

Minutes of Meeting of the Killaloe Municipal District

held on Wednesday, 17th May 2023 at 9.30am

Meeting held in Meeting Room, Killaloe Municipal District Offices

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

Officials: Ms. Anne Haugh, Director of Service
Mr. Brian McCarthy, Senior Planner & Meetings Administrator
Mr. Derek Troy, Acting Senior Executive Engineer
Ms. Pauline Costelloe, Staff Officer

Members of the media attended.

The Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Alan O’Callaghan chaired the meeting.

Item 1 Minutes of Killaloe MD Meeting held on 22nd March, 2023

The Minutes of Killaloe Municipal District Meeting held on 22nd March, 2023 were adopted having been proposed by Cllr. J. Cooney and seconded by Cllr. P. Hayes.

Item 2 Minutes of Special Killaloe MD Meeting held on 29th March, 2023

The Minutes of Killaloe Municipal District Meeting held on 29th March, 2023 were adopted having been proposed by Cllr. J. Cooney and seconded by Cllr. T. O’Brien.

Item 3 Matters Arising

Referring to Item 2, Cllr. T. O’Brien requested an update on the EV charging points in Killaloe town, D. Troy replied quotations have been sought and progress is expected shortly.

Referring to Item 7, Cllr. P. Hayes advised the Lough Derg Green Way project was raised in the Dáil shortly after the presentation to Killaloe Municipal District and requested that Waterways Ireland be invited to meet again with the Killaloe MD elected members to provide a further update.

Referring to Item 8, Cllr. T. O'Brien requested an update on the installation of speed control ramps on the approach to Killaloe Boys NS and Bridgetown NS. D. Troy advised speed surveys are currently being arranged.

Referring to Item 14, Cllr A. O'Callaghan enquired if Coillte had been contacted regarding timber haulage on local roads and referred in particular to Cloontra, D. Troy replied he is aware of the issue and a meeting has been arranged with Coillte.

Item 4 Set date for next meeting

It was agreed that the Killaloe MD AGM be arranged for 1.00pm on Friday 30th June, 2023 in Comhairle Contae an Chláir.

It was agreed the next Killaloe MD meeting be arranged for 9:30am Wednesday 19th July, 2023 in the Killaloe MD Offices, Scarriff.

Item 5 Update to Members on Killaloe Bridge and Bypass

Sean Lenihan, Senior Engineer, Capital Projects gave an overview of the project and introduced members of the team in attendance:

John Sisk & Sons - John O'Connor, Regional Director, David Cawley, Project Resident Engineer and Tadgh O'Regan.

RPS Consulting Engineers - Anthony O'Brien, Technical Lead (attended remotely)

Clare County Council - Sean Killeen, A/Senior Executive Engineer (attended remotely) and Padraic Cullen, A/Executive Engineer, Clare County Council

A. O'Brien provided an overview and update on the project and played recent drone footage showing progress to date. He referred to the main milestones for the project

Killaloe Bypass – completion date late 2024

Shannon Bridge crossing – completion date early 2025

R494 Birdhill to Ballina Upgrade – completion date mid 2025

J. O'Connor gave an overview of the programme, referring to challenges involved in a project of this nature and the benefits of the advance works undertaken. S. Lenihan advised members

that as the project progresses there will be increased costs, change orders and changed scopes and referred to importance of political and state agency support.

D. Cawley acknowledged impact of works on local residents and businesses and thanked the councillors and community for their support and understanding, adding that in the long term the project will result in significant improvements and invigorate the community.

Cllr. T. O'Brien referred to some issues raised by local residents and stated while the work is progressing very well more consultation would be helpful i.e. there are a significant number of trucks on the surrounding roads. In response to Cllr. O'Brien's query on junctions, A. O'Brien confirmed there is a ghost junction at Crevroe and not on Hill Road, adding the layouts are based on the volume of traffic at the time of design. Works to the R494 will necessitate a nine month road closure.

