

Minutes - October 2022

Ennis Municipal District meeting

10:45a.m. on Tuesday 4th October 2022

Council Chamber and on-line

Councillors: P. Murphy, J. Flynn, C. Collieran-Molloy, A. Norton, M. Howard, P. Daly.

Officials: Leonore O'Neill, Senior Executive Officer, Eamon O'Dea, Senior Executive Engineer, Patrick Tiernan, A/Senior Executive Engineer, Niamh O'Connor, Administrative Officer & Meetings Administrator, Gareth Ruane, Executive Planner (Item 3 (i)), Carmel Greene, Senior Executive Officer (Item 3 (ii), (iii) and (iv)), Lily McInerney, Staff Officer (minutes).

Apologies: Carmel Kirby, Director of Services.

Chair, Cllr. C. Collieran-Molloy opened the meeting welcoming all present.

Item No. 1. Minutes of the September 2022 Meeting of Municipal District of Ennis

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

Cllr. J. Flynn requested an amendment to Item (v) under A.O.B to add "that he would not object to the data centre subject to the 100% use of green carbon energy". September minutes to be amended accordingly.

Item No. 2. Matters Arising

None.

Item No. 3. (i) Strategic Housing Development – 289 No. Residential Units and Creche, Ballymacaula, Drumbiggle, Keelty, Circular Road, Ennis

Gareth Ruane, Executive Planner, presented on this Strategic Housing Development (SHD) which is with An Bord Pleanála for decision. The planning section sought the views of Members on this proposed development, to inform the Chief Executive's report which will be forwarded to An Bord Pleanála.

Whilst acknowledging the current deficit in social and private housing, Cllr. Daly stated that the number of units in this SHD is too high for this area. He pointed out that the residential zoning is set for 'low density' and recommended the current number of units be reduced by a minimum of 89.

Cllr M. Howard and Cllr. P Murphy highlighted the adverse social impact of a lot of houses in a condensed area adding that the 32.5 units per hectare is too high.

Members voiced safety concerns regarding 1) low permeability, the single vehicular entrance and exit 2) the location of the creche at the entrance 3) potential traffic congestion.

Cllr J. Flynn outlined that he was concerned that the SHD may be in contravention of several recommendations in "Project Ireland 2040", namely *no. 25 Sustainable Communities, no. 28 Alternatives to cars, no. 29 Age friendly appropriate mix, no. 34 Provision of new housing at scale relative to size.* Furthermore, Cllr. Flynn highlighted the lack of services, activities for children, teenagers and the community in general. He added that the SHD is a town-centre type development out in a suburban setting and the house types may not be in line with the zoning density for the area. He flagged the issue regarding *flood risk* in an area already vulnerable to flash flooding, which had the potential to exacerbate existing flood risk management in nearby estates.

Acknowledging the positivity of a housing development in general and the fact that it represented the largest private housing development in Clare, Cllr. Clare Colleran-Molloy reiterated earlier concerns made in relation to permeability, traffic congestion and high density. The Mayor concluded by stating that whilst there is a concern that national guidelines may not serve to deter the housing density proposed, nevertheless the Ennis M.D. Members were united in influencing to the best of their ability the Chief Executives Report on this SHD for the benefit of the residents of Ennis.

(ii) Section 183 Disposal of building and surrounding site at The Junction, Cloughleigh, Ennis, Co. Clare

Report and map had been circulated in advance of the Meeting.

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

(iii) Section 183 Disposal of property at 9 Glenina, Gort Road, Ennis, Co. Clare.

Report and map had been circulated in advance of the Meeting.

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

(iv) Section 183 Disposal of property at Block B, Ballymaley Business Park, Gort Road, Ennis, Co. Clare

Report and map had been circulated in advance of the meeting.

Carmel Greene, SEO, briefed Members on the proposal to sell this building to an innovative high-tech company, following and expressions of interest process. The proposal will result in this building being the location for 60-100 highly skilled jobs, early investment in the refurbishment of this vacant building, the transfer to Ennis of overseas R&D, and the creation of a *Centre of Excellence* by a global leader in respiratory diagnostics. This innovation was well received by Members, and C. Greene and L. Conneally, Director of Services were commended for their diligent service to the economic progress of Ennis.

