I ask that a condition survey be carried out of surfaces of public footpaths at the Ballyalia Lake amenity area in order to plan and schedule surface restoration or repair where necessary to prevent accidents.

**Barry Conway, A/Senior Executive Officer, responded as follows:**

*The Ennis MD will arrange to inspect the footpaths at the Ballyalla Lake amenity. The repair of any defects identified will be scheduled shortly thereafter.*

*In Cllr. Flynn’s absence and on his instruction that this motion should pass, this item was proposed by Cllr. A. Norton, seconded by Cllr. P. Murphy and agreed by all Members.*

**No. 5 Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. P. Murphy**

I am requesting an update on progress regarding provision of an Ennis town bus service by the National Transport Authority.

***Leonore O’Neill, Senior Executive Officer, responded as follows:***

*The Ennis MD are in ongoing communication with the NTA Public Transport Service Planning Team who are responsible for the planning and design of the Town Bus Service in Ennis. The NTA are currently finalising route selection.*

*Implementation is dependent on budgets being available to support the operational cost of providing the service.*

*This item was seconded by Cllr. A. Norton and agreed by all Members.*

Cllr. Murphy sought clarification as to whether the service would be funded by the NTA or in part by the Council. He emphasised that this bus service should form part of the Ennis mobility plan. The Director clarified that this is part of the ‘national bus service’, adding that Ennis is in the next priority list of towns to receive a bus service. She advised that talks are at an advanced stage, that an update from the NTA had been requested, and it is hoped that same would be available for the next meeting. Leonore O’Neill clarified that in terms of budgets, the NTA will require a budget for the operational costs of the service. Cllr. P. Daly expressed delight that the bus service is a priority.

**No. 6 Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. P. Daly**

I ask Ennis Municipal District, with the support of all seven Councillors to put in a submission to the County Development Plan, requesting that Our Lady’s Hospital site would be zoned Commercial, Residential, Educational and Recreational. Its essential that parts of the old derelict hospital would need to be de-listed, in order to develop its full potential and realise its commercial value.

**Candace Ingram, A/Senior Executive Planner, responded as follows:**

*The Draft Clare County Development Plan 2023-2029 was placed on public display on 10th December 2021 which commenced a period of public consultation up to the 28th March 2022. Written submission and observations can be made to the Planning Department on any of the ten volumes of the draft development plan. Volume 3a relates specifically to the Ennis Municipal District Area and the settlements within it including Ennis, and includes a written statement and settlement zoning map for each settlement. Volume 4 of the Draft Clare County Development Plan 2023-2029 is the Record of Protected Structures which includes all existing Protected Structures in the County as well as a number of proposed additions, deletions and modifications to the listing. An essential part of the consultation process is to encourage public engagement in the development plan process and to this end the Planning Department is promoting the process through various mediums including consultation events which are planned for a number of locations around the County including Ennis, which is due to be held on the 26th January between 4-8pm in the Scout Hall beside the Parish Office on Station Road (in accordance with Covid 19 health and safety guidelines).  At the end of the public consultation process all submissions will be considered and a response and recommendation will be set out in the Chief Executive’s Report which will be issued to the Elected Members for their consideration.*

*This item was seconded by Cllr. A. Norton and agreed by all Members.*

Cllr. P. Daly advised that the site is a huge asset, however the old hospital needs to be delisted to realise the full potential of the site. Cllr. A. Norton outlined that designation of the hospital as a listed building, may entail additional works, which can act as a disincentive to developers. Cllr. Howard advised that delisting of the building should be examined as part of the County Development Plan process.

**No. 7 Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. J. Flynn**

I ask for a progress report including likely completion dates of pedestrian crossings , additional public footpaths and road surface repairs on the public road from the Roslevan roundabout via Newpark to Gaurus Bridge.

**John Gannon, Senior Executive Engineer, responded as follows:**

*The design stage for the pedestrian crossings has commenced. Subject to funding from the Department of Transport I expect that a Section 38 notice will be issued in Q2 of 2022 and that construction will be completed in Q4 2022.*

*In Cllr. Flynn’s absence and on his instruction that this motion should pass, this item was proposed by Cllr. P. Murphy, seconded by Cllr. A. Norton and agreed by all Members.*

**No. 9 Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. P. Murphy**

That consideration is given to the installation of a mini roundabout at the junction of Old Road and Patrick Street, Clarecastle. The sightlines on the Old Road side of this junction are very bad and a roundabout would improve matters greatly.

***John Gannon, Senior Executive Engineer, responded as follows:***

*A contract has been recently awarded, associated with Roche Demolition Application, that will improve site lines at this junction. The junction will be monitored to assess the operational impacts of works.*

*This item was seconded by Cllr. A. Norton and agreed by all Members.*

Cllr. P. Murphy stated he was confident that the site lines can be improved. Cllr. P. Daly in support, requested that the road design office should give consideration to a mini roundabout.

Barry Conway reminded the meeting that a section 38 ‘traffic calming and amendments to footways and parking at Patrick Street and Old Road, Clarecastle’ was agreed at the September meeting. He advised that a tender had been awarded for same.

**No. 10 Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. P. Daly**

I ask Ennis Municipal District to upgrade the road from Kelly’s Corner out to Cois na hAbhaine on the Gort Road Ennis.

**Barry Conway, A/Senior Executive Engineer, responded as follows:**

*In 2021 the Department of Transport, Tourism & Sport introduced a new funding stream which allows Local Authorities to apply for funding to resurface the former national road Network. Funding has been sought by this office for the former national roads in the district including the R458 Gort Road (formerly the N18). Members will be updated in the coming months as soon as the 2022 grants have been awarded by the DoTTS.*

*This item was seconded by Cllr. M. Howard and agreed by all Members.*

Cllr. P. Daly acknowledged the response and advised he would like to see it completed when funding does become available.

**Item No. 7 Any Other Business**

Cllr. Howard referred to the recently published IBAL report, in which Ennis achieved third place in the rankings, ‘higher than European norms’. She then highlighted the comments and grading in respect of the Ennis bus/train station. She referred to a presentation by Jim Dempsey (Business Development Manager – Irish Rail), at a briefing in November ’21 where he gave a commitment to reviewing 1) the maintenance of the station and 2) Irish Rail’s relationship with Tidy Towns. She requested that EMD write to Mr. Dempsey looking for a day-to-day management plan to keep the station clean. This was supported by Cllr. Daly, Cllr Murphy and Cllr Norton.

Cllr. Norton thanked the outdoor and indoor staff of EMD for their part in making ‘Christmas in Ennis’ a success despite current restrictions. She wished everyone a happy new year and encouraged people to limit their contacts and protect each other.

Leonore O’Neill reminded that normal meetings schedule will resume, with the next meeting scheduled for Tuesday Feb 1st.

The meeting ended at 11:25a.m.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Mayor of Ennis

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Meetings Administrator

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_