

Minutes of Meeting of the Killaloe Municipal District

held on Monday, 28th March, 2022 at 3.15pm

Meeting held in Council Chamber, Áras Chontae an Chláir

In attendance: Cllr. Joe Cooney
Cllr. Alan O’Callaghan
Cllr. Tony O’Brien
Cllr. Pat Hayes
Cllr. Pat Burke

Officials: Ms. Anne Haugh, Director of Service
Mr. Morgan Lahiffe, A/Senior Executive Officer
Ms. Niamh Madden, Senior Executive Engineer
Ms. Pauline Costelloe, Staff Officer
Mr. John Leahy, Senior Engineer
Mr. Conor McDonagh, Executive Engineer
Ms. Anne O’Sullivan, Senior Executive Engineer

Members of the media attended

The Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Joe Cooney, chaired the meeting.

Cllr. J. Cooney opened the meeting.

Item 1 Minutes of Killaloe MD Meeting, held on 26th January, 2022.

The minutes of Killaloe Municipal District Meeting held on 26th January, 2022 were adopted having been proposed by Cllr. A. O’Callaghan and seconded by Cllr. T. O’Brien.

Item 2 Matters arising

None

Item 3 Set date for next Killaloe MD meeting

It was agreed the next Killaloe MD meeting be provisionally arranged for Wednesday, 11th May, 2022 in the Killaloe MD offices, Scarriff.

Item 4 Section 38 – Ballycuggaran, Ogonnelloe, Killaloe

Report, dated 16th March, 2022 from Alan Carmody, Technician, General Design Office was circulated with the agenda. The report states that it is proposed to carry out the following Traffic Calming measures in the Killaloe Municipal District in accordance with Section 38 of the Road Traffic Act 1994:

Controlled pedestrian crossing with associated traffic management works on the R463 (approximately 30 meters north of entrance to Ballycuggaran forest recreation area) Ballycuggaran, Ogonnelloe, Killaloe, Co. Clare.

Plans and particulars of the proposed works were publicly advertised and available for inspection on www.clarecoco.ie with objections or representations invited up to 21st February, 2022. No objections or representations were received.

It was proposed by Cllr. T. O'Brien, seconded by Cllr. J. Cooney and agreed "That traffic calming measures in accordance with Section 38 of the Road Traffic Act 1994 on the R463 at Ballycuggaran, Killaloe be approved."

Item 5. Section 38 – Clarisford Park Road, Killaloe

Report dated 21st March, 2022 from John Moylan, Chief Technician, General Design Office was circulated with the agenda. The report states that it is proposed to carry out the following Traffic Calming measures in the Killaloe Municipal District in accordance with Section 38 of the Road Traffic Act 1994:

The construction of footpaths, including a minor road realignment at the northern section from the existing road R463 to the entrance of the car park at Clarisford Amenity Park along the local road L-3100.

Plans and particulars of the proposed works were publicly advertised and available for inspection on www.clarecoco.ie with objections or representations invited up to 28th February, 2022. No objections or representations were received.

It was proposed by Cllr. T. O'Brien, seconded by Cllr. P. Hayes and agreed "That traffic calming measures in accordance with Section 38 of the Road Traffic Act at Clarisford Park Road (L-3100) Killaloe be approved."

Item 6 Schedule of Municipal District Works 2022

John Leahy, Senior Engineer attended to present main elements of the Schedule of Municipal District works for 2022.

J. Leahy advised the total fund available is €48,361,374. This is an increase on 2021 but includes an increased allocation for Killaloe Bridge/By-pass and NTA Active Travel funding (€5,298,000) is also included in this figure for the first time.

The sources of this funding are:

- €5,982,840 from the TII in respect of national roads.
- €34,917,364 from the DoT in respect of Non-national roads
- €1,563,170 from the Council's own resources.
- €600,000 from IPB for footpaths.
- €5,298,000 from National Transport Authority

The Schedule provides for the following roads funding the Killaloe Municipal District for 2022:

• Restoration Improvement Grant	€ 2,993,477
• Restoration Maintenance Grant	€ 823,555
• Discretionary Grant	€ 170,000
• Drainage Works	€ 204,300
• Regional Road Maintenance	€ 207,500
• Local Road Maintenance	€ 551,000
• Bridge Rehabilitation Works	€ 250,500
• Safety Improvement Works	€ 75,000
• Specific Improvement Grant (Henchy's Cross)	€ 70,000
• Strategic Regional & Local Road (Shannon Crossing)	€11,800,000
• IPB	€ 120,000
• Climate Adaptation and Resilience Works	€ 303,000
• Active Travel	€ 1,200,000

J. Leahy referred to previous lobbying regarding funding for local roads and highlighted an increase to 6.67% of county's non-national roads to be either strengthened or surface dressed in 2022. He advised 13 of the 28 bridge rehabilitation projects and 50% of the Climate Adaptation projects are in the Killaloe MD area. J. Leahy highlighted the increase in CIS funding from €142,000 in 2021 to €726,000.