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

(iii) Update from the Twinning Committee

Cllr. Howard advised that in 2023 Ennis would be celebrating a 10-year twinning relationship with Langenfeld, Germany and a 35th anniversary relationship with Phoenix, Arizona. She informed the meeting that during the summer this year representatives from both committees visited, two Langenfeld reps toured Ennis and the County and three "Colleens" travelled from Phoenix and toured the Cliffs of Moher etc. She commended Deirdre O'Shea A/Head of Tourism and Nicola Killeen from Clare County Council's tourism section for their outstanding efforts in co-ordinating these events. Cllr. Howard proposed to the Mayor that an invite to the St. Patrick's Day festival 2023 issue to both twinning committees, this was discussed and agreed by all Members.

Cllr Howard extended sympathy to the family of the late Mary McCullough of Austin Texas, who had just passed away. Mary was involved with the Youth Ambassadors and had done remarkable work in this regard over the years. May she rest in peace.

Item No. 4. GMA Allocations for approval

	Project	Total:
1	Sláinte an Chláir	€1,500
2	Ennis Brass Band	€1,000
3	Clare Peace Park	€1,500
4	Banner GAA for "entrance road improvement costs"	€500
5	Lifford AFC	€2,000
Total for approval		€6,500

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

Item No. 5. Notices of Motions

No. 1 Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. C. Colleran-Molloy

At the request of the St Flannan's Terrace Resident's Association, that the Ennis Municipal District officially name the laneway that runs to the rear of the terraced houses "Sheperd's Lane."

No response required

Notices of Motion 1, 2, 3 & 10 were addressed together (see nom 3)

No. 2 Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. J. Flynn

I ask that Ennis Municipal District Executive put in place the necessary process to name the laneway behind St Flannans Terrace as Shepherd's Lane. This name has been put forward by the Residents Association following a ballot of all 46 houses on the terrace.

No response required

Notices of Motion 1, 2, 3 & 10 were addressed together (see nom 3)

No. 3 Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. P. Murphy

I refer to Notice of Motion that I submitted to the March meeting of Ennis Municipal District re St. Flannan's Terrace Backlane L-8714-0. I requested what steps be taken on how to initiate a process whereby this laneway be named properly. Arising from the response being circulated to a number of residents, a Resident's Association was formed with the aim of protecting the terrace and its amenities. Naming the laneway was found to be the initial priority and following the initial residents meeting, all 46 houses were balloted and asked to choose from three names provided on a voting sheet or to make an alternative suggestion. Shepherd's Lane was the name favoured by most people, prior to 1912 the site on which the houses were built was known as the Shepherd's Field, so the name has strong local historical significance. I am hereby proposing that the elected members of Ennis Municipal District support this Notice of Motion to have this much-loved laneway officially named "Shepherd's Laneway".

No response required

Notices of Motion 1, 2, 3 & 10 were addressed together.

Leonore O'Neill, SEO, outlined that Section 196 of the Local Government Act 2001 provides for the naming/renaming of a road, wherein a ballot of residents must be carried out and a majority of votes received for the selected name. In this case, a total of 46 households were balloted, 21 ballots were returned, and the result was as follows:

The Lane -	1 vote
The Car Road -	2 votes
Shepherd's Way -	8 votes
Shepherd's Lane -	10 votes

The majority of votes were received for **SHEPHERD'S LANE**. Leonore advised the meeting, that following today's approval, the name change will be entered into the records, the pavement management system will be updated and new signage arranged. Cllr. Murphy, having first raised this Notice of Motion in March 2022 was pleased with the outcome and the historical significance of the name chosen.

This item was proposed by Cllr. P. Murphy, seconded by Cllr. C. Collieran-Molloy and agreed by all Members.

**No. 4. Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr M. Howard
Maiville.**

The footpaths and road surface in Maiville is in an appalling condition- manhole covers are a number of inches above the road surface and are a health and safety risk. I request that the estate is accessed as soon as possible.

Ian Chaplin, A/SEE responded as follows:
The estate is in Charge and will be inspected.