Cllr. P. Hayes complimented work to date and requested that public representatives be kept up dated and suggested a site visit. S. Lenihan welcomed this suggestion and added monthly reports including drone footage will be available on the Clare County Council website on the Project Management Office page. Cllr. P. Hayes referred to traffic delays particularly on match days and asked if this could be managed better? S. Lenihan advised the contractors are working closely with Killaloe MD engineers, Tipperary County Council and the Gardai with regard to traffic management.

In reply to Cllr. P. Burke, J. O'Connor confirmed the By-Pass will open before the other two elements of the project, around October 2024.

Cllr. J. Cooney complimented the project management office and contractor on great work done to date and reiterated the importance of traffic management and keeping the public advised. B. McCarthy referred to the importance of this infrastructure project not only as a key element of roads infrastructure but also as an economic, social and tourism benefit for Killaloe, its residents and the East Clare Area. He indicated that the completion of the bypass and bridge crossing was a key element of the *Elected Members of Killaloe MD Strategic Work Plan* and thanked all those who attended.

Cllr. A. O'Callaghan thanked all and requested the elected members be kept informed.

The Project Management and Sisk teams left the meeting.

Notices of Motion from Cllr. Pat Burke:-

6. “Calling on Clare County Council to repair a section of road that has subsided between the Ash Tree cross and Dereney in Whitegate. “

Proposed by: Cllr. P. Burke

Seconded by: Cllr. J. Cooney

Reply from Derek Troy, Acting Senior Executive Engineer:

“I wish to confirm that an inspection will be undertaken of the section of road on the L8096. Based on the inspection, any repairs that are deemed necessary, in order to maintain safe usage of the public road, will be arranged undertaken as soon as possible.”

7. “Calling on Clare County Council to install a pedestrian crossing at the entrance to the GAA Grounds in Whitegate in the interest of safety. “

Proposed by: Cllr. P. Burke

Seconded by: Cllr. P. Hayes

Reply from Derek Troy, Acting Senior Executive Engineer:

“I wish to confirm that a draft proposal will be forwarded to the Road Design Section of Clare County Council for the consideration of a controlled pedestrian crossing at this location. The proposal will seek to provide a safer facility for pedestrians to cross the R352. It is possible that traffic calming measures may also be incorporated into the works, if deemed necessary.

Projects of this nature are generally funded following submission by Road Design to the Department of Transport under Safety Improvement Works on Regional and Local Roads. Funding under this grant has already been allocated for 2023, therefore this project could be considered under the 2024 submission. When a draft design is completed, this project may require consultation with An Garda Síochána, the Regional Road Safety Officer, and may need to be approved under Section 38 of the Road Traffic Act, 1994.”

Notices of Motion from Cllr. Joe Cooney:-

8. “That Clare County Council give an update on the new car park proposed for the town of Scarriff.”

Proposed by: Cllr. J. Cooney

Seconded by: Cllr. P Hayes

Reply from Brian McCarthy, Senior Planner & Killaloe MD Coordinator, 15th May, 2023

“The Members will be aware that Funding under Category 2 of the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF) was awarded in 2022 to develop plans and investigate the feasibility for key interventions in the centre of Scarriff that will improve the public realm and provide community, tourism and enterprise facilities in the town centre. The award of RRDF provided for the development of designs for a Multi Service Innovation and Engagement Hub and improved public realm for the Market Square in the town centre, as well as the development of an adjoining town centre carpark – the subject of this Notice of Motion.

Following confirmation of funding in March 2022, the design of the carpark as well as Multi Service Innovation and Engagement Hub commenced immediately and culminated in the lodgement of a Part VIII for the carpark and associated multi-service development in October 2022. Following the public consultation period, the Part VIII for the car park was permitted at the Meeting of Clare County Council in February of this year. This was a positive step and milestone, enabling us to progress with certainty to commence the acquisition of the site and to undertake it’s detailed design in order to be in a position to seek funding to develop the buildings and carpark in anticipation of a Call for Category 1 – RRDF Capital funding later this year.