Conor McDonagh, EE, Transportation provided an update on the Active Travel Scheme which includes 5No. projects in Killaloe MD with funding of €1.2m. Cllr. A. O'Callaghan welcomed the increase in funding in this area and highlighted benefits of works completed to date.

Cllr. T. O'Brien requested an update on the Killaloe Bridge/Bypass project.

Cllr. P. Hayes acknowledged the increase in funding for local roads but added that the percentage of roads to be included in the annual programme is still 3% short of the desired target and he queried if the rising costs will impact on delivery? J. Leahy replied that due to the price of diesel and bitumen this year costs may become an issue but the target remains at 7% of the road network. Cllr. P. Hayes also referred to the Henchys Cross project and that current funding is not adequate to meet requirements.

Cllr. P. Burke agreed with the urgency in progressing works at Henchy's Cross and need for councillors to keep pressure on Oireachtas members to move this project forward. He requested an update on the next round of Active Travel projects. J. Leahy replied Active Travel is a five year rolling programme and 2023 projects will not be confirmed until later in the year. Cllr. P. Burke welcomed increase in CIS funding J. Leahy advised county allocation of €726k for CIS projects, Killaloe MD allocation will be circulated shortly.

Cllr. J. Cooney welcomed the increase in funding and supported the members comments regarding Henchy's Cross. J. Leahy replied that a full application for Henchy's Cross costing approx. €2m was submitted and Roads continue to liaise with the department to progress this project. Cllr. J. Cooney queried the current position regarding LIS funding? J. Leahy advised he does not have information on this scheme as it administered through the Rural Department.

The Schedule of Municipal District Works 2022 was proposed by Cllr. A. O’Callaghan, seconded by Cllr. J. Cooney and agreed by all members.

Cllr. J. Cooney and the members complimented and thanked Niamh Madden for her work during her time in the Killaloe MD and wished her well in her new role in the Housing Section. Derek Troy will take over the role of SEE in the Killaloe MD on 19th April, 2022. Niamh Madden thanked the councillors and the team in the Killaloe MD office for all their assistance and support during her time there.

Item 7 Notices of Motion from Cllr. A. O’Callaghan

“Request this council to carry out road works repair on the Quin to Tulla Road, between Smith’s Cross and Donnellan’s Cross, where a trench on the right-hand lane has subsided.”

Proposed by: Cllr. A. O’Callaghan

Seconded by: Cllr. P. Hayes

Reply from Niamh Madden, Senior Executive Engineer:

“The trench reinstatement works were originally carried out as part of the installation of a watermains by the former Corbally Danganbrack Group Water Scheme. The Killaloe Municipal District recognises that improvement works need to be carried out on the L-3180 and as such, we have included this section of road at a matter of priority in this year's roadworks programme.”

N. Madden added that works will commence in the coming weeks.

Item 8 Notices of Motion from Cllr. A. O’Callaghan

“That works would be carried out on the Kilkishen to O’Callaghan’s Mills road where a bad bump has developed and is quite dangerous.”

Proposed by: Cllr. A. O’Callaghan

Seconded by: Cllr. J. Cooney

Reply from Niamh Madden, Senior Executive Engineer:

“Over 2km of the L-3002 is included for restoration maintenance works in this year's roadworks programme. These works will rehabilitate the road surface and provide a smoother and more durable running surface for vehicular traffic.”

Item 9 Notices of Motion from Cllr. T. O'Brien

“That a driver feedback sign be erected on the approach to Killaloe boys’ national school on the approach from the graveyard side.”