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

Cllr. Howard stressed the hazardous nature of the protruding manhole cover and she looked forward to the inspection and remedial works taking place at the earliest opportunity. In response to Cllr. Norton's suggestion that all areas which are 'taken in charge' should be scheduled for maintenance, Leonore O'Neill SEO explained that the roadworks programme sets out the schedule of works for the year. She added that all available reporting platforms should be used throughout the year to report any further maintenance issues which may arise.

No. 5. Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr P. Daly

I ask Ennis M.D. to enlarge the yellow box at Kilrush Road cross, to accommodate residents access to Ahern's Terrace, particularly with the opening of the car park at the old National School which is only yards from their houses.

Ian Chaplin, A/SEE responded as follows:

This area has been inspected and it is in order to extend the yellow hatched box by approx. 1.5m in the direction of Kiltrush, as far as the existing handrail. This should allow for easier exiting. Extra hatching will be facilitated via normal lining maintenance that is carried out a few times a year. Timeframe will be in the next month or so when we have the liners in the town again.

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

Cllr. Daly welcomed the response from Ian Chaplin adding that residents would very much welcome this upgrade as it would serve to facilitate all road users at this junction.

No. 6. Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. J. Flynn

Ennis Municipal District request Clare County Council to urgently prepare a report on the ability of the mid-20th Century Coastal Barrage at Clarecastle to protect for the coming 100 years Ennis & it's environs and essential public infrastructure from the effects of rising sea level, storm surges, increased intensity of rainfall. This is in light of the current Climate Crisis and the recent report from World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) titled "United in Science Report" which used inputs from related United Nations (UN) climate change reports.

Sean Lenihan, Senior Engineer, responded as follows:

The Council shares the Members opinion on the critical nature of the Clarecastle Barrage to the town of Ennis and its environs. It is a key piece of infrastructure and is critical in protecting Ennis and the wider catchment from significant flooding. The importance of same has increased significantly in more recent years with the multimillion expenditure invested by the OPW in the various Flood Defence infrastructural schemes protecting the town, namely Ennis North, Ennis Lower and Ennis South. The benefit from these absolutely depends on a fully functioning and optimally fit for purpose Barrage.

As a result of rising tides downstream and increased waters upstream due to climate change and other factors, it is imperative that the barrage operates to its maximum efficiency. The Council is currently examining what improvements may be possible and necessary. These may include additional or larger valves that would be capable of discharging the upstream waters faster without of course having a negative downstream effect in terms of increased flood risk. To this end, the Members will be aware that we are in the process of commissioning Punch Consulting Engineers to prepare a brief for the appointment of Experts to carry out a Structural Assessment of the Barrage. Based on the findings of same, we will be in further discussion with the OPW and our parent Department regarding what works may need to be carried out and what measures are necessary to best prepare us for the future

I will keep the Members informed of developments in this regard.

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

Cllr Flynn welcomed the response and recommended that the findings of the 'Ennis Main Drainage Study 2001' be included in the consultants' brief. Members voiced support for this

Motion. SEE, Eamon O’Dea clarified that the brief was confined to the structural assessment and that the findings could then be taken forward to see what efficiencies/adjustments could be sought via the OPW.

No. 7 Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. C. Colleran-Molloy

That an update on the timing for the completion of the Ballybeg footpath and its lighting be provided.

Ian Chaplin, A/SEE responded as follows:

The Ballybeg footpath project was advertised in the local newspaper last week under the Section 38 process. Once the process has concluded we would hope to be in a position to start the work. The lighting element is to be tendered out by the Road Design section shortly so we will have to await the conclusion of that process first.

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

The response was well received by Cllr Colleran-Molloy who commented on the benefits this work would deliver to this amenity area and the subsequent public lighting in due course. This Motion was also supported by Cllrs Murphy and Daly who commented on the vast improvement to this amenity in last 20 years.

No. 8 Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr. P. Murphy

I am requesting that Ennis Municipal District call on the roads department of Clare County Council to seek Active Travel Funding in order to construct a footpath from Doora Church to Doora School.

Ian Chaplin, A/SEE responded as follows:

The Ennis MD will seek to have application submitted to the NTA, for footpath project from Doora Church to Doora School, when the next funding cycle is announced by the NTA for 2023. It would also be essential that the proposal is in line with the planning settlement strategy for the area.