It should be noted that the construction and development of the 42-space carpark with a designated coach set-down area is a key priority for Killaloe Municipal District and will provide an alternative and much needed mobility solution to the existing car parking arrangements in the town centre, providing an opportunity to enhance the public realm around Market Square. The carpark is however dependent on concluding the acquisition of the site and in particular obtaining Category 1 – RRDF Capital funding for the overall project. The success of any RRDF funding application will also be dependent on demonstrating how the overall development which includes the Multi Service Hub and improved public realm for the Market

Square would be transformative, create a sense of place and a safe, secure, easily accessible, and enjoyable public realm for all and assist with Government Policy on climate change and sustainable town centre regeneration priorities. In that regard the focus is now on concluding the acquisition of the carpark site, finalising a design for an enhanced Market Square and public realm area and undertaking background work in order to be best placed and ready for an RRDF application.”

Cllr. J. Cooney welcomed the reply and fully supports the proposal, but for now wants to see carparking in the town prioritised. He asked if the proposed site is in council ownership and if a temporary carpark could be put in place if only for the later part of the week when the town is busier. Cllr. P. Hayes and Cllr. A. O’Callaghan were in agreement with this proposal. B. McCarthy referred to current government policy of enhanced mobility in town centres for all, including pedestrians, cyclists and advised the application may be more favourably assessed as a combined funding application including improved public realm, economic hub and parking. He recapped on his reply and advised that acquisition of the site is on-going.

In reply to Cllr. P. Burke, B. McCarthy advised the site acquisition is progressing but due to conveyancing issues that need to be resolved is unable to confirm a timeline at this stage.

9. “That Clare County Council carry out a survey on all local and minor roads in the Killaloe M.D. that have not been resurfaced in the past 15 years as some of these are in a very poor condition.”

Proposed by: Cllr. J. Cooney

Seconded by: Cllr. T. O’Brien

Reply from Derek Troy, Acting Senior Executive Engineer:

“Killaloe MD technical team undertake a Pavement Condition Survey of all roads for which it is responsible for, on an ongoing basis. All local and minor roads in the MD, including those with unbound surfaces, were surveyed in November 2021. Details of the pavement condition rating index (PSCI) of all roads across the entire country are recorded on the Department of Transport’s Pavement Management System (PMS). This information, along with the known annual average daily traffic (AADT) of each road, forms the primary basis on which decisions are made on roads to be included in the annual Schedule of Municipal District Works.

In terms of funding allocation, it was noted as part of the presentation and adoption of the 2023 Schedule of Municipal District Works, that the 2023 annual allocation allows for 5.7% of the county's non-national road network to be either strengthened or surface dressed. It is generally accepted however, that at least 10% of all roads should receive some form of intervention in order to maintain the level of service that is required. The consequence of the minimal increases to the annual roads grant allocations, is that the roads with lower traffic volumes are not getting either strengthened or surface dressed in a timely manner.”

Cllr. J. Cooney asked that following the survey, a list be compiled for Killaloe MD, and roads rated in the poorest condition be considered for the roads programme? He commented that Killaloe MD has a greater number of local and minor roads than other municipal districts and additional funding needs to be sought.

Cllr. T. O'Brien acknowledged a lack of central funding is the issue. He asked if the survey could be circulated to the Elected Members and discussed with the Municipal District staff. Cllr. P. Hayes supported the motion and stated there is a need to apply for additional central funding, especially as there is a marked deterioration in all roads this year around the county. Cllr. P. Burke & Cllr. A. O'Callaghan concurred. D. Troy agreed with the members comments and will compile a list of secondary and tertiary roads in poor condition. He added that while funding is an issue rising costs have also contributed to a reduction in the number of roads being strengthened or surface dressed.

Notices of Motion from Cllr. Alan O'Callaghan:-

10. “Ask this MD for an update on the paths in Tulla, especially the area on the Main Street at junction for the church.”

Proposed by: Cllr. A. O'Callaghan

Seconded by: Cllr. P. Hayes

Reply from Road Design Department:

“A preliminary design was completed last year by Road Design Section within Clare County Council, as part of the Active Travel funding application submission to the NTA. Funding was not granted, similar to other footpath projects throughout the MD, however the project will

again be included in the 2023/2024 application. It is possible that alternative funding streams need to be identified in order to progress this project, such as planning contributions.