Proposed by: Cllr. T. O'Brien

Seconded by: Cllr. J. Cooney

Reply from Niamh Madden, Senior Executive Engineer:

“The Killaloe Municipal District has consulted with An Garda Síochána in relation to vehicular speeds on the westerly approach in to Killaloe from Abbey Street, in the vicinity of the Smith O'Brien's GAA Club and the Boys' National School. The speed limit in this area is 50kph. Driver feedback signs aim to influence behaviour and encourage drivers to slow down by displaying their vehicle approach speeds. While the Killaloe Municipal District does not have the funding for this sign presently, we will aim to source funding to purchase a driver feedback sign for this location in the immediate future.”

N. Madden advised that Cllr. T. O'Brien has agreed to fund this sign from his 2022 GMA allocation.

Item 10 Notice of Motion from Cllr. T. O'Brien

“That Clare County Council undertake to paint and clean the pedestrian green bridge over the canal at Royal Parade Killaloe.”

Proposed by: Cllr. T. O'Brien

Seconded by: Cllr. P. Burke

Reply from Niamh Madden, Senior Executive Engineer:

“The Killaloe Municipal District has established and maintains positive relationships with community groups across the district. While resources do not currently permit the Killaloe Municipal District to carry out painting works to this structure, we endeavour to work with the Killaloe Community Group with a view to organising the painting and refreshing of the bridge. The municipal district will liaise with the group to establish the best course of action to progressing and financing materials for this project.”

Item 11 Notices of Motion from Cllr. J. Cooney

That Clare County Council give an update on the pilot scheme proposed for the wastewater treatment plant in the village of Broadford.”

Proposed by: Cllr. J. Cooney

Seconded by: Cllr. T. O'Brien

Reply from Cyril Feeney, Senior Engineer, Water Services and Environment Section:

“Clare County Council have not been notified to date of any pilot scheme for the provision of a wastewater treatment plant in the village of Broadford.”

Cllr. J. Cooney commented that it is very disappointing for rural villages that cannot get these systems and that the lack of proper infrastructure may impact on zoning for this area in the Draft County Development Plan. Cllr. T. O’Brien and Cllr. P. Burke referred to a commitment given by the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage on a visit to the county last August and were very dissatisfied that no correspondence had issued from the Department.

In reply to Cllr. A. O’Callaghan, A. Haugh advised a submission was made and she is not aware of a formal response received. She added her understanding is that a scheme/solution is being worked on to deal with un-serviced villages such as Broadford at a national level.

Cllr. J. Cooney proposed that Killaloe MD write to the Department outlining their disappointment with the delay in progressing this project and requesting Minister O’Brien meet with the five local councillors in person. This was seconded by Cllr. A. O’Callaghan.

Item 12 Notices of Motion from Cllr. J. Cooney

“That Clare County Council carry out a survey on all road signage in the Killaloe M.D. replace and supply new one where required in the interest of road safety.”

Proposed by: Cllr. J. Cooney

Seconded by: Cllr. P. Hayes

Reply from Niamh Madden, Senior Executive Engineer:

“The Killaloe Municipal District carried out a signage survey in 2021 and we continue to monitor and take account of signage damage and deficiencies in the area on an ongoing basis. The municipal district has recently ordered new signage and we intend to replace a number of defective signs in the very near future. While the municipal district does not have a specific budget for signage in the district, we endeavour to arrange for the replacement or repair of defective signage when we become aware of these issues.”

Cllr. P. Hayes asked if a programme of cleaning could be put in place by the Senior General Service Supervisors, N. Madden replied Killaloe MD do not have a budget for such a programme but when carrying out works on roads will look to clean signs in the area.

Item 13 Notice of Motion from Cllr. P. Burke

“Calling on Clare County Council to carry out works by piping an open roadside drain in the interest of safety at Aughrim, Scariff immediately north of property V94 TD8N.”

Proposed by: Cllr. P. Burke

Seconded by: Cllr. J. Cooney

Reply from Niamh Madden, Senior Executive Engineer:

“Open roadside drains are a very frequent occurrence along many rural roads in County Clare and indeed in Ireland. These channels have the very important functions of minimising water damage to the carriageways and preventing flooding on the public roads. Roadside channels in that specific area were piped in 2021 as part of the roadworks programme. While the section of drain on the L-4016 is not included in a programme of works for 2022, it can be considered for future works as part of a future roadworks programme.”

Item 14 Notice of Motion from Cllr. P. Burke

“Calling on Clare County Council to explore if funding could be secured to widen / make safe a Bridge on the R352 immediately east of Mountshannon village in the interest of road safety for both motorists and pedestrians.”