This item was seconded by Cllr. J. Flynn and agreed by all Members.

Cllr. Murphy outlined how this busy but narrow and winding road was in much need of a footpath and should be prioritised for *Active Travel* funding. All Members supported this Motion and having met with locals, there is strong support for upgrading the zoning status from *cluster* to *village*. This status change would allow Doora to be designated for appropriate permeability measures befitting a village.

No. 9 Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr M Howard

Kincora Park

Is it possible to do an assessment of the trees in this area
- some are dead and need to be replaced

- footpath in dangerous condition due to vigorous root growth (especially so on the footpath leading up to St Joseph's Church).

Tommy Scott, Senior Executive Technician, responded as follows:

Trees: Yes, trees in this area are always included in the annual assessment, some tree work is scheduled to take place in that area this autumn.

Ian Chaplin, A/SEE responded as follows:

The footpath will be inspected and any problematic areas due to tree roots will be examined further. Where trees exist beside a footpath, the issue of root growth displacing the footpath occurs frequently. The solution is often to remove the tree.

This item was seconded by Cllr. J. Flynn and agreed by all Members.

Cllr Howard acknowledged both responses and highlighted the importance of restricting planting to trees appropriate for urban estates. She added a list of designated trees for this purpose would be useful.

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

I request Ennis M.D. to arrange for the laneway at the back of St Flannan's Terrace to be named "Shepherds Lane".

No response required

Notices of Motion 1, 2, 3 & 10 were addressed together (see nom 3)

Item No. 6 Correspondence

None.

Item No. 7 Any Other Business

- (i) Cllr Howard acknowledged the current work at the much-needed pedestrian crossing at St. Flannan's. She also highlighted a required upgrade to the pedestrian crossing at Newbridge Road.
- (ii) Congratulations to Róisín Cahill who came first in the Under 23 European Ocean kayak racing championships in Portugal last week, she also came third in the same event at World championship level in Sardinia during September.
- (iii) Cllr Howard criticised the recent vandalism at the War Memorial park, she recommended the use of CCTV cameras at this location and the need for more municipal bins.

- (iv) Members joined Cllr Howard in acknowledging the hard work and dedication to the town of outgoing Senior Executive Officer Eamon O’Dea. Cllr Howard praised Eamon’s honesty, loyalty and diligence in dealing with all manner of emerging issues in the town over the years.
- (v) Cllr Flynn acknowledged the recent surfacing works at Oak Park but requested that the ensuing debris strewn along the boundary walls be removed.
- (vi) Cllr Flynn raised the hazard for children at the exit from Ashline onto the Kilrush Road and recommended a safety measure to prevent the sudden emergence of children on bikes onto the main road.
- (vii) Members joined Cllr Colleran-Molloy in congratulating Dr Ivanna McMahon, an Ennis native who was crowned *Miss Ireland 2022*. The Mayor advised that Ivanna would be a guest at the “Switching on of the Christmas Lighting in Ennis” event.
- (viii) Cllr Colleran-Molloy wished Éire Óg Football and Hurling Clubs who are through to the semi-finals of the County Championships, every success.
- (ix) Cllr Howard extended congratulations to Marie Moloney who was awarded Clare Older Peoples Volunteer of the Year 2022. Cllr Norton briefed the meeting on the Clare Volunteer Awards ceremony with 13 volunteers acknowledged. Marie Moloney, the overall winner, was warmly appreciated for her great work in volunteering throughout her life. Members joined in paying tribute to Marie’s tireless endeavours in volunteering with Alzheimer Society, Eire Og GAA club and St. Joseph’s Apostolic Society.
- (x) Cllr Norton congratulated the Scouts who now have a new building.
- (xi) Cllr Norton briefed the meeting on the recent ‘Clare Association Awards’ and how positive it was to see the return of the annual celebratory dinner dance.
- (xii) Cllr Norton highlighted the upcoming “Make Way Day” which serves to recognise and highlight works done to increase permeability and accessibility for all. She reminded the Meeting that October is *Downs Syndrome* month.

The Meeting ended at 12:25 p.m.

Signed: 
 Mayor of Ennis

Signed: 
 Meetings Administrator

Date: 1/11/2022