Works are progressing well on the sections of replacement footpaths throughout Tulla Village under existing Active Travel funding, at Chapel Street and on Main Street. These works also include the provision of the two controlled pedestrian crossings on the R462 in the vicinity of St Mochulla's Primary School."

Cllr. A. O'Callaghan queried if the project has missed out on Active Travel funding? Cllr. P. Hayes, referring to the new housing developments in Tulla, asked if planning levies could be made available for works to this location? Cllr. A. O'Callaghan was in support of this suggestion. Cllr. J. Cooney stated a new design needs to be considered for this junction and asked if the councillors could be consulted when drawings become available. D. Troy replied drawings will be progressed and he will circulate the first draft when available.

11. "Ask this MD that the Main Street in Broadford could be included as soon as possible in a program for resurfacing as it's in need of repair."

Proposed: by Cllr. A. O'Callaghan

Seconded: by Cllr. J. Cooney

Reply from Derek Troy, Acting Senior Executive Engineer:

"I wish to confirm that Main Street, Broadford will be considered for road restoration improvement works under the 2024 Schedule of Municipal District Works for Killaloe MD. The technical team within Killaloe MD are aware of its current deteriorating condition, however full-scale resurfacing works have not been undertaken in recent years in anticipation of the proposed wastewater agglomeration and treatment project for Broadford Village. Works on which will require the construction of a new sewer line along Main Street, as well as individual lateral connections for each property. Clare County Council Water Services Section are monitoring this application; however, no updates have been received to date in terms of timelines or funding announcements. Minor repairs will be undertaken where required on an ongoing basis".

Cllr. A. O’Callghan acknowledged the requirement to plan works around the proposed sewerage scheme and asked if some maintenance works could be carried out to the street around gullies and Eircom boxes etc.

Cllr. A. O’Callaghan took short break from meeting and Cllr. P Burke Leas-Chathaoirleach took over as Chair of the Meeting.

Notices of Motion from Cllr. Tony O’Brien:-

12. “That following a previous motion regarding a clean up and painting from me about what is locally known as the Green Bridge, could we get an update as to when works will be done.”

Proposed by: Cllr. T. O’Brien

Seconded by: Cllr. P. Hayes

Reply from Derek Troy, Acting Senior Executive Engineer:

“I wish to confirm that Killaloe MD are in the process of procuring a contractor to undertake refurbishment works to the pedestrian ‘green’ bridge in Killaloe. Works will include cleaning and repainting of all elements of the bridge, and to include minor repairs where required. It is expected that this work will be completed in the coming weeks.”

13. “That road safety measures be put in place at the entrance/exit from Ballyvalley Estate opposite the Brian Boru heritage site.”

Proposed by: Cllr. T. O’Brien

Seconded by: Cllr. J. Cooney

Reply from Derek Troy, Acting Senior Executive Engineer:

“I wish to confirm that Killaloe MD are currently making arrangements to repair the road verge at this location. These measures will prevent the intermittent parking that is occurring, which causes an obstruction to the sightlines of the residents exiting from Ballyvalley Estate onto the R463 Killaloe – Scarriff road. It is expected that this work will be completed in the coming weeks.”

Cllr. A. O’Callaghan re-joined the meeting and resumed Chair of the Meeting.

Notices of Motion from Cllr. Pat Hayes:-

14. “I am asking that a planned programme of works would be put in place for the footpath between Feakle Village and the Post Office. As it currently is in a state of disrepair, presenting hazards and inconvenience to pedestrians, resulting in individuals walking on the road instead of the footpath. It is essential to address the poor condition of the footpath and provide a safe and suitable walking surface for residents and visitors to Feakle.”

Proposed by: Cllr. P. Hayes

Seconded by: Cllr. J. Cooney

Reply from Derek Troy, Acting Senior Executive Engineer:

“I wish to confirm that a footpath upgrade project proposal for Feakle will be developed by Killaloe MD technical team in the coming weeks. The area to be included will cover between Feakle Village and the Post Office, and also from Feakle Village to Smyths and the Digital Hub. Consideration on these routes will be given to improving pedestrian and cycling permeability and safety. It is possible that works could involve the acquisition of or dedication of lands to achieve the required road and footpath widths, or the introduction of a one-way system if required.