Proposed by: Cllr. P. Burke

Seconded by: Cllr. P. Hayes

Reply from Niamh Madden, Senior Executive Engineer:

“The Killaloe Municipal District has liaised with the Roads Design section of Clare County Council in relation to this matter. Funding for any works on this bridge, including the widening of the bridge, would be subject to a Specific Improvement grant. Clare County Council will consider this bridge for a future Specific Improvement grant application.”

Item 15 Notice of Motion from Cllr. P. Hayes

“I am asking for an update on the present situation regarding vacant and derelict properties in our Towns and villages in the Killaloe Municipal District. It is imperative that a long-term strategy is put in place so that these properties can be brought back into use particularly in light of the present housing crisis.”

Proposed by: Cllr. P. Hayes

Seconded by: Cllr. A. O’Callaghan

Reply from Anne Haugh, Director of Service, Social Development:

The Vacant Homes Team of Clare County Council is currently assessing vacant properties using data from the Geo Directory. In co-ordination with the four Municipal Districts a targeted focus

on a number of towns and village centres across the County has commenced and the following is a breakdown of activity to date within the Killaloe Municipal District;

Town/Village	Examined	Identified as potential	Not Suitable
Tulla	16	12	4
Killaloe	11	6	5
O'Briensbridge	4	1	3
Broadford	8	4	4
Quin	3	3	2
Scarriff	12		

Update on Progress

1. Tulla

16 no. properties were initially examined by way of site inspection after which **12 no.** were identified for further investigation. Of the **12 no.** examined the following is the current position:

- 5 no. owners are to carry out refurbishment works themselves;
- 3 no. owner have not engaged. Building Control has carried out works at one property to deem it safe;
- 2 no. have been referred to Derelict sites for follow up;
- 1 no. property is still being investigated to establish ownership;
- 1 no. property owner has been engaging with the Council with a view to placing property on the open market.

The Vacant Homes Section has provided owners with information on the options available to them to bring their properties back into use and will continue to monitor progress.

2. Killaloe

11no. properties were initially examined through a site inspection after which **6no.** properties were identified to be further examined. Of the **6 no.** examined the following is the current position:

- 1no. is to be dealt with through the CPO process;
- 1no. deemed unviable due to current title/legal issues.
- 1no. to be placed on the open market.
- 1no. is still being pursued to establish ownership..
- 1no. owner to carry out works to the property
- 1no. ongoing communication with Owner and Bank.

The Vacant Homes Section continues to liaise and support Owners and Banks in an attempt to deal with the vacancies.

3. O'Briensbridge

4no. properties were initially examined by way of a site inspection. Of the **4 no.** examined the following is the current position:

- 1no. has been referred to Derelict Sites Team.
- 1no. sold on open market.
- 1no. now occupied.
- 1no. letter sent to Owner.

The Vacant Homes Section continues to liaise with the Derelict Sites Sections in addressing vacant properties which are in a very dilapidated state.

4. Broadford

8no. properties were initially examined by way of a site inspection after which 4 no. properties were identified to be further examined. Of the **4 no.** examined the following is the current position:

- 2no. referred to Derelict Sites Section, one subsequently sold and the owner of the other property has now committed to carrying out refurbishing works.
- 1 no. ongoing engagement with Owner
- 1 no. has since been rented privately.

Lack of sewerage upgrade in Broadford is an issue in progressing with re-development of some vacant properties at this location.

5. Quin

3no. properties were initially examined by way of a site inspection. Of the **3 no.** examined the following is the current position:

- 1 no. occupied.
- 1 no. referred to Derelict Sites for follow up.
- 1no. still being pursued to establish new owner.

6. Scarriff

12no. properties identified and further examination of these properties has commenced to establish ownership and future plans for the vacant buildings.

The Vacant Homes Team assess entries from the public on the website Vacanthomes.ie and respond accordingly, i.e. they are included for further examination or deemed unsuitable.

Website Entries	2021	2022 to date
Overall Entries	62	9
Entries relating to Killaloe MD	18	2

The challenges associated with establishing ownership, title issues, communicating with banks regarding properties in receivership, and costs associated with bringing houses back to use continue to prevail. However, the Vacant Homes Team are active in engaging with owners and pursuing all options to enable vacant and under-utilised properties to be returned to use as quickly as possible. In this regard we await details on the Croi Conaithe (Towns) Scheme which is an objective of Housing for All aimed at providing further supports to regenerate vacant property in town centres and also a targeted CPO initiative which will enable local authorities to acquire vacant properties with the objective of returning them to the market.