This proposal will be forwarded to the Road Design Section of Clare County Council for inclusion the countywide submission under the Active Travel programme. It is possible also that works of this nature could be funded from planning contributions. Separately, sections of existing footpaths in Feakle will also be considered by Killaloe MD for inclusion under the IPB footpath works in 2023, subject to the availability of funding.”

Cllr. P. Hayes welcomed reply and commented that as path may not receive funding under Active Travel other funding options may need to be considered, he requested the foopath be included on a planned programme. Cllr. J. Cooney stated that the design needs to be examined. Cllr. P. Burke suggested consulting with the community regarding a one-way system similar to that introduced in Mountshannon. D. Troy stated the footpath is narrow and non-compliant, and Killaloe MD will examine widening the path, but if this is not possible other options will have to be considered.

15. “I propose that following on from our recent update of our Strategy and Work plan for the Killaloe District, that we identify key roads in East Clare that require immediate attention, such as those with heavy traffic, poor conditions, or insufficient capacity. Therefore, I would ask that we develop a phased plan for their upgrade, focusing on resurfacing, widening, and improved signage and lighting.”

Proposed by: Cllr. P. Hayes

Seconded by: Cllr. P. Burke

Reply from Derek Troy, Acting Senior Executive Engineer:

“I wish to confirm that Killaloe MD technical team will contribute, along with the Elected Members, to developing a phased plan for strategic road upgrades. Clare County Council’s existing 3-year roadworks plan takes in account the existing road performance and surface condition and prioritizes the areas in most need of resurfacing improvement works, based on traffic volume. The 3-year plan forms the basis for the annual Schedule of Municipal District Works but does not currently incorporate areas for widening or for signage and lighting improvements. It is agreed also that the development of a phased plan for strategic road upgrades will consider future demands within the MD in terms of rural development and tourism promotion.”

Cllr. P. Hayes referred to previous investment in the R352 and stated there are sections of the road which currently need improvement works such as the removal of bends or realignment i.e. Scarriff to Whitegate, Tuamgraney to Bodyke and Tulla to Ballynahinch. He stated these type of works should be set out in a planned programme for regional roads in Killaloe MD.

Cllr. P. Burke concurred and referred to works around the Whitegate area. Cllr. A. O’Callaghan referred to the R471 Oatfield/Sixmilebridge/Clonlara and the R469 Kilmurry to Quinn roads.

Cllr. J. Cooney agreed but stated there is a need to prioritise, rather than examining the entire Municipal District and identify regional roads with more dangerous bends i.e. Broadford to Limerick road.

D. Troy advised he will compile a list of bends, not the full route, but select highest priority locations with regard to traffic volumes. He also highlighted the need to approach landowners in advance of works of this nature.

16. Correspondence

- Letter of thanks to Jim Meade, Chief Executive, Iarnrod Eireann in respect of the meeting regarding the re-opening of Crusheen Railway Station, dated 12th May, 2023.
- Letter to Brian Tracy, Western Regional Manager, Waterways Ireland in respect of briefing to Killaloe Municipal District, dated 12th May, 2023.

17. Any Other Business

Cllr. P. Hayes stated while many graveyards are well maintained by communities there are a number lacking maintenance and overgrown i.e. Tulla. He referred to the burial grounds policy introduced under the Rural Development SPC and the need to examine how this policy is to be implemented. Cllr. A. O’Callaghan and Cllr. J. Cooney concurred. A. Haugh suggested the Rural Directorate be invited to the next Killaloe MD Meeting to discuss the matter.

Cllr. J. Cooney congratulated the Clare Minor Hurling team on their success in winning the Munster Hurling Championship final and wished them well in the remainder of the competition. He also acknowledged the recent success of the U20s Clare Team in reaching the Munster U20 Hurling Championship final.

Brian McCarthy,

Senior Planner and Killaloe MD Meetings Administrator

17th May, 2023