It is thus envisaged that Clare County Council will become significantly more active in the CPO space in the future in situations where engagement with property owners is not yielding the desired progress or outcomes in tackling vacancy and dereliction.

Reply from Carmel Greene, Senior Executive Officer, Economic Development:

“The Economic Directorate has embarked on a process of reviewing all existing files on Derelict sites and inspecting derelict properties over the past few months and to date considerable progress has been made. In particular, compared to recent years, the level of activity has increased greatly. We continue to see a real impact on the ground from our work on derelict properties, with a number of them being brought to market during February, and some more at planning stage, demolition stage or with plans for refurbishment. This is not to say that there are not many challenges in dealing with derelict sites as we come across many issues which need to be resolved. However, with time and effort, working with owners and other departments, there are definitely options for positive re-development of many such derelict sites.

The table below provides a snapshot of the activity in February 2022 and the year to date, together with comparative figures for the full year 2021.

Derelict Sites	February 2022	Year to date 2022	Full year 2021
No. of new files opened	2	8	35
No. of Section 8(2) Notices issued – Intention to enter site on Derelict Sites Register	5	9	20
No. of Section 8(7) Notices issued – Entry of site onto Derelict Sites Register	1	4	4
No. of Section 11 Notices issued – Measures required to render the site non-derelict	0	0	2
No. of files closed / property removed from Derelict Sites Register	1	1	0
No. of Notices served to Compulsorily Purchase (CPO)	1	4	0
No of Vesting Orders signed	1	1	0

The Council is in receipt of enquiries regarding the proposed new grant for people to re-develop vacant or derelict properties into permanent residences. As no formal notification of this grant has yet been received, we will retain contact details so that we can advise those interested when we receive the details from the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government. It is intended that it will provide a stimulus to owners of vacant and derelict properties to take action to return them to habitable properties or to commercial use.

Significantly in 2022 to date, four notices for the compulsory acquisition of derelict sites have been issued and published. These are the first proposed compulsory acquisition of derelict sites by Clare County Council since 2014. The properties in question are:

- House at No 4 An Garrán, Mountshannon, Co. Clare
- House at No. 3 St Senan’s Terrace, Kilrush, Co Clare
- House at Cloughleigh Road, Ennis, Co. Clare
- House at 111 Dun na hInse, Clareen, Ennis, County Clare

The Derelict sites team will continue to work with the Vacant Homes officer and elected Members to advance work under the Derelict sites Act, 1990. It is intended to hold workshops with the elected members of each Municipal District on subject of Derelict sites before Summer 2022.”

Cllr Hayes thanked the council for a comprehensive reply and added that work needs to continue in dealing with the issue.

Item 16 Notice of Motion from Cllr. P. Hayes

“I am asking what if any proposals are being progressed to install charging points in our towns and villages in the Killaloe Municipal district. These facilities are critically important, in light of Government policy and urgency is required to address this issue.”

Proposed by: Cllr. P. Hayes

Seconded by: Cllr. J. Cooney

Reply from Anne O’Sullivan, Senior Executive Engineer, Roads & Transportation:

“The Council is developing an EV and EV Charging Point strategy. Through the development of the Clare EV Strategy an assessment of the need for the infrastructure will be carried out. This will include mapping existing charger locations, examining current usage, modelling likely demand, drafting design for on-street chargers & how the rollout should be achieved. A national strategy is also awaited which will inform this strategy. Engagement with stakeholders including ESB Networks, EV charging companies, Retail Providers, Car Park Owners, etc. is required and this has commenced. In parallel with this it is anticipated that a small-scale pilot project for the installation of on street chargers will commence in 2022.”

In reply to Cllr. P. Hayes, A. O’Sullivan advised a number of chargers are planned for the Killaloe MD, but funding needs to be identified.

17. AOB

Cllr. J. Cooney congratulated Diarmuid Nash on winning the All-Ireland Senior Singles Handball title and becoming the first player to bring the title back to Clare since 1980. It was proposed and agreed a letter of congratulations be sent on behalf of the Killaloe Municipal District.

The meeting then concluded.

Morgan Lahiffe
A/ Senior Executive Officer
22nd April, 2